


WHAT'S IN A MEAL  
Grades K-12

National School Lunch Program  
and School Breakfast Program  
Meal Patterns for Grades K-12

School Year 2023-24

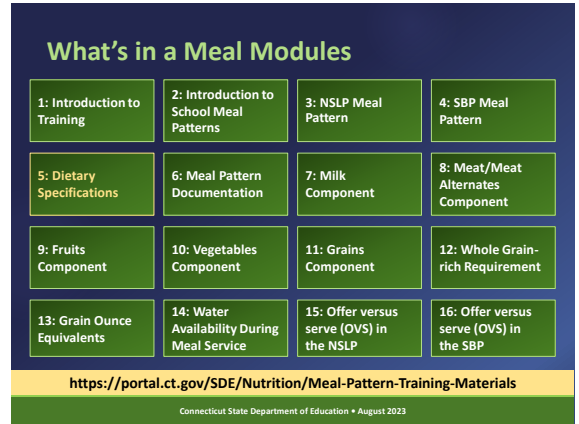
**Module 5: Dietary Specifications**



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Bureau of Child Nutrition Programs

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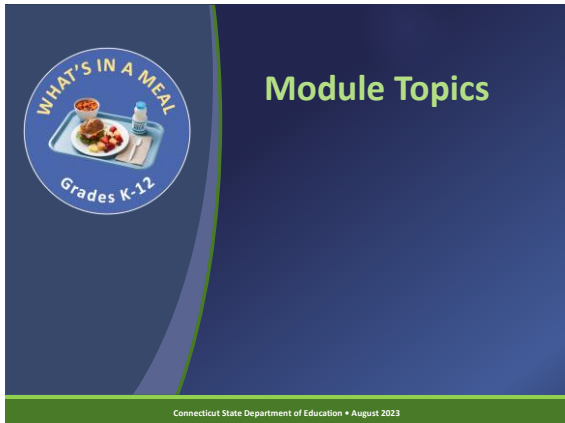
**What's in a Meal Modules**

1: Introduction to Training	2: Introduction to School Meal Patterns	3: NSLP Meal Pattern	4: SBP Meal Pattern
5: Dietary Specifications	6: Meal Pattern Documentation	7: Milk Component	8: Meat/Meat Alternates Component
9: Fruits Component	10: Vegetables Component	11: Grains Component	12: Whole Grain-rich Requirement
13: Grain Ounce Equivalents	14: Water Availability During Meal Service	15: Offer versus serve (OVS) in the NSLP	16: Offer versus serve (OVS) in the SBP

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

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WHAT'S IN A MEAL  
Grades K-12

**Module Topics**

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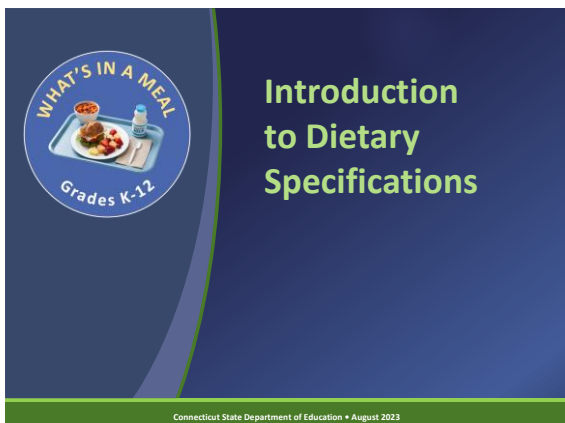


**Module 5 Topics**

- Overview of dietary specifications for lunch
- Overview of dietary specifications for breakfast
- Calories
- Saturated Fat
- Sodium
- Trans fat
- Resources

