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Kate Brown, Governor



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CACFP New Meal Pattern Meat/Meat Alternates Question and Answers September 1, 2017

Breakfast:

- 1. Meat is allowed to be served as a replacement for grain up to three times a week. Does this include weeks shorter than 5 days?**

Yes, serving meat/meat alternates (M/MA) in place of the entire grain component is allowed up to three times a week regardless of the number of days per week a program operates. As a reminder, one ounce of M/MA is equal to one ounce equivalent of grains.

- 2. Does this new allowance for substituting meat/meat alternates for grains at breakfast apply to the NSLP meal pattern as well?**

No, this new change only applies to the CACFP meal pattern. However, the NSLP meal pattern requires that operators follow the CACFP meal pattern for infants and preschool children.

Tofu:

- 3. When does tofu become creditable in the menu pattern?**

All new meal pattern regulations will take effect on October 1, 2017 unless sponsors are approved for early implementation.

- 4. Are we required to keep the label from tofu that was served?**

Yes. All tofu packaging and nutrition labels must be kept to verify that tofu served meets the 5 grams of protein per 2.2 ounces by weight requirement.

- 5. Can I buy open stock tofu from a grocery store? It has a nutrition label posted by the bin.**

Yes, tofu can be purchased from grocery stores as long as it is commercially prepared. If the tofu is not pre-packaged, but is sold in open bins with a nutrition label on the bin, sponsor and provider staff must take a photo of the nutrition facts label or request a copy of the nutrition label from the grocer and file the nutrition facts label with other

menu crediting documentation. In order to credit, tofu must meet the 5 grams of protein per 2.2 ounces by weight requirement. 2.2 ounces of tofu by weight will credit for 1 ounce of M/MA.

6. Why does tofu have to be recognizable as a meat/meat alternate? Would tofu served as part of a macaroni and cheese dish be considered "easily identifiable"?

Tofu is required to be served in a recognizable form in order to help children learn how to build a healthy plate. Part of the goal of the new meal pattern is to help young children identify components of a healthy meal. When tofu is served as part of a combination dish, such as macaroni and cheese, tofu might be served as small blocks of baked tofu or blended into the cheese sauce. If tofu is served in small blocks, it would be considered recognizable and allowed. If the tofu is blended or mashed into a cheese sauce, it would not be considered recognizable and would not be allowed.

7. Are Child Nutrition (CN) labels required for tofu? Do soy sausage links need CN labels? Is soy bacon creditable?

No, CN labels are not required for commercially made tofu. However, as mentioned in Question 5, sponsors and providers should keep nutrition labels for tofu served. A CN label is required for soy links or sausages because they may have additional ingredient fillers and a CN label will be needed in order to determine if the soy product meets protein requirements. In cases where CN labels may not be available, a product formulation statement (PFS) may be requested from the manufacturer. Similarly, soy bacon would also need a CN label or PFS in order to verify that the soy product meets protein requirements. For more information on CN labels and product formulation statements (PFS), go to [the CACFP Policy and Procedure Manual, Chapter 8: Meal Service Requirements](#).

8. Will there be a list of creditable brands of tofu in the future? How about a list of soy yogurt brands that would be creditable?

FNS and ODE CNP do not maintain a list of creditable tofu and soy yogurt products. At this time, there are no plans to develop a list of creditable tofu and soy yogurt products since commercial products change formulations and packaging too frequently to maintain an up-to-date list.

9. Are there USDA codes for the tofu recipes from the Participant Handbook provided at the CACFP new meal pattern trainings in April?

USDA standardized recipes that have been developed and credited for child care centers can be found on the [USDA Recipes for Child Care webpage](#). In the USDA recipes, there are codes listed next to each recipe for easy identification (ex. D-18 for Stir Fry Chicken). There are no USDA codes for the tofu recipes in the Participant Handbook provided at the CACFP sponsor trainings in April (available as a link on our [CACFP Training webpage](#)) since the recipes included are not official USDA recipes. They were credited for CACFP use by the state of Wisconsin. USDA has two new recipes that incorporate tofu and includes crediting information. Both the Southwest Tofu Scramble and the Chinese Style Vegetables with Tofu recipes can be found on the [What's Cooking webpage](#).

Yogurt:

10. For yogurt nutrition label requirements, should the nutrition label from the container be saved? Or can we use the nutrition label we find online?

