

Sample Snack Menus for Adult Day Care Centers in the Child and Adult Care Food Program

This document provides sample snack menus with menu planning considerations for adult day care centers that participate in the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP). The specified servings meet or exceed the requirements of the [CACFP adult meal patterns](#) and are indicated in parentheses after each menu item.

The CACFP adult snack meal pattern requires the minimum serving of any two of the five meal components, including 1 cup of low-fat (1%) or fat-free milk (unflavored or flavored); 1 ounce equivalent (oz eq) of meats/meat alternates, ½ cup of vegetables, ½ cup of fruits, and 1 oz eq of grains.

Each meal component must provide at least the minimum meal pattern serving. CACFP menus may include additional food or larger servings beyond the minimum requirements. Serve nutrient-dense foods that are appropriate to participants' nutrition needs.

For guidance on the CACFP adult meal patterns, refer to the Connecticut State Department of Education's (CSDE) [Guide to Meeting the CACFP Adult Meal Patterns and Crediting Requirements](#). For more information, visit the CSDE's [Meal Patterns for CACFP Adult Care Centers](#) webpage and refer to the CSDE's [Resources for the Child and Adult Care Food Program Meal Patterns](#).

Menu Planning Considerations

Consider the meal pattern requirements and recommendations below when planning CACFP menus. For guidance on crediting foods, refer to the CSDE's [Crediting Summary Charts for CACFP Adult Meal Patterns](#) and visit the CSDE's [Crediting Foods in CACFP Adult Day Care Centers](#) webpage and [Crediting Documentation for the Child Nutrition Programs](#) webpage.

Meats/meat alternates (MMA) component

- The serving size of MMA refers to the edible portion of cooked lean meat, poultry, or fish, e.g., cooked lean meat without bone, breading, binders, fillers, or other ingredients. Commercial processed products that contain added ingredients (such as combination entrees, deli meats, hot dogs, and sausages) require a Child Nutrition (CN) label or product formulation statement (PFS) to document crediting information. For more information, refer to the CSDE's resources, [Crediting Commercial Meat/Meat Alternate Products in the Child and Adult Care Food Program](#) and [Crediting Deli Meats in the Child and Adult Care Food Program](#).
- Nut and seed butters credit by volume (tablespoons) not weight. For more information, refer to the CSDE's resource, [Crediting Nuts and Seeds in the Child and Adult Care Food Program](#).

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- Yogurt and soy yogurt cannot contain more than 23 grams of total sugars per 6 ounces (no more than 3.83 grams per ounce). Effective October 1, 2025, the USDA final rule, [Child Nutrition Programs: Meal Patterns Consistent with the 2020-2025 Dietary Guidelines for Americans](#), changes the limit for yogurt to no more than 12 grams of added sugars per 6 ounces (2 grams of added sugars per ounce). For more information, refer to the CSDE's resource, [Crediting Yogurt in the Child and Adult Care Food Program](#).
- The USDA's [CACFP best practices](#) recommend serving only lean meats, nuts, and beans, peas, and lentils; limiting processed meats to one serving per week; and serving only low-fat or reduced-fat natural cheese.

For more information, visit the "[Meats and Meat Alternates](#)" section of the CSDE's [Crediting Foods in CACFP Adult Day Care Centers](#) webpage

Fruits component and vegetables component

- Before planning juice at snack, make sure that the other daily meals and snacks do not contain juice. Pasteurized full-strength juice credits as either the vegetables component or fruits component at only one meal or snack per day. The juice limit includes fruit and vegetable juice, frozen pops made from 100 percent juice, and pureed fruits and vegetables in smoothies (refer to the CSDE's resources, [Crediting Juice in the Child and Adult Care Food Program](#) and [Crediting Smoothies in the Child and Adult Care Food Program](#)). The USDA's [CACFP best practices](#) recommend serving whole fruits (fresh, frozen, canned, and dried) more often than juice.
- Dried fruit credits as twice the volume served, e.g., $\frac{1}{4}$ cup of raisins credits as $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of the fruits component.
- Raw leafy greens such as lettuce or spinach credit as half the volume served, e.g., $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of raw leafy greens credits as $\frac{1}{4}$ cup of the vegetables component.

For more information, visit the "[Fruits](#)" section and the "[Vegetables](#)" section of the CSDE's [Crediting Foods in CACFP Adult Day Care Centers](#) webpage.