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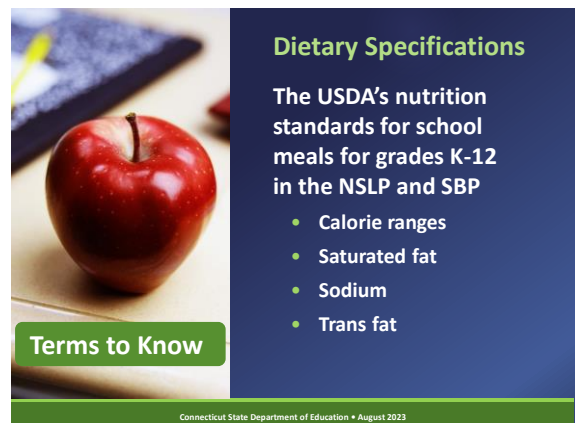


WHAT'S IN A MEAL  
Grades K-12

**Introduction to Dietary Specifications**

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**Dietary Specifications**

The USDA's nutrition standards for school meals for grades K-12 in the NSLP and SBP

- Calorie ranges
- Saturated fat
- Sodium
- Trans fat

**Terms to Know**


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### Dietary Specifications Based On


#### Dietary Reference Intakes (DRIs)

- Institute of Medicine (IOM)



#### Dietary Guidelines for Americans

- U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS)
- USDA




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### Dietary Specifications

#### Apply to

NSLP or SBP meal patterns for grades K-12



#### Do not apply to

- NSLP or SBP meal patterns for preschoolers
- Afterschool Snack Program (ASP)

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### Part of NSLP and SBP Meal Patterns

Dietary Specifications (Nutrition Standards) (They cannot be used as the average for a five-day week)			
	550-650	600-700	750-850
Calories <sup>14,15</sup>	550-650	600-700	750-850
Saturated fat (percentage of total calories) <sup>17</sup>	< 10	< 10	< 10
Sodium (milligrams) <sup>14,15</sup>	≤ 1,230	≤ 1,360	≤ 1,420
Trans fat (grams) <sup>17</sup>	Nutrition label or manufacturer specifications must indicate zero grams of trans fat per serving.		

National School Lunch Program (NSLP) Priority 1-12 Meal Patterns by Grades K-12 and 13				
Nutrient/Component	Percentage availability of the average daily intake			
	Grades K-5	Grades 6-8	Grades 9-12	Grades 13
Meat/Meat Alternative	100%	100%	100%	100%
Vegetables	100%	100%	100%	100%
Fruit	100%	100%	100%	100%
Bread/Cereal	100%	100%	100%	100%
Milk	100%	100%	100%	100%
Other	100%	100%	100%	100%

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### Transitional Standards Apply to Two School Years

**2022-23**


July 1, 2022, through June 30, 2023

**2023-24**

July 1, 2023, through June 30, 2024

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## Overview of Dietary Specifications for Lunch

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### Dietary Specifications for Lunch

Nutrients	Standard Grade Groups			Optional Grade Group
	K-5	6-8	9-12	K-8
Calories	550-650	600-700	750-850	600-650
Saturated fat	< 10%	< 10%	< 10%	< 10%
Sodium (milligrams)				
• Target 1: 2022-23	≤ 1,230	≤ 1,360	≤ 1,420	≤ 1,230
• Target 1A: 2023-24	≤ 1,110	≤ 1,225	≤ 1,280	≤ 1,110
Trans Fat	Nutrition label or manufacturer specifications must indicate zero grams of trans fat per serving			

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## Overview of Dietary Specifications for Breakfast

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## Dietary Specifications for Breakfast

Nutrients	Standard Grade Groups			Optional Grade Groups		
	K-5	6-8	9-12	K-8	K-12	6-12
Calories	350-500	400-550	450-600	400-500	450-500	450-550
Saturated fat	< 10%	< 10%	< 10%	< 10%	< 10%	< 10%
Sodium (milligrams)	≤ 540	≤ 600	≤ 640	≤ 540	≤ 540	≤ 600
Trans Fat	Nutrition label or manufacturer specifications must indicate zero grams of trans fat per serving					

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## Calories

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## Minimum and Maximum Calories

Grades	Breakfast	Lunch
K-5	350-500	550-650
6-8	400-550	600-700
9-12	450-600	750-850
K-8 option	400-500	600-650
K-12 option <sup>1</sup>	450-500	NA
6-12 option <sup>1</sup>	450-550	NA

