

Crediting Smoothies 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 components, refer to Connecticut State Department of Education’s (CSDE) resources, *Requirements for the Vegetables/Fruits Component of the Summer Food Service Program Meal Patterns*, *Requirements for the Milk Component of the Summer Food Service Program Meal Patterns*, and *Requirements for the Meat/Meat Alternates 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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Creditable Ingredients

Smoothie ingredients that credit toward the SFSP meal patterns include full-strength fruit or vegetable juice, pureed fruits, and pureed vegetables (vegetables/fruits component); milk (milk component); and yogurt or soy yogurt (meat/meat alternates (MMA) component). These ingredients must provide at least the minimum creditable amount:

- $\frac{1}{8}$ cup for the vegetables component;
- $\frac{1}{8}$ cup for the fruits component;
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup for the milk component (applies only to milk in smoothies); and
- $\frac{1}{8}$ cup ($\frac{1}{4}$ ounce) for yogurt.

If a smoothie contains less than the full serving of a component, the menu must include additional foods to meet the full requirement.

SFSP sponsors must maintain appropriate documentation to indicate the crediting information for smoothies. For example, to credit a strawberry smoothie as $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of the vegetables/fruits component and 1 ounce of the MMA component, the SFSP sponsor's documentation must indicate that the serving contains $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of pureed strawberries and $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of yogurt.

Required Crediting Documentation

To credit smoothies made from scratch, SFSP sponsors must have a recipe that indicates the meal pattern contribution of each component in the serving. The CSDE encourages SFSP sponsors to use standardized recipes to ensure accurate crediting information. For information on standardized recipes, refer to the CSDE's [Standardized Recipe Form for the Summer Food Service Program](#) and visit the "[Standardized Recipes](#)" section of the CSDE's SFSP webpage.

To credit commercial smoothies, SFSP sponsors must obtain a product formulation statement (PFS). A Child Nutrition (CN) label may be available for some commercial smoothies that contain yogurt. For information on CN labels and PFS forms, refer to CSDE's resources, [Using Child Nutrition \(CN\) Labels in the Summer Food Service Program](#), [Using Product Formulation Statements in the Summer Food Service Program](#), and [Accepting Processed Product Documentation in the Summer Food Service Program](#), the USDA's [PFS forms for the SFSP](#).

For guidance on how to review a PFS, refer to the USDA's [Tips for Evaluating a Manufacturer's Product Formulation Statement](#) and [Reviewer's Checklist for Evaluating Manufacturer Product Formulation Statements for Meat/Meat Alternates](#). Additional guidance on documentation for commercial products is available in the "[Crediting Commercial Processed Products](#)" section of the CSDE's SFSP webpage.

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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*.

Recommended Daily Limit for Smoothies

The USDA recommends limiting smoothies to one SFSP meal or snack per day. For example, if a smoothie is served at breakfast, the SFSP menus for lunch, supper, and snack should not include a smoothie.

Crediting Fruits and Vegetables in Smoothies

Pureed fruits and vegetables in smoothies credit only as juice toward the vegetables/fruits component. 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. SFSP sponsors must document the amount of pureed fruits and vegetables per serving (refer to “[Required Crediting Documentation](#)” in this document).

Menu planners must follow the guidance below when crediting fruits and vegetables in smoothies.

- **Juice limit for lunch and supper:** The SFSP lunch and supper meal pattern requires at least $\frac{3}{4}$ cup (combined total) of two different kinds of vegetables and/or fruits. Juice (including pureed fruits and vegetables in smoothies) cannot credit for more than half of the vegetables/fruits component. SFSP lunch and supper menus cannot offer a smoothie and juice as the only two servings of fruits and vegetables (because both credit as juice. For more information, refer to CSDE's resource, *Crediting Juice in the Summer Food Service Program*.

At least one of the two required servings of the vegetables/fruits component at lunch or supper must be a **whole fruit or vegetable**, i.e., fresh, frozen, canned, or dried. For example, a lunch menu that includes a peach smoothie made with $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of pureed fruit (credits as juice) must also include at least $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of vegetables or a different type of whole fruit (not peaches). For more information, refer to CSDE's resource, *Requirements for the Vegetables/Fruits Component of the Summer Food Service Program Meal Patterns*.

- **Breakfast:** The SFSP breakfast meal pattern requires a serving of vegetables, fruits, or both. Smoothies that contain $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of juice (including pureed fruits and vegetables) may credit as the entire vegetables/fruits component at breakfast. For example, a serving of smoothie that contains $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of pureed mangoes and carrots credits as the full vegetables/fruits component.

