

School Nutrition Programs Meal Patterns

Illinois School Nutrition Association
Annual Conference

Agenda

Breakfast

Lunch

New(*ish*)
Changes

Resources

Final Rule for School Meal Standards

- Updated school meal standards based on the Dietary Guidelines for Americans
- Effective July 1, 2024, but USDA is gradually phasing in required changes over time
- Key provisions:
 - Milk
 - Whole grains
 - Added sugars
 - Sodium



Breakfast Meal Pattern Requirements

SBP Meal Pattern Overview

The SBP has three food components: 1) grains, 2) fruits, and 3) milk

Quantities of food components are determined based on age/grade groups

Dietary specifications are set for calories, sodium, and saturated fat

Offer versus serve (OVS) is optional for all grade groups

SBP Meal Pattern Overview

Meal Pattern Components and Minimum Serving Sizes

Meal Component	Grades K-5	Grades 6-8	Grades 9-12
Fruit (cups)	5 (1)	5 (1)	5 (1)
Grain (ounce-equivalents)	7-10 (1)	8-10 (1)	9-10 (1)
Milk (cups)	5 (1)	5 (1)	5 (1)

Dietary Specifications

Meal Component	Grades K-5	Grades 6-8	Grades 9-12
Calories (kcal)	350-500	400-550	450-600
Sodium (mg)	≤540 mg	≤600 mg	≤640 mg
Saturated Fat (% total kcal)	<10	<10	<10

SBP Meal Pattern Overview

Meal Pattern Components and Minimum Serving Sizes Daily Requirements

Meal Component	Grades K-5	Grades 6-8	Grades 9-12
Fruit (cups)	5 (1)	5 (1)	5 (1)
Grain (ounce-equivalents)	7-10 (1)	8-10 (1)	9-10 (1)
Milk (cups)	5 (1)	5 (1)	5 (1)



SBP Meal Pattern Overview

Meal Pattern Components and Minimum Serving Sizes—Weekly Requirements

Meal Component	Grades K-5	Grades 6-8	Grades 9-12
Fruit (cups)	5 (1)	5 (1)	5 (1)
Grain (ounce-equivalents)	7-10 (1)	8-10 (1)	9-10 (1)
Milk (cups)	5 (1)	5 (1)	5 (1)

Dietary Specifications—Weekly Requirements

Meal Component	Grades K-5	Grades 6-8	Grades 9-12
Calories (kcal)	350-500	400-550	450-600
Sodium (mg)	≤540 mg	≤600 mg	≤640 mg
Saturated Fat (% total kcal)	<10	<10	<10

Fruit Component



Fresh, frozen, dried, canned (packed in water, full-strength juice, or light syrup) and full-strength juice may contribute toward the fruit requirement



No more than half of the required weekly cups of fruit may come from juice



Generally, fruits credit toward the fruit component based on their volume as served

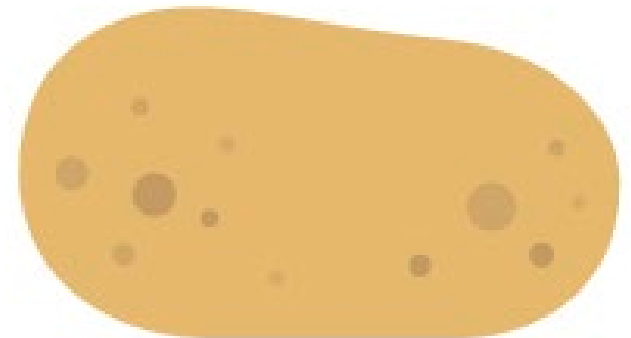
Exception: dried fruits credit as twice the amount served



The minimum quantity of fruits and/or vegetables that may be credited towards this component is 1/8 cup

Vegetable Substitutions at Breakfast

- Vegetables are not a required meal pattern component in the SBP
- May be offered in place of all or part of the required fruits at breakfast
- 1 day/week = any subgroup can be offered
- 2 days/week (or more) = at least 2 subgroups must be offered



Vegetable Subgroups

Vegetables are not a required meal pattern component in the SBP

	Grades K-12	
Dark Green	($\frac{1}{2}$ cup)	$\frac{1}{2}$ cup
Red/Orange	$\frac{3}{4}$ cup	1 $\frac{1}{4}$ cup
*Beans/Peas/Lentils	$\frac{1}{2}$ cup	$\frac{1}{2}$ cup
Starchy	$\frac{1}{2}$ cup	$\frac{1}{2}$ cup
Other	$\frac{1}{2}$ cup	$\frac{3}{4}$ cup
Additional to reach weekly total	1 cup	1 $\frac{1}{2}$ cup

*Formerly Legumes/Bean/Peas

Grain Component

80% of grains served throughout the week must be *whole grain-rich* (WGR), and any remaining grains must be *enriched*

All grain products must be credited based on per-ounce equivalent (oz eq) standards

When crediting grain products, grains round down to the nearest 0.25 oz eq

The minimum amount of grain creditable towards meal pattern requirements is 0.25 oz eq

Grain Component

Whole grain-rich (WGR) is a term that is specific to the USDA's Child Nutrition Programs

WGR differs from the commonly used term *whole grain*



A product is considered WGR if it contains 100% whole grains, or a blend of whole grains and enriched grains of which at least 50% is whole grain and any remaining grains in the product are enriched