<sup>1</sup> Applies to breakfast only

Smaller calorie range for optional grade groups

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## Minimum and Maximum Calories

Grades	Breakfast	Lunch
K-5	350-500	550-650
6-8	400-550	600-700
9-12	450-600	750-850
K-8 option	400-500	600-650
K-12 option <sup>1</sup>	450-500	NA
6-12 option <sup>1</sup>	450-550	NA

<sup>1</sup> Applies to breakfast only

Smaller calorie range for optional grade groups

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## Minimum and Maximum Calories

Grades	Breakfast	Lunch
K-5	350-500	550-650
6-8	400-550	600-700
9-12	450-600	750-850
K-8 option	400-500	600-650
K-12 option <sup>1</sup>	450-500	NA
6-12 option <sup>1</sup>	450-550	NA

<sup>1</sup> Applies to breakfast only

Smaller calorie range for optional grade groups

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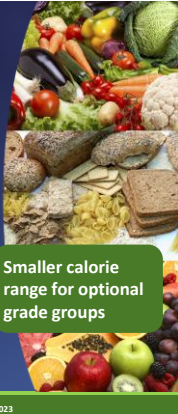
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### Minimum and Maximum Calories

Grades	Breakfast	Lunch
K-5	350-500	550-650
6-8	400-550	600-700
9-12	450-600	750-850
K-8 option	400-500	600-650
K-12 option <sup>1</sup>	450-500	NA
6-12 option <sup>1</sup>	450-550	NA

<sup>1</sup> Applies to breakfast only

Smaller calorie range for optional grade groups



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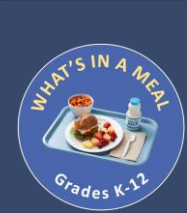
### Minimum and Maximum Calories

- Serve nutrient-dense menus
  - More fruits, vegetables, and whole grains
- Avoid foods high in fats and added sugars



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### Saturated Fat

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### Limit for Saturated Fat

- Same for all grade groups and meals
- < 10% of calories



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### Sources of Saturated Fat

- Animal foods (except fish)
- Tropical oils




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### Reducing Saturated Fat

- Careful purchasing
  - Compare nutrition labels
  - Write specifications
  - Limit frequency




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### Reducing Saturated Fat


- More strategies in CSDE's Menu Planning Guide for School Meals for Grades K-12
  - Section 6: Dietary Specifications




[https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/MPG/MPG6\\_Dietary\\_Specifications.pdf](https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/MPG/MPG6_Dietary_Specifications.pdf)

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## Sodium

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### Limit for Sodium

- Final Rule 87 FR 6984 (February 2022)

#### Transitional Standards for Milk, Whole Grains and Sodium



<https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2022/02/07/2022-02327/child-nutrition-programs-transitional-standards-for-milk-whole-grains-and-sodium>

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### Weekly Sodium Limit (milligrams)

Grades	Lunch		Breakfast
	Target 1: School year 2022-23	Target 1A: School year 2023-24	School years 2022-23 and 2023-24
K-5	≤ 1,230	≤ 1,110	≤ 540
6-8	≤ 1,360	≤ 1,225	≤ 600
9-12	≤ 1,420	≤ 1,280	≤ 640
K-8 option	≤ 1,230	≤ 1,110	≤ 540
K-12 option <sup>1</sup>	NA	NA	≤ 540
6-12 option <sup>1</sup>	NA	NA	≤ 600

<sup>1</sup> Applies to breakfast only

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### Weekly Sodium Limit (milligrams)

Grades	Lunch		Breakfast
	Target 1: School year 2022-23	Target 1A: School year 2023-24	School years 2022-23 and 2023-24
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9-12	≤ 1,420	≤ 1,280	≤ 640
K-8 option	≤ 1,230	≤ 1,110	≤ 540
K-12 option <sup>1</sup>	NA	NA	≤ 540
6-12 option <sup>1</sup>	NA	NA	≤ 600

<sup>1</sup> Applies to breakfast only

Stricter limits for optional grade groups

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### Weekly Sodium Limit (milligrams)

