

Crediting Juice in the Summer Food Service Program

This guidance applies to meals and snacks served in the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s (USDA) Summer Food Service Program (SFSP). For information on the SFSP meal patterns and the vegetables/fruits component, resource the Connecticut State Department of Education’s (CSDE) resource, [Requirements for the Vegetables/Fruits Component of the Summer Food Service Program Meal Patterns](#), and visit the “Meal Patterns for the SFSP” and “Vegetables/Fruits Component for the SFSP” sections of the CSDE’s SFSP webpage.



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Crediting Juice in the Summer Food Service Program

Overview of Crediting Requirements

Juice served in SFSP meals and snacks must be pasteurized full-strength (100 percent) fruit juice, vegetable juice, or a combination of fruit and vegetable juices. Juice credits toward the vegetables/fruits component of the SFSP meal patterns. At lunch and supper, juice cannot credit for more than half of the vegetables/fruits component. At snack, juice cannot be served when milk is the only other snack component or when the only other component is a vegetable or fruit.

Juice limits for lunch and supper

Juice cannot count for more than half of the vegetables/fruits component at lunch and supper. In addition, juice must be a different kind from the other offered vegetable or fruit. For example, a lunch menu that contains $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of apple juice must also contain at least $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of vegetables or a different type of fruit (i.e., not apples). The juice limit applies to all sources of 100 percent juice (refer to “[Allowable Types of Juice](#)” in this document).

At least one of the two required servings of the vegetables/fruits component at lunch and supper must always be a **whole fruit or vegetable** (fresh, frozen, canned, or dried). The two servings cannot consist only of juice. For example, juice and a smoothie cannot be the only two servings of the vegetables/fruits component at (even if one is made from vegetables and the other is made from fruits) because both credit as juice. This would exceed the juice limit of no more than half of the vegetables/fruits component.

Juice limits for snack

The SFSP snack meal pattern requires any two of the four food components (milk, meat/meat alternates, vegetables/fruits, and grains/breads). A reimbursable snack cannot include a serving of juice (including frozen 100 percent juice pops and pureed fruits/vegetables in smoothies) and a serving of fruit or vegetables as the only two snack components. For example, a snack that contains fruit juice and carrot sticks is not reimbursable because both food items are from the same component (vegetables/fruits).

In addition, juice cannot be served when milk is the only other snack component. For example, a snack that contains milk and a mango-peach smoothie is not reimbursable.

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Allowable Types of Juice

Any type of pasteurized full-strength (100 percent) juice credits in the SFSP meal patterns. Juice may be fresh, frozen, or made from concentrate. The name of the full-strength fruit juice on the label must include one of the following terms: “juice,” “full-strength juice,” “100 percent juice,” “reconstituted juice,” or “juice from concentrate.” The statements “natural” and “organic” do not indicate that a juice is full strength. Products that credit as 100 percent juice include:

- 100 percent juice including fresh, frozen, and made from (refer to “[Crediting Juice Concentrates](#)” in this document);
- frozen juice pops made from 100 percent juice (refer to “[Crediting Frozen Juice Products](#)” in this document);
- pureed fruits and vegetables in fruit/vegetable smoothies (refer to “[Crediting Pureed Fruits and Vegetables in Smoothies](#)” in this document); and
- juice from canned fruit served in 100 percent juice (refer to “[Crediting Juice in Canned Fruit](#)” in this document).

Juice products that are less than full strength, or that contain juice concentrates that are not fully reconstituted, do not credit in the SFSP meal patterns. Except for juice in smoothies, juice cannot credit when it is used as an ingredient in another food or beverage (refer to “[Crediting Pureed Fruits and Vegetables in Smoothies](#)” in this document).

The USDA recommends serving whole fruits (fresh, frozen, canned, and dried) more often than juice. Juice does not provide the same nutritional benefits as whole fruits and vegetables.

Juice ingredients

The ingredients in juice can vary among manufacturers and products. The Food and Drug Administration’s (FDA) labeling regulations allow 100 percent juice to contain added ingredients and still be labeled “100% juice.” Some 100 percent juices contain added ingredients such as artificial flavors, artificial colors (e.g., red 40, blue 1, yellow 5 and 6, and titanium dioxide), preservatives (e.g., sodium potassium sorbate), flavor enhancers (e.g., ethyl maltol), and emulsifiers or thickeners (e.g., glycerol esters of wood rosin and xanthan gum). The CSDE encourages menu planners to read ingredients statements and choose 100 percent juice without these added ingredients.