Grain Component

WGR grains meet at least one of the following:

- Whole grains per 1 oz eq serving must be ≥ 8 grams (for groups A-G) **OR**
- Whole grains are the primary ingredient by weight **OR**
- The product includes one of the following FDA approved whole grain health claims on its packaging **OR**
 - “Diets rich in whole grain foods and other plant foods, and low in total fat, saturated fat, and cholesterol, may reduce the risk of heart disease and certain cancers.”
 - “Diets rich in whole grain foods and other plant foods, and low in saturated fat and cholesterol, may help reduce the risk of heart disease.”
- The product is listed on any State Agency’s WIC-approved whole grain food list



Grain Component

Ounce equivalent (oz eq) standards are used to designate the contribution a given serving size makes toward the grain component

An ounce equivalent is the amount of a grain product that is considered equal to (or contains) 1 ounce creditable toward the grain component

Breads, cereals, muffins, crackers, pasta, etc. all contribute differently to the grain requirement based on the weight of each product

Grain Component

Exhibit A of the Food Buying Guide for Child Nutrition Programs is the most important tool for determining how different grain products contribute to the ounce equivalence requirement.

Find Exhibit A online at
<https://foodbuyingguide.fns.usda.gov/Content/TablesFBG/Exhibit A Grain Requirements For Child Nutrition Programs.pdf>

Group E
 Cereal bars, breakfast
 (with nuts, dried fruit,
 and/or fruit puree)
 Doughnuts (cake or
 French toast)
 Sweet rolls (buns)
 Toasted pastries (fruit
 or nut)
Group F
 Cakes (plain, unfrosted)
 Coffee cake
Group G
 Biscuits (plain)
 Cakes (all varieties)
Group H
 Breakfast cereals (all
 varieties)
 Macaroni (all shapes)
 Noodles (all varieties)
 Pasta (all shapes)
 Rapid freeze dry
 Rice
Group I
 Ready to eat breakfast
 cereals

Exhibit A: Grain Requirements for Child Nutrition Programs¹
 Color Key: Portions 5 = 5 oz, Portions 3 = 3 oz, Portions 2 = 2 oz, Portions 1 = 1 oz

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 (buns)	1/2 oz eq = 17 gm or 0.6 oz	1/2 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
Crackers (biscuits and snack crackers)	1/2 oz eq = 6 gm or 0.2 oz	1/2 serving = 5 gm or 0.2 oz
Croissants		
Proteins (hard)		
Stuffing (dry) (note: weights apply to bread-in-stuffing)		
Group B	Ounce Equivalent (oz eq) for Group B	Minimum Serving Size for Group B
Staples	1 oz eq = 28 gm or 1.0 oz	1 serving = 25 gm or 0.9 oz
Batter-type coating	1/2 oz eq = 21 gm or 0.75 oz	1/2 serving = 19 gm or 0.7 oz
Breads	1/2 oz eq = 14 gm or 0.5 oz	1/2 serving = 13 gm or 0.5 oz
Breads - all (for example sliced, French, Italian)	1/2 oz eq = 7 gm or 0.25 oz	1/2 serving = 6 gm or 0.2 oz
Buns (hamburger and hot dog)		
Sweet Crackers (graham crackers - all shapes, animal crackers)		
Egg roll skins		
English muffins		
Pita bread		
Pizza crust		
Proteins (soft)		
Rolls		
Tortillas		
Tortilla chips		
Taco shells		
Group C	Ounce Equivalent (oz eq) for Group C	Minimum Serving Size for Group C
Cookies ² (plain - includes vanilla wafers)	1 oz eq = 34 gm or 1.2 oz	1 serving = 31 gm or 1.1 oz
Combination	1/2 oz eq = 26 gm or 0.9 oz	1/2 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	1/2 oz eq = 8 gm or 0.3 oz	1/2 serving = 8 gm or 0.3 oz
Pancakes		
Pie crust (dessert pie, cobble, fruit turnover, and meat/meat alternate pies)		
Muffins		
Group D	Ounce Equivalent (oz eq) for Group D	Minimum Serving Size for Group D
Doughnuts (cake and yeast raised, unfrosted)	1 oz eq = 55 gm or 2.0 oz	1 serving = 50 gm or 1.8 oz
Cereal bars, breakfast bars, granola bars (granola)	1/2 oz eq = 42 gm or 1.5 oz	1/2 serving = 38 gm or 1.3 oz
Muffins (all, except corn)	1/2 oz eq = 29 gm or 1.0 oz	1/2 serving = 25 gm or 0.9 oz
Sweet roll (unfrosted)	1/2 oz eq = 14 gm or 0.5 oz	1/2 serving = 13 gm or 0.5 oz
Toast (unfrosted)		

¹ In the NSLP, SSP (grades K-12), and NSLP after-school snacks (effective July 1, 2025), at least 40 percent of the weekly grains offered must meet the whole grain-rich criteria and the remaining grain items offered must be made from whole grain flour, whole grain meal, corn meal, masa harina, hominy, enriched flour, enriched meal, bran, germ, or be an enriched product, such as enriched bread, or a fortified cereal. Please note: State agencies have the discretion to set stricter requirements than the minimum nutrition standards for school meals. For additional guidance, please contact your State agency. For all other Child Nutrition Programs, grains must be either whole grain flour, whole grain meal, masa harina, hominy, enriched flour, enriched meal, bran, germ, or be an enriched product, such as enriched bread, or a fortified cereal. Under the CACFP, NSLP, and adult meal programs and the NSLP/SSBP preschool meals, at least one grain serving per day must meet the whole grain-rich criteria.