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- **Snack:** The SFSP snack meal pattern requires any two of the four food components (milk, MMA, vegetables/fruits, and grains/breads). Smoothies that contain $\frac{3}{4}$ cup of juice (including pureed fruits and vegetables) may credit as the entire vegetables/fruits component at snack. Smoothies containing juice and milk may credit as either juice or milk but cannot credit as both components in the same snack. The snack menu cannot include juice (including pureed fruits and vegetables in smoothies) when milk is the only other snack component. Table 1 shows some examples of how these requirements apply.

Table 1. Examples of crediting smoothies at snack

The SFSP snack meal pattern requires any two of the following: 1 cup of milk, 1 ounce of MMA, $\frac{3}{4}$ cup of vegetables/fruits, and 1 serving of grains/breads.

Example 1: A smoothie recipe's serving contains $\frac{3}{4}$ cup of pureed fruit (credits as fruit juice) and 1 cup of unflavored low-fat milk. The menu planner may choose to credit the smoothie as either the vegetables/fruits component or the milk component but cannot credit the smoothie as both components in the same snack. To be reimbursable, the snack must include the full serving of a second component, i.e., MMA or grains.

Example 2: A smoothie recipe's serving contains $\frac{3}{4}$ cup of pureed fruit (credits as fruit juice) and $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of unflavored low-fat milk. The pureed fruit credits as the vegetables/fruits component. However, the milk cannot credit as the full milk component because the serving is less than 1 cup. To be reimbursable, the snack must include the full serving of a second component, i.e., MMA or grains.



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Crediting Milk in Smoothies

Milk in smoothies credits as the milk component based on the amount per serving. For example, a smoothie that contains $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of milk credits as $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of the milk component. SFSP sponsors must document the amount of milk per serving (refer to “[Required Crediting Documentation](#)” in this document).

- **Allowable types of milk:** Allowable types of milk for the SFSP include unflavored or flavored pasteurized whole milk, reduced-fat milk, low-fat milk, fat-free milk, buttermilk, lactose-reduced milk, and acidophilus milk. For information on the crediting requirements for milk, refer to CSDE’s resource, [Requirements for the Milk Component of the Summer Food Service Program Meal Patterns](#).
- **Minimum creditable amount:** The minimum creditable amount of milk in a smoothie is $\frac{1}{4}$ cup. This crediting applies only to smoothies. SFSP sponsors must have a recipe or PFS to document the type and amount of milk per serving (refer to “[Required Crediting Documentation](#)” in this document).

Crediting Yogurt in Smoothies

Yogurt in smoothies credits as the MMA component based on the amount in the serving. Soy yogurt does not credit in SFSP meals and snacks.

A $\frac{1}{2}$ -cup serving of yogurt credits as 1 ounce of the MMA component. SFSP sponsors must document the amount of yogurt per serving (refer to “[Required Crediting Documentation](#)” in this document). For information on the crediting requirements for yogurt, refer to CSDE’s resource, [Crediting Yogurt in the Summer Food Service Program](#).

The addition of yogurt to a smoothie is not a substitution for fluid milk in the SFSP meal patterns. Fluid milk must be offered in all meals to meet the milk component requirement.

Additional Ingredients

Smoothies may include additional ingredients to improve flavor and consistency, such as oatmeal and peanut butter. However, these ingredients do not credit toward the SFSP meal patterns.

Crediting Example

Table 1 shows how a smoothie made with blueberry puree, low-fat yogurt, fat-free milk, and oatmeal could credit toward the SFSP meal patterns.

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Table 1. Meal pattern contribution of a blueberry smoothie recipe

Ingredient	Meal pattern contribution ¹
Frozen blueberry puree, ½ cup	½ cup of fruit juice (vegetables/fruits component) ²
Low-fat yogurt, ½ cup	1 ounce of MMA ³
Low-fat milk, 4 fluid ounces	4 fluid ounces of milk ³
Oatmeal, 2 tablespoons	None (noncreditable in smoothies)
<p>¹ If a creditable ingredient does not provide the full meal pattern component (minimum amount), the menu must include additional servings of that component to meet the SFSP meal patterns.</p> <p>² The menu planner must count pureed fruits and vegetables in smoothies toward the juice limit at lunch and supper. For more information, refer to CSDE’s resource, Crediting Juice in the Summer Food Service Program.</p> <p>³ The minimum creditable amount of milk in a smoothie is ¼ cup. If the smoothie contains less than 1 cup of milk per serving, the menu must include the additional amount of milk to provide the full milk component.</p>	

Commercial Products

Commercial smoothies credit the same as smoothies made from scratch. Product formulation and labeling can vary greatly because commercial smoothies do not have a federal standard of identity. To credit commercial smoothies in SFSP meals and snacks, SFSP sponsors must obtain a PFS (or CN label, if available) stating the amount of all creditable ingredients per serving, such as pureed fruits and vegetables, juice, yogurt, and milk (refer to “[Required Crediting Documentation](#)” in this document).