Grains component

- At least one serving of grains per day must be whole grain-rich (WGR). The USDA's [CACFP best practices](#) recommend at least two servings of WGR grains per day. To meet the CACFP WGR criteria, foods must contain at least 50 percent whole grains and the remaining grain ingredients must be enriched, bran, or germ. For more information, refer

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to the CSDE's [Guide to Meeting the Whole Grain-rich Requirement for the Child and Adult Care Food Program](#) and "Whole Grain-rich Requirement" in the "Grains" section of the CSDE's [Crediting Foods in CACFP Adult Day Care Centers](#) webpage.

- To credit as the required oz eq, the serving of grain products and recipes must provide either: 1) the required serving weight (groups A-E) or volume (groups H-I) in the USDA's Exhibit A chart (refer to the CSDE's resources, [Grain Ounce Equivalents for the Child and Adult Care Food Program](#) and [How to Use the Grain Ounce Equivalents Chart for the Child and Adult Care Food Program](#)); or 2) the minimum creditable grains per serving (refer to the CSDE's resources, [Calculation Methods for Grains Ounce Equivalents for the Child and Adult Care Food Program](#) and [When Commercial Grain Products Require a Product Formulation Statement to Credit in the Child and Adult Care Food Program](#)). For more information, refer to "Serving Requirements" in the "Grains" section of the CSDE's [Crediting Foods in CACFP Adult Day Care Centers](#) webpage.
- Grain-based desserts do not credit. Examples include cookies, piecrusts in sweet pies, doughnuts, cereal bars, granola bars, sweet rolls, pastries, toaster pastries, cake, and brownies. Sweet crackers such as graham crackers and animal crackers are not grain-based desserts and may credit as the grains component. However, the CSDE recommends limiting sweet crackers to no more than twice per week between all meals and snacks. For more information, visit the USDA's [Grain-based Desserts in the Child and Adult Care Food Program](#) webpage
- Breakfast cereals must be WGR, enriched, or fortified and cannot contain more than 6 grams of sugars per dry ounce. Effective October 1, 2025, the USDA final rule, [Child Nutrition Programs: Meal Patterns Consistent with the 2020-2025 Dietary Guidelines for Americans](#), changes the limit for breakfast cereals to no more than 6 grams of added sugars per dry ounce. For more information, refer to the CSDE's resource, [Crediting Breakfast Cereals in the Child and Adult Care Food Program](#).

Milk component

- Milk must be low-fat (1%) milk or fat-free milk and may be unflavored or flavored. The USDA's [CACFP best practices](#) recommend serving only unflavored milk.
- Only one of the two meal components may be a creditable beverage, such as milk or juice.

For more information, visit the "Milk" section of the CSDE's [Crediting Foods in CACFP Adult Day Care Centers](#) webpage.

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Water

The USDA recommends serving water when snacks do not include milk or juice. Water does not credit in the CACFP adult meal patterns and cannot be offered in place of the required meal components.

Noncreditable foods

Noncreditable foods cannot be served in place of the required meal components. Examples of noncreditable foods include potato chips, pudding, ice cream, gelatin, cream cheese, bacon, condiments (e.g., syrup, jam, ketchup, mustard, mayonnaise, and butter), and water. For more information, refer to the CSDE's resource, [Noncreditable Foods for Adult Day Care Centers in the Child and Adult Care Food Program](#).

Crediting Documentation

Adult day care centers must be able to document that CSCFP menus provide the minimum serving of each required meal component. Use the USDA's [Food Buying Guide for Child Nutrition Programs](#) (FBG) to determine the amount of purchased food that meets the meal pattern requirements.

- Commercial processed products require a CN label or PFS to document crediting information unless they are listed in the FBG. CACFP sponsors must verify PFS forms for accuracy prior to purchasing, serving, and claiming the product in reimbursable meals and snacks. For more information, refer to the CSDE's resources, [Using Child Nutrition \(CN\) Labels in the Child and Adult Care Food Program](#), [Using Product Formulation Statements in the Child and Adult Care Food Program](#), and [Accepting Processed Product Documentation in the Child and Adult Care Food Program](#).
- Foods made from scratch must have a recipe that documents the crediting information per serving. Standardized recipes are encouraged to ensure accurate crediting information. For more information, refer to the "[Standardized Recipes](#)" section of the CSDE's [Crediting Documentation for the Child Nutrition Programs](#) webpage.

