



Preschool Meal Pattern Training for the School Nutrition Programs

Module 7: Grains Component

Connecticut State Department of Education
Bureau of Child Nutrition Programs
School Year 2023-24

December 2023

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1

Preschool Meal Pattern Training Modules

1. Introduction to Training
2. Introduction to Preschool Meal Patterns
3. Meal Pattern Comparison of Preschool and Grades K-12
4. Milk Component
5. Meat/Meat Alternates Component
6. Fruits Component and Vegetables Component
7. Grains Component
8. Meal Service for Preschoolers


<https://portal.ct.gov/SDE/Nutrition/Meal-Patterns-Preschoolers-in-School-Nutrition-Programs/How-To>

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2

Module Topics

- Required servings of grains
- Allowable grain foods
- Whole grain-rich (WGR) requirement
- WGR criteria
- Grain-based desserts
- Serving same grain foods to preschoolers and grades K-12
- How to determine grain ounce equivalents (oz eq)
- Resources



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3



Required Servings of Grains

Once Equivalents (oz eq)


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Required Servings of Grains

Preschool Meal Pattern	Minimum Quantity	
	Ages 1-2	Ages 3-4
Breakfast	½ oz eq	½ oz eq
Lunch	½ oz eq	½ oz eq
Snack *	½ oz eq	½ oz eq

* Not required but may be 1 of 2 snack components




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5

Required Servings of Grains

- Minimum creditable amount = ¼ oz eq
- For many grain foods, 1 ounce does not equal 1 oz eq
- Serving size on commercial product's package may or may not equal 1 oz eq



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6




Allowable Grain Foods


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7

Allowable Grain Foods

Grain foods	Breakfast cereals
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ WGR ▪ Enriched 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ WGR * ▪ Enriched * ▪ Fortified * <p style="font-size: small;">* ≤ 6 grams sugars per dry ounce</p>






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8

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Crediting Breakfast Cereals for Preschoolers in the National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program




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

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9

CSDE Resource

How to Identify Creditable Grains for Preschoolers in the National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program



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

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10



WGR Requirement

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11

WGR Requirement

- ≥ 1 WGR serving per day
- USDA's Best Practices recommend ≥ 2 WGR servings per day
- May serve WGR food at any preschool meal or snack




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12

Menu Planning Considerations for WGR Requirement

SFA serves	Requirement
Only 1 meal	Grain must be WGR
Only breakfast with MMA substitution	WGR food not required
Only snack	If offer grain, must be WGR
> 1 meal with different groups of children	Only 1 meal must contain WGR food



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13

Menu Planning Considerations for WGR Requirement


- USDA encourages SFAs to vary meals and snacks that include a WGR food



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WGR Criteria



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Whole grain-rich (WGR)

A food that contains at least 50 percent whole grains and the remaining grain ingredients are enriched, bran, or germ

- 100 percent whole grain
- Blend of whole and enriched grains (≥ 50% whole grain)

Terms to Know Applies only to preschool meal patterns




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Different WGR Criteria for Preschool and Grades K-12

- Stricter WGR criteria for grades K-12 (limit for noncreditable grains)
 - Grain foods that meet K-12 WGR criteria also meet preschool WGR criteria, except grain-based desserts
 - Grain foods that meet preschool WGR criteria may or may not meet K-12 WGR criteria




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17


Different WGR Criteria for Preschool and Grades K-12

- Same menu for both groups must meet WGR criteria for grades K-12



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18



Methods to Determine if Foods Meet Preschool WGR Criteria

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19

Methods to Determine if Foods are WGR

Methods for Preschool Meal Patterns	Commercial products	Foods made from scratch
1. Rule of Three	✓	
2. WIC Whole-Grain Foods List	✓	
3. Documentation (CN label, PFS, standardized recipe)	✓	✓
4. NSLP WGR Criteria (except grain-based desserts)	✓	✓
5. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) Whole Grain Health Claim	✓	
6. Labels for foods with FDA Standard of Identity (whole wheat, entire wheat, or graham)	✓	

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20

Methods to Determine if Foods are WGR

Methods for Preschool Meal Patterns	Commercial products	Foods made from scratch
1. Rule of Three	✓	
2. WIC Whole-Grain Foods List	✓	
3. Documentation (CN label, PFS, standardized recipe)	✓	✓
★ 4. NSLP WGR Criteria (except grain-based desserts)	✓	✓
5. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) Whole Grain Health Claim	✓	
6. Labels for foods with FDA Standard of Identity (whole wheat, entire wheat, or graham)	✓	

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21

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Meal Pattern Training for School Nutrition Programs

