

Requirements for the Milk Component of the Summer Food Service Program Meal Patterns

This document provides guidance on meeting the meal pattern and crediting requirements for the milk component of the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s (USDA) [Summer Food Service Program \(SFSP\) meal patterns](#). For information on the SFSP meal patterns, visit the “[Meal Patterns](#)” section of the Connecticut State Department of Education’s (CSDE) SFSP webpage. For information on the crediting requirements, visit the CSDE’s [Crediting Foods in the Summer Food Service Program](#) webpage and [Crediting Documentation for the Child Nutrition Programs](#) webpage.



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Overview of Meal Pattern Requirements

The SFSP meal patterns require 1 cup of milk at breakfast, lunch, and supper. A 1-cup serving of milk may be offered as one of the two required meal components at snack.

- **Breakfast:** Milk may be served as a beverage, on cereal, or a combination of both.
- **Lunch and supper:** Milk must be served as a beverage.
- **Snack:** Milk may be served as a beverage, on cereal, or a combination of both. Milk cannot be served when juice is the only other snack component. To increase nutrient variety, the CSDE recommends not serving milk when yogurt is the only other snack component.

Crediting Requirements

The milk component includes only fluid milk. Milk must be pasteurized, meet all state and local requirements, and contain vitamins A and D at levels specified by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA). Training on the crediting requirements for the milk component is available in the CSDE's Summer Meals annual training module, [Crediting Foods in the Summer Food Service Program Meal Patterns: Part 2: Milk Component](#).

Allowable types of fluid milk

The SFSP milk component allows unflavored or flavored pasteurized whole milk, reduced-fat milk, low-fat milk, fat-free milk, buttermilk, lactose-reduced milk, and acidophilus milk. The recommendations below from the [Dietary Guidelines for Americans](#) indicate the appropriate type of milk for each age group.

- Age 1: unflavored whole milk
- Ages 2-5: unflavored low-fat or fat-free milk
- Ages 6 and older: unflavored or flavored low-fat or fat-free milk

For additional guidance, refer to the CSDE's [Crediting Summary Charts for the Summer Food Service Program Meal Patterns](#).

Milk substitutes for disability reasons

The USDA requires that SFSP sponsors must make reasonable meal modifications on a case-by-case basis for children whose disability restricts their diet, based on written documentation from a state licensed healthcare professional or registered dietitian. Meal modifications must be related to the disability or limitations caused by the disability.

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- A **state licensed healthcare professional** is an individual who is authorized to write medical prescriptions under state law. The Connecticut State Department of Public Health (DPH) defines these individuals as physicians (MD), physician assistants (PA) and certified physician assistants (PAC), doctors of osteopathy (DO), and advanced practice registered nurses (APRN).
- A **registered dietitian** (RD) or registered dietitian nutritionist (RDN) is an individual with a minimum of a graduate degree from an accredited dietetics program and who completed a supervised practice requirement, passed a national exam, and completes continuing professional educational requirements to maintain registration. For more information, visit the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics' (AND) [Registered Dietitian Nutritionist Fact Sheet](#) website.

When a child has a medically documented disability that requires a milk substitute, the SFSP sponsor must provide an appropriate substitute based on the child's medical statement. SFSP sponsors may serve nondairy beverages in place of fluid milk when the child's medical statement supports the substitution.

For more information, refer to [USDA Memo CACFP 14-2017 and SFSP 10-2017: Policy Memorandum on Modifications to Accommodate Disabilities in the Child and Adult Care Food Program and Summer Food Service Program](#) and the CSDE's [Guidance for Meal Modifications in the Summer Food Service Program](#), and visit the "[Meal Modifications for Special Diets](#)" section of the CSDE's SFSP webpage.

Milk substitutes for non-disability reasons

SFSP sponsors that are not school food authorities (SFAs) cannot serve fluid milk substitutes to children without a disability. In addition, the USDA does not allow juice, water, and other beverages to substitute for milk in SFSP meals and snacks for children without a disability.

