



## SECTION 12: Resources

There are many resources available to assist emergency shelters participating in the CACFP. Some of these resources are on the following pages.

- Emergency Shelter Resources
- Online Child Care Resources
- Reducing the Risk of Choking in Young Children at Mealtimes
- Offering Water in the USDA CACFP
- Tips for Family Style Dining
- Meal Pattern Requirement Worksheets – Fluid Milk, Meat/Meat Alternates, Vegetables, Adding Whole Grains, Crediting Single-Serving Packages of Grains, Crediting Store-Bought Combination Baby Food



# Emergency Shelter Resources

The USDA website has a “CACFP in Emergency Shelters” page with links to related policy memos at <https://www.fns.usda.gov/cacfp/emergency-shelters>.

Some of these policy memos are linked below:

[\*\*SP 05 CACFP 05-2018 Providing Child Nutrition Program Benefits to Disaster Survivor\*\*](#) (January 18, 2018)

[\*\*SP 46-2014, CACFP 12-2014, SFSP 18-2014 Disaster Response\*\*](#) (May 19, 2014)

[\*\*CACFP 11-2007, Accommodations for Non-Traditional Program Operators\*\*](#) (July 3, 2007)

[\*\*Participation of Emergency Shelters in the Child and Adult Care Food Program \(CACFP\)— Questions and Answers\*\*](#) (March 14, 2000)

[\*\*CACFP#5-99 Homeless Shelters Receiving Commodities in the Child and Adult Care Food Program \(CACFP\)\*\*](#) (August 18, 1999)

[\*\*CACFP#5-99 Participation of Emergency Shelters Serving Homeless Children\*\*](#) (March 30, 1999)

# Online Child Care Resources

The internet has a vast amount of information that can assist shelters with their food service operations and the education of staff and participants. Below are some resource recommendations. You can find all the links on our webpage at

<http://health.mo.gov/cacfp>

[A Flash of Food Safety](#)

[Childhood Obesity Prevention Toolkit for Rural Communities](#)

[Choose My Plate](#)

[DHSS Food Safety](#)

[Eatright.org](#)

[Farm to Child Care](#)

[Food Product Thermometer Calibration](#)

[Food Safety](#)

[Institute of Child Nutrition](#)

[ICN Child Care Center Food Allergy Fact Sheets](#)

[Food Safety Resources](#)

[Nutrition for Kids](#)

[Recipes for Healthy Kids](#)

[Serving Traditional Indigenous Foods](#)

[Team Nutrition](#)

[CACFP Meal Pattern Training Worksheets \(English and Spanish\)](#)

[Crediting Tip Sheets in Child Nutrition Programs](#)

[Mealtimes with Toddlers in the Child and Adult Care Food Program](#)

[Spanish Materials Available for Team Nutrition](#)

[Training Resources on Using Ounce Equivalents for Grains](#)

[Team Nutrition Quizzes](#)

[Feeding Infants in the Child and Adult Care Food Program \(English and Spanish\)](#)

[USDA Child and Adult Care Food Program](#)

[USDA Civil Rights](#)

[USDA Food Buying Guide for Child Nutrition Programs](#)

[USDA Procuring Local Foods for Child Nutrition Programs Guide](#)

[USDA Standardized Recipes](#)

[WIC Approved Food List](#)

# Reducing the Risk of Choking in Young Children at Mealtimes

Children **under the age of 4** are at a high risk of choking while eating. Young children are still learning how to chew food properly, and they often swallow the food whole. Their small airways can become easily blocked.

You can help reduce children’s risk of choking when eating by preparing food in certain ways, such as cutting food into small pieces and cooking hard food, like carrots, until it is soft enough to pierce with a fork. **Remember, always supervise children during meals and snacks.**



## Prepare Foods So They Are Easy to Chew

You can make eating safer for young children by following the tips below:

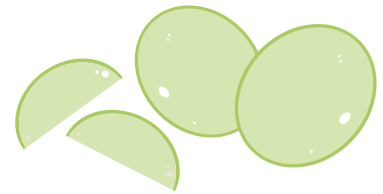
- Cook or steam hard food, like carrots, until it is soft enough to pierce with a fork.
- Remove seeds, pits, and tough skins/peels from fruits and vegetables.
- Finely chop foods into thin slices, strips, or small pieces (no larger than ½ inch), or grate, mash, or puree foods. This is especially important when serving raw fruits and vegetables, as those items may be harder to chew.
- Remove all bones from fish, chicken, and meat before cooking or serving.
- Grind up tough meats and poultry.

## Cut Round Foods Into Smaller Pieces

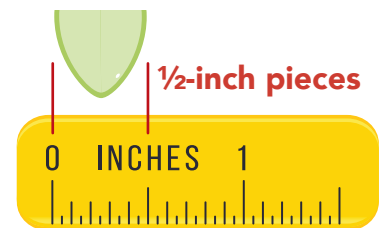
Small round foods such as grapes, cherries, cherry tomatoes, and melon balls are common causes of choking.



Slice these items in half lengthwise.



Then slice into smaller pieces (**no larger than ½ inch**) when serving them to young children.



## Avoid Choking Hazards

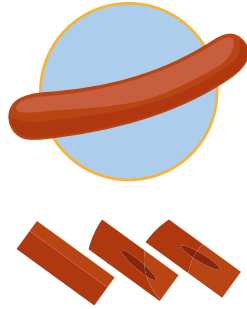
To help prevent choking, do not serve small (marble-sized), sticky, or hard foods that are difficult to chew and easy to swallow whole, including:

- Cheese cubes or blocks. Grate or thinly slice cheese before serving.
- Chewing gum\*
- Dried fruit
- Gummy fruit snacks\*
- Hard candy, including caramels, cough drops, jelly beans, lollipops, etc.\*
- Hard pretzels and pretzel chips
- Ice cubes\*
- Marshmallows\*
- Nuts and seeds, including breads, crackers, and cereals that contain nuts and seeds
- Popcorn
- Spoonfuls of peanut butter or other nut butters. Spread nut butters thinly on other foods (e.g., toast, crackers, etc.). Serve only creamy, not chunky, nut butters.
- Whole round or tube-shaped foods such as grapes, cherry tomatoes, cherries, raw carrots, sausages, and hot dogs

\*Not creditable in the Child Nutrition Programs, including the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP), National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program, and Summer Food Service Program.

## Cut Tube-shaped Foods Into Smaller Pieces

Cut tube-shaped foods, such as baby carrots, string cheese, hot dogs, etc., into short strips rather than round pieces.



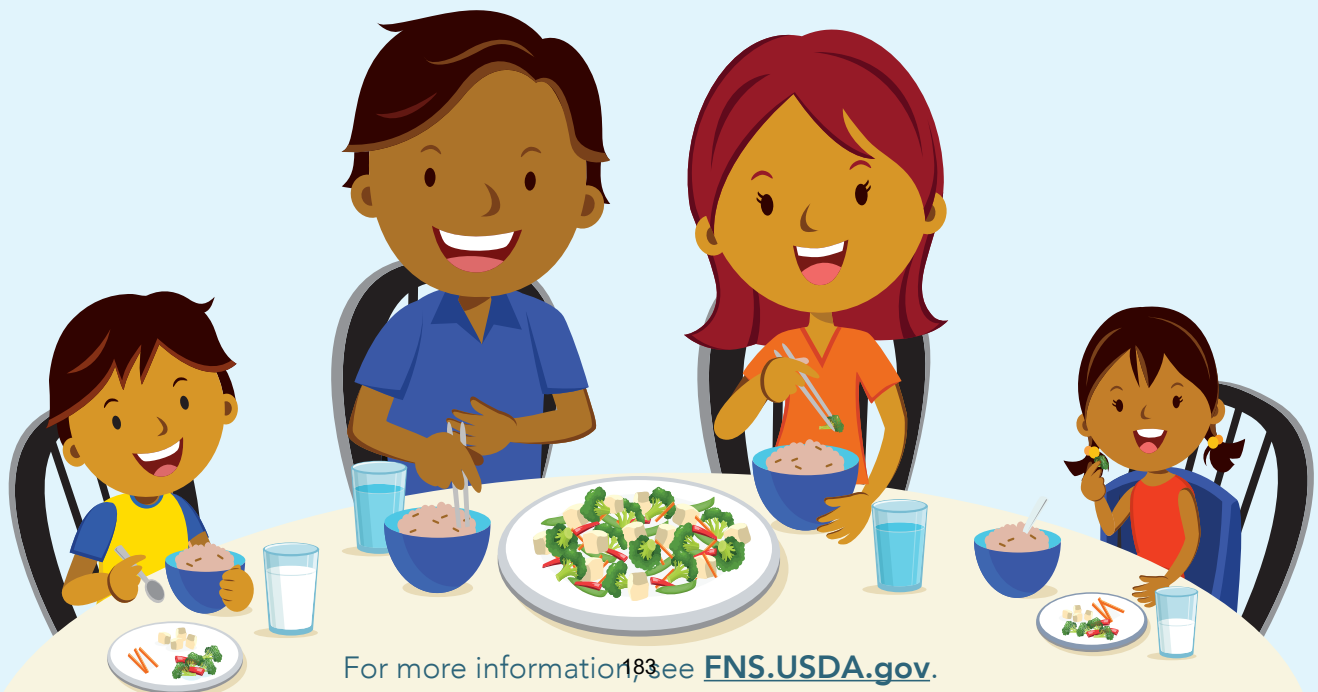
In addition to the foods listed, **avoid serving foods that are as wide around as a nickel**, which is about the size of a young child's throat.