² For the NSLP, SSP (grades K-12), NSLP after-school snacks, and CACFP, and NSLP/SSBP infant and preschool meals, grain quantities are determined using ounce equivalents (oz eq). SSP may determine grain quantities using grain-to-breads servings. Some of the following grain items may contain more sugar, salt, or other additives than those listed. This should be a consideration when deciding how often to serve them.

³ Allowed in NSLP up to 2.0 oz eq grain-based dessert per week in grades K-12 as specified in §101.10 and at snack service in SSP. Combination grain-based dessert and cereal must contain the grain component in the CACFP, NSLP after-school snacks (effective July 1, 2025), or NSLP/SSBP infant and preschool meals as specified in §101.10 and at snack service in SSP.

⁴ Allowed in NSLP up to 2.0 oz eq grain-based dessert per week in grades K-12 as specified in §101.10. May count toward the grain component in the CACFP, NSLP after-school snacks (effective July 1, 2025), or NSLP/SSBP infant and preschool meals as specified in §101.10 and at snack service in SSP.

⁵ Allowed in NSLP up to 2.0 oz eq grain-based dessert per week in grades K-12 as specified in §101.10. May count toward the grain component in the CACFP, NSLP after-school snacks (effective July 1, 2025), or NSLP/SSBP infant and preschool meals as specified in §101.10 and at snack service in SSP.

⁶ Effective October 1, 2025, cereals served in CACFP and NSLP/SSBP infant and preschool meals must contain no more than 6 grams of added sugars per dry ounce. Prior to October 1, 2025, breakfast cereals served in the CACFP must contain no more than 8 grams of total sugars per dry ounce.

Meat/Meat Alternate Substitutions at Breakfast

Meat/meat alternates (M/MA) are not a required meal pattern component in the SBP

May substitute M/MA products to meet the weekly grains serving requirement

Schools are no longer required to serve 1 oz eq of grains before substituting M/MA

Milk Component

Allowable milk types

- Fat-free (skim) flavored and unflavored
- Low-fat (1%) flavored and unflavored

Meal Service

- At least 2 varieties must be offered during the meal service
- One of those options must be unflavored

Component	K-5	6-8	K-8	9-12
Milk	5 cups weekly 1 cup daily	5 cups weekly 1 cup daily	5 cups weekly 1 cup daily	5 cups weekly 1 cup daily



Offer Versus Serve (OVS) at Breakfast

- Optional for all grades
- Under OVS at breakfast, schools must offer at least **four food items** from the three required **food components**
- A **food component** is one of three required food groups in a reimbursable breakfast (fruits, grains, and milk)
- A **food item** is a specific food offered within the three food components
- Students must select at least **three food items**, including at least ½ cup of fruit (or vegetable substitutions, if offered)

Food Component	Food Item
Fruit	½ cup
Grain	1 oz eq
Milk	1 cup

Dietary Specifications—*Added Sugar*

Product-based limits beginning **July 1, 2025**

Breakfast Cereals

no more than 6 grams of added sugar per dry ounce

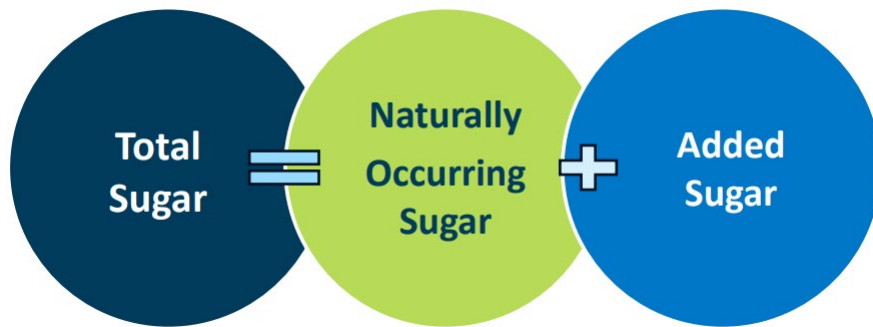
Yogurt

no more than 12 grams of added sugar per 6 ounces (2 grams per ounce)

Flavored Milk

no more than 10 grams of added sugar per 8 fluid ounces

Added Sugar (Breakfast & Lunch)



1 gram of added sugar
= 4 calories

Nutrition Facts	
8 servings per container	
Serving size 8 fl oz (240mL)	
Amount per serving	
Calories	110
% Daily Value*	
Total Fat 0g	0%
Saturated Fat 0g	0%
Trans Fat 0g	
Cholesterol 0mg	0%
Sodium 5mg	0%
Total Carbohydrate 27g	10%
Dietary Fiber 0g	0%
Total Sugars 25g	
Includes 23g Added Sugars	46%
Protein 0g	
Vitamin D 0mcg	0%
Calcium 0mg	0%
Iron 0mg	0%
Potassium 40mg	0%
* 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.	