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Crediting Juice Concentrates

Juice concentrates credit only when reconstituted with water to 100 percent full-strength juice and served in the form of juice. Juice concentrates do not credit when used as an ingredient in another food or beverage product, such as gelatin or sherbet made with juice concentrates.

Juice made from concentrate is reconstituted with a volume of water that is several times the amount of the juice concentrate. A typical reconstitution ratio might be three parts water to one-part concentrate, but this ratio may vary for different juice products. Commercial juice products made from concentrate will list “water” as the first ingredient followed by the type of juice concentrate, for example, “water, orange juice concentrate” and “filtered water, grape juice concentrate.” Juice made from concentrate that is labeled “100 percent juice” credits when the SFSP sponsor follows the manufacturer’s specific instructions for reconstituting.

Crediting Juice Blends

Juice blends made from 100 percent full-strength juices credit in the SFSP meal patterns. They may be a combination of full-strength fruit juices, vegetable juices, or fruit and vegetable juices.

Crediting Frozen 100 Percent Juice Products

Frozen 100 percent fruit juice products (such as frozen juice pops) credit toward the vegetables/fruits component based on the fluid volume prior to freezing. SFSP sponsors must request a product formulation statement (PFS) from the manufacturer to document this information. Frozen fruit juice counts toward the juice limit at lunch and supper (refer to “[Juice Limit at Lunch and Supper](#)” in this document).



For information on PFS forms, refer to the CSDE’s resources, [Using Product Formulation Statements in the Summer Food Service Program](#) and [Accepting Processed Product Documentation in the Summer Food Service Program](#), and the USDA’s documents, [Product Formulation Statement for Documenting Vegetables and Fruits in the Child and Adult Care Food Program, Summer Food Service Program, and NSLP Afterschool Snacks](#), and [Tips for Evaluating a Manufacturer’s Product Formulation Statement](#).

Training on the requirements for CN labels and PFS forms is available in Module 6: Meal Pattern Documentation of the CSDE’s training program, [What’s in a Meal: National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program Meal Patterns for Grades K-12](#).

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Crediting Apple Cider

Apple cider must be pasteurized 100 percent full-strength juice. Pasteurized juice has been heat-treated to kill harmful bacteria. Check labels, as some brands of apple cider are not pasteurized. SFSP sponsors cannot serve apple cider (or any other type of juice) that is not pasteurized. Apple cider counts toward the juice limit at lunch and supper (refer to [“Juice Limit at Lunch and Supper”](#) in this document).

Crediting Juice in Canned Fruit

A serving of canned fruit may include the 100 percent juice in which the fruit is packed but cannot include water or syrup. For example, $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of canned peaches with juice credits as $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of the vegetables/fruits component. However, $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of canned peaches with syrup does not credit as $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of the vegetables/fruits component because the serving does not contain $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of fruit. The menu planner can credit only the amount of peaches without the syrup.

The juice from canned fruit counts toward the juice limit at lunch and supper if the menu planner credits the juice toward the vegetables/fruits component (refer to [“Crediting juice at lunch and supper”](#) in this document).

Juice from canned fruit does not count toward the juice limit at lunch and supper if the juice is planned as an extra noncreditable food. An example is $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of canned fruit portioned in a 5 $\frac{1}{2}$ -ounce container with the juice added after measuring the full $\frac{1}{2}$ -cup serving of fruit.

Crediting Pureed Fruits and Vegetables in Smoothies

Pureed fruits and vegetables in smoothies credit only as juice in SFSP meals and snacks. Crediting is based on the volume (cups) of pureed fruits and vegetables per serving. For example, a smoothie that contains $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of pureed strawberries credits as $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of fruit juice. Pureed fruits and vegetables in smoothies count toward the juice limit at lunch and supper (refer to [“Juice Limit at Lunch and Supper”](#) in this document).



Concentrated fruit puree and concentrated juice are added sugars. They do not credit as juice unless they are reconstituted to full-strength fruit puree or full-strength juice.