## Teach Good Eating Habits

Sit and eat with children at meals and snacks. Remind children to take small bites of food and swallow between bites. Eating together may help you quickly spot a child who might be choking. Other tips to help prevent choking while eating include:

- Only providing foods as part of meals and snacks served at a dining table or high chair. When serving infants, do not prop the bottle up on a pillow or other item for the baby to feed him or herself.
- Allowing plenty of time for meals and snacks.
- Making sure children are sitting upright while eating.
- Reminding children to swallow their food before talking or laughing.
- Modeling safe behavior for children to follow, including eating slowly, taking small bites, and chewing food completely before swallowing.
- Encouraging older children to serve as role models for younger children as well. All children should avoid playing games with food, as that may lead to an increased risk of choking.



# Try It Out!

How can you prepare and serve the following foods to reduce the risk of choking?

**1** Whole baby carrots

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**2** Whole grapes

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**3** Peanut butter

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**4** Block of cheddar cheese

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1. Cut carrots lengthwise into thin strips (not circles). You could also cook carrots until soft, or cut into small pieces no larger than ½ inch.
2. Cut grapes in half lengthwise, then cut into smaller pieces no larger than ½ inch.
3. Spread peanut butter thinly on small pieces of toast, crackers, etc. Do not serve spoonfuls of peanut butter.
4. Grate or thinly slice the cheese. Do not serve cheese cubes.

## Answer Key



# Offering Water in the USDA Child and Adult Care Food Program

In the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP), centers and homes are required to offer water to children throughout the day. As a best practice, sites are encouraged to make water available to adult participants as well. Water is not a meal component in the CACFP. There is no minimum serving amount for water. However, water may be served:

- Together with meals and snacks
- In between meals and snack
- As requested by the adult or child.



## Water and Health

Drinking enough water is important for good health. Drinking water can prevent dehydration, a condition that can cause the body to overheat. It can also help prevent constipation. If fluoridated, drinking water can help prevent dental caries (cavities).

There is no recommendation from the *Dietary Guidelines for Americans* on the amount of plain water children and adults need each day. Children and adults can meet their needs for water through foods and drinks. People may need to drink more water during hot or cold weather and when exercising.



## A Note About Infants

Infants usually do not need to drink plain water until they are at least 6 months old. Once an infant has started eating solid foods, small amounts of plain, fluoridated water may be offered to the infant in a cup. Consult with the parents or guardians of older infants regarding whether small amounts of water should be offered.



## Meal Planning and Water

In the CACFP, milk is an important meal component. Milk provides important nutrition for both children and adults.

- ✓ Under the CACFP meal pattern for children, you may not serve water instead of milk at meals. However, water may be served at the table along with the milk.
- ✓ Under the CACFP meal patterns for children and adults, only two meal components are required at snack. If milk is not offered as one of the two required components, consider offering water with the snack.
- ✓ Under the CACFP meal pattern for adults, you may serve yogurt in place of milk once per day. In addition, a serving of milk is optional at supper. It is not required that you offer water on these occasions, but you are encouraged to do so.

## Making Water Available

You can make water available throughout the day by:

- Placing closed pitchers of water and cups where program participants can reach them. Use pitchers that are small enough for children to lift and pour.
- Putting cups beside a sink, water fountain, or other source of drinking water. Or, pour and offer cups of water to children throughout the day.
- If drinking fountains are too tall for children, use a sturdy stool to allow children to reach them.
- Making class trips to the water fountain after active play.



*Note: When self-serve water stations are not recommended, such as during a public health emergency or pandemic, try offering cups of water to children regularly throughout the day. Always follow local health department safety guidelines.*



## Getting Children Involved

When children help serve water, they can learn about the importance of drinking it. Ask children to wash their hands and then let them:

- Carry cups to tables.
- Pour water into cups (with the help of an adult, for younger children).
- Decorate their own water cups or water bottles.



*Note: Some of these activities may not be recommended during a public health emergency or pandemic. Always follow local health department safety guidelines.*

Also, consider sharing the Nibbles for Health Newsletter on “Water: It’s a Great Choice” with parents of young children ([fns.usda.gov/tn/nibbles](https://fns.usda.gov/tn/nibbles)). It contains an activity families can do together.

See Team Nutrition’s “Summer Foods, Summer Moves” materials for more resources on water ([fns.usda.gov/tn/summer-food-summer-moves](https://fns.usda.gov/tn/summer-food-summer-moves)).



Drink water and kids will too.



## Offer Water Safely

Keep children healthy and safe by:

- Regularly sanitizing water fountains and keeping drinking areas clean.
- Teaching children not to place their mouths on water fountain spouts. Have kids wash their hands after touching the water fountain.
- Cleaning and sanitizing water pitchers, dispensers, and reusable drinking cups after use.
- Keeping clean towels nearby when serving or pouring water.
- Placing rubber mats under spaces where water is offered.



*Note: If safe drinking water is not available at your center or child care home, bottled water may be purchased with CACFP funds. Check with your State agency or sponsoring organization for more information.*



## Try It Out!

When will you offer water? Fill in the blanks below.

**I will offer water to program participants (children or adults):**

1 (Example) When it is hot outside

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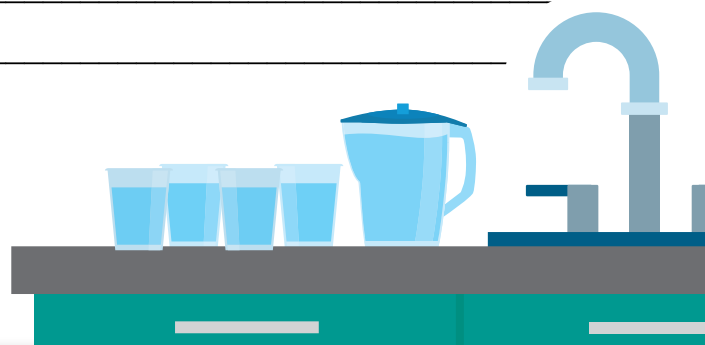
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### Answers:

- Answers will vary, but responses may include:
2. After milk at breakfast, lunch, or supper
  3. After outdoor playtime

4. With snacks when milk is not served
5. Throughout the day



## Tips for Family Style Dining

### START WITH THE RIGHT EQUIPMENT

When purchasing serving dishes, utensils and other place settings, keep in mind that they need to be kid-friendly and sized for little hands to maneuver.



### REMEMBER EACH CHILD'S SKILL LEVEL

when choosing your menu. Finger foods and foods that are easy to navigate with a child-size fork or spoon are easiest to self-serve for younger children.

**HAVE MULTIPLE SETS OF UTENSILS** and serving spoons in case someone drops one on the floor.

**GIVE EACH CHILD A TASK** to help set the table. One child can set the plates, one can place the cups and so on. Children have a sense of pride and belonging when they have a contributing role.

**OFFER A VARIETY OF FAMILIAR FOODS** and don't forget to introduce new foods. Children are more willing to try something new when they serve themselves.



**RESERVE EXTRA SERVINGS** for second helpings or in case the bowl of food gets contaminated.

**PROVIDE A TRASH CAN** for children in which to dispose napkins and uneaten food. Provide a tub for them to place dirty dishes after they scrape them off.

### KEEP CLEANING SUPPLIES NEARBY

Spills will happen. Be patient and use this opportunity as a teaching moment on how to clean-up.



Most importantly, **EAT WITH YOUR CHILDREN**. Children learn from good role models. Sitting with them while everyone eats also allows you to start positive mealtime conversations.