Additional guidance on meal pattern documentation is available on the CSDE's [Crediting Documentation for the Child Nutrition Program](#) webpage.

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Abbreviations for Sample Menus

The abbreviations used in the CACFP sample menus are indicated below.

Meal components

M = Milk component

MMA = Meats/meat alternates component

V = Vegetables component

F = Fruits component

G = Grains component

WGR = Whole grain-rich

Menu items not credited

A = Additional creditable food (credits but does not provide full serving)

O = Other food (noncreditable)

Measurements

c = cup

Tbsp = tablespoon

tsp = teaspoon

oz = ounce

oz eq = ounce equivalent

Note: The CSDE's sample menus are intended for informational purposes and do not guarantee compliance with the CACFP adult meal patterns. Crediting information for local menus will vary depending on the types of foods purchased by the CACFP adult day care center and the recipes and preparation techniques used. CACFP adult day care centers are responsible for ensuring that their menus meet the CACFP adult meal patterns and maintaining appropriate crediting documentation on file (refer to "[Crediting Documentation](#)" above).

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Week 1

| Component | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday |
|---------------------|------------------------------|---|--|-----------------------------------|--|
| M 1 cup | | | | | |
| MMA 1 oz | | Yogurt and fruit parfait: Low-fat vanilla yogurt (½ c) | | | Ham (½ oz) and cheese (½ oz) roll-up |
| V ½ cup | | | Cucumber slices (½ c) | Vegetable soup (½ cup vegetables) | |
| F ½ cup | Orange slices (½ c) | Sliced strawberries (¼ c) Blueberries (¼ c) | | Cantaloupe chunks (½ c) | |
| G 1 oz eq | Enriched corn muffin (1½ oz) | | Whole-grain crackers (1 oz) WGR | | Whole-corn tortilla (1 oz) WGR |
| A | | Whole-grain granola (2 Tbsp) WGR | | | Shredded lettuce (⅛ c) |
| O | Water | Water | Low-fat dip (1 Tbsp) Water | Water | Mustard (1 tsp) or low-fat mayonnaise (1 tsp) Water |

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Week 2

| Component | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday |
|---------------------|---|---|---------------------------------|--|--|
| M 1 cup | | | | | |
| MMA 1 oz | Diced turkey (1 oz) | | Sunflower butter (2 Tbsp) | Hummus (¼ c chickpeas) pita with shredded carrots | |
| V ½ cup | Tossed salad: Lettuce (½ c) with tomatoes and cucumbers (¼ c) | Sliced avocado (½ c) | | | Cucumber slices (¼ c) Carrot slices (¼ c) |
| F ½ cup | | | Apple slices (½ c) | | |
| G 1 oz eq | | Whole-wheat toast (1 oz) WGR | | Whole-wheat pita (1 oz) WGR | Enriched pretzels (1 oz) |
| A | Enriched croutons (¼ oz) | | | Shredded carrots (⅛ c) | |
| O | Low-fat dressing (1 Tbsp) Water | Water | Water | Water | Low-fat dip (1 Tbsp) Water |

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Week 3

| Component | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday |
|---------------------|--|--------------------------------|---|---|---------------------------------|
| M 1 cup | | | | Unflavored low-fat milk (1 c) | |
| MMA 1 oz | | Low-fat cottage cheese (¼ c) | Tortilla wrap: Refried beans (¼ c) and shredded cheese (⅛ oz) | | |
| V ½ cup | | | | Carrot-pineapple-raisin salad: Shredded carrots (½ cup) | Roasted cauliflower bites (½ c) |
| F ½ cup | Mixed berries (½ c) | Canned apricots in juice (½ c) | | | Honeydew melon (½ c) |
| G 1 oz eq | Soft whole-grain pretzel (1 oz) WGR | | Whole-grain tortilla (1 oz) WGR | | |
| A | | | Diced tomato (⅛ c) | Crushed pineapple (⅛ cup) Raisins (1 tsp) | |
| O | Water | Water | Water | | Low-fat dip (1 oz) Water |