The SFSP meal patterns do not allow nondairy fluid milk substitutes for children without a disability. Fluid milk substitutes are plant-based beverages designed to replace cow's milk, e.g., soy milk, almond milk, cashew milk, rice milk, and oat milk.

SFAs operating the SFSP may choose to serve fluid milk substitutes that meet the following requirements:

- USDA's nutrition standards for fluid milk substitutes; and

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- the state beverage requirements for nondairy milk substitutes ([Section 10-221q of the Connecticut General Statutes](#)).

Products that met these requirements are listed on list 17 of the CSDE's [List of Acceptable Foods and Beverages](#) webpage. Certain brands of soy and oat milk are the only nondairy milk products that currently meet the USDA's nutrition standards for fluid milk substitutes.

For additional guidance on the requirements for fluid milk substitutes in SFSP sites operated by SFAs, refer to the CSDE resources, [Allowable Fluid Milk Substitutes for Non-Disability Reasons in the School Nutrition Programs](#) and [Identifying Products that Meet the USDA's Nutrition Standards for Fluid Milk Substitutes in the School Nutrition Programs](#).

Additional milk requirements for Summer Meals sites in public schools

In addition to meeting the SFSP meal pattern requirements, milk and nondairy milk substitutes offered by Summer Meals sites that operate in public schools must also meet the state beverage requirements of Section 10-221q of the Connecticut General Statutes. The state beverage statute applies to all beverages available for sale to students on school premises, as part of and separately from reimbursable meals and snacks.

The CSDE's [List of Acceptable Foods and Beverages](#) webpage identifies products that comply with the federal and state requirements. Milk is available in [list 16](#). Fluid milk substitutes are available in [list 17](#). **Note:** Fluid milk substitutes for non-disability reasons are allowed only for school food authority (SFA) sponsors of the SFSP. SFSP sponsors cannot offer nondairy fluid milk substitutes for non-disability reasons.

Milk in smoothies

Milk credits as the milk component when served in fruit and vegetable smoothies. The minimum creditable amount is $\frac{1}{4}$ cup. If a smoothie contains less than 1 cup of milk per serving, the SFSP menu must include the additional amount from another serving of milk.

Crediting milk in amounts less than the full serving applies only to smoothies. SFSP menus must always offer the full 1-cup serving of milk with each meal.

To credit milk in smoothies made from scratch, SFSP sponsors must have a recipe that documents the amount of milk per serving. To credit milk in commercial smoothies, SFSP sponsors must obtain a product formulation statement (PFS) that states the amount of milk per

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serving. The PFS must also attest that commercial mixes with milk are made using ingredients that meet federal, state, and local definitions for fluid milk.

For more information, refer to the CSDE's resources, [Crediting Smoothies in the Summer Food Service Program](#) and [Using Product Formulation Statements in the Summer Food Service Program](#).

Milk in prepared foods

The SFSP meal patterns require fluid milk as a beverage. Milk does not credit when cooked in cereals, puddings, cream sauces, or other foods. For example, milk does not credit when used to make quiche or macaroni and cheese. In addition, foods made from milk do not credit, such as cheese, yogurt, and ice cream. For information on crediting cheese and yogurt as the meat/meat alternates component, refer to the CSDE's resource, [Requirements for the Meats/Meat Alternates Component of the Summer Food Service Program Meal Patterns](#).

Noncreditable milk

Some examples of foods that do not credit as the milk component include nondairy milk substitutes (e.g., soy milk, rice milk, almond milk, and cashew milk), milk that is cooked or baked in foods (e.g., cereals, puddings, and cream sauces), nutrition supplement beverages (e.g., Abbott's Pediasure), and powdered milk beverages (e.g., Nestle's NIDO). For more information, refer to the CSDE's resource, [Noncreditable Foods in the Summer Food Service Program](#).

In addition, for SFSP sponsors operating on the premises of public schools, noncreditable milk includes milk and nondairy milk substitutes that do not meet the state beverage requirements of Connecticut General Statute Section 10-221q.