## Why You Should Serve Family Style

Family style dining encourages learning and development not only at the table but away from mealtime as well. Children learn independence, social skills, and other important habits that will last them through adulthood.

There are many benefits to serving your meals family style and it is not hard to implement. It may be as easy as putting the minimum serving of food required in serving dishes, placing it on the table and allowing children to serve themselves.

There is a learning curve to this method. However, this approach to mealtime creates a number of healthy habits that are important to the growth and development of children at any age. Children tend to eat more healthy foods if they see their friends try it. They learn skills such as taking turns, sharing and teamwork.

Family style dining opens up opportunities for conversation,

which increases vocabulary, promotes proper use of language and interaction with friends.

There are even more benefits that support healthy growth. Children learn:

- portion sizes for each food group,
- to recognize when they are hungry or satisfied,
- how to identify healthy foods and where they come from, and
- to improve fine motor skills.

Children are not the only ones who benefit. Providers get a better grasp of food costs, get help with mealtime service and, with less food being wasted, they save money.

*There's nothing more exciting for children than being able to say, "I did it all by myself!"*

*- Jennifer from Mechanicsville, VA*

# Child and Adult Care Food Program Milk Requirements



**Newborn through  
11 Months**

Breastmilk or Iron-Fortified  
Infant Formula



**12 Months through  
23 Months**

Unflavored  
Whole Milk



**2 Years through  
5 Years**

Unflavored Fat-Free or  
Low-Fat (1%) Milk



**6 Years  
and Older**

Unflavored or  
Flavored Fat-Free or  
Low-Fat (1%) Milk

**Breastmilk is creditable at any age**

## Transitions



To help program operators gradually introduce different types of milk to children:

- Breastmilk, iron-fortified infant formula, and/or unflavored whole milk may be served to children ages **12 months to 13 months**.
- Breastmilk, unflavored whole, reduced-fat (2%), low-fat (1%), and/or fat-free (skim) milk may be served to children ages **24 months to 25 months**.

Learn more at <https://www.fns.usda.gov/cacfp-training-tools>.



# Serving Meats and Meat Alternates at Breakfast

Breakfasts in the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) include milk, vegetables and/or fruits, and grains. You can also serve meats and/or meat alternates instead of grains at breakfast up to 3 times per week. This option gives you more choices for menu planning.

Here’s how to include meats or meat alternates as part of a reimbursable breakfast:

- Substitute 1 **ounce equivalent** of meats/meat alternates for 1 ounce equivalent of grains.

**Ounce equivalents** are a way to measure amounts of food. In the CACFP, 1 ounce equivalent of a meat or meat alternate is equal to 2 tablespoons of peanut butter, ½ of a large egg, or 1 ounce of lean meat, poultry, or fish. If you want to serve meats/meat alternates at breakfast more than 3 days a week, you must offer them as additional foods, which do not count toward a reimbursable breakfast.



## A Closer Look at Menu Planning

If you plan to offer a meat or meat alternate at breakfast in place of grains, it must replace the entire required amount of grains. The table below shows the minimum amount of a meat or meat alternate you would need to serve in place of grains at breakfast.

	Ages 1 - 2 years and 3 - 5 years	Ages 6 - 12 years and 13 - 18 years	Adults
<b>Minimum amount of meats/meat alternates required when served instead of grains at breakfast</b>	½ ounce equivalent	1 ounce equivalent	2 ounce equivalents
<b>Meats/Meat Alternates:</b>	<b>is equal to:</b>	<b>is equal to:</b>	<b>is equal to:</b>
<b>Beans or peas (cooked)</b>	⅛ cup	¼ cup	½ cup
<b>Natural or processed cheese</b>	½ ounce	1 ounce	2 ounces
<b>Cottage or ricotta cheese</b>	⅛ cup (1 ounce)	¼ cup (2 ounces)	½ cup (4 ounces)
<b>Eggs</b>	¼ large egg	½ large egg	1 large egg
<b>Lean meat, poultry, or fish</b>	½ ounce	1 ounce	2 ounces
<b>Peanut butter, soy nut butter, or other nut or seed butters</b>	1 tablespoon	2 tablespoons	4 tablespoons
<b>Tofu (store-bought or commercially prepared)</b>	⅛ cup (1.1 ounces) with at least 2.5 grams of protein	¼ cup (2.2 ounces) with at least 5 grams of protein	½ cup (4.4 ounces) with at least 10 grams of protein
<b>Yogurt (including soy yogurt)</b>	¼ cup of yogurt (2 ounces)	½ cup of yogurt (4 ounces)	1 cup of yogurt (8 ounces)

*Note: When you serve beans and peas as a vegetable, they cannot also count as a meat alternate in the same meal.*



# Mix It Up at Breakfast



You can serve a meat or meat alternate as a standalone item, such as eggs, yogurt, cottage cheese, turkey sausage, and ham. As a best practice, choose foods that are lower in saturated fat and sodium. Meats and meat alternates can be served together, such as eggs (a meat alternate) and ham (a meat). Meats and meat alternates can also be served in a dish mixed with other foods, such as apple slices spread with peanut butter, yogurt topped with fruit, or a tofu scramble with vegetables.



Bacon, imitation bacon products, scrapple, and salt pork are not creditable in the CACFP.



Turkey bacon, Canadian bacon, and some types of sausage are creditable only if the product has a Child Nutrition label, or if you have a Product Formulation Statement (PFS) signed by the manufacturer. For more information on crediting foods in the CACFP, please see the *Food Buying Guide for Child Nutrition Programs* at <https://foodbuyingguide.fns.usda.gov>.



**For Adult Day Care Only:** You can serve 6 ounces of yogurt in place of 8 ounces of milk once per day when yogurt is not served as a meat alternate in the same meal. If you serve yogurt to adults as a meat alternate at breakfast, you must also serve fluid milk.



## Try It Out!

### Test Yourself

1. Your adult day care center is open 4 days a week. How many times per week may you serve meats and meat alternates in place of grains at breakfast?

2. Your child care home is open 7 days per week. How many times per week may you serve meats and meat alternates in place of grains at breakfast?

3. You want to serve yogurt at breakfast to your 3-5 year olds once per week. If you are serving the yogurt in place of a grain, what's the minimum amount you must serve to this age group to meet the meal pattern requirement?

1. You may serve meats and meat alternates in place of grains up to 3 times per week. All centers and day care homes may serve meats/meat alternates in place of grains at breakfast up to 3 times per week, no matter how many days per week they are open.

2. You may serve meats and meat alternates in place of grains up to 3 times per week. All centers and day care homes may serve meats/meat alternates in place of grains at breakfast up to 3 times per week, no matter how many days per week they are open.

3. If serving yogurt in place of a grain at breakfast, you must serve at least 2 ounces (¼ cup) of yogurt to the 3-5 year olds to meet the meal pattern requirement.

### Answer Key:



## Serving Meats and Meat Alternates at Lunch and Supper in the USDA Child and Adult Care Food Program

Meats and meat alternates provide protein, B vitamins, and minerals such as iron, zinc, and magnesium. Protein supports growing muscles in children and helps muscles stay strong in adults. The iron in many meats and meat alternates helps the body carry oxygen within the blood. Some meats and meat alternates, such as nuts, fish, and seafood, also have healthy fats that help support heart and brain health.



### Meats and Meat Alternates at Lunch and Supper

In the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP), meats and/or meat alternates are a required meal component at lunch and supper for child and adult participants. The following examples show how meats and/or meat alternates may be part of lunch and supper menus\*.

#### Example 1



**Baked Tilapia Fish Fillets**, whole grain-rich roll, whipped sweet potatoes, sliced plums, and fat-free (skim) milk

#### Example 2



**Taco-Seasoned Stuffed Peppers (with meat and beans)**, salsa, corn muffin, sliced strawberries, and low-fat (1%) milk



#### Example 3

**Baked Tofu Bites**, brown rice, gingered carrots, melon, and low-fat (1%) milk



Find USDA standardized recipes featuring meats and meat alternates at [theicn.org/cnrb](https://theicn.org/cnrb).



### Make Every Bite Count!

Serve meats and meat alternates that are lower in saturated fat and sodium (salt) such as:

- Lean meats, poultry, fish, seafood, and eggs;
- Beans, peas, and lentils; and
- Nuts, seeds, and soy products (such as tofu or tempeh);
- Low-fat or fat-free yogurt or cheese.

Offering a variety of meats and meat alternates over the course of the week helps child and adult participants meet their nutritional needs, while limiting saturated fat and sodium. As a CACFP best practice, offer processed meats (such as hot dogs and sausage) no more than once per week.