Lunch Meal Pattern Requirements

NSLP Meal Pattern Overview

The NSLP has five food components: 1) grains, 2) meat/meat alternate, 3) fruit, 4) vegetables, and 5) milk

Quantities of food components are determined based on age/grade groups

Dietary specifications are set for calories, sodium, and saturated fat

Offer versus serve (OVS) is required for grades 9-12 (optional for all other grades)

NSLP Meal Pattern Overview

Meal Pattern Components and Minimum Serving Sizes

Meal Component	Grades K-5	Grades 6-8	Grades 9-12
Fruit (cups)	2 ½ (1/2)	2 ½ (1/2)	5 (1)
Vegetables (cups)	3 ¾ (3/4)	3 ¾ (3/4)	5 (1)
Grain (ounce-equivalents)	8-9 (1)	8-10 (1)	10-12 (2)
M/MA (ounce-equivalents)	8-10 (1)	9-10 (1)	10-12 (2)
Milk (cups)	5 (1)	5 (1)	5 (1)

Dietary Specifications

Meal Component	Grades K-5	Grades 6-8	Grades 9-12
Calories (kcal)	550-650	600-700	750-850
Sodium (mg)	≤ 1,110 mg	≤ 1,225 mg	≤ 1,280 mg
Saturated Fat (% total kcal)	<10	<10	<10

NSLP Meal Pattern Overview

Meal Pattern Components and Minimum Serving Sizes


Daily Requirements

Meal Component	Grades K-5	Grades 6-8	Grades 9-12
Fruit (cups)	2 ½ (1/2)	2 ½ (1/2)	5 (1)
Vegetables (cups)	3 ¾ (3/4)	3 ¾ (3/4)	5 (1)
Grain (ounce-equivalents)	8-9 (1)	8-10 (1)	10-12 (2)
M/MA (ounce-equivalents)	8-10 (1)	9-10 (1)	10-12 (2)
Milk (cups)	5 (1)	5 (1)	5 (1)

NSLP Meal Pattern Overview

Meal Pattern Components and Minimum Serving Sizes—Weekly Requirements

Meal Component	Grades K-5	Grades 6-8	Grades 9-12
Fruit (cups)	2 ½ (1/2)	2 ½ (1/2)	5 (1)
Vegetables (cups)	3 ¾ (3/4)	3 ¾ (3/4)	5 (1)
Grain (ounce-equivalents)	8-9 (1)	8-10 (1)	10-12 (2)
M/MA (ounce-equivalents)	8-10 (1)	9-10 (1)	10-12 (2)
Milk (cups)	5 (1)	5 (1)	5 (1)



	Grades K-8	Grades 9-12
Dark Green	½ cup	½ cup
Red/Orange	¾ cup	1 ¼ cup
*Beans/Peas/Lentils	½ cup	½ cup
Starchy	½ cup	½ cup
Other	½ cup	¾ cup
Additional to reach weekly total	1 cup	1 ½ cup

*Formerly Legumes/Bean/Peas

Fruit Component



Fresh, frozen, dried, canned (packed in water, full-strength juice, or light syrup) and full-strength juice may contribute toward the fruit requirement



No more than half of the required weekly cups of fruit may come from juice



Generally, fruits credit toward the fruit component based on their volume as served

Exception: dried fruits credit as twice the amount served



The minimum quantity of fruits and/or vegetables that may be credited towards this component is 1/8 cup

Fruit Component

Products that do not contribute toward meal pattern requirements

Snack-type foods made from fruits (e.g. fried banana chips, fruit drops, fruit strips)

Freeze-dried fruits

Jam, jelly, or other condiments

Home-canned products (for food safety reasons)

Coconut flour and coconut oil

Vegetable Component



Fresh, frozen, dried, canned, and full-strength juice may contribute toward the vegetable requirement



No more than half of the required weekly cups of vegetables may come from juice



Generally, vegetables credit toward the vegetable component based on their volume as served

Exception: leafy greens, tomato paste and puree



The minimum quantity of vegetables that may be credited towards this component is 1/8 cup

Vegetable Component

	Grades K-8	Grades 9-12
Dark Green	($\frac{1}{2}$ cup)	$\frac{1}{2}$ cup
Red/Orange	$\frac{3}{4}$ cup	1 $\frac{1}{4}$ cup
*Beans/Peas/Lentils	$\frac{1}{2}$ cup	$\frac{1}{2}$ cup
Starchy	$\frac{1}{2}$ cup	$\frac{1}{2}$ cup
Other	$\frac{1}{2}$ cup	$\frac{3}{4}$ cup
Additional to reach weekly total	1 cup	1 $\frac{1}{2}$ cup

