

Crediting **Grains** in the **Child Nutrition Programs**

Tip Sheet

Part 3: Program Requirements



Grain products made with creditable grains are required as part of reimbursable meals offered in Child Nutrition Programs (CNP): the National School Lunch Program (NSLP), the School Breakfast Program (SBP), Preschool, the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP), and the Summer Food Service Program (SFSP). Products made with creditable grains may also be offered as part of a reimbursable snack in the CACFP, NSLP Preschool, SFSP, and the NSLP Afterschool Snack Service. This tip sheet provides helpful information on serving creditable grains in CNP to meet meal pattern requirements.

How Much?

In NSLP, SBP, Preschool, and CACFP, the grains component is measured in ounce equivalents (oz eq). To provide 1.00 oz eq grains, the product must contain at least:

- 16 grams of creditable grains for grain products listed in Groups A-G of **Exhibit A: Grain Requirements for Child Nutrition Programs (Exhibit A)**, such as breads, crackers, bagels, pancakes, etc.
- 28 grams of creditable grains for grain products listed in Groups H and I of Exhibit A, such as dry cereal grains, pastas, and ready-to-eat (RTE) cereals.

A grain product must provide a **minimum of 0.25 oz eq grains per serving** to credit toward the grains component. **Note:** the CACFP infant meal pattern does not have a minimum grains requirement.

For SFSP and NSLP Afterschool Snack Service, the grains contribution is measured in grains/breads servings. One grains/breads serving provides:

- 14.75 grams of creditable grains for grain products listed in Groups A-G of Exhibit A, such as breads and crackers.
- 25 grams of creditable grains for grain products listed in Groups H and I of Exhibit A, such as dry cereal grains, pastas, and ready-to-eat cereals.

A grain product must provide a **minimum of 0.25 grains/breads serving** to contribute toward the grains component.





The minimum grains requirement for a reimbursable meal depends upon the age or grade group for the specific CNP.

School Meals

SBP*			NSLP	
Grade	Daily Minimum (oz eq)	Weekly Minimum-Maximum (oz eq)	Daily Minimum (oz eq)	Weekly Minimum-Maximum (oz eq)
K-5	1	7-10	1	8-9
6-8	1	8-10	1	8-10
9-12	1	9-10	2	10-12

*At breakfast, a meat/meat alternate may be served in place of grains after the minimum daily grains requirement is met.

School meals have both a minimum daily grains requirement and a weekly grains requirement range. Although schools may serve more than the upper weekly range (as long as the weekly dietary specifications are met), they must serve at least the minimum amount listed per week.

CACFP and Preschool

Age Group	Meal	Daily Minimum per Meal/Snack* (oz eq)
Ages 1 - 2 & Ages 3 - 5	Each Meal* & Snack**	½
Ages 6 - 18	Each Meal* & Snack**	1
Adults	Each Meal*	2
Adults	Snack**	1

*At breakfast, a meat/meat alternate may be served in place of the entire grains requirement up to three times per week.

**Grains are optional at snack

SFSP & Afterschool Snack

Age Group	Daily Minimum per Meal/Snack*
All Ages SFSP Each Meal & Snack*	1 grains/breads serving
Ages 1 - 2 NSLP Afterschool Snack*	½ grains/breads serving
Ages 3 - 5	½ grains/breads serving
Ages 6 - 12	1 grains/breads serving

*Grains are optional at snack



Four Ways To Determine How Grain Products Credit Toward the Meal Pattern Requirements

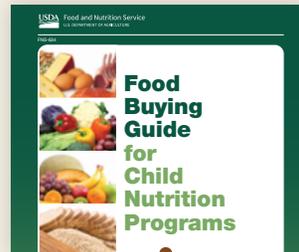
1 Exhibit A

Exhibit A: Grain Requirements For Child Nutrition Programs^{1,2}
 Color Key: Footnote 5 = Blue, Footnote 3 or 4 = Red