*\*During the COVID-19 public health emergency, some State agencies may have opted into School Year 2021-2022 meal pattern waivers. Additional information on these waivers is available at: [fns.usda.gov/disaster/pandemic/cn-2021-22-waivers-and-flexibilities](https://fns.usda.gov/disaster/pandemic/cn-2021-22-waivers-and-flexibilities).*

## Serving Meats and Meat Alternates

The CACFP meal pattern lists the required amounts for meats and/or meat alternates as ounce equivalents (oz eq). Ounce equivalents tell you the amount of meat and/or meat alternate in a portion of food. For example, 1 oz eq is equal to half a large egg, 1 ounce (oz) of cooked lean meat, 4 oz of yogurt, or 1 oz of natural cheese.

The table below lists some meats and meat alternates that you can serve in the CACFP. For information on meats or meat alternates that are not listed in the table, please see the *Food Buying Guide for Child Nutrition Programs* (FBG) at [foodbuyingguide.fns.usda.gov](http://foodbuyingguide.fns.usda.gov). The *Food Buying Guide* also shows yields of meats, meat alternates, and other items after cooking. This can help you determine how much of an ingredient to buy to meet minimum serving amounts.

**Minimum Required Amounts at Lunch/Supper**

Meats and/or Meat Alternates	Ages 1 through 2	Ages 3 through 5	Ages 6 through 18	Adults
	1 oz eq is equal to:	1½ oz eq is equal to:	2 oz eq is equal to:	2 oz eq is equal to:
Beans, peas, or lentils	¼ cup (4 tablespoons)	⅜ cup (6 tablespoons)	½ cup (8 tablespoons)	½ cup (8 tablespoons)
Cheese, natural or processed	1 oz	1½ oz	2 oz	2 oz
Cottage or ricotta cheese	¼ cup (2 oz)	⅜ cup (3 oz)	½ cup (4 oz)	½ cup (4 oz)
Eggs (whole)	½ large egg	¾ large egg	1 large egg	1 large egg
Fish (cooked, with skin or skinless)	1 oz	1½ oz	2 oz	2 oz
Lean beef, chicken, pork, or turkey (cooked, with skin or skinless)	1 oz	1½ oz	2 oz	2 oz
Nut and seed butters (e.g., peanut butter, sunflower butter, etc.)	2 tablespoons	3 tablespoons	4 tablespoons	4 tablespoons
Nuts and seeds	½ oz = ½ oz eq*	¾ oz = ¾ oz eq*	1 oz = 1 oz eq*	1 oz = 1 oz eq*
Surimi	3 oz	4.4 oz	6 oz	6 oz
Tempeh**	1 oz	1½ oz	2 oz	2 oz
Tofu (store-bought/ commercially prepared)	¼ cup (2.2 oz) with at least 5 grams of protein	⅜ cup (3.3 oz) with at least 7.5 grams of protein	½ cup (4.4 oz) with at least 10 grams of protein	½ cup (4.4 oz) with at least 10 grams of protein
Yogurt*** (including Greek and soy yogurt)	½ cup of yogurt (4 oz)	¾ cup of yogurt (6 oz)	1 cup of yogurt (8 oz)	1 cup of yogurt (8 oz)

For information on serving meats and meat alternates at breakfast, see Team Nutrition’s “Serving Meats and Meat Alternates at Breakfast” at [fns.usda.gov/tn/meal-pattern-training-worksheets-cacfp](http://fns.usda.gov/tn/meal-pattern-training-worksheets-cacfp).

*\*Nuts and seeds may count toward half (½) of the meats and/or meat alternates requirement at lunch and supper. For a reimbursable meal, they must be served with another meat or meat alternate. For example, chopped nuts and yogurt in a parfait may credit toward the meats and/or meat alternates component. Nut and seed butters may credit toward the entire meats and/or meat alternates component at all CACFP meals and snacks.*

*\*\*Applies to tempeh made with soybeans (or other legumes), tempeh culture, vinegar, seasonings, and herbs only. Tempeh containing other ingredients such as brown rice, seeds, or vegetables will require documentation.*

*\*\*\*Yogurts served in the CACFP must contain no more than 23 grams of sugar per 6 ounces. For more information, see Team Nutrition’s “Choose Yogurts That Are Lower in Sugar” at [fns.usda.gov/tn/meal-pattern-training-worksheets-cacfp](http://fns.usda.gov/tn/meal-pattern-training-worksheets-cacfp).*

## Which Meats and Meat Alternates are Creditable?

As shown in the lists below, some foods may not count toward the meats and/or meat alternates component in the CACFP. Other foods may need more documentation, such as a Child Nutrition (CN) label or Product Formulation Statement (PFS) signed by a manufacturer, so you can see how they count toward the meal pattern. Check the *Food Buying Guide*, or contact your State agency or sponsoring organization for more information.

### Might Be Creditable

- Beef, chicken, or pork patties
- Canadian bacon
- Chicken nuggets
- Deli/luncheon meats (cold cuts)
- Fish sticks
- Hot dogs
- Jerky (meat, poultry, and seafood)
- Tempeh made with legumes and other foods like rice, seeds, vegetables, etc.
- Turkey bacon
- Vegetable patties/burgers
- Wild game meat (with inspection and approval by State or Federal agency)



### Not Creditable

- Bacon
- Cheese products
- Commercial frozen yogurt
- Egg yolks (when not served as part of the whole egg)
- Egg whites (when not served as part of the whole egg)
- Deep-fried foods prepared onsite
- Imitation cheese
- Salt pork
- Scrapple



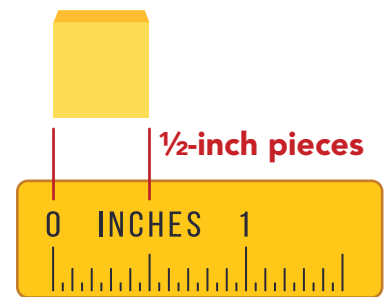
## Serving It Safe!

### Choking Prevention

Children under the age of 4 are at a high risk of choking while eating. When serving meats and meat alternates to young children, reduce the risk of choking by:

- Grating, mashing, pureeing, or finely chopping items into thin slices, strips, or small pieces that are no larger than a ½ inch. If serving round or tube-shaped foods (e.g., sausages, hot dogs, string cheese, etc.), cut them into short strips instead of round pieces.
- Removing all bones from fish, chicken, and meat before cooking or serving.
- Nuts and seeds are generally not recommended for young children because they present a choking hazard. If serving, nuts and seeds should be finely chopped.
- If serving nut butters, spread them thinly on other foods (e.g., toast, crackers, etc.). Serve only creamy, not chunky, nut butters.

For more information, see USDA's "Reducing the Risk of Choking in Young Children at Mealtimes" at [fns.usda.gov/tn/meal-pattern-training-worksheets-cacfp](https://fns.usda.gov/tn/meal-pattern-training-worksheets-cacfp).



## Serving It Safe! (continued)

### Allergies

Some participants may be allergic to meats or meat alternates, such as fish, shellfish, eggs, nuts, and soybeans. Be sure to discuss any allergies with parents and caregivers and follow proper guidelines to prevent allergic reactions.



### Food Safety

It is important to follow safe food handling practices when storing, thawing, preparing, and serving meats and meat alternates. Learn more at [FoodSafety.gov](https://www.foodsafety.gov). Refer to State and local requirements for cooking and storage temperatures.

### Best Choices for Fish

Choose fish that are lower in mercury, such as canned light tuna, salmon, tilapia, cod, flounder, and haddock. For more information, see the U.S. Food and Drug Administration’s “Advice about Eating Fish” at [fda.gov/food/consumers/advice-about-eating-fish](https://www.fda.gov/food/consumers/advice-about-eating-fish). You can also contact your State or local health department or call 1-888-SAFEFOOD (1-888-723-3366) for more information.

## Menu Planning Tips

- ✓ Beans, peas, and lentils can be served as either the meat alternate or vegetable component of the meal in the CACFP. You may not credit beans, peas, and lentils as both a meat alternate and a vegetable for the same meal or snack. If you serve two different beans, peas, or lentils at a meal, you may credit one as a meat alternate, and the other as a vegetable, if you serve the minimum creditable amount of each.
- ✓ Pasta made of bean flour(s) must be served with another visible meat or meat alternate, such as cheese or meat, to credit as a meat alternate.
- ✓ In smoothies, yogurt may credit as a meat alternate. Other meats or meat alternates used in smoothies (e.g., nut butter, tofu, etc.) may not credit toward the meats and meat alternates component.
- ✓ **For adult participants only:** When yogurt is served in place of milk, it may not count as a meat alternate at the same meal.