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SFSP sponsors must document the amount of pureed fruits and vegetables per serving. This requires a PFS for commercial products and a recipe for smoothies made from scratch. For information on standardized recipes and PFS forms, visit the “[Crediting Foods Made from Scratch](#)” and “[Crediting Commercial Processed Products](#)” sections of the CSDE’s SFSP webpage. Training on the requirements for standardized recipes and PFS forms is available in Module 6: Meal Pattern Documentation of the CSDE’s training program, *What’s in a Meal: National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program Meal Patterns for Grades K-12*.

The CSDE’s resource, *Crediting Smoothies in the Summer Food Service Program*, summarizes the requirements for crediting smoothies in CACFP meals and snacks.

Resources

Accepting Processed Product Documentation in the Summer Food Service Program (CSDE):

https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/sde/nutrition/sfsp/creditingfsp/accepting_processed_product_documentation_sfsp.pdf

Crediting Commercial Processed Products in the Summer Food Service Program (CSDE) webpage):

<https://portal.ct.gov/sde/nutrition/summer-food-service-program/documents#CreditingCommercialProcessedProductsSFSP>

Crediting Foods in the Summer Food Service Program (“Documents/Forms” section of CSDE’s SFSP webpage):

<https://portal.ct.gov/SDE/Nutrition/Summer-Food-Service-Program/Documents>

Crediting Smoothies in the Summer Food Service Program (CSDE):

https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/sde/nutrition/sfsp/creditingfsp/credit_smoothies_sfsp.pdf

Food Buying Guide for Child Nutrition Programs (USDA):

<https://www.fns.usda.gov/tn/food-buying-guide-for-child-nutrition-programs>

Meal Patterns for the SFSP (“How To” Section of CSDE’s SFSP webpage):

<https://portal.ct.gov/sde/nutrition/summer-food-service-program/how-to#MealPatterns>

Menu Planning for the SFSP (CSDE’s SFSP webpage):

<https://portal.ct.gov/sde/nutrition/summer-food-service-program#MenuPlanning>

Nutrition Guide: Summer Food Service Program (USDA):

<https://www.fns.usda.gov/sfsp/nutrition-guide>

Product Formulation Statement for Documenting Vegetables and Fruits in the Child and Adult Care Food Program, Summer Food Service Program, and NSLP Afterschool Snacks (USDA):

https://fns-prod.azureedge.us/sites/default/files/resource-files/PFS_Total_Veg_Fruits_Fillable_508.pdf

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Product Formulation Statements (CSDE):

https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/NSLP/Crediting/Product_Formulation_Statements.pdf

Requirements for the Vegetables/Fruits Component of the Summer Food Service Program Meal Patterns (CSDE):

https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/sde/nutrition/sfsp/creditingfsp/component_vegetables_fruits_sfsp.pdf

Resources for the Summer Food Service Program Meal Patterns (CSDE):

https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/sde/nutrition/sfsp/mealpattern/resources_sfsp_meal_patterns.pdf.

Tips for Evaluating a Manufacturer's Product Formulation Statement (USDA):

<https://fns-prod.azureedge.us/sites/default/files/resource-files/manufacturerPFStipsheet.pdf>

USDA Memo SP 40-2019, CACFP 17-2019, and SFSP 17-2019: Smoothies Offered in the Child Nutrition Programs:

<https://www.fns.usda.gov/cn/smoothies-offered-child-nutrition-programs>

What's in a Meal Module 6: Meal Pattern Documentation (CSDE's Training Program, What's in a Meal: National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program Meal Patterns for Grades K-12):

<https://portal.ct.gov/sde/nutrition/meal-pattern-training-materials>

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For more information, visit the [Meal Patterns for the SFSP](#) and [Crediting Foods in the SFSP](#) sections of the CSDE's SFSP webpage or contact the [Summer Meals staff](#) at the Connecticut State Department of Education, Bureau of Child Nutrition Programs, 450 Columbus Boulevard, Suite 504, Hartford, CT 06103-1841. This document is available at https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/sde/nutrition/sfsp/creditingfsp/credit_juice_sfsp.pdf.

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Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights
1400 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20250-9410; or
2. fax: (833) 256-1665 or (202) 690-7442; or
3. email: program.intake@usda.gov

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