Food Products per Group	Ounce Equivalent (oz eq)	Minimum Serving Size
Group A	Ounce Equivalent (oz eq) for Group A	Minimum Serving Size for Group A
Bread type coating Bread sticks (hard) Chow Mein noodles Savory Crackers (saltines and snack crackers) CROUTONS Pretzels (hard) Stuffing (dry) <i>Note: weights apply to bread in stuffing</i>	1 oz eq = 22 gm or 0.8 oz 3/4 oz eq = 17 gm or 0.6 oz 1/2 oz eq = 11 gm or 0.4 oz 1/4 oz eq = 6 gm or 0.2 oz	1 serving = 20 gm or 0.7 oz 3/4 serving = 15 gm or 0.5 oz 1/2 serving = 10 gm or 0.4 oz 1/4 serving = 5 gm or 0.2 oz

Example: 11 grams or 0.4 ounces of whole grain-rich crackers provides 0.5 oz eq grains

2 The Food Buying Guide

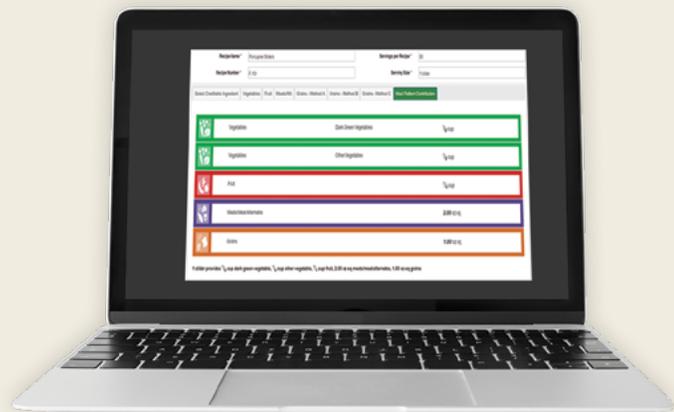


1 1/2 cup of popcorn provides 0.5 oz eq grains

POPCORN

Item	Weight	Price	Grain Equivalent
Popcorn, popped	Pound	45.50	3/4 cup popped provides 1/4 oz equivalent grains
	Pound	22.75	1-1/2 cup popped provides 1/2 oz equivalent grains
	Pound	11.38	3 cup popped provides 1 oz equivalent grains

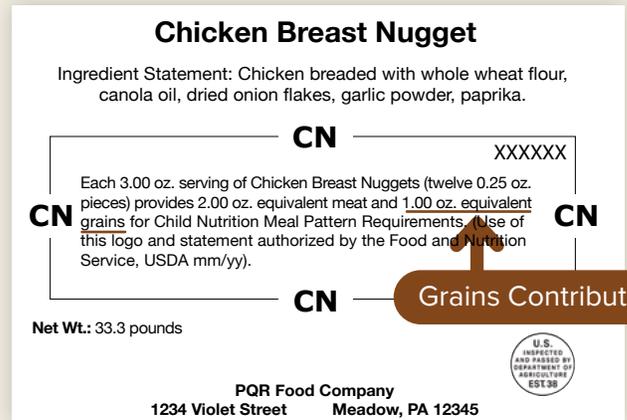
3 The Recipe Analysis Workbook (RAW)



This helps Program operators determine how creditable ingredients in a standardized recipe may credit toward meal pattern requirements, including grains and other meal pattern components.

- For more details, visit <https://foodbuyingguide.fns.usda.gov/Appendix/ResourceAppendixA>.
- To access the online RAW, visit <https://foodbuyingguide.fns.usda.gov/>.

4 Manufacturer's Documentation Child Nutrition (CN) Label



A CN label provides crediting information for commercial products. Main dish products that provide at least 0.50 oz equivalent meat/meat alternate are eligible for a CN label.

For more information, see: <https://www.fns.usda.gov/cn/labeling-program>.

4

Manufacturer’s Documentation (continued) Product Formulation Statement (PFS)

A PFS is a certified document that may be used to demonstrate how a manufacturer’s product contributes to the meal pattern requirements. A PFS may be provided for processed products that do not have a CN label. Program operators are responsible for ensuring menu items meet meal pattern requirements; therefore, they should review and verify the crediting statement on a manufacturer’s PFS prior to purchasing the product.

For more information, see: <https://www.fns.usda.gov/cn/labeling/food-manufacturersindustry>.