### Preparation Methods

Foods that are deep-fat fried onsite are not creditable in the CACFP. Try cooking methods such as roasting, sautéing, and grilling. For more ideas, see Team Nutrition’s “Methods for Healthy Cooking” worksheet, webinar, and training slides at [fns.usda.gov/tn/training-tools-cacfp](https://fns.usda.gov/tn/training-tools-cacfp).



# Serving Vegetables in the Child and Adult Care Food Program

## Offering vegetables at meals and snacks:

- Helps children and adults get important nutrients like potassium, folate (folic acid), vitamin A, and vitamin C.
- Provides dietary fiber, which contributes to a feeling of fullness.
- Adds color, crunch, and flavor to meals and snacks.
- Helps reduce the risk of certain diseases, like heart disease and Type 2 diabetes, later in life.

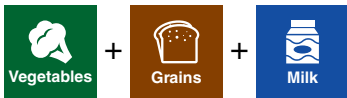


## Adding Vegetables to Your CACFP Menu

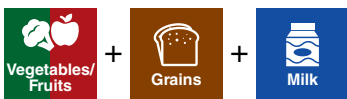
You can serve vegetables as part of a reimbursable breakfast, lunch, supper, or snack in the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP).

### Breakfast

#### Example 1



#### Example 2



#### Example 3



(up to three times per week)

### Lunch and Supper

#### Example 1



#### Example 2



▲ A second vegetable can be served in place of fruit at lunch and supper.

### Snacks

#### Example 1



#### Example 2



#### Example 3



#### Example 4





## Test Your CACFP Vegetable Knowledge!

Does this food count as a vegetable in the CACFP? Mark Yes or No, and then check your answers on page 4.

- |                        |  |                                      |  |
|------------------------|--|--------------------------------------|--|
| 1. White Potatoes      | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No | 8. Canned Tomatoes (store-bought)    | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| 2. Avocados            | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No | 9. Ketchup                           | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| 3. Macaroni and Cheese | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No | 10. Black Beans                      | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| 4. Strawberry Jelly    | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No | 11. Rice                             | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| 5. Cornbread           | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No | 12. Canned Green Beans (home-canned) | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| 6. Pumpkin             | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No |                                      |  |
| 7. Hominy (whole)      | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No |                                      |  |

## Meal Planning Considerations

The chart below shows examples of amounts of food needed to credit as  $\frac{1}{4}$ -cup and  $\frac{1}{2}$ -cup of vegetables in the CACFP. For more information, visit the Food Buying Guide for Child Nutrition Programs at <https://foodbuyingguide.fns.usda.gov>.

Vegetable	$\frac{1}{4}$ cup	$\frac{1}{2}$ cup
<b>Carrot, Baby</b>	3 baby carrots	6 baby carrots
<b>Carrot Stick</b> ( $\frac{1}{2}$ " by 4")	3 sticks	6 sticks
<b>Celery Stick</b> ( $\frac{1}{2}$ " by 4")	3 sticks	6 sticks
<b>Corn, on cob</b> (about 5" - 6" long)	$\frac{1}{2}$ ear	1 ear
<b>Cucumber Sticks</b> (3" by $\frac{3}{4}$ ")	3 sticks	6 sticks
<b>Leafy Greens (collard greens, kale, spinach, etc.), Cooked</b>	$\frac{1}{4}$ cup	$\frac{1}{2}$ cup
<b>Leafy Greens (kale, lettuce, spinach, etc.), Raw</b>	$\frac{1}{2}$ cup	1 cup
<b>Potato, Sweet</b> (2 $\frac{1}{4}$ " or more in diameter)	$\frac{1}{4}$ sweet potato	$\frac{1}{2}$ sweet potato
<b>Potato, White or Russet</b> (about 6 oz)	$\frac{1}{2}$ potato	1 potato
<b>Tomato, Cherry</b>	3 cherry tomatoes	6 cherry tomatoes
<b>Tomato Slice</b> ( $\frac{1}{8}$ " thick)	4-5 slices	8-10 slices



## Giving Vegetables Credit: How Vegetables Count in the Child and Adult Care Food Program

- ✓ **Vegetables in amounts** smaller than  $\frac{1}{8}$  cup do not credit toward a reimbursable lunch, supper, or snack.
- ✓ **Raw leafy green vegetables** (spinach, kale, collards, and lettuce) credit for half of the amount served. For example, one cup of raw leafy greens credits as  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup of vegetables.  
**1 cup raw spinach =  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup of vegetables**
- ✓ **Cooked leafy green vegetables** credit for the entire amount served.  
**1 cup steamed spinach = 1 cup of vegetables**
- ✓ **Dried vegetables** credit for twice the amount served. For example:  
 **$\frac{1}{4}$  cup sun-dried tomatoes =  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup of vegetables**
- ✓ **Dry beans and peas** (legumes), including black beans, split peas, and lentils, can credit as vegetables or as meat alternates, but cannot credit toward both components in the same meal.
- ✓ **Pureed vegetables** used in smoothies credit as 100 percent vegetable juice. Juice may only be served once per day in the CACFP.
- ✓ **A second, different vegetable** can be served in place of the fruit component at lunch and supper.

### Other Considerations

Reduce the risk of choking by:





- Cutting raw vegetables into smaller pieces.
- Cooking raw vegetables until slightly soft.
- Cutting round, soft vegetables like cherry tomatoes into small pieces no larger than one-half inch ( $\frac{1}{2}$ ").





## Make Fridays Try-Days in the CACFP

Look for vegetables that are grown in your area and have a taste-testing event. Look for recipes, nutrition education resources, and Try Day stickers at: <https://teamnutrition.usda.gov>.

 <b>Spring</b>	 <b>Summer</b>	 <b>Fall</b>	 <b>Winter</b>
Asparagus	Bell Peppers	Brussels Sprouts	Beets
Broccoli	Corn	Cauliflower	Cabbage
Lettuce	Crookneck Squash	Pumpkins	Kale
Spinach	Tomatoes	Sweet Potatoes	Winter Squash

### Test Your CACFP Vegetable Knowledge Answers



1. White Potatoes: **Yes**
2. Avocados: **Yes**
3. Macaroni and Cheese: **No**
4. Strawberry Jelly: **No**
5. Cornbread: **No**
6. Pumpkin: **Yes**
7. Hominy (whole): **Yes**
8. Canned Tomatoes (store-bought): **Yes**
9. Ketchup: **No**
10. Black Beans: **Yes**
11. Rice: **No**
12. Canned Green Beans (home-canned): **No**



# Adding Whole Grains to Your Child and Adult Care Food Program Menu

Whole grain-rich foods are an important part of your menu in the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP). Foods that are whole grain-rich are filled with vitamins, minerals, fiber, and other nutrients that help kids and adults stay healthy.

## How often do I have to serve whole grains in the CACFP?

Each day, at least one of the grain components of a meal or snack must be “whole grain-rich.” Whole grain-rich food items must be offered at least once per day, not once per meal/snack. In the CACFP, whole grain-rich means that at least half the grain ingredients in a food are whole grains, and any remaining grains are enriched grains, bran, or germ. This is required for CACFP child and adult meal patterns only. There is no whole grain-rich requirement for infants.



### If you serve meals and snacks to the same group of children or adults during the day:

- ✓ Serve whole grain-rich items for the grain component at one of the meals or snack each day.

### If you serve meals and snacks to different groups of children or adults during the same day (for example, morning and afternoon sessions):

- ✓ Serve whole grain-rich items for the grain component to one of the groups of children or adults each day.

### If you serve only snacks:

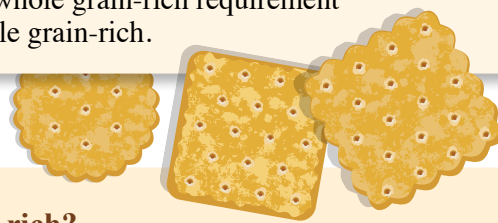
- ✓ You do not have to serve a grain component at snack. But if you do, it must be whole grain-rich.

### If you serve only breakfast and want to serve a meat or meat alternate:

- ✓ You do not need to serve a grain, because you are replacing the grain component with a meat or meat alternate. You may do this up to three times per week. On the days when a meat or meat alternate is not served, you must serve whole grain-rich items for the grain component. If you decide to serve a grain as an “extra” food that does not count toward the CACFP meal pattern requirements, then the grain does not have to be whole grain-rich.

