

### **Creditable Foods**

Foods that credit toward a meal component (fluid milk, grains, meats/meat alternates, fruits, or vegetables) in CNP. A food is “creditable” when it meets the requirements/standards established to count toward a reimbursable meal or snack.

### **Enriched Grains**

Enriched grains are refined grains that have been processed to remove all or a portion of the bran and germ and then have certain nutrients added back after or during processing.

### **Family Style Meal Service**

In family style meal service, children can help set the table; serve themselves from bowls, plates, and/or pitchers on the table; and talk with others at mealtime. Family style meal service is optional in the CACFP.

### **Meal Component**

One of the five food categories that make up a reimbursable meal or snack according to meal pattern requirements. The five meal components are: fluid milk, fruits, vegetables, grains, and meats/meat alternates (M/MA).

### **Meal Patterns**

The required amounts of food specified by meal components and by age/grade group that must be offered/served to qualify for Federal reimbursement under CNP. The CACFP meal pattern requirements are shown on pages 9-11 of this handbook.

### **Minimum Creditable Amount**

The smallest portion of a food that credits toward a meal component.

### **Noncreditable Foods**

Noncreditable foods are foods that do not credit toward one of the five meal components in the CACFP. Some examples include:

- cereals that do not meet the added sugars limits
- juice drinks that are not 100% juice
- condiments (e.g., ketchup or jelly)
- grain-based desserts

CACFP operators may serve noncreditable foods, however, these foods do not credit toward a reimbursable meal/snack.

### **Ounce Equivalents (oz eq)**

Ounce equivalents designates the contribution a given serving size makes toward the meats/meat alternates (M/MA) component or the grains component. One ounce equivalent (1 oz eq) of M/MA is a serving of meat or meat alternate that provides the equivalent contribution of one ounce cooked lean meat without the bone. One ounce equivalent of grains is a serving of grains that provides 16 grams of creditable grains.

## GETTING STARTED: WORDS TO KNOW

### **Program Operator/CACFP Operator**

Program operator is an individual who is operating one or more CNP, such as the CACFP. An example of a program operator is a person who runs a home day care site and serves meals to children through CACFP. Typically, a program operator is the person who is preparing and serving the meals to children or adults and receiving reimbursement through one of the CNP. CACFP operators may also be referred to as “providers.”

### **Serving Size**

A single portion of a food identified by the measure, typically as a weight and/or volume. Each meal pattern lists the minimum serving size for each meal component that must be served or offered to meet the meal pattern requirements. The CACFP operator may choose to serve more than the minimum serving size; however, additional reimbursement will not be given for the extra food served.

### **Whole Grains**

Whole grains or the foods made from whole grains contain all the essential parts of a grain: the bran, germ, and the endosperm.

### **Whole Grain-Rich**

Whole grain-rich is the term used by FNS to indicate that the grain content of a product is between 50 and 100 percent whole grain with any remaining grains being enriched. See the Grains section of this handbook beginning on page 72, for information on identifying whole grain-rich products.

### **Other Terms to Be Familiar With**

#### **Modifications for Disability Reasons**

CACFP centers and day care homes must provide reasonable modifications to meals and snacks or to the meal service to accommodate participants with disabilities. These modifications related to an individual’s disability are done on a case-by-case basis. If the meal modification does not meet the meal pattern requirements, a signed medical statement to request modifications on behalf of participants with disabilities is required. State licensed healthcare professionals or Registered Dietitians/Registered Dietitian Nutritionists may write medical statements. A State licensed healthcare professional is an individual authorized to write medical prescriptions under State law. Meals that do not meet the CACFP meal pattern requirements are not eligible for reimbursement unless they are supported by a signed medical statement.

The medical statement should include a description of the participant’s disability so that providers understand how it restricts the participant’s diet. The statement should also describe what must be done to accommodate the disability. This may include what foods should not be served and recommendations for what should be served. A signed medical statement is required to justify reimbursement for the modified meal. This statement should be kept on file at the center or day care home.

#### **Modifications for Nondisability Reasons**

CACFP operators are encouraged to consider participants’ dietary preferences when planning and preparing meals and snacks.

