



# Fresh Ideas

Fiscal Year 2020  
Trimester 2

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## Child Nutrition Labels & Product Formulation Statements

(program meal patterns)

Meals and snacks reimbursed by the Food Program must meet minimum serving size guidelines as established in the child meal patterns. This requirement includes combination foods. A combination food is a single serving of a food item which contains 2 or more of the required meal components. Examples include pizza, corn dogs, fish sticks and chicken nuggets.

When these products are homemade, the recipe can be used to establish compliance with the minimum serving size guidelines. When they are commercially prepared a Child Nutrition (CN) label or Product Formulation Statement (PFS) is required.

A CN label or a Product Formulation Statement provide meal pattern contribution information for commercially prepared, combination food items. CN labels are available only for main dish entrees that contribute to the meat/meat alternate component of the meal pattern.

Some commercially prepared, combination foods may not have a CN label. This is because the CN labeling is a voluntary program. If a commercially prepared, combination food item does not have a CN label, contact the manufacturer for a PFS. **If a food item does not have a CN label or PFS, the food item will not be creditable in Child Nutrition Programs.**

It is important to understand you cannot establish the crediting of commercial combination foods by looking at a product's ingredient label. The ingredient label does not have the detailed serving size information required for crediting. The ingredient label tells you what is in the product. It does not tell you how much of each ingredient is in the product nor does it tell you how the product contributes to the meal pattern.

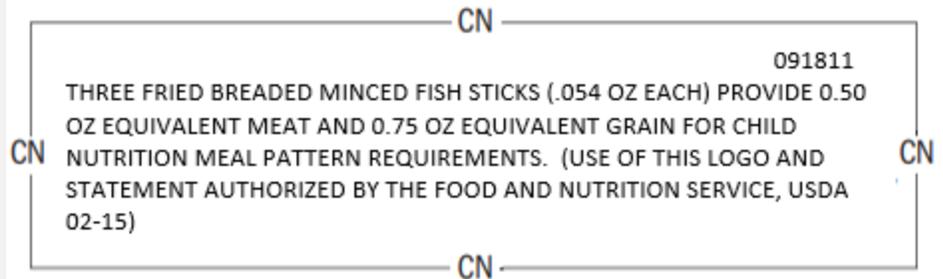
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*You cannot establish the crediting of commercial combination foods by looking at a product's ingredient label.*

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**The CN Label will always contain the:**

- CN logo which is a distinct border.
- Meal pattern contribution statement.
- Six-digit product identification number.
- USDA authorization.
- Month and year of approval.



Carefully read the CN label to ensure you understand how the product contributes to the meal pattern. This CN label shows 3 fish sticks provide  $\frac{1}{2}$ -ounce equivalent meat and  $\frac{3}{4}$ -ounce equivalent grain. The lunch meal pattern requires children 3-5 years receive at least  $1\frac{1}{2}$  ounces of meat/meat alternate and  $\frac{1}{2}$  ounce equivalent grain. Three fish stick supply more than the required grain, but it takes 9 fish sticks to fulfill the meat requirement. This amount may be too much for some children. If so, consider serving fewer fish sticks and a second meat/meat alternate (yogurt, cheese, nuts) to meet the required 1.5 ounces.

CN labels are typically found on item purchased in bulk. You may not be able find CN labels in the grocery store. For these products you need to obtain a Product Formulation Statement from the manufacturer.

A Product Formulation Statement provides crediting information for processed products that do not have a CN Label. A PFS always contains:

- Manufacturer's letterhead.
- Name of product and product code number.
- Math calculations showing how the manufacturer determined the meal pattern contribution.
- Crediting statement.
- Signed and dated by an official of the manufacturer (see example PFS handout).

To determine if a product has a PFS, contact the manufacturer. The product packaging will contain the telephone number or mailing address. Explain that you need the child nutrition information for the commercially prepared product. They may ask for the Universal Product Code (UPC) number so have this information available as well.

As with CN labels you must carefully read the label to determine how the product contributes to the meal pattern. **Your Program Advisor will look at your CN labels and PFS at each home visit to ensure you are properly claiming the products.** If you have questions about CN labels or PFS, ask you Program Advisor or contact ACA's office. We are here to assist you.