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Week 4

| Component | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday |
|---------------------|---|--|---------------------------------------|--|---|
| M 1 cup | | | | | |
| MMA 1 oz | Part-skim Mozzarella cheese stick (1 oz) | Ants on a log: Peanut butter (2 Tbsp) | | Pasta veggie salad: Ham (1 oz) | |
| V ½ cup | | Carrot sticks (¼ c) Celery sticks (¼ c) | Corn and black bean salad (½ c) | | |
| F ½ cup | Red grapes (½ c) | | | | Sliced kiwi (½ c) |
| G 1 oz eq | | | Whole-grain pita chips (1 oz) | Enriched rotini pasta (½ c) | Whole-grain cornbread (1 oz) WGR |
| A | | Raisins (1 Tbsp) | | Diced vegetables: Carrots, broccoli, and tomatoes (¼ c) | |
| O | Water | Water | Water | Water | Water |

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Week 5

| Component | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday |
|---------------------|--|------------------------|---|---|--------------------------------|
| M 1 cup | | | | | |
| MMA 1 oz | Low-fat cottage cheese (¼ c) | Peanut butter (2 Tbsp) | | Fruit and yogurt smoothie: Yogurt (½ c) | |
| V ½ cup | | Carrot sticks (½ c) | | | |
| F ½ cup | | | Diced papaya (½ c) | Pureed strawberries (½ c) | Sliced green grapes (½ c) |
| G 1 oz eq | Whole-grain puffed cereal (¾ c) WGR | | Trail mix: Whole-grain cereal rounds (½ c) WGR , enriched pretzels (1 oz), and dried fruit | | Enriched pretzel sticks (1 oz) |
| A | Crushed pineapple in juice (1 Tbsp) | | Peanuts (½ Tbsp) Dried fruit (½ Tbsp) | | |
| O | Water | Water | Water | Water | Water |

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Week 6

| Component | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday |
|---------------------|------------------------------------|--|---|---|--|
| M 1 cup | | | | Unflavored low-fat milk (½ c) | |
| MMA 1 oz | | | Low-fat Greek yogurt (½ c) | Almond butter (2 Tbsp) | Tuna salad (1 oz tuna) |
| V ½ cup | Sliced jicama (½ c) | Marinated broccoli florets (½ c) | | | |
| F ½ cup | | Plums (½ c) | Fruit salad: Oranges, bananas, sliced grapes, pineapple (½ c) | | |
| G 1 oz eq | Enriched bread sticks (1 oz) | | | Whole-wheat bagel (1 oz) WGR | Whole-grain crackers (1 oz) WGR |
| A | | | | | Chopped tomatoes (¼ c) |
| O | Low-fat dip (1 Tbsp) Water | Water | Water | Water | Water |

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Week 7

| Component | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday |
|---------------------|----------------------------|--|---|---|--|
| M 1 cup | | | Unflavored low-fat milk (1 c) | | |
| MMA 1 oz | Pumpkin seeds (1 oz) | Hummus (¼ c chickpeas) | | Shredded low-fat cheese (1 oz) | Berry-peach yogurt parfait: Low-fat yogurt (½ c) |
| V ½ cup | | Zucchini sticks (¼ c) Pepper strips (¼ c) | | Garden salad: Lettuce (½ c), tomatoes, cucumbers, and carrots (¼ c) | |
| F ½ cup | Watermelon chunks (½ c) | | | | Seasonal berries (¼ c) Diced peaches (¼ c) |
| G 1 oz eq | | | Enriched pumpkin cranberry muffin (2 oz) WGR | | |
| A | | | | | |
| O | Water | Water | | Low-fat Italian dressing (1 Tbsp) Water | Crumbled graham crackers (1 Tbsp) Water |

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Week 8

| Component | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday |
|---------------------|--|-------------------------|---|--|--|
| M 1 cup | | | | | |
| MMA 1 oz | Pita bread triangles: Low-fat cheese (1 oz) | | | | Chicken salad (1 oz cooked chicken) |
| V ½ cup | | Roasted chickpeas (½ c) | Marinated diced cucumber-tomato salad (½ c) | | |
| F ½ cup | | Pineapple chunks (½ c) | | Strawberry shortcake: Sliced strawberries (½ c) | |
| G 1 oz eq | Whole-wheat pita bread (1 oz) WGR | | Whole-grain roll (1 oz) WGR | Enriched biscuit (1 oz) | Whole-wheat pita pocket (1 oz) WGR |
| A | Veggie salsa (⅛ c) | | | | Shredded lettuce (⅛ c) Diced tomato (⅛ c) |
| O | Low-fat dressing (1 Tbsp) Water | Water | Water | Whipped cream (2 Tbsp) Water | Low-fat dip (1 Tbsp) Water |