Crediting Statement from a PFS for Dinner Rolls (for NSLP)

Total weight (per portion) of product as purchased 2.25

Total contribution of product (per portion) 2.00 oz eq

I certify that the above information is true and correct and that a 2.25 ounce portion of this product (ready for serving) provides 2.00 oz eq grains. I further certify that non-creditable grains **are not** above 0.24 oz eq per portion. Products with more than 0.24 oz eq or 3.99g for Groups A-G or 6.99g for Groups H and I of non-creditable grains do not credit toward the grains requirement for school meals.

Grains Requirement in CNP

- Grains offered in all CNP must be creditable to count toward meal pattern requirements.
- When calculating the grains contribution, round down to the nearest 0.25 oz eq or 0.25 grains/breads serving.

What is a creditable grain in CNP?

For more information see: [Crediting Grains in Child Nutrition Programs Tip Sheet, Part 1: Creditable Grains in Child Nutrition Programs](#).

- School Meal Programs, Preschool, and CACFP have a whole grain-rich requirement.

What does Whole Grain-Rich mean?

“Whole grain-rich” is a term used by the U.S Department of Agriculture’s Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) and only refers to its criteria for meeting the grains requirement for the NSLP, SBP, Preschool, and CACFP. The term is not found on product labels and should not be confused with the U.S. Food and Drug Administration’s (FDA) whole grain health claim. Whole grain-rich products must contain at least 50 percent whole grains and the remaining grain, if any, must be enriched.



For more information, see: [Crediting Grains in Child Nutrition Programs Tip Sheet, Part 2: Identifying Grain Products That Are Whole Grain-Rich](#).

Note: There is no whole grain-rich requirement for SFSP, NSLP Afterschool Snack Service, or the CACFP infant meal pattern.

School Meal Programs (NSLP & SBP)

- 80 percent of grains offered must be whole grain-rich.
- In NSLP, up to 2 oz eq of grain-based desserts per week are allowed.
- In SBP, schools may substitute 1 oz eq meat/meat alternate for 1 oz eq grains after the minimum daily grains requirement is met.

CACFP and Preschool

- At least one offering of grains per day must be whole grain-rich for children and adults.
- Grain-based desserts do not credit toward the grains component.
- Breakfast cereal must contain no more than 6 grams of total sugars per dry oz.
- At breakfast, meats/meat alternates may be used to meet the entire grains requirement a maximum of 3 times per week.



Test Your Knowledge

1. The preschool at Liberty Elementary School served *Happy Days* breakfast cereal to students, ages 3-5 years old. Can this cereal count toward the grains component in a reimbursable breakfast?



INGREDIENTS: Corn, sugar, contains 2% or less of: malt flavor, corn syrup, modified food starch, dextrose, salt, gelatin, natural flavors

Vitamins & Minerals: Iron (ferric phosphate), niacinamide, vitamin B6 (pyridoxine hydrochloride), vitamin B2 (riboflavin), vitamin B1 (thiamin hydrochloride), folic acid, vitamin D3, vitamin B12.

- Yes No

Nutrition Facts

Serving size 2/3 cup (1 oz)

Amount per serving
Calories 102

% Daily Value*

Total Fat 0g 0%

Saturated Fat 0g 0%

Trans Fat 0g

Cholesterol 0mg 0%

Sodium 124mg 0%

Total Carbohydrate 25g 0%

Dietary Fiber <1g 0%

Total Sugars 12g

Includes 11g Added Sugars 0%

Protein 1g

* The % Daily Value (DV) tells you how much a nutrient in a serving of food contributes to a daily diet. 2,000 calories a day is used for general nutrition advice.

2. Sunrise Day Care Center cares for children 3 through 5 years old. The Program operator purchased the following crackers to serve at snack.

Using Exhibit A, how many crackers would need to be offered to each child to provide the amount of grains required when including grains at snack?