Grades	Lunch		Breakfast
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K-8 option	≤ 1,230	≤ 1,110	≤ 540
K-12 option <sup>1</sup>	NA	NA	≤ 540
6-12 option <sup>1</sup>	NA	NA	≤ 600

<sup>1</sup> Applies to breakfast only

Stricter limits for optional grade groups

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### Weekly Sodium Limit (milligrams)

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K-8 option	≤ 1,230	≤ 1,110	≤ 540
K-12 option <sup>1</sup>	NA	NA	≤ 540
6-12 option <sup>1</sup>	NA	NA	≤ 600

<sup>1</sup> Applies to breakfast only

Stricter limits for optional grade groups

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### CSDE Resource

#### Transitional Sodium Limits for the National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program

[https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/NSLP/MealPattern/Transitional\\_Sodium\\_Limits\\_NSLP\\_SBP.pdf](https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/NSLP/MealPattern/Transitional_Sodium_Limits_NSLP_SBP.pdf)

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### Reducing Sodium in School Meals

- CSDE's Menu Planning Guide for School Meals for Grades K-12
  - Section 6: Dietary Specifications

[https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/MPG/MPG6\\_Dietary\\_Specifications.pdf](https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/MPG/MPG6_Dietary_Specifications.pdf)

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### Trans Fat

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### Limit for Trans Fat

- Applies to all foods in school meals

Nutrition label or manufacturer specifications must indicate zero grams of trans fat per serving

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### Limit for Trans Fat

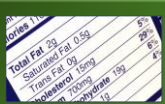
- Applies only to artificial trans fat
- Excludes naturally occurring trans fat, e.g., beef, lamb, dairy products

Nutrition label or manufacturer specifications must indicate zero grams of trans fat per serving

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### Limit for Trans Fat




- Trans fat has negative health effects

Nutrition label or manufacturer specifications must indicate **zero grams** of trans fat per serving

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### Limit for Trans Fat




- Standard might be removed
- Proposed Rule 85 FR 4094 (January 2020): Simplifying Meal Service and Monitoring Requirements in the National School Lunch and School Breakfast Programs

<https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2020/01/23/2020-00926/simplifying-meal-service-and-monitoring-requirements-in-the-national-school-lunch-and-school-breakfast-programs>

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### Limit for Trans Fat




- SFAs must continue to meet trans fat standard

Nutrition label or manufacturer specifications must indicate **zero grams** of trans fat per serving

<https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2020/01/23/2020-00926/simplifying-meal-service-and-monitoring-requirements-in-the-national-school-lunch-and-school-breakfast-programs>

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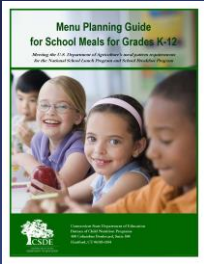
## Resources for Dietary Specifications

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### CSDE Resource

## Menu Planning Guide for School Meals for Grades K-12



- Section 6: Dietary Specifications

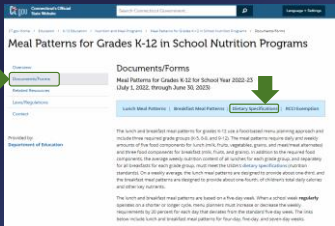
<https://portal.ct.gov/SDE/Nutrition/Menu-Planning-Guide-for-School-Meals>

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### CSDE Webpage

## Meal Patterns for Grades K-12 in School Nutrition Programs




<https://portal.ct.gov/SDE/Nutrition/Meal-Patterns-School-Nutrition-Programs/Documents#DietarySpecifications>

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**CSDE Resource**

**Resources for the School Meal Patterns for Grades K-12**




[https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/NSLP/MealPattern/Resources\\_School\\_Meal\\_Patterns\\_grades\\_K-12.pdf](https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/NSLP/MealPattern/Resources_School_Meal_Patterns_grades_K-12.pdf)

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**Questions?**

**Contact the school nutrition programs staff**



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

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**Thank you for participating in module 5!**



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

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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](mailto:program.intake@usda.gov)

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