### If your at-risk afterschool site or adult day care serves breakfast, lunch, or supper using Offer Versus Serve:

- ✓ All grain items offered at the meal you wish to count towards the whole grain-rich requirement must be whole grain-rich.



### Can I serve a grain-based dessert if it is whole grain-rich?

- ✗ Grain-based desserts, even those made with whole grains, cannot count towards the grain component of a CACFP meal or snack. There are many other tasty whole grain-rich foods that you can add to your menus.

## What are some ways to serve whole grain-rich foods at meals and snacks?

The requirement is that whole grain-rich food items must be offered at least once per day. But, you may choose to offer whole grain-rich food items more often. Check out these easy ways to serve whole grain-rich foods:

Breakfast	Lunch/Supper	Snacks
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Oatmeal*</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Whole Grain-Rich Pancakes or Waffles</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Toast Made with Whole-Wheat Bread</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Whole Grain-Rich English Muffin, Bagel, or Biscuit</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Whole Grain-Rich Muffin</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Whole Grain-Rich Cereal*</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Whole-Wheat Macaroni or Spaghetti</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Brown Rice</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Quinoa</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Bulgur</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Wild Rice</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Whole-Wheat Bun or Roll</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Whole Grain-Rich Pizza Crust</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Whole Grain-Rich Tortilla</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Whole Grain-Rich Crackers</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Whole Grain-Rich Pita Triangles</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Whole Grain-Rich Cereal Mix*</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Whole Grain-Rich Pretzels</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Rice Cakes Made with Brown Rice</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Whole Grain-Rich Banana Bread</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Whole Grain-Rich Chips</li> </ul>

\*Cereal must meet CACFP sugar limits.

## How can I share information about whole grain-rich foods on my menu?

Some easy ways CACFP providers are highlighting whole grains on their menus include:



Writing “whole wheat” or “WW” in front of an item on the menu, such as “whole-wheat bread” or “WW bread.”

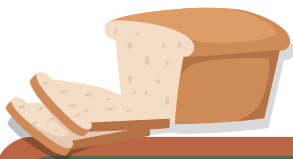


Adding a fun grain icon or picture next to whole grain-rich foods.



Placing a check in a checkbox to show that a food is whole grain-rich.

There are no Federal CACFP requirements that you label which foods are whole grain-rich on your menu. Check with your State agency or sponsoring organization to see what they require. Highlighting whole grain-rich foods on your menu communicates to families how you are providing nutritious foods to their loved ones. Families may see this as a sign of the quality of meals and snacks you are offering.



## Try It Out!

Look at the menus for three CACFP sites below. Which menus meet the CACFP requirement for whole grain-rich?

### Menu 1

Served at a child care center that serves one group of children in the morning and another in the afternoon

**Breakfast:** Chopped strawberries, whole grain-rich waffles, 1% milk

**Lunch:** Baked chicken, 1% milk, broccoli, orange wedges, white rice

**Snack:** Apple slices and string cheese

### Menu 2

Served at an at-risk afterschool center that only serves snack

**Snack:** Enriched pretzels and hummus (bean dip)

Answer Key: Menus 1 and 3 meet the CACFP requirement for whole grain-rich. Menu 2 does not meet the CACFP meal pattern requirement for whole grain-rich. Because the center only serves snacks, any grains served at snack must be whole grain-rich. The pretzels in this snack are enriched, not whole grain-rich, so this snack does not meet the requirement.

### Menu 3

Served at an at-risk afterschool center that only serves snack

**Snack:** Celery sticks and sunflower seed butter



# Crediting Single-Serving Packages of Grains in the Child and Adult Care Food Program

Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) operators may serve single-serving or snack-sized packages of grain items, such as breakfast cereals or whole grain crackers to meet grains requirements at snacks and meals.

In the CACFP, the minimum required amounts for grains are listed in the meal pattern as ounce equivalents (oz eq). Ounce equivalents tell you the amount of grains in a portion of food.



## How Much is 1 Ounce Equivalent?

0.8 ounce (22 grams)  
of **Cheese Crackers**



= 1 oz eq of grains

1 ounce (28 grams)  
of **Toasted O's Cereal**



= 1 oz eq of grains

2 ounces (55 grams)  
of **Blueberry Muffin**




= 1 oz eq of grains

# Using the Grains Measuring Chart for Single-Serving Packages

To see how many single-serving packages of grains are needed to meet CACFP meal pattern requirements, follow the steps below:

- 1 Look at the Grains Measuring Chart for Single-Serving Packages on pages 2-3 and find the item you are serving under the “Grain Item and Package Weight” column. Grain items are listed in alphabetical order. If the item is not listed, see “What If My Grain is Different?” on page 5.
- 2 Each item on the chart lists a minimum package weight by the name of the item. Look at the package you are serving and find its weight listed on the Nutrition Facts label or on the front of the package. Check that the package weighs the same as, or more than, the weight listed on the chart (see page 4).
- 3 Look at the chart and find the column for the age group of your participants and the meal or snack you are serving. This column lists the number of packages you need to serve to meet the CACFP meal pattern requirement for grains. You may serve more than this amount.

Grains Measuring Chart for Single-Serving Packages			
Grain Item and Package Weight*	Child and Adult Care Food Program Age Group and Meal		
	1- through 5-year-olds at Breakfast, Lunch, Supper, Snack	6- through 18-year-olds at Breakfast, Lunch, Supper, Snack  Adults at Snack	Adults at Breakfast, Lunch, Supper
	Serve at Least ½ oz eq, which equals about...	Serve at Least 1 oz eq, which equals about...	Serve at Least 2 oz eq, which equals about...
 <b>Bagel Chips</b> at least 28 grams or 1 ounce	½ package	1 package	2 packages
<b>Cereal, Ready-to-Eat, All Types**</b> at least 28 grams or 1 ounce	½ package	1 package	2 packages
<b>Corn Chips</b> at least 28 grams or 1 ounce	½ package	1 package	2 packages

\*Check that the package you want to serve weighs this amount, or more. See “Finding the Weight of Single-Serving Packages” on page 4 for more information.

\*\*Must contain 6 grams of sugar or less per dry ounce.

All grains served in the CACFP must be whole grain-rich, enriched, or fortified.

## Grains Measuring Chart for Single-Serving Packages

Grain Item and Package Weight*	Child and Adult Care Food Program Age Group and Meal		
	1- through 5-year-olds at Breakfast, Lunch, Supper, Snack	6- through 18-year-olds at Breakfast, Lunch, Supper, Snack  Adults at Snack	Adults at Breakfast, Lunch, Supper
	Serve at Least ½ oz eq, which equals about...	Serve at Least 1 oz eq, which equals about...	Serve at Least 2 oz eq, which equals about...
			
<b>Crackers, Savory</b> (e.g., cheese, saltines, whole-wheat, etc.) at least 22 grams or 0.8 ounces	½ package	1 package	2 packages
<b>Crackers, Sweet</b> (e.g., animal, graham, etc.) at least 28 grams or 1 ounce	½ package	1 package	2 packages
<b>Croissant</b> at least 34 grams or 1.2 ounces	½ package	1 package	2 packages
<b>Grits, Dry</b> at least 28 grams or 1 ounce	½ package	1 package	2 packages
<b>Muffin, All Types</b> (except corn) at least 55 grams or 2 ounces	½ package	1 package	2 packages
<b>Muffin, Corn</b> at least 34 grams or 1.2 ounces	½ package	1 package	2 packages
<b>Oatmeal, Dry</b> (unflavored or flavored)** at least 28 grams or 1 ounce	½ package	1 package	2 packages
<b>Pita Chips</b> at least 28 grams or 1 ounce	½ package	1 package	2 packages
<b>Pretzels, Hard***</b> at least 22 grams or 0.8 ounces	½ package	1 package	2 packages
<b>Popcorn***</b> at least 14 grams or 0.5 ounce	1 package	2 packages	4 packages
<b>Rice Cakes</b> at least 22 grams or 0.8 ounces	½ package	1 package	2 packages
<b>Tortilla Chips</b> at least 28 grams or 1 ounce	½ package	1 package	2 packages

\*Check that the package you want to serve weighs this amount, or more. See “Finding the Weight of Single-Serving Packages” on page 4 for more information.

\*\*Must contain 6 grams of sugar or less per dry ounce.

\*\*\*Choking hazard for children under the age of 4.

**All grains served in the CACFP must be whole grain-rich, enriched, or fortified.**

# Finding the Weight of Single-Serving Packages

All items in the Grains Measuring Chart list weights by the name of the item. Follow the steps below to see if the package of grains you want to serve meets the minimum weight listed in the chart.