*Formerly Legumes/Bean/Peas

Vegetable Component

Beans and Peas* <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ black beans ▪ black-eyed peas (mature, dry) ▪ garbanzo beans (chickpeas) ▪ great northern ▪ kidney beans ▪ lentils ▪ mung beans ▪ navy beans ▪ pink beans ▪ pinto beans ▪ red beans ▪ soy beans ▪ split peas ▪ white beans 	Red & Orange Vegetables <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ acorn squash ▪ butternut squash ▪ carrots ▪ hubbard squash ▪ pimientos (cherry pepper) ▪ pumpkin ▪ red peppers ▪ sweet potatoes ▪ tomatoes ▪ tomato juice 	Other Vegetables <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ artichokes ▪ asparagus ▪ avocado ▪ bamboo shoots ▪ bean sprouts ▪ beets ▪ breadfruit ▪ brussels sprouts ▪ cabbage ▪ cactus (nopales) ▪ cauliflower ▪ celery ▪ chayote (mirliton) ▪ cucumbers or pickles ▪ eggplant ▪ green beans ▪ green peppers ▪ iceberg (head) lettuce ▪ kohlrabi ▪ mushrooms ▪ okra ▪ olives ▪ onions ▪ pepperoncini ▪ radishes ▪ turnips ▪ wax beans ▪ zucchini
Dark Green Vegetables <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ beet greens ▪ bok choy ▪ broccoli ▪ chicory ▪ collard greens ▪ dark green leafy lettuce ▪ endive or escarole ▪ grape leaves ▪ kale ▪ mesclun ▪ mustard greens ▪ parsley ▪ romaine lettuce ▪ spinach ▪ turnip greens ▪ watercress 	Starchy Vegetables <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ cassava ▪ corn ▪ fresh cowpeas, field peas, or black-eyed peas (not dry) ▪ green bananas ▪ green peas ▪ green lima beans ▪ jicama ▪ malanga or yautia (tannia, tannier) ▪ parsnips ▪ plantains ▪ poi (undiluted) ▪ potatoes ▪ taro ▪ water chestnuts 	

<https://www.isbe.net/Documents/vegetable-subgroups.pdf>

Vegetable Component

	Grades K-8	Grades 9-12
Dark Green	(½ cup)	½ cup
Red/Orange	¾ cup	1 ¼ cup
* Beans/Peas/Lentils	½ cup	½ cup
Starchy	½ cup	½ cup
Other	½ cup	¾ cup
Additional to reach weekly total	1 cup	1 ½ cup

*Formerly Legumes/Bean/Peas

The *Other* vegetables subgroup includes vegetables that do not meet the classification standards to fall into the dark green, red/orange, legumes, or starchy subgroups. **However, the weekly requirement for the *Other* vegetable subgroup can be met with additional amounts of dark green, red/orange, and legumes.**

Vegetable Component

	Grades K-8	Grades 9-12
Dark Green	(½ cup)	½ cup
Red/Orange	¾ cup	1 ¼ cup
* Beans/Peas/Lentils	½ cup	½ cup
Starchy	½ cup	½ cup
Other	½ cup	¾ cup
Additional to reach weekly total	1 cup	1 ½ cup

*Formerly Legumes/Bean/Peas

Additional vegetables are those that are needed to meet the total weekly vegetable requirements of 3.75 cups for grades K-5 and 6-8, and 5 cups for grades 9-12. **Additional amounts of any vegetable subgroup can be offered to meet the total weekly vegetable requirement.**

Vegetable Component

Products that do not contribute toward meal pattern requirements

Snack-type foods made from vegetables, such as
potato chips

Pickle relish, jam, or jelly

Tomato catsup and chili sauce (tomato paste in chili is
creditable)

Home-canned products (for food safety reasons)

Dehydrated vegetables used for seasoning

A Note on Meat/ Meat Alternates & Grains

The Meat/Meat Alternate and Grains components are credited based on a **per-ounce equivalent (oz eq)**—USDA's [Food Buying Guide](#) is a helpful tool for crediting

Child Nutrition (CN) labels and Product Formulation Statements (PFS) are typically needed for crediting

Both components have weekly maximum servings, which may be exceeded as long as weekly calories, sodium, saturated fat, and added sugar limits are met

1 Chicken Stir-Fry Bowl
Ingredient Statement:

2 Chicken, brown rice, broccoli, red peppers, carrots, onions, water, olive oil, soy sauce, spices.

3 CN XXXXXX
Each 4.5 oz Chicken Stir-Fry Bowl provides 1.5 oz eq meat, 1.0 oz eq grains, ¼ cup dark green vegetable, ¼ cup red/orange vegetable, and ½ cup other vegetable for Child Nutrition Meal Pattern Requirements. (Use of this logo and statement authorized by the Food and Nutrition Service, USDA XX/XX).

CN CN

Net Wt.: 18 pounds

Chicken Wok Company
1234 Kluck Street • Poultry, PA 1235

4 INSPECTED U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE P-XX

Meat/Meat Alternate Component

Examples of foods that may credit toward the meat/meat alternate component:

Beef

Beans, peas, and lentils

Nut and seed butters

Poultry

Cheese

Yogurt

Fish

Eggs

Dried and semi-dried meat

Tofu

Nuts and seeds

Minimum amount of meat/meat alternate creditable is 0.25 oz eq,
and operators must round down to the nearest 0.25 oz eq

Meat/Meat Alternate Component

Nuts & Seeds

- The final rule allows nuts and seeds, and nut and seeds butters to credit for the full meat/meat alternate component
 - Under previous regulations, there was a 50% crediting limit for nuts and seeds at lunch