Additional information on CN labels and PFSs can be found at:

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

Credit: <https://education.mn.gov/MDE/dse/FNS/prog/CACFPCen/ops/Menu/>  
<https://www.fns.usda.gov/cn/labeling/food-manufacturersindustry>

## CACFP Record Retention

(recordkeeping)

The USDA requires Food Program participants to retain Program records for three years after the date of submission of the final claim for the fiscal year to which they pertain. This provision is intended to facilitate reviews, to enhance Program integrity, and to assure Providers they are being properly reimbursed by their sponsor.

Providers are required to keep copies of each child's signed and dated enrollment forms (**including re-enrollment forms**), daily records of the number of children in attendance and the number of meals, by type, served to enrolled children (meal count and menu forms). This requirement means Food Program records for fiscal year 2019 (October 1, 2018-September 30, 2019) must be kept until January 1, 2023. Failure to keep such records shall be grounds for denial of reimbursement.

USDA has stated Providers must have on hand for immediate review all records that support their program activities for the current month as well as the previous twelve months of operations. Providers may store the remaining two years offsite; however, they must still be in the control of the Provider and accessible within a reasonable amount of time. If no offsite storage is used, Providers must retain the three years of records, onsite at the family child care home. Records can be kept in hard copy or **electronic** format, provided they are readily available to reviewers. Electronic and paper copies of enrollment forms and re-enrollment forms must include the parent's signature and date.

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Food Program records for fiscal year 2019 must be kept until January 1, 2023

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## Ounce Equivalents Update

(meal patterns)

USDA delayed implementation of the "ounce equivalents" requirement for crediting grain from October 1, 2019 until October 1, 2021. This two-year extension allows more time for the Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) to develop additional technical assistance materials. It allows State agencies and sponsoring organizations to provide training and technical assistance to participating childcare Providers without claim deductions for the next two years.

Under the update meal pattern, Providers will be moving from crediting grains as servings to crediting grains as ounce equivalents. One ounce equivalent = 16 grams of grain. Your Program Advisor will leave you two handouts to help you determine the serving size of grain products: *Grain Portion Guide for the Child and Adult Care Food Program* and *Using Ounce Equivalents for Grains in the Child and Adult Care Food Program*. Children ages 1-5 need ½ ounce equivalent of grain at meals and snacks. Children 6-12 need 1 ounce equivalent of grain at meals and snacks.

The *Grain Portion Guide* was developed by the Minnesota Department of Education (MDE) and provides the minimum required portion size of many grain products that are commonly served at snack

The *Using Ounce Equivalents* was developed by USDA and give directions on how to determine the minimum required portion size of grains. So, if the product you are serving is not found on the *Grain Portion Guide* your can use one of the methods in USDA handout to determine the required minimum serving size of the product. Your Program Advisor will show you how to use both handouts.




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## Special Diet Statements

(program meal patterns, program reimbursement system)

Child Care Providers participating in the CACFP must make reasonable substitutions to meals and/or snacks on a case-by-case basis for participants who are considered to have a disability that restricts their diet.

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Amendments Act of 2008 broadened the scope of what constitutes a disability to include most physical and mental impairments. Providers caring for children with a medical need for diets differing from the meal patterns may be reimbursed for the meals/snacks if an approved Special Diet Statement is on file with ACA.

**It is important to differentiate between a medical need for a special diet and a dietary preference.**

Dietary preferences are not considered medical conditions or disabilities and, thus, do not need to be accommodated. These could include:

- *Lifestyle choices, such as vegan, vegetarian, or organic*
- *Religious choices, such as eliminating pork*
- *General health concerns, such as a preference that a child eat a gluten-free diet because a parent believes it is better for the child*

If a sponsor or provider chooses to accommodate a request due to a dietary preference, then they must ensure all meal pattern requirements are met for the meal/snack to be eligible for reimbursement.

**A special diet statement is needed if the medically required special diet request results in a meal/snack not fully meeting meal pattern requirements.** Common examples include digestive issues requiring an exempt formula such as Nutramigen or Alimementum and allergies to milk proteins requiring almond milk.



