

The School Lunch Tray: December 21, 2022

Dear School Sponsors of Child Nutrition Programs:

The School Lunch Tray contains the Connecticut State Department of Education's (CSDE) weekly email notifications for the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) school nutrition programs. This week's topics are listed below.

This is the last edition of the School Lunch Tray for 2022. The School Lunch Tray will resume on January 4, 2023. Best wishes from all of us for a wonderful holiday season!

Action Items

- Have a wonderful holiday season! 😊

Need to Know

- Operational Memorandum No. 03-23: Schedule for Submitting Child Nutrition Programs Monthly Claims for Reimbursement in Fiscal Year 2023
- Reminder for Receipting in FFAVORS Before Winter Break
- New CSDE Resource: When Commercial Grain Products Require a Product Formulation Statement (PFS) to Credit in the School Nutrition Programs
- New CSDE Resource: Crediting Grain-based Desserts in the School Nutrition Programs
- Updated Version of CSDE's Guide: Meeting the Whole Grain-rich Requirement for the NSLP and SBP Meal Patterns for Grades K-12 (December 2022)
- Recalled and Updated Versions of CSDE's Grain Crediting Resources
- New Food Yields Added to the Food Buying Guide for Child Nutrition Programs Interactive Web-based Tool and FBG Interactive Mobile App
- Resource Roundup: Recipe Ideas for Schools

Good to Know

- Team Nutrition Recipe of the Month: Cheesy Bean Tostadas

Please review and share with appropriate staff members. For previous versions of the School Lunch Tray, visit the CSDE's [School Lunch Tray and Table Talk](#) webpage.



Need to Know

Operational Memorandum No. 03-23: Schedule for Submitting Child Nutrition Programs Monthly Claims for Reimbursement in Fiscal Year 2023

[Operational Memorandum No. 03-23](#) outlines important information regarding the monthly claim submission process and claim due dates for fiscal year 2023 (October 1, 2022, through September 30, 2023). Please review and share with all staff members involved with preparing and submitting claims, e.g., claim preparers and claim submitters. This memo is available on the CSDE's [Operational Memoranda for School Nutrition Programs](#) webpage.

Reminder for Receipting in FFAVORS Before Winter Break

Be sure to go into FFAVORS and receipt any invoices in the system before leaving for the winter break. Receipting should be done no later than five business days after delivery.

New CSDE Resource: When Commercial Grain Products Require a Product Formulation Statement (PFS) to Credit in the School Nutrition Programs

School food authorities (SFA) must obtain a PFS from the manufacturer when a commercial grain product's ingredients statement and packaging do not provide sufficient information to determine if the product meets the crediting or whole grain-rich (WGR) criteria for the school meal patterns.

The CSDE's new resource, [When Commercial Grain Products Require a Product Formulation Statement to Credit in the School Nutrition Programs](#), provides guidance and examples of when commercial grain products require a PFS to credit in the National School Lunch Program (NSLP), School Breakfast Program (SBP), and Afterschool Snack Program (ASP) meal patterns for grades K-12 and preschoolers. This resource is available in the "[Crediting Commercial Processed Products](#)" section of the CSDE's [Crediting Foods in School Nutrition Programs](#) webpage.

New CSDE Resource: Crediting Grain-based Desserts in the School Nutrition Programs

The CSDE's new resource, [Crediting Grain-based Desserts in the School Nutrition Programs](#), provides guidance on the requirements for grain-based desserts, including how to identify grain-based desserts, the limit for grain-based desserts at lunch, crediting restrictions for grain-based desserts at breakfast, and serving grain-based desserts as extra foods. This resource is available in the "[Grains Component for Grades K-12](#)" section of the CSDE's [Crediting Foods in School Nutrition Programs](#) webpage.

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Updated Version of CSDE's Guide: Meeting the Whole Grain-rich Requirement for the NSLP and SBP Meal Patterns for Grades K-12 (December 2022)

The CSDE is recalling the November 2022 version of the guide, [Meeting the Whole Grain-rich Requirement for the NSLP and SBP Meal Patterns for Grades K-12](#), and replacing with an updated version dated December 2022. This version includes clarification on the WGR criteria for different types of commercial grain products (summarized below), an expanded list of when commercial WGR grain products require a PFS to credit in school meals, and revised examples of how to evaluate whether a commercial grain product is WGR. The WGR criteria are summarized below.

- **Commercial grain foods (groups A-H):** Grain products in groups A-G (such as breads, muffins, pancakes, and crackers) and group H (such as rice, pasta, quinoa, and cooked breakfast cereals, e.g., oatmeal) are WGR if they meet the following criteria: 1) the food is 100 percent whole grain or contains a blend of whole and enriched grains that is at least 50 percent whole grain; and 2) noncreditable grains do not exceed 3.99 grams per portion for groups A-G or 6.99 grams per portion for group H.
- **RTE breakfast cereals (group I):** RTE breakfast cereals are WGR if they meet the following criteria: 1) the first ingredient is a whole grain and the cereal is fortified, or the cereal is 100 percent whole grain; and 2) noncreditable grains do not exceed 6.99 grams per portion. Fortification is not required for 100 whole grain cereals.
- **Commercial combination foods containing a grain portion from groups A-I:** The grain portion (such as pizza crust in pizza, noodles in lasagna, and breading on chicken nuggets) is WGR if it meets the following criteria: 1) the grain portion contains 100 percent whole grain or a blend of whole and enriched grains that is at least 50 percent whole grain; and 2) noncreditable grains in the grain portion do not exceed 3.99 grams per portion for groups A-G or 6.99 grams per portion for groups H-I.