Serving size = 5 crackers (15 grams)

- 3 crackers
 4 crackers
 5 crackers

Exhibit A: Grain Requirements For Child Nutrition Programs^{1,2}

Color Key: Footnote 5 = Blue, Footnote 3 or 4 = Red

Food Products per Group	Ounce Equivalent (oz eq)	Minimum Serving Size
Group A	Ounce Equivalent (oz eq) for Group A	Minimum Serving Size for Group A
Bread type coating	1 oz eq = 22 gm or 0.8 oz	1 serving = 20 gm or 0.7 oz
Bread sticks (hard)	3/4 oz eq = 17 gm or 0.6 oz	3/4 serving = 15 gm or 0.5 oz
Chow Mein noodles	1/2 oz eq = 11 gm or 0.4 oz	1/2 serving = 10 gm or 0.4 oz
Savory Crackers (saltines and snack crackers)	1/4 oz eq = 6 gm or 0.2 oz	1/4 serving = 5 gm or 0.2 oz
Croutons		
Pretzels (hard)		
Stuffing (dry) <small>Note: weights apply to bread in stuffing</small>		

3. These strawberry pancakes are served at Liberty Elementary School (K-5) for breakfast.

INGREDIENTS: Water, whole wheat flour, enriched wheat flour (unbleached wheat flour, niacin, reduced iron, thiamine mononitrate, riboflavin, folic acid), soybean oil, cane sugar contains 2% or less: baking powder, barley malt, salt, strawberries, guar gum, soy lecithin.



Serving size = 2 pancakes (70 grams)

a. Using Exhibit A (below), how many ounce equivalents of grains are provided in 2 pancakes?

Exhibit A: Grain Requirements for Child Nutrition Programs^{1,2}		
Color Key: Footnote 5 = Blue, Footnote 3 or 4 = Red		
Group C	Ounce Equivalent (oz eq) for Group C	Minimum Serving Size for Group C
Cookies ³ (plain - includes vanilla wafers)	1 oz eq = 34 gm or 1.2 oz	1 serving = 31 gm or 1.1 oz
Cornbread	3/4 oz eq = 26 gm or 0.9 oz	3/4 serving = 23 gm or 0.8 oz
Corn muffins	1/2 oz eq = 17 gm or 0.6 oz	1/2 serving = 16 gm or 0.6 oz
Croissants	1/4 oz eq = 9 gm or 0.3 oz	1/4 serving = 8 gm or 0.3 oz
Pancakes		
Pie crust (dessert pies ³ , cobbler ³ , fruit turnovers ⁴ , and meats/meat alternate pies)		
Waffles		

- 1 oz eq
- 2 oz eq
- 2.5 oz eq

b. Do two strawberry pancakes meet the SBP daily minimum requirement for grades K-5?

Chart 1A: School Breakfast Program (SBP)			
Meal Components	Grades K - 5	Grades 6 - 8	Grades 9 - 12
Amount of Food¹ Per Week (Minimum per day)			
Grains (oz eq) ⁴	7-10 (1)	8-10 (1)	9-10 (1)

- Yes
- No





Answers

1. The preschool at Liberty Elementary School served Happy Days breakfast cereal to students, ages 3-5 years old. Can this cereal count toward the grains component in a reimbursable breakfast?



INGREDIENTS: Corn, sugar, contains 2% or less of: malt flavor, corn syrup, modified food starch, dextrose, salt, gelatin, natural flavors

Vitamins & Minerals: Iron (ferric phosphate), niacinamide, vitamin B6 (pyridoxine hydrochloride), vitamin B2 (riboflavin), vitamin B1 (thiamin hydrochloride), folic acid, vitamin D3, vitamin B12.

Nutrition Facts

Serving size 2/3 cup (1 oz)

Amount per serving
Calories 102

% Daily Value*

Total Fat 0g 0%

Saturated Fat 0g 0%

Trans Fat 0g

Cholesterol 0mg 0%

Sodium 124mg 0%

Total Carbohydrate 25g 0%

Dietary Fiber <1g 0%

Total Sugars 12g

Includes 11g Added Sugars 0%

Protein 1g

* The % Daily Value (DV) tells you how much a nutrient in a serving of food contributes to a daily diet. 2,000 calories a day is used for general nutrition advice.

- **No.** The grain ingredient, corn, does not indicate that it is whole grain or enriched. However, the cereal is fortified with added vitamins and minerals, and therefore appears creditable based on the ingredient label. The sugar content for a RTE breakfast cereal served in Preschool must contain no more than 6 grams of sugar per dry ounce. The Nutrition Facts label for this cereal, which lists nutrients per 1 oz serving size, states that Total Sugars are 12 grams; hence, this cereal is not creditable.

- Yes

2. Sunrise Day Care Center cares for children 3 through 5 years old. The Program operator purchased the following crackers to serve at snack.