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Week 9

| Component | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday |
|---------------------|--|----------------------------------|--|------------------------|---|
| M 1 cup | | | | | |
| MMA 1 oz | | | | Almond butter (2 Tbsp) | Herbed cottage cheese (¼ c) |
| V ½ cup | | Marinated three-bean salad (½ c) | | | Celery sticks and cucumber slices (½ c) |
| F ½ cup | Pineapple slices (½ c) | | Sliced kiwi (½ c) | Frozen banana (½ c) | |
| G 1 oz eq | Whole-grain bagel (1 oz) WGR | Enriched pretzels (1 oz) | Whole-grain puffed cereal (¾ c) WGR | | |
| A | | | | | Whole-grain crackers (½ oz) WGR |
| O | Light cream cheese (½ Tbsp) Water | Water | Water | Water | Water |

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Week 10

| Component | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday |
|---------------------|--|-----------------------------|---|---------------------------------|---|
| M 1 cup | | | | | |
| MMA 1 oz | Hard-boiled egg (½ large) | | | | Peanut butter (2 Tbsp) |
| V ½ cup | | Cherry tomatoes (½ c) | | Roasted green beans (½ c) | |
| F ½ cup | | Diced pears (½ c) | Refried beans and salsa (½ cup) | Apple slices (½ c) | |
| G 1 oz eq | Whole-grain roll (1 oz) WGR | | Whole-corn tortilla chips (1 oz) WGR | | Whole-wheat bagel (1 oz) WGR |
| A | | | | | |
| O | Water | Water | Water | Water | Water |

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Resources

Crediting Documentation for the Child Nutrition Programs (CSDE webpage):

<https://portal.ct.gov/sde/nutrition/crediting-documentation-for-the-child-nutrition-programs>

Crediting Foods in CACFP Adult Day Care Centers (CSDE webpage):

<https://portal.ct.gov/sde/nutrition/crediting-foods-in-cacfp-adult-day-care-centers>

Crediting Summary Charts for the CACFP Adult Meal Patterns (CSDE):

https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/sde/nutrition/cacfp/crediting/crediting_summary_charts_cacfp_adults.pdf

Guide to Meeting the CACFP Adult Meal Patterns and Crediting Requirements (CSDE):

https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/sde/nutrition/cacfp/mealpattern/guide_cacfp_meal_patterns_adults.pdf

Meal Patterns for CACFP Adult Day Care Centers (CSDE webpage):

<https://portal.ct.gov/sde/nutrition/meal-patterns-cacfp-adult-centers>

Menu Planning Basics: A Guide for CACFP Operators in Child Care (Institute of Child Nutrition):

<https://theicn.org/icn-resources-a-z/menu-planning-basics-cacfp>

Menu Planning for CACFP Adult Day Care Centers (CSDE's Meal Patterns for CACFP Adult Day Care Centers webpage):

<https://portal.ct.gov/sde/nutrition/meal-patterns-cacfp-adult-centers/menu-planning>

Recipes for Child Nutrition Programs (CSDE's Menu Planning for Child Nutrition Programs webpage)

<https://portal.ct.gov/sde/nutrition/menu-planning/recipes-for-child-nutrition-programs>

Resources for the Child and Adult Care Food Program Meal Patterns (CSDE):

https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/sde/nutrition/cacfp/mealpattern/resources_cacfp_meal_patterns.pdf

Snacks ("Menu Planning" section of CSDE's Meal Patterns for CACFP Adult Day Care Centers webpage):

<https://portal.ct.gov/sde/nutrition/meal-patterns-cacfp-adult-centers/menu-planning#Snacks>

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For more information, visit the [Meal Patterns for CACFP Adult Day Care Centers](#) webpage and [Crediting Foods in CACFP Adult Day Care Centers](#) webpage or contact the [CACFP staff](#) at the Connecticut State Department of Education, Bureau of Child Nutrition Programs, 450 Columbus Boulevard, Suite 504, Hartford, CT 06103-1841. This document is available at https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/sde/nutrition/cacfp/mealpattern/adult_menu_cacfp_snack.pdf.

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3. email: program.intake@usda.gov

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