Beans, Peas, & Lentils

- A serving of beans, peas, and lentils offered may credit as either a meat alternate or as a vegetable in a meal, but may not credit as both for daily meal components
- As of July 1, 2024: Beans, peas, and lentils offered and credited as the meat/meat alternate daily meal component may also credit toward the weekly beans, peas, and lentils vegetable subgroup requirement
- When offering beans, peas, and lentils as the meat/meat alternate component, an additional serving of vegetable must also be served as the daily vegetable meal component

Meat/Meat Alternate Component

Example: Beans as Meat/Meat Alternate

½ cup of cooked black beans* are served as part of the veggie quesadilla entrée for grades K-5

*1/2 cup of cooked black beans = 2 oz eq meat/meat alternate

K-5 Meal Pattern Component	Requirement	Example	Requirement Met?
Daily M/MA	1 oz eq	2 oz eq	✓
Daily Vegetable	¾ cup	0 cup	✗
Weekly Beans, Peas, & Lentils	½ cup	½ cup	✓

Note: The daily vegetable requirement (¾ cup for K-5) is not met until another vegetable(s) is offered with the meal because the beans can only credit as one component (i.e., meat/meat alternate in this example)

Grain Component

80% of grains served throughout the week must be *whole grain-rich* (WGR), and any remaining grains must be *enriched*

When crediting grain products, grains round down to the nearest 0.25 oz eq

The minimum amount of grain creditable towards meal pattern requirements is 0.25 oz eq

No more than 2 oz eq grain-based desserts throughout the week can contribute to the grain component

Five Components—*Grains*

Exhibit A

- Breads, cereals, muffins, crackers, pasta, etc. all contribute differently to the grains requirement based on the weight of each product
- USDA's [Exhibit A](#) provides a general guideline for crediting grain items
 - It is the most important tool for determining how different grain products contribute to the oz eq requirement

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) <small>Note: weights apply to bread in stuffing</small>	1 oz eq = 22 gm or 0.8 oz ¼ oz eq = 17 gm or 0.6 oz ½ oz eq = 11 gm or 0.4 oz ¾ oz eq = 6 gm or 0.2 oz	1 serving = 20 gm or 0.7 oz ¼ serving = 15 gm or 0.5 oz ½ serving = 10 gm or 0.4 oz ¾ serving = 5 gm or 0.2 oz
Group B	Ounce Equivalent (oz eq) for Group B	Minimum Serving Size for Group B
Bagels Batter type coating Biscuits Breads - all (for example sliced, French, Italian) Buns (hamburger and hot dog) Sweet Crackers ² (graham crackers - all shapes, animal crackers) Egg roll skins English muffins Pita bread Pizza crust Pretzels (soft) Rolls Tortillas Tortilla chips Taco shells	1 oz eq = 28 gm or 1.0 oz ¼ oz eq = 21 gm or 0.75 oz ½ oz eq = 14 gm or 0.5 oz ¾ oz eq = 7 gm or 0.25	1 serving = 25 gm or 0.9 oz ¼ serving = 19 gm or 0.7 oz ½ serving = 13 gm or 0.5 oz ¾ serving = 6 gm or 0.2 oz
Group C	Ounce Equivalent (oz eq) for Group C	Minimum Serving Size for Group C
Cookies ³ (plain - includes vanilla wafers) Combread Corn muffins Croissants Pancakes Pie crust (dessert pies ⁴ , cobbler ⁵ , fruit turnovers ⁶ , and meats/meat alternate pies) Waffles	1 oz eq = 34 gm or 1.2 oz ¼ oz eq = 26 gm or 0.9 oz ½ oz eq = 17 gm or 0.6 oz ¾ oz eq = 9 gm or 0.3 oz	1 serving = 31 gm or 1.1 oz ¼ serving = 23 gm or 0.8 oz ½ serving = 16 gm or 0.6 oz ¾ serving = 8 gm or 0.3 oz
Group D	Ounce Equivalent (oz eq) for Group D	Minimum Serving Size for Group D
Doughnuts ⁴ (cake and yeast raised, unfrosted) Cereal bars, breakfast bars, granola bars ⁴ (plain) Muffins (all, except corn) Sweet roll ⁴ (unfrosted) Toaster pastry ⁴ (unfrosted)	1 oz eq = 55 gm or 2.0 oz ¼ oz eq = 42 gm or 1.5 oz ½ oz eq = 28 gm or 1.0 oz ¾ oz eq = 14 gm or 0.5 oz	1 serving = 50 gm or 1.8 oz ¼ serving = 38 gm or 1.3 oz ½ serving = 25 gm or 0.9 oz ¾ serving = 13 gm or 0.5 oz

Milk Component

Allowable milk types

- Fat-free (skim) flavored and unflavored
- Low-fat (1%) flavored and unflavored

Meal Service

- At least 2 varieties must be offered during the meal service
- One of those options must be unflavored

Component	K-5	6-8	K-8	9-12
Milk	5 cups weekly 1 cup daily	5 cups weekly 1 cup daily	5 cups weekly 1 cup daily	5 cups weekly 1 cup daily



Offer Versus Serve at Lunch

General Information

- Required for grades 9-12
- Students must be offered all 5 meal pattern components
- Under *offer versus serve* (OVS), students are allowed to decline up to 2 meal components

Required OVS Components

- At least 3 components must be selected
- At least ½ cup of fruit and/or vegetable must be selected for the meal to be reimbursable