Module 12: Whole grain-rich (WGR) Requirement



<https://portal.ct.gov/SDE/Nutrition/Meal-Pattern-Training-Materials>

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22

Methods to Determine if Foods are WGR

Methods for Preschool Meal Patterns	Commercial products	Foods made from scratch
1. Rule of Three	✓	
2. WIC Whole-Grain Foods List	✓	
3. Documentation (CN label, PFS, standardized recipe)	✓	✓
4. NSLP WGR Criteria (except grain-based desserts)	✓	✓
5. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) Whole Grain Health Claim	✓	
6. Labels for foods with FDA Standard of Identity (whole wheat, entire wheat, or graham)	✓	


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23

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Meal Pattern Training for School Nutrition Programs

Module 6: Meal Pattern Documentation



<https://portal.ct.gov/SDE/Nutrition/Meal-Pattern-Training-Materials>

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24

Methods to Determine if Foods are WGR

Methods for Preschool Meal Patterns	Commercial products	Foods made from scratch
1. Rule of Three	✓	
2. WIC Whole-Grain Foods List	✓	
3. Documentation (CN label, PFS, standardized recipe)	✓	✓
4. NSLP WGR Criteria (except grain-based desserts)	✓	✓
5. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) Whole Grain Health Claim	✓	
6. Labels for foods with FDA Standard of Identity (whole wheat, entire wheat, or graham)	✓	

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25

Rule of Three

- Review first 3 grain ingredients
 - First ingredient (excluding water) is a whole grain
 - Next two grain ingredients (if any) are creditable grains



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Rule of Three Applies To

- Commercial grain products
- Commercial combination foods with a grain portion
- Cooked breakfast cereals




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Rule of Three Does Not Apply To

- Ready-to-eat (RTE) breakfast cereals
- Meal patterns for grades K-12

Applies only to preschool meal patterns



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28

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Guide to Meeting the Whole Grain-rich Requirement for the CACFP



https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/CACFP/Crediting/WGR_Requirement_CACFP.pdf

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29

Grain-based Desserts



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30

Grain-based Desserts Do Not Credit

- Commercial products
- Foods made from scratch

Includes WGR foods

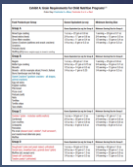



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31

Methods to Identify Grain-based Desserts

- USDA's Exhibit A Chart
- Common perceptions of food

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32

Common Perceptions of Food


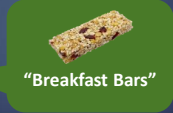

- Is it thought of or served as a dessert?
- Is it frosted, iced, or dessert-flavored?
- Does it contain custard filling or candy?
- Is it in the shape of a cookie or packaged like a dessert?



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Cannot Rely on Product's Name

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Examples of Grain-based Desserts (Not Creditable)

- Brownies
- Cakes, coffee cake, cupcakes, gingerbread, cinnamon streusel quick breads
- Cereal bars, breakfast bars, and granola bars
- Cookies and bars, e.g., chocolate chip, vanilla wafers, fig bars, marshmallow cereal treats, and sweet biscotti
- Doughnuts and pastries
- Pie crusts of dessert pies, fruit cobblers, and fruit turnovers
- Sweet scones, sweet croissants, and sweet bread puddings, and sweet rice puddings
- Sweet pita chips, e.g., cinnamon-sugar

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Animal Crackers and Graham Crackers

- Not grain-based desserts
- Limit to no more than 2 times per week



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36

USDA Resource

Grain-Based Desserts in the CACFP

Handouts and webinars in English and Spanish



<https://www.fns.usda.gov/tn/grain-based-desserts-cacfp>

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37

Knowledge Check: Grain-based Desserts




https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/Training/Preschool/Preschool_Meal_Pattern_Worksheet_Module_7_Grain_Based_Desserts.pdf

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38

Animal Crackers




Grain-based dessert?
 Yes No

Recommend limit for sweet crackers: ≤ 2 times per week

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39

Brownies made with Pureed Black Beans



Grain-based dessert?
 Yes No

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Coffee Cake




Grain-based dessert?
 Yes No

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41

Cereal Bars and Granola Bars




Grain-based dessert?
 Yes No

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42

Cookies



Grain-based dessert?
 Yes No

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43

Doughnuts




Grain-based dessert?
 Yes No

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44

Fruit Cobbler

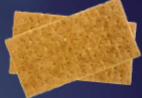


Grain-based dessert?
 Yes No

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Graham Crackers




Grain-based dessert?
 Yes No

Recommend limit for sweet crackers: ≤ 2 times per week

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Muffins (Blueberry, Cinnamon, Corn)




Grain-based dessert?
 Yes No

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47

Cinnamon Buns



Grain-based dessert?
 Yes No

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Sweet Rice Pudding

Grain-based dessert?

Yes No



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49

Cinnamon Sugar Pita Chips

Grain-based dessert?

Yes No



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50

Vanilla Wafers

Grain-based dessert?