**NOTE:** A special diet statement is not needed if you can substitute a qualify food for the food eliminated. For example, if a child cannot have peanut butter, you could substitute a cheese stick.

A special diet statement **must contain** the following information in order to be considered complete:

- *Food or allergen to be avoided*
- *Explanation of how exposure would affect the participant*
- *Foods to be substituted*

The Special Diet Statement must be completed and **signed by one of the following** state licensed medical authorities:

- *Physician*
- *Physician Assistant*
- *Advanced Practice Care Nurse, such as a Nurse Practitioner*

A Special Diet Statement template is available on ACA's website <https://www.acainc.org/forms.html>. Other documentation, such as a doctor's prescription, may be accepted if it contains all the required information noted above.

Once a complete special diet statement is on file, meal accommodations may be claimed for reimbursement, even if they result in a meal or snack that does not meet meal pattern requirements.

## FREE Training Available From MDE

The Brighton eLearning modules are online trainings with voice narration and interactivity specifically designed for adult learners. The modules contain online resources available through internet links and ongoing knowledge evaluation. Each module takes 60 minutes or more to complete both the narrative content and activities. When the learner finishes all course assignments and passes the quiz at 90% competency, then the course is successfully completed. Each course is approved for 1 credit hour in Develop.

The e-Learning modules include the following:

- Healthy Food Preparation Techniques and CACFP Menu Planning
- Nutrition Basics for Better CACFP Menu Planning
- A CACFP Meal Pattern Guide
- A CACFP Infant Meal Pattern Guide
- All Aboard The Whole Grain Express!

Start with the [Quick Start Guide](#) for instructions on creating a Brighton user account.

<https://mdebrightontraining.com/mod/page/view.php?id=128>

Then review the [Course Walk Through](#) which explains course navigation.

<https://mdebrightontraining.com/mod/page/view.php?id=129>

Note: Do not lose your password to access these trainings. Neither ACA or MDE can reset your password. Also, these modules will be available for a limited time, so take advantage of the free training while it's available.

The United States Department of Agriculture's (USDA's) CACFP Meal Service Training Grant (MSTG), provides the funding for these Brighton e-Learning modules for CACFP.

### Some Things to Remember:

(claims submission, review procedures, recordkeeping, program reimbursement system, meal counts)

- ⇒ Claims are due in ACA's office by the 3<sup>rd</sup> of the month following the month claimed.
- ⇒ Menu records and meal count forms must be completed daily (by midnight).
- ⇒ Enrollment forms must be received before your claim is submitted (on-line) or with your claim (paper forms).
- ⇒ Variance, special diet statements and update child care licenses must be received prior to submitting (online) or with your claim (paper forms) These documents are used to review your claim and calculate your reimbursement.
- ⇒ Review your error report monthly and contact ACA with any questions.
- ⇒ Record school out or sick day for school age children who are in care for a.m. snack and/or lunch
- ⇒ Keep up to date on what's happening by reading the notices ACA sends you. Online Providers receive notice in KidKare (green box with envelope tops right of screen). Paper claiming provider will receive mailed notices often included with their check or direct deposit stub.



### ★ACA's New Address★

**In January ACA's office moved to:**

**Adults' & Children's Alliance  
10 Yorkton Court  
St Paul MN 55117**

**Be sure to use this address on everything you mail to us.**

**Our phone number and email address remain the same.**

**ACA will be closed on the following days:**

**February 17, 2020** – Presidents' Day

**May 25, 2020** – Memorial Day

**July 3, 2020** – Independence Day

**September 7, 2020** – Labor Day

You may leave a voice mail or contact us by E-mail or fax when our office is closed, and we will get back to you on the next business day.

### Food Program Claims Drop Box

(claims submission)

ACA Food Program claims can be dropped off at our office after hours. (We are in the Think Small building.)

The address is 10 Yorkton Court, St. Paul (Little Canada)

Look for the white mail box near the front door with ACA's name on it.

**Be sure to write ACA on the envelope.**

Remember, claims are due by the 3<sup>rd</sup> of the month.

### KidKare Accounting

If you use KidKare accounting, please contact MinuteMenu with any questions or issues you encounter. The accounting program is a separate program exclusively administered by MinuteMenu.



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