Nondisability dietary preferences may include cultural, ethical, Tribal, and religious, to include kosher and halal, preferences. CACFP operators may choose to accommodate a nondisability dietary preference that is not supported by a medical statement if the modifications requested can be made within the meal pattern requirements. Modified meals that meet the meal pattern requirements are reimbursable without a written medical statement. USDA acknowledges that, due to operational and budgetary constraints, program operators may not be able to meet all participant preferences at each meal service; however, USDA encourages program operators to strive for an inclusive meal service. See the **Culturally and Religiously Preferred Foods** website for additional resources.

### **Reimbursement**

Money received from the USDA for serving reimbursable meals and snacks to eligible participants.

### **Traditional Indigenous Foods**

As per the Agricultural Act of 2014, the term “traditional food” means food that has traditionally been prepared and consumed by an Indian Tribe. In general, traditional Indigenous foods are local, seasonal, nutritious, and environmentally friendly, and include herbs and medicinal plants. Traditional Indigenous food includes wild game meat, fish, seafood, marine mammals, plants, and berries.

CACFP operators are encouraged to serve foods that are culturally relevant to their participants, including serving traditional Indigenous foods. Crediting information for some traditional Indigenous foods may be found in the FBG.

However, for those foods which are not listed, program operators may use yield information for a similar product that is in the FBG.

See the policy memo: **Crediting Traditional Indigenous Foods in Child Nutrition Programs** and website: **Serving Traditional Indigenous Foods in Child Nutrition Programs** for additional information.

### **Manufacturer Documentation: Child Nutrition Labels and Product Formulation Statements**

The Child Nutrition (CN) label and a manufacturer’s Product Formulation Statement (PFS) are documents that provide a way for a manufacturer to demonstrate how a processed food product may credit toward the meal pattern requirements in CNP. Both a CN label and PFS are voluntarily provided by manufacturers at the request of program operators.

- A CN label is approved by USDA and provides a warranty of a product’s meal pattern contribution when the product is used according to the manufacturer’s instructions.
- A PFS is typically provided for processed products that do not have a CN label. A verified PFS is one that the program operator has reviewed and verified the ingredients are creditable and calculations are correct.

Additional Information about CN labels and PFS may be found:

- **<https://www.fns.usda.gov/cn/manufacturing-documentation>**
- **<https://www.fns.usda.gov/cn/labeling/food-manufacturersindustry>**

# GETTING STARTED: WORDS TO KNOW

## Child Nutrition Labeling Program

A voluntary program that allows manufacturers the opportunity to include a standardized crediting statement on their product label. Only main dish products that credit toward the meats/meat alternates component are eligible for a CN label. CN labels are typically provided for foodservice products (those provided directly through vendors) versus products found in the retail market (grocery stores).

The CN Labeling Program is managed by USDA, Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS).

- A CN-labeled product must contain a minimum of 0.50 ounce equivalent M/MA per serving.
- All CN labels must be authorized by AMS prior to being used.
- Manufacturers must have an approved quality control (QC) program and Federal oversight to participate in the CN Labeling Program.
- CN labels provide a warranty against audit claims when the product is used according to manufacturer's instructions.

## Sample CN Label

## Beef Crumbles With Soy Protein

Ingredient Statement: Ground beef (no more than 20% fat), textured soy protein product, water, salt, pepper.


**CN** XXXXXX\*

Each 2.20 oz. serving of Cooked Beef Patty Crumbles (By Weight) provides 2.00 oz. equivalent meat/meat alternate for Child Nutrition Meal Pattern Requirements. (Use of this logo and statement authorized by the Food and Nutrition Service, USDA mm/yy\*\*).

**CN**

**Net Wt.:** 19.0 pounds

**CN**



**DFG Food Company**  
**1234 Yellow Road    Oaktown, PA 12345**

\* The 6-digit CN identification number is assigned by CN Labeling office.

\*\* Date is written using numbers to represent the month/year of final label approval.

## GETTING STARTED: WORDS TO KNOW

For additional information about the CN Labeling Program, see <https://www.fns.usda.gov/cn/labeling>.

### **Product Formulation Statement (PFS)**

A Product Formulation Statement (PFS) is a signed document from the manufacturer that demonstrates how a food product may credit toward the meal pattern requirements. A PFS may be requested by the program operator for

processed food products that are not listed in the FBG and do not have CN label. USDA does not approve a manufacturer's PFS. Program operators are responsible for ensuring menu items meet meal pattern requirements.

PFS templates for industry use are found here: <https://www.fns.usda.gov/cn/labeling/food-manufacturersindustry>.