Yes No



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51

Noncreditable Grain Foods



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52

Examples of Noncreditable Grains


- Grain-based desserts
- Commercial grain products that are not WGR or enriched
- Standardized recipes that are not WGR or enriched
- Breakfast cereals that are not WGR, enriched, or fortified
- Breakfast cereals that contain > 6 grams of sugars per ounce

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53

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Noncreditable Foods for Preschoolers in the National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program



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

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54




Serving Same Grain Foods to Preschoolers and Grades K-12

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Serving Same Grain Foods to Preschoolers and Grades K-12

- Must meet stricter requirements of each meal pattern




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56

Serving Same Grain Foods to Preschoolers and Grades K-12


Exception: Co-mingled meals

Meal pattern requirement	WGR	Enriched
K-12 crediting criteria, including noncreditable grains limit <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Groups A-E: ≤ 3.99 grams Groups H-I: ≤ 6.99 grams 	✓	✓
Preschool sugar limit for breakfast cereals (≤ 6 grams per ounce)	✓	✓



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57



How to Determine Grain Oz Eq

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58



Grain Oz Eq

Amount of a grain product that is equal to or contains 1 ounce of the grains component

- 1 oz eq = 16 grams of creditable grains
- 1 oz eq WGR = 16 grams of creditable grains including ≥ 8 grams of whole grains


Terms to Know

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59

Methods to Determine Grain Oz Eq

- Same for preschool and grades K-12
 - Weight or volume (USDA's Exhibit A: Grain Requirements for Child Nutrition Programs)
 - Creditable grains (grams per serving)



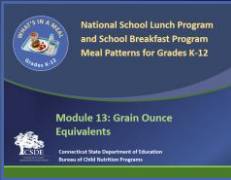
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60

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Meal Pattern Training for School Nutrition Programs

What's in a Meal Module 13: Grain Ounce Equivalents




<https://portal.ct.gov/SDE/Nutrition/Meal-Pattern-Training-Materials>

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61

Summary of Methods to Determine Grain Oz Eq


Method 1: Weight or volume (Exhibit A)	Considerations
<p>Compare product's serving weight or volume to Exhibit A weight or volume</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Groups A-E: baked goods Group H: cereal grains Group I: ready-to-eat (RTE) breakfast cereals 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Common for most commercial products Must know serving weight for baked goods made from scratch

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62

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How to Use the Grain Ounce Equivalents Chart for the National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program



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

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63

USDA Resource

Exhibit A Grains Tool of the Food Buying Guide for Child Nutrition Programs



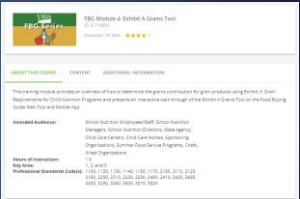
<https://foodbuyingguide.fns.usda.gov/>

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64

Institute of Child Nutrition (ICN) Resource

Food Buying Guide Module 4: Exhibit A Grains Tool




<https://theicn.doebosaa.com/learn/course/internal/view/elearning/317/fbg-module-4-exhibit-a-grains-tools>

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65

Summary of Methods to Determine Grain Oz Eq

Method 2: Creditable Grains	Considerations
<p>Determine grams of creditable grains per serving</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Requires PFS for commercial products Requires standardized recipe for foods made from scratch

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66

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When Commercial Grain Products Require a Product Formulation Statement to Credit in the School Nutrition Programs



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

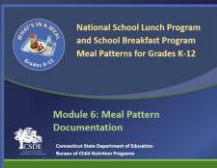
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67

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Meal Pattern Training for School Nutrition Programs

Module 6: Meal Pattern Documentation




<https://portal.ct.gov/SDE/Nutrition/Meal-Pattern-Training-Materials>

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68

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Calculation Methods for Grain Ounce Equivalents for Preschoolers in the National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program



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

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69

Resources for Grains Component

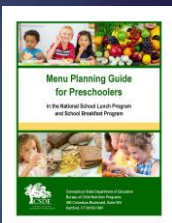


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70

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Menu Planning Guide for Preschoolers in the National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program



https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/NSLP/Preschool/Menu_Planning_Guide_Preschool.pdf


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71

USDA Resource

Food Buying Guide for Child Nutrition Programs

Recipe Analysis Workbook



<https://www.fns.usda.gov/tn/food-buying-guide-interactive-web-based-tool>

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72

CSDE Webpage

Meal Patterns for Preschoolers in School Nutrition Programs

<https://portal.ct.gov/SDE/Nutrition/Meal-Patterns-Preschoolers-in-School-Nutrition-Programs/Related-Resources>
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73

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Crediting Summary Charts for the Preschool Meal Patterns of the School Nutrition Programs

https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/NSLP/Crediting/Crediting_Summary_Charts_SNP_Preschool.pdf
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74

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Resources for the Preschool Meal Patterns

https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/NSLP/Preschool/Resources_Preschool_Meal_Patterns.pdf
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75

Questions?

Contact the school nutrition programs staff

<https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/CNstaff/countyassign.pdf>
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76

Thank you for participating!

<https://portal.ct.gov/SDE/Nutrition/Meal-Patterns-Preschoolers-in-School-Nutrition-Programs>
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78

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