1. Find the grain item and the package weight in the Grains Measuring Chart.

For example, a package of hard pretzels must weigh at least 22 grams or 0.8 ounces.

Grain Item and Package Weight*	Child and Adult Care Food Program Age Group and Meal		
	1- through 5-year-olds at Breakfast, Lunch, Supper, Snack	6- through 18-year-olds at Breakfast, Lunch, Supper, Snack <b>Adults at Snack</b>	<b>Adults</b> at Breakfast, Lunch, Supper
	Serve at Least ½ oz eq, which equals about...	Serve at Least 1 oz eq, which equals about...	Serve at Least 2 oz eq, which equals about...
<b>Pretzel, Hard</b> at least 22 grams or 0.8 ounces	½ package	1 package	2 packages

2. Look at the Nutrition Facts label of the item you are serving. Find the serving size and make sure that it is listed as "1 package" or other similar wording. If the serving size is not listed as 1 package, look for the weight of one package on the front of the package, as shown in the picture below. If the weight of one package is shown on the front of the package, go to Step 4. If the serving size is not 1 package, and the weight of the package is not on the front of the package, see "What If My Grain Is Different?" on page 5.



3. Find the weight of one package. In this example, one package of **Brand P Hard Pretzels** weighs 28 grams.



If the weight of one package is not written on the Nutrition Facts label, look for the weight on the front of the package.

4. Compare the weight of one package to the weight listed in the Grains Measuring Chart. Is this package weight the same as, or heavier than, the weight listed in the Grains Measuring Chart?

**Yes:** Use the Grains Measuring Chart to see how many packages you need to serve to meet CACFP meal pattern requirements.

In this example, a package of hard pretzels must weigh at least 22 grams or 0.8 ounces to use the Grains Measuring Chart. Because 1 package of Brand P hard pretzels weighs 28 grams, you may use the row for "Pretzels, Hard" in the chart to see how many packages of Brand P hard pretzels are needed to meet CACFP meal pattern requirements.

**No:** Use another method to determine how many packages you need to serve to meet CACFP meal pattern requirements. See "What if My Grain Is Different?" on page 5.

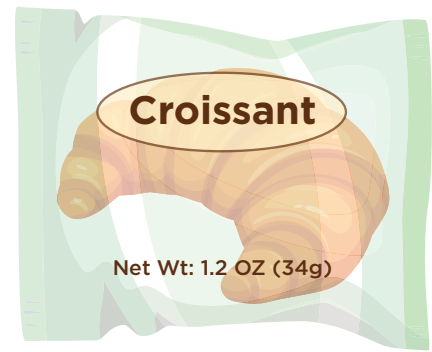
## What If My Grain Is Different?

If the package of grains you are serving:

- is lighter in weight than the item listed in the Grains Measuring Chart, or
- does not list the weight of one package, or
- is not listed on the Grains Measuring Chart,

you will need to use another method to determine how many packages are needed to meet CACFP meal pattern requirements. To do this, you could:

- Use the “Food Buying Guide for Child Nutrition Programs (FBG) Exhibit A Grains Tool” available at [foodbuyingguide.fns.usda.gov](http://foodbuyingguide.fns.usda.gov).
- Use Team Nutrition’s “Calculating Ounce Equivalents for Grains in the CACFP” worksheet available at [TeamNutrition.USDA.gov](http://TeamNutrition.USDA.gov).
- Contact your State agency or sponsoring organization for assistance.



## Are There Other Menu Planning Considerations?

If you serve a package that weighs more than what is listed on the Grains Measuring Chart, then you might serve more grains than required by the CACFP meal pattern. The serving amounts listed in the meal pattern are minimums, so you are allowed to serve more than that amount. However, the tools described under “What If My Grain Is Different?” can also help you determine how much of an item is needed to meet the meal pattern requirements without serving more than what is required. Work with your vendors to purchase single-serving packages of grains that provide the right amount for your participants.

### Answer Key:

See “Try It Out!” practice questions on page 6.

1. You should serve each child at least half (1/2) of a corn muffin. Because each corn muffin weighs 1.2 ounces (34 grams), you may use the row for “Muffin, Corn” in the Grains Measuring Chart (Page 3) to see how many muffins to serve each child.
2. You should serve each participant 2 boxes of Brand B bran flakes cereal. Because one box of this cereal weighs 1 ounce, you may use the row for “Cereal, Ready-to-Eat, All Types” in the Grains Measuring Chart (Page 2) to see how many boxes to serve each participant. You may also serve each participant 1 box of Brand B bran flakes, and serve 1 oz eq of another grain item.
3. No, you should not use the Grains Measuring Chart to see how many bags of Brand S savory crackers to serve. A package of savory crackers must weigh at least 0.8 ounces or 22 grams in order to use the chart. One bag of Brand S savory crackers weighs 0.75 ounces. Because 0.75 ounces is less than 0.8 ounces, you must use another method to see how many packages of Brand S savory crackers to serve.

# Try It Out!

Use the information in this worksheet to answer the questions below.  
See page 5 for the Answer Key.

**1** You want to serve individually wrapped corn muffins at lunch to 3-year-olds. Each corn muffin weighs 1.2 ounces (34 grams). How many corn muffins should you serve each child to meet the minimum amount of grains required at lunch in the CACFP?

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**2** Your adult day care wants to offer single-serving boxes of ready-to-eat cereal at breakfast. One box of Brand B bran flakes weighs 1 ounce (28 grams). How many boxes of bran flakes should you serve each participant to meet the minimum amount of grains required at breakfast?

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**3** Your at-risk afterschool program wants to serve single-serving bags of Brand S savory crackers at snack to 10-year-olds. One single-serving bag of Brand S savory crackers weighs 0.75 ounces (21 grams). Should you use the Grains Measuring Chart to determine how many bags of Brand S savory crackers to serve? Why or why not?

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# Crediting Store-Bought Combination Baby Foods in the Child and Adult Care Food Program



Combination baby foods are foods that include a mixture of two or more foods, such as meat and vegetables. Under certain circumstances, these foods may be counted toward a reimbursable infant meal or snack in the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP).

Before serving a store-bought combination baby food, check with your State agency or sponsoring organization. It may require you to have the baby food packaging, a Product Formulation Statement, or other form of documentation to show how the food credits toward the CACFP infant meal pattern.

## How Much of the Combination Baby Food Needs to be Offered?

In the CACFP infant meal pattern\*, amounts of food served at meals and snacks are shown as ranges, such as 0 to 2 tablespoons. This range lets you introduce new foods slowly when the infant is developmentally ready. Once a baby is regularly eating a food, offer the infant the full amount of the food (the uppermost range).

Combination baby foods should be offered only after the infant has been introduced to the individual ingredients in the combination food. For example, before an infant is given a chicken and vegetable combination baby food, the infant should have already been introduced to both chicken and the vegetable individually as single component foods. More information on the introduction of foods is available at [fns.usda.gov/tn/feeding-infants-child-and-adult-care-food-program](https://fns.usda.gov/tn/feeding-infants-child-and-adult-care-food-program).

Since infants eating combination baby foods have already shown that they are developmentally ready and accepting of each food in the combination baby food, you must ensure that the combination baby food package provides the full, required amount of the food component. If it does not, you must offer more food from that component to meet the full amount of the food.

Remember, this amount must be *offered* to the infant, but the infant does not have to eat all of it.

\*For information on the CACFP infant meal pattern, please see the "Feeding Infants in the Child and Adult Care Food Program" guide at [fns.usda.gov/tn/feeding-infants-child-and-adult-care-food-program](https://fns.usda.gov/tn/feeding-infants-child-and-adult-care-food-program).

## Required Amounts of Food Components at Meals and Snacks

### Breakfast, Lunch, Supper\*

- **Grains/Meats/Meat Alternates:** ½ oz eq (4 tbsp) iron-fortified infant cereal or 4 tbsp meat, fish, poultry, whole eggs, cooked dry beans or peas; or ½ cup (4 oz) yogurt or cottage cheese; or a combination.
- **Vegetables/Fruit:** 2 tbsp vegetable, fruit, or both.

### Snack\*

- **Grains:** ½ oz eq (4 tbsp) infant cereal, ½ oz eq of bread/bread-like items, ¼ oz eq ready-to-eat breakfast cereal, or ¼ oz eq crackers.
- **Vegetables/Fruit:** 2 tablespoons fruit, vegetable or a combination of both.