Dietary Specifications (Breakfast & Lunch)

Dietary Specifications (Current)

Breakfast

Meal Component	Grades K-5	Grades 6-8	Grades 9-12
Calories (kcal)	350-500	400-550	450-600
Sodium (mg)	≤ 540 mg	≤ 600 mg	≤ 640 mg
Saturated Fat (% total kcal)	<10	<10	<10

Lunch

Meal Component	Grades K-5	Grades 6-8	Grades 9-12
Calories (kcal)	550-650	600-700	750-850
Sodium (mg)	$\leq 1,110$ mg	$\leq 1,225$ mg	$\leq 1,280$ mg
Saturated Fat (% total kcal)	<10	<10	<10

Product-Based Added Sugar Limits (Breakfast & Lunch)

Product-based limits beginning **July 1, 2025**

Breakfast Cereals

no more than 6 grams of added sugar per dry ounce

Yogurt

no more than 12 grams of added sugar per 6 ounces (2 grams per ounce)

Flavored Milk

no more than 10 grams of added sugar per 8 fluid ounces

Dietary Specifications

Calories

Sodium

Saturated
Fat

Added
Sugar

- The standards for calories, sodium, saturated fat, and sugar are based on averages for the school week
 - Throughout the week, one or more days may fall outside of the required calorie range, or above the sodium, saturated fat, and sugar limits
 - However, other days during that week must balance out those averages so that meals fall within the above requirements

Added Sugar Weekly Limits at Breakfast & Lunch

- In addition to product-based limits that begin for the 2025-2026 school year
- Final rule establishes weekly dietary limits for added sugar
 - Beginning July 1, 2027, no more than 10 percent of calories across the week can be served in the school lunch and breakfast programs



Final Changes for Sodium

Through school year 2026-2027

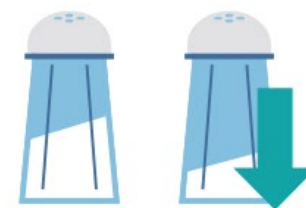
- Schools will maintain current sodium limits (Target 1A for lunch & Target 1 for breakfast)

Beginning school year 2027-2028

- Schools will implement a 15 percent reduction for lunch and 10 percent reduction for breakfast

Sodium at Breakfast

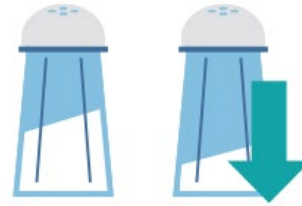
Age/Grade Group	Current Sodium Limit: In place through June 30, 2027	Sodium Limit: Must be implemented by July 1, 2027
Grades K-5	≤ 540 mg	≤ 485 mg
Grades 6-8	≤ 600 mg	≤ 535 mg
Grades 9-12	≤ 640 mg	≤ 570 mg



↓ 10% reduction from
SY26-27 to SY 27-28

Age/Grade Group	Current Sodium Limit: In place through June 30, 2027	Sodium Limit: Must be implemented by July 1, 2027
Grades K-5	≤ 540 mg	≤ 485 mg
Grades 6-8	≤ 600 mg	≤ 535 mg
Grades 9-12	≤ 640 mg	≤ 570 mg

Sodium at Lunch



Age/Grade Group	Current Sodium Limit: In place through June 30, 2027	Sodium Limit: Must be implemented by July 1, 2027
Grades K-5	$\leq 1,110$ mg	≤ 935 mg
Grades 6-8	$\leq 1,225$ mg	$\leq 1,035$ mg
Grades 9-12	$\leq 1,280$ mg	$\leq 1,080$ mg

↓ 15% reduction from
SY26-27 to SY 27-28

Age/Grade Group	Current Sodium Limit: In place through June 30, 2027	Sodium Limit: Must be implemented by July 1, 2027
Grades K-5	$\leq 1,110$ mg	≤ 935 mg
Grades 6-8	$\leq 1,225$ mg	$\leq 1,035$ mg
Grades 9-12	$\leq 1,280$ mg	$\leq 1,080$ mg