Sponsors must keep the nutrition label from the container since nutrition labels found online might be for older products with different formulations. If it is not possible to save the original container, sponsors should make a photocopy of the nutrition label or take a clear and legible photograph of the nutrition label to save for your menu documentation. Different yogurt flavors and brands will have different product formulations, so sponsors should save a nutrition label for all brands and flavors of yogurt served. Yogurt nutrition labels must be saved in order to verify that yogurts are creditable under the sugar limit thresholds. The yogurt nutrition labels saved must match the brand and flavors listed on the working menu.

11. Should yogurt nutrition labels be kept on site or with the sponsor's administrative office if it's not in the same location?

Nutrition labels for all food items that support creditable meal components must be kept with all menu documentation. This can be kept on site or with the administrative site as long as the documentation is available during an administrative review. Labels and menu documentation can also be kept electronically for ease of recordkeeping. Family Day Care Home Providers must keep menu documentation (i.e. nutrition facts labels, ingredient labels, CN labels, etc.) on file at their home.

12. Can yogurt be served as a snack component for preschool children?

Yes, yogurt credits as a meat/meat alternate component at snack for preschool children. Yogurt cannot be credited as part of the fluid milk component for the child and infant meal patterns.

13. In the adult meal pattern, can yogurt be substituted for milk at all meals, or just one meal?

In the adult meal pattern, yogurt can only be substituted for fluid milk for one meal per day. Yogurt may not be substituted for fluid milk at any meal or snack for the child and infant meal patterns.

14. How does yogurt credit as a meat alternate? How does it credit as a fluid milk substitute for adults?

Four ounces of yogurt credits for 1 ounce serving of meat alternate. Per the CACFP memo 17-2016 sent out by ODE CNP on August 26, 2016, 6 ounces, or $\frac{3}{4}$ cup of yogurt credits for 1 serving of fluid milk (8 ounces) for adults only.

15. Is the sugar limit in yogurt referring to total sugar or added sugar?

The sugar limit for yogurt is based on total sugar and not added sugar. Yogurts served to all age groups must be within the limit of 23 grams of total sugar per 6 ounces.

16. Will smoothies containing yogurt and fresh fruit still be creditable? And if yes, how?

Yes, smoothies with yogurt and fruit will remain creditable for child and adult meal patterns as long as minimum portion sizes are met for the age group. The yogurt will credit for the meat/meat alternate component while the fruit will count towards the fruit component. Since the fruit is pureed for the smoothie, it will also count towards the once per day juice limit.

17. Is it allowable to mix a half serving of plain yogurt and a half serving of flavored yogurt together to cut the sugar content?

No, per the USDA memo CACFP 08-2017 sent out by ODE CNP on March 16, 2017, CACFP operators may not mix non-creditable food items with creditable foods items in order to make a new food item creditable. This is because it would be difficult to calculate the exact sugar content of the mixed yogurt.

18. Can sponsors and providers add toppings such as chocolate chips or honey to yogurt? Would the yogurt still remain creditable even if the toppings raise the sugar content above the sugar limit?

The yogurt sugar limit is based on the yogurt product alone. If the yogurt by itself meets the sugar limit, then it would be creditable. CACFP operators have the flexibility to serve non-reimbursable foods of their choosing, such as sweet toppings. However, FNS and ODE CNP encourages all operators to use their discretion when serving non-reimbursable foods and beverages, which may be higher in added sugar, solid fats, and sodium, to ensure children and adult participants' nutritional needs are met. Operators may not use program funds to purchase non-creditable foods. Condiments, herbs and spices are the only exception to this rule. While condiments, herbs and spices cannot credit towards the meal pattern requirements, condiments served with creditable foods and herbs/spices used to prepare and enhance the flavor of meals may be purchased with non-profit food service account funds.

19. Is soy yogurt creditable for all participants or only for participants with a medical statement?

Soy yogurt is creditable for the child and adult meal patterns but it is not creditable for the infant meal pattern. No medical statement is needed to serve soy yogurt in the child and adult meal patterns. Soy yogurts will need to follow the same sugar limits as regular yogurt.

20. There is a concern that some soy yogurt is non-vegan. Would yogurt made with coconut milk be reimbursable? How about rice milk yogurt?

At this time, the only non-dairy yogurt that is allowed is soy yogurt. Coconut milk and rice milk yogurt are not creditable. While some soy yogurts may contain casein or whey, making the products non-vegan, there are multiple nationwide soy yogurt brands that are fully vegan. Sponsors and providers are encouraged to review nutrition labels and ingredient lists before purchasing new food items.