\*You must also offer a baby breastmilk and/or iron-fortified infant formula at breakfast, lunch, supper, and snack.

## How Do I Credit Combination Baby Foods?

Follow the steps below to see how combination baby foods count toward a reimbursable meal or snack.

- 1 Look for the creditable ingredient(s) in the baby food. What component(s) do the ingredient(s) credit toward?

The charts below and on page 3 show some common ingredients that are and are not creditable in the CACFP infant meal pattern. Although there are ingredients that may not be creditable, if there is at least one creditable component, the combination baby food may be offered.

**Look for combination baby foods that are made with few or no non-creditable ingredients. This will help ensure the infant gets the nutrition he or she needs for growth and development.**

Creditable	
Food Item	Food Component
Beans	Grains/Meats/Meat Alternates or Vegetables/Fruit
Cheese (natural or processed)	Grains/Meats/Meat Alternates
Fin fish and shellfish	Grains/Meats/Meat Alternates
Fruits (not freeze-dried, not juice)	Vegetables/Fruit
Iron-fortified infant cereal*	Grains/Meats/Meat Alternates
Meats (beef, pork)	Grains/Meats/Meat Alternates
Poultry (chicken, turkey)	Grains/Meats/Meat Alternates
Ready-to-Eat Cereal	Grains (creditable at snack only)
Vegetables (not freeze-dried, not juice)	Vegetables/Fruit
Yogurt	Grains/Meats/Meat Alternates

\*At snack, iron-fortified infant cereal counts toward the grains component, as there is no required meats/meat alternates component at snack.

For more information on creditable foods in the infant meal pattern, see “Appendix F: Infant Foods List” in the “Feeding Infants in the Child and Adult Care Food Program” guide at [fn.usda.gov/tn/feeding-infants-child-and-adult-care-food-program](https://fn.usda.gov/tn/feeding-infants-child-and-adult-care-food-program).

## Not Creditable

### Food Item

Barley	Nuts and seeds
Cooked grains	Nut and seed butters
Dried or powdered cheese*	Oats
Freeze-dried vegetables and fruit (e.g., banana)	Quinoa
Granola	Rice
Macaroni and other pastas	Wheat
Millet	
Mixed grains	

\*According to the Food and Drug Administration, dried or powdered cheese does not meet the definition of "cheese."

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Does the combination baby food only include ingredients from one food component?

- **Yes.** If the combination baby food only has ingredients from one food component, go to Step 4. You can also see Example #1 (Page 5) on how to credit this food.
- **No.** Go to Step 3.



## How Do I Credit Combination Baby Foods? (continued)

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Is the amount of each creditable ingredient listed on the food container as a unit of volume (i.e., cups, tablespoons (tbsp), or teaspoons (tsp), etc.)?

- **Yes.** If the amount of each ingredient is listed as a unit of volume, such as cups, tbsp, tsp, etc., go to Step 4. You can also see Example #2 (Page 5) on how to credit this food.



### Ingredients:

65% organic bananas, 30% water, 3% organic oat flour, 1% organic barley flakes, 0.277% organic cinnamon, 0.1% organic lemon juice concentrate.

- **No.** Is the amount of each of the ingredients listed as a percentage of the total weight? If so, you may need to calculate the amount of each ingredient to determine the number of tbsp, tsp, etc., or request more information from the manufacturer. See Example #3 on page 6.

- **No.** If the package does not list the volume or percentage of each creditable ingredient, then you will need more information from the manufacturer, such as a Product Formulation Statement. For more information on a PFS, see [fns.usda.gov/sites/default/files/resource-files/manufacturerPFStipsheet.pdf](https://fns.usda.gov/sites/default/files/resource-files/manufacturerPFStipsheet.pdf).



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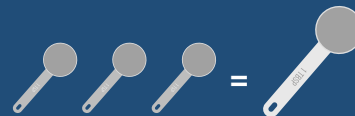
Compare the amount of each food component in the container with the amount required in the CACFP infant meal pattern.

- If the food has more than one ingredient from the same component, add the volume (cups, tbsp, tsp, etc.) of the ingredients together to see the total amount from the food component.
- If the volume (cups, tbsp, tsp, etc.) of ingredients that credit toward a food component is less than the required amount for that food component, additional foods are needed.

### Converting to Tablespoons

If the package lists amounts in teaspoons or cups, see the information below for how many tablespoons are in that amount.

3 teaspoons (3 tsp) = 1 tablespoon (tbsp)



$\frac{1}{8}$  cup = 2 tablespoons (tbsp)



$\frac{1}{4}$  cup = 4 tablespoons (tbsp)



# Let's Practice

## Example 1: Sweet Potato, Apple, & Corn

### Step 1. Look for the creditable ingredients. What component(s) do the ingredient(s) credit toward?

The creditable ingredients are sweet potato, apple, and corn. All the ingredients credit toward the vegetables/fruit component.

### Step 2. Does the combination baby food only include ingredients from one food component?

**Yes.** Sweet potato, apple, and corn are all creditable ingredients from the vegetables/fruit component. There are no other ingredients in this baby food.

### Step 3. Is the amount of each creditable ingredient listed on the food container as a unit of volume (i.e., cups, tablespoons (tbsp), or teaspoons (tsp), etc)?

This food only contains ingredients from one food component (vegetables/fruit), so we do not need to know the amount of each ingredient.

### Step 4. Compare the amount of each food component in the container with amount required in the CACFP infant meal pattern.

- The infant meal pattern requires that you offer 2 tbsp of vegetables/fruit at CACFP meals and snacks. Because this food only contains ingredients from one food component, you can offer an infant 2 tbsp of this food to fulfill the vegetables/fruit component.



## Example 2: Turkey & Sweet Potato Dinner

### Step 1. Look for the creditable ingredients. What component(s) do the ingredient(s) credit toward?

The creditable ingredients are sweet potato and turkey. Sweet potatoes credit toward the vegetables/fruit component and turkey credits toward the grains/meats/meat alternates component.

This food also contains cooked grains, which are not creditable in the infant meal pattern.

### Step 2. Does the combination baby food only include ingredients from one food component?

**No.** This food has ingredients that credit toward two different food components.



**Step 3. Is the amount of each creditable ingredient listed on the food container as a unit of volume (i.e., cups, tablespoons (tbsp), or teaspoons (tsp), etc.)?**

**Yes.** This tub of combination baby food lists 4 tbsp of sweet potatoes and 3 tsp of turkey per container.

**Step 4. Compare the amount of each food component in the container with the amount required in the CACFP infant meal pattern.**

The infant meal pattern requires that you offer:

- 2 tbsp of vegetables/fruit at CACFP meals and snacks, and
- 4 tbsp grains/meats/meat alternates at breakfast, lunch, and supper.

✓ Because this tub offers 4 tbsp of vegetables/fruit, one tub of this food fulfills the vegetables/fruit component.

⚠ However, this tub only offers 3 tsp (1 tbsp) of meats/meat alternates. You must offer 3 tbsp more of an iron-fortified infant cereal and/or meats/meat alternates to fulfill the full 4 tbsp of the grains/meats/meat alternates component.

### Example 3: Granola With Banana and Cinnamon

**Step 1. Look for the creditable ingredients. What component(s) do the ingredient(s) credit toward?**

The creditable ingredient is banana. Bananas credit toward the vegetables/fruit component.

**Step 2. Does the combination baby food only include ingredients from one food component?**

**No.** The food also contains water, oat flour, barley flakes, and other items that do not credit toward the vegetables/fruit component.

**Step 3. Is the amount of each creditable ingredient listed on the food container as a unit of volume (i.e., cups, tablespoons (tbsp), or teaspoons (tsp), etc.)?**

**No.** The amount of each ingredient is listed as a percentage of the total weight.

**Step 4. Compare the amount of each food component in the container with amount required in the CACFP infant meal pattern.**

Because the jar lists amounts of the ingredients in percentages of the total weight, you will need to use the Food Buying Guide for Child Nutrition Programs ([foodbuyingguide.fns.usda.gov](http://foodbuyingguide.fns.usda.gov)) to determine the amount that may be credited toward the meal pattern. Please contact your State agency or sponsoring organization for assistance and documentation requirements. You may also request a Product Formulation Statement (PFS) from the manufacturer that shows the amount of each ingredient in cups, tablespoons (tbsp), or teaspoons (tsp), etc. For more information on a PFS, see [fns.usda.gov/sites/default/files/resource-files/manufacturerPFStipsheet.pdf](http://fns.usda.gov/sites/default/files/resource-files/manufacturerPFStipsheet.pdf).