Keeping Milk Cold

Implementing procedures to keep milk cold is important for food safety and helps make milk more appealing to children. Milk must be kept at 40°F or below but tastes best at 35°F. SFSP sponsors should develop procedures to maintain milk at 35°F during all points of the meal service including receiving, storing, and serving.

New England Dairy's [Chill Out with Cold Milk](#) webpage contains resources to help staff serve cold milk. The U.S. Dairy has a [Milk Quality Checklist](#) that helps programs evaluate their current practices and implement procedures for keeping milk cold.

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Resources

Allowable Fluid Milk Substitutes for Non-Disability Reasons in the School Nutrition Programs (CSDE):

https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/sde/nutrition/nslp/specdiet/milk_substitutes_snp.pdf

Chill Out with Cold Milk (New England Dairy webpage):

<https://www.newenglanddairy.com/school-meals/keep-milk-cold/>

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 the Summer Food Service Program (CSDE webpage):

<https://portal.ct.gov/sde/nutrition/crediting-foods-in-the-summer-food-service-program>

Crediting Smoothies in the Summer Food Service Program (CSDE):

https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/sde/nutrition/sfsp/creditingfsp/credit_smoothies_sfsp.pdf

Crediting Summary Charts for the Summer Food Service Program Meal Patterns (CSDE):

https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/sde/nutrition/sfsp/creditingfsp/crediting_summary_charts_sfsp.pdf

Food Buying Guide for Child Nutrition Programs (USDA):

<https://www.fns.usda.gov/tn/food-buying-guide-for-child-nutrition-programs>

Guidance for Meal Modifications in the Summer Food Service Program (CSDE):

https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/sde/nutrition/sfsp/mealpattern/meal_modification_guidance_sfsp.pdf

Identifying Products that Meet the USDA's Nutrition Standards for Fluid Milk Substitutes in the School Nutrition Programs (CSDE):

https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/sde/nutrition/nslp/specdiet/identify_allowable_nondairy_milk_substitutes_snp.pdf

Meal Modifications for Special Diets (CSDE's SFSP webpage):

<https://portal.ct.gov/sde/nutrition/summer-food-service-program/meal-patterns/#MealModifications>

Meal Patterns for the SFSP (CSDE's SFSP webpage):

<https://portal.ct.gov/sde/nutrition/summer-food-service-program/meal-patterns>

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Milk Component (CSDE's Crediting Foods in the Summer Food Service Program webpage):
<https://portal.ct.gov/sde/nutrition/crediting-foods-in-the-summer-food-service-program/milk>

Milk Quality Checklist (U.S. Dairy):
<https://www.usdairy.com/news-articles/milk-quality-check-list>

Milk Substitutes (CSDE's Meal Modifications for Special Diets webpage):
<https://portal.ct.gov/sde/nutrition/special-diets-in-school-nutrition-programs/milk-substitutes>

Noncreditable Foods in the Summer Food Service Program (CSDE):
https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/sde/nutrition/sfsp/creditingfsp/noncreditable_foods_sfsp.pdf

Records Retention Requirements for the Summer Food Service Program (CSDE):
https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/sde/nutrition/nslp/records_retention_snp.pdf

Summer Meals Annual Training Module: Crediting Foods in the Summer Food Service Program Meal Patterns: Part 2: Milk Component ("Annual Training" section of CSDE's SFSP webpage):
<https://portal.ct.gov/sde/nutrition/summer-food-service-program/annual-training#CreditingFoods>

USDA Memo CACFP 14-2017 and SFSP 10-2017: Modifications to Accommodate Disabilities in CACFP and SFSP:
<https://www.fns.usda.gov/modifications-accommodate-disabilities-cacfp-and-sfsp>

Using Product Formulation Statements in the Summer Food Service Program (CSDE):
https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/sde/nutrition/sfsp/creditingfsp/product_formulation_statements_sfsp.pdf

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For more information, visit the “Meal Patterns” section of the CSDE’s SFSP webpage and the CSDE’s [Crediting Foods in the Summer Food Service Program](#) webpage or contact the [Summer Meals 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/sfspcreditingfsp/component/_/milk_/sfsp.pdf.

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