Other:

21. Why can't we serve bacon? We are able to serve ham and sausage.

Bacon is not creditable because of its high fat and low protein composition. In the [CACFP Crediting Handbook](#), bacon is listed as a non-creditable food item. Bacon can be offered as a bonus item, but cannot be credited towards the meal pattern. Ham is a creditable product and crediting guidelines can be found in the current [Food Buying](#)

[Guide](#). Sausages may or may not credit as some sausages may contain non-meat fillers. Sausages, with the exception of fresh pork sausages which are included in the Food Buying Guide, must have a CN label or manufacturer's product analysis sheet on file in order to be credited.

22. If we can find CN labeled items with bacon, would the bacon be creditable?

CACFP operators may use CN labeled items with bacon although bacon is typically not the product that credits for the M/MA component. Food products with bacon that is CN labeled can include turkey bacon and processed combination food items that include other meat and meat alternate products in addition to bacon. When using CN labeled items, sponsors and providers should ensure that portion sizes served meets the required portion size for the age group.

23. Is turkey bacon creditable?

Turkey bacon is not creditable unless it has a CN label or a Product Formulation Statement (PFS). It is not listed in the current Food Buying Guide because it is a processed item and different manufacturers may have different product formulations. A CN label or a PFS of the turkey bacon served must be kept on file in order to use the product as a creditable item. Canadian bacon, which is creditable under the Food Buying Guide, may be an alternate option.

24. Where can I find processed food items with CN labels such as chicken tenders and corn dogs?

Food distribution companies carry items with CN labels. In addition, warehouse stores and warehouse clubs that sell bulk and wholesale products sometime have CN labeled items. CACFP operators that purchase CN labeled items from warehouse stores and clubs must check to make sure that the product being purchased has a current CN label. Products may change and current CN labels for products served must be kept on file. On occasion, products that were previously CN labeled may end up without a CN label if the product is re-formulated. If CN labels are not available, sponsors or providers may ask vendors for a PFS instead. Refer to the link in answer #7 for more information on PFS. CACFP operators who are looking for creditable homemade recipe alternatives such as oven-baked chicken and chicken nuggets can find it on the [USDA Recipes for Child Care webpage](#).

25. Are farm fresh eggs considered a creditable CACFP food item?

Farm fresh eggs bought directly from a farm vendor may or may not come from a licensed egg seller who has been inspected by the Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS). Eggs that are inspected by FSIS will bear the USDA inspection mark. Using eggs that do not come from a licensed egg handler is not recommended in child or adult care centers since young children and the elderly often have weaker immune systems and are at an increased risk of food-borne illness, such as salmonella. Sponsors are advised to work with their local health officials to determine acceptable means for safe use and handling of eggs from a local farm or through donation. Sponsors should always use their best judgment in conducting safe food handling practices.

26. Can TVP (textured vegetable protein) count as a meat/meat alternative?

Yes, as long as the product has either a CN Label or PFS indicating crediting amounts. TVP is a commercially processed soy product and protein content may vary based on processing.

27. Are non-dairy cheeses, such as cashew or soy based cheeses, creditable?

Non-dairy cheeses are not creditable.

28. Is cottage cheese creditable as a meat/meat alternate? How about for infants?

Yes. Cottage cheese is creditable for the infant, child, and adult meal patterns. The current Food Buying Guide credits cottage cheese for 1 ounce of meat/meat alternate for each 2 ounces of cottage cheese served. For infants 6-11 months, the serving size is 0-4 ounces of cottage cheese.

29. Do canned beans such as kidney beans qualify as a meat/meat alternate?

Yes, canned beans such as kidney beans and black beans are listed as a meat alternate under the Food Buying Guide and can be a good source of protein. ¼ cup drained beans credit for 1 ounce of meat alternate. Note that canned green beans are only considered to be a vegetable and not a meat alternate.

30. At what age do you recommend introducing peanut butter to kids?

Sponsors and providers should work with families and their medical providers on when to introduce peanut butter on a case by case basis. The American Association of Pediatrics (AAP) recently came out with updated recommendations for introducing peanut butter. For the highest risk infants, new recommendations suggest introducing peanut butter at four to six months while moderate risk infants should be introduced to peanut butter at approximately six months with family input. Children with low risk of

peanut allergies can be introduced to the product freely. For peanut allergy risk guidelines and more information, refer to the [AAP News & Journal article](#).

31. If the meat/meat alternate portion size required is 1.5 ounces, what is the amount of re-fried beans that is needed

Refried beans credit in the same way as other beans in the Food Buying Guide for the meat/meat alternate component. For the 3-5 year old age group, which requires 1 ½ ounce meat/meat alternate, 3/8 cup of refried beans will be required for a full serving. Refer to the Child (Ages 1-18) Meal Pattern Chart for serving sizes.