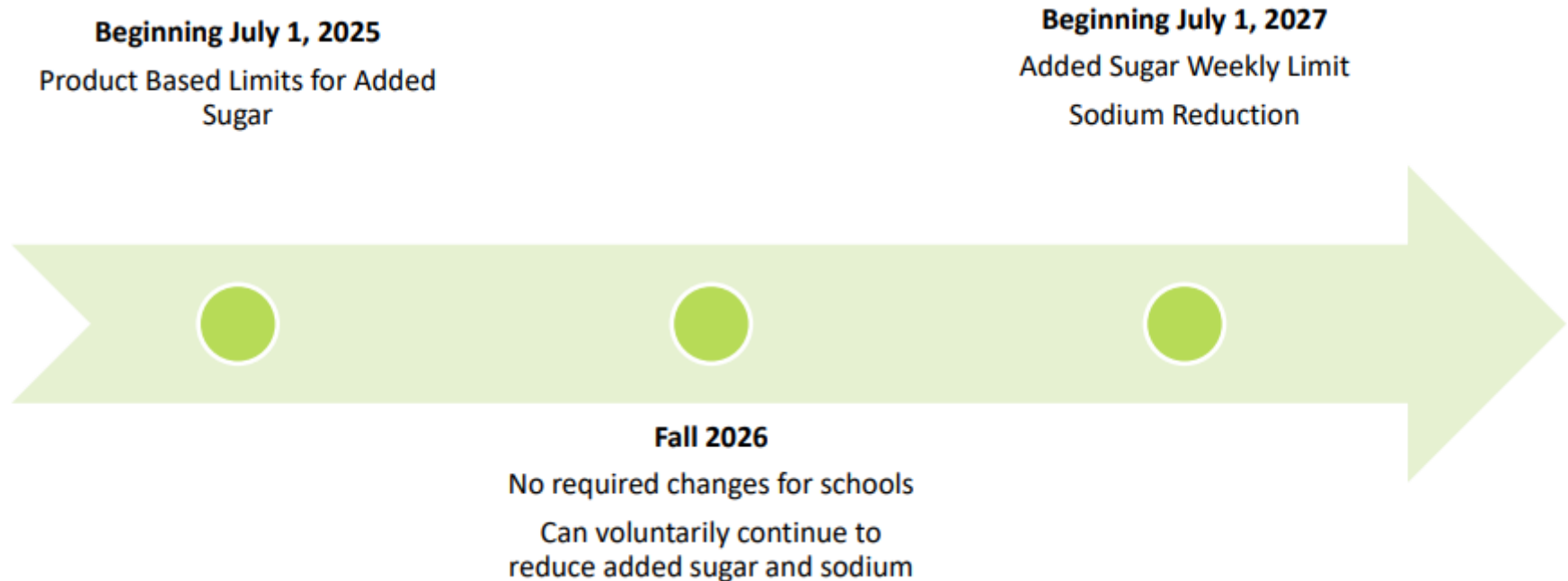
Dietary Specifications at Breakfast

	K-5	6-8	K-8	9-12
Calories	350-500	400-550	400-500	450-600
Saturated Fat (% total calories)	<10	<10	<10	<10
Sodium Through June 30, 2027	≤ 540 mg	≤ 600 mg	≤ 540 mg	≤ 640 mg
Sodium Beginning July 1, 2027	≤ 485 mg	≤ 535 mg	≤ 485 mg	≤ 570 mg
Added Sugars (% total calories) Beginning July 1, 2027	<10	<10	<10	<10

Dietary Specifications at Lunch

	K-5	6-8	K-8	9-12
Calories	550-650	600-700	600-650	750-850
Saturated Fat (% total calories)	<10	<10	<10	<10
Sodium Through June 30, 2027	≤ 1,110 mg	≤ 1,225 mg	≤ 1,110 mg	≤ 1,280 mg
Sodium Beginning July 1, 2027	≤ 935 mg	≤ 1,035 mg	≤ 935 mg	≤ 1,080 mg
Added Sugars (% total calories) Beginning July 1, 2027	<10	<10	<10	<10

Dietary Specifications—*Timeline*



Resources

SCHOOL NUTRITION PROGRAMS ADMINISTRATIVE HANDBOOK

Section C—Menu Planning and Meal
Pattern Requirements

[HTTPS://WWW.ISBE.NET/PAGES/SCHOOL
NUTRITIONADMINHANDBOOK.ASPX](https://www.isbe.net/pages/school-nutrition-admin-handbook.aspx)



USDA's Updates to the School Nutrition Standards webpage

<https://www.fns.usda.gov/cn/school-nutrition-standards-updates>



USDA's Menu Planner for School Meals

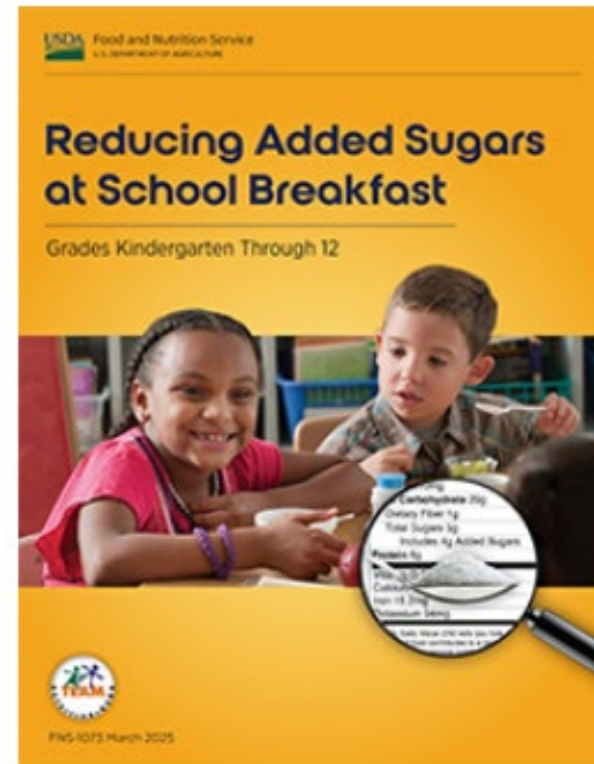
<https://www.fns.usda.gov/tn/menu-planner-school-meals>



Offering Meats and Meat Alternates at School Breakfast



Reducing Added Sugars at School Breakfast





Questions?



CNP@isbe.net



(800) 545-7892 (toll free in Illinois) or
(217) 782-2491



Thank you