Using Exhibit A, how many crackers would they need to offer each child to meet the meal pattern requirement in oz eq?

Serving size = 5 crackers (15 grams)

Exhibit A: Grain Requirements For Child Nutrition Programs^{1,2}

Color Key: Footnote 5 = Blue, Footnote 3 or 4 = Red

Food Products per Group	Ounce Equivalent (oz eq)	Minimum Serving Size
Group A	Ounce Equivalent (oz eq) for Group A	Minimum Serving Size for Group A
Bread type coating	1 oz eq = 22 gm or 0.8 oz	1 serving = 20 gm or 0.7 oz
Bread sticks (hard)	3/4 oz eq = 17 gm or 0.6 oz	3/4 serving = 15 gm or 0.5 oz
Chow Mein noodles	1/2 oz eq = 11 gm or 0.4 oz	1/2 serving = 10 gm or 0.4 oz
Savory Crackers (saltines and snack crackers)	1/4 oz eq = 6 gm or 0.2 oz	1/4 serving = 5 gm or 0.2 oz
CROUTONS		
Pretzels (hard)		
Stuffing (dry) <i>Note: weights apply to bread in stuffing</i>		

- 3 crackers
- **4 crackers.** The amount of grains to serve at CACFP snack for 3-5 year olds is 0.5 oz eq. According to Exhibit A, 1/2 oz eq of savory crackers equals 11 grams.

To find out how many crackers are in 11 grams, first find the weight of each cracker. Divide the total weight of the crackers (15 grams) by the number of crackers (5). 15 grams divided by 5 crackers is 3 grams. Each cracker weighs 3 grams.

You need to serve at least 11 grams of crackers. 11 divided by 3 is 3.66 crackers, which rounds up to 4 crackers.

- 5 crackers



Answers

3. These strawberry pancakes are served at Liberty Elementary School (K-5).

INGREDIENTS: Water, **whole wheat flour, enriched wheat flour** (unbleached wheat flour, niacin, reduced iron, thiamine mononitrate, riboflavin, folic acid), soybean oil, cane sugar contains 2% or less: baking powder, barley malt, salt, strawberries, guar gum, soy lecithin.



Serving size = 2 pancakes (70 grams)

a. Using Exhibit A (below), how many ounce equivalents of grains are provided in 2 pancakes?

Exhibit A: Grain Requirements For Child Nutrition Programs ^{1,2}		
Color Key: Footnote 5 = Blue, Footnote 3 or 4 = Red		
Group C	Ounce Equivalent (oz eq) for Group C	Minimum Serving Size for Group C
Cookies ³ (plain - includes vanilla wafers)	1 oz eq = 34 gm or 1.2 oz	1 serving = 31 gm or 1.1 oz
Cornbread	3/4 oz eq = 26 gm or 0.9 oz	3/4 serving = 23 gm or 0.8 oz
Corn muffins	1/2 oz eq = 17 gm or 0.6 oz	1/2 serving = 16 gm or 0.6 oz
Croissants	1/4 oz eq = 9 gm or 0.3 oz	1/4 serving = 8 gm or 0.3 oz
Pancakes		
Pie crust (dessert pies ³ , cobbler ³ , fruit turnovers ⁴ , and meats/meat alternate pies)		
Waffles		

- 1 oz eq
- 2 oz eq. Two pancakes weigh 70 grams. Exhibit A states that 34 grams of pancakes provide 1 oz eq grains. Divide the weight of the two pancakes (70 grams) by the weight of 1 oz eq of pancakes (34 grams), and the result is 2.05 oz eq. This amount needs to be rounded down to the nearest 0.25 oz eq, which is 2.0 oz eq.
- 2.5 oz eq

b. Do two strawberry pancakes meet the SBP daily minimum requirement for grades K-5?

Chart 1A: School Breakfast Program (SBP)			
Meal Components	Grades K - 5	Grades 6 - 8	Grades 9 - 12
Amount of Food¹ Per Week (Minimum per day)			
Grains (oz eq) ⁴	7-10 (1)	8-10 (1)	9-10 (1)

- Yes. The minimum daily grains requirement at breakfast in the SBP for grades K-5 is 1 oz eq.
- No