- **Crediting pureed vegetables/fruits:** Commercial smoothies made with juice or pureed fruits/vegetables credit only as juice. Crediting is based on the volume of fruits/vegetables after pureeing and before freezing. The product label must include a statement regarding the “percent juice content,” which is required by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) for beverages made with fruit/vegetable juice or puree. For example, an 8-fluid ounce smoothie made from fruit puree labeled with “contains 50% juice” credits as 4 fluid ounces (½ cup) of juice. SFSP sponsors may need to obtain a PFS from the manufacturer to document the amount of pureed fruit in the product.

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

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- **Crediting milk:** The type of milk used as an ingredient in commercial smoothies must be consistent with the SFSP meal pattern requirements (refer to “[Allowable types of milk](#)” in this document). The manufacturer’s product documentation must attest that commercial mixes with milk are made using ingredients that meet federal, state, and local definitions for fluid milk.
- **Crediting yogurt:** Yogurt credits as the MMA component when used as an ingredient in commercial smoothies (refer to “[Crediting Yogurt in Smoothies](#)” in this document). The product documentation must attest that commercial mixes with yogurt are made in compliance with the federal definition for yogurt.
- **Limit for crediting amount:** The total creditable amount in a smoothie cannot exceed the volume served. For example, ½ cup of a commercial smoothie cannot credit as 1 cup of juice.
- **Noncreditable commercial smoothies:** Probiotic dairy drinks, drinkable yogurt, and yogurt drinks are not smoothies, and do not credit in the SFSP meal patterns. Commercial smoothies that contain dietary supplements (such as whey protein powder) or herbal supplements (such as ginkgo biloba, ginseng, and echinacea) do not credit.
- **Review accuracy of PFS:** Prior to including commercial smoothies in reimbursable meals, SFSP sponsors must check the manufacturer’s PFS for accuracy. Check that the listed volumes of pureed fruits and vegetables are prior to freezing, and that milk and yogurt (if included) meet the meal pattern requirements, i.e., milk is low-fat or fat-free and yogurt meets the federal definition for yogurt.

Resources

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

https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/SFSP/CreditingSFSP/Accepting_Processed_Product_Documentation_SFSP.pdf

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

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

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

https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/SFSP/CreditingSFSP/Credit_Juice_SFSP.pdf

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

https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/SFSP/CreditingSFSP/Credit_Yogurt_SFSP.pdf

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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>

Milk Component for the SFSP (“Documents/Forms” section of CSDE’s SFSP webpage):

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

Nutrition Guide: Summer Food Service Program (USDA):

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

Product Formulation Statement (Product Analysis) for Meat/Meat Alternate (M/MA) Products in Child Nutrition Programs (USDA):

https://www.fns.usda.gov/sites/default/files/resource-files/PFS_Meats-Meat_Alternates_Fillable_508.pdf

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

Requirements for the Milk Component of the Summer Food Service Program Meal Patterns (CSDE):

https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/SFSP/CreditingSFSP/Component_Milk_SFSP.pdf

Requirements for the Vegetables/Fruits Component of the SFSP Meal Patterns (CSDE):

https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/SFSP/CreditingSFSP/Component_Vegetables_Fruits_SFSP.pdf

Standardized Recipe Form for the SFSP (CSDE):

https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/SFSP/CreditingSFSP/Standardized_Recipe_Form_SFSP.docx

Standardized Recipes (“Documents/Forms” section of CSDE’s SFSP webpage):

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

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

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

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

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

Using Child Nutrition (CN) Labels in the Summer Food Service Program (CDSE):

https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/SFSP/CreditingSFSP/CN_Labels_SFSP.pdf

Using Product Formulation Statements in the Summer Food Service Program (CSDE):

https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/SFSP/CreditingSFSP/Product_Formulation_Statements_SFSP.pdf

Vegetables/Fruits Component for the SFSP (CSDE webpage):

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

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/CreditingSFSP/Credit_Smoothies_SFSP.pdf.

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1. mail: U.S. Department of Agriculture
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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