This resource is available in the "[Whole Grain-rich Requirement](#)" section of the CSDE's [Crediting Foods in School Nutrition Programs](#) webpage. Please discard any versions downloaded prior to today and replace with the December 2022 versions.

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Updated Versions of CSDE's Grain Crediting Resources (December 2022)

Updated versions (dated December 2022) are available for the grain crediting resources listed below. The updated versions include clarification on the WGR criteria, an expanded list of when commercial grain products require a PFS to credit in school meals, and updated resource links.

- [Calculation Methods for Grain Ounce Equivalents for Grades K-12 in the NSLP and SBP](#)
- [Calculation Methods for Grain Ounce Equivalents for Preschoolers in the NSLP and SBP](#)
- [Comparison of Meal Pattern Requirements for Preschool and Grades K-12 in the Afterschool Snack Program of the NSLP](#)
- [Comparison of Meal Pattern Requirements for Preschool and Grades K-12 in the Afterschool Snack Program of the NSLP](#)
- [Comparison of Meal Pattern Requirements for the Grains Component in School Nutrition Programs](#)
- [Crediting Breakfast Cereals for Grades K-12 in the NSLP and SBP](#)
- [Crediting Breakfast Cereals for Preschoolers in the NSLP and SBP](#)
- [Crediting Enriched Grains in the NSLP and SBP](#)
- [Crediting Whole Grains in the NSLP and SBP](#)
- [Grain Ounce Equivalents for Grades K-12 in the NSLP and SBP](#)
- [How to Identify Creditable Grains for Preschoolers in the NSLP and SBP](#)

The resources for grades K-12 are available in the “[Grains Component for Grades K-12](#)” section of the CSDE’s [Crediting Foods in School Nutrition Programs](#) webpage. The preschool resources are available in the “[Grains Component for Preschoolers](#)” section of the CSDE’s [Meal Patterns for Preschoolers in School Nutrition Programs](#) webpage. The comparison charts are available under “[C](#)” on the CSDE’s Program Guidance for School Nutrition Programs webpage.

Please discard any versions downloaded prior to today and replace with the December 2022 versions.

Updated Menu Planning Guide (December 2022)

The CSDE has updated the [Menu Planning Guide for School Nutrition Programs](#) (dated December 2022) to reflect the changes below.

- Section 3: The same changes noted above for the CSDE grain resources: updated WGR criteria for different types of commercial grain products, and an expanded list of when commercial WGR grain products require a PFS to credit in school meals.
 - Section 4: Additional guidance on Child Nutrition (CN) labels and PFS forms.
 - Section 7: Addition of new resources: Crediting Grain-based Desserts in the School Nutrition Programs; and When Commercial Grain Products Require a Product Formulation Statement (PFS) to Credit in the School Nutrition Programs.
 - All sections: revised page numbers and table of contents.
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New Food Yields Added to the Food Buying Guide for Child Nutrition Programs Interactive Web-based Tool and FBG Interactive Mobile App

The following new food yields are available in the [Food Buying Guide](#): frozen mangoes, fresh rambutan, fresh lychee, fresh and canned mandarins, frozen legumes (dark red kidney beans and white kidney beans), and pouched tuna.

Resource Roundup: Recipe Ideas for Schools

Looking for recipe ideas? The CSDE's webpages below can assist.

- Visit the “[Crediting Foods Made from Scratch](#)” section of the CSDE's [Crediting Foods in School Nutrition Programs](#) webpage.
- Visit the “[Recipes for Child Nutrition Programs](#)” section of the CSDE's [Menu Planning for Child Nutrition Programs](#) webpage.

These webpages include links to the USDA's standardized recipes for schools, more recipes for Child Nutrition Programs, guidance on using spices and seasonings, and guidance on standardized recipes.

Good to Know

Team Nutrition Recipe of the Month: Cheesy Bean Tostadas

This Cheesy Bean Tostada recipe is a quick and easy way to enjoy beans. Using just three ingredients, this tasty snack can be prepared in 15 minutes or less. [Watch this short video](#) and download the recipes with portions for [children 3 to 5](#) and [children 6 to 18](#) years old. The activities below provide additional nutrition education connections for children.

- Learn about other protein foods in this [Nibbles for Health Newsletter](#) (for children 4-6 years old).
- Learn more about the main ingredient in refried beans, [Pinto Beans](#), with the Great Garden Detective Flash Cards (for children ages 8-10).
- Name the different types of beans in [this poster](#) (all ages).

USDA Child Nutrition program operators can request free printed copies of certain Team Nutrition materials, while supplies last, at <https://pueblo.gpo.gov/TN/TNPubs.php>.



For more information, visit the Connecticut State Department of Education's (CSDE) [School Lunch Tray and Table Talk](#) webpage, or contact the [school nutrition programs staff](#) at the Connecticut State Department of Education, School Health, Nutrition and Family Services, 450 Columbus Boulevard, Suite 504, Hartford, CT 06103-1841.

This document is available at https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/SLT/2022/SLT_12_21_2022.pdf.

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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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