

# How to Use the Grains/Breads Servings Chart for the Summer Food Service Program

This guidance applies to meals and snacks served in the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s (USDA) Summer Food Service Program (SFSP). For information on the SFSP meal patterns and the grains/breads component, visit the [“Meal Patterns”](#) section of the Connecticut State Department of Education’s (CSDE) SFSP webpage and refer to the CSDE’s resource, [Requirements for the Grains/Breads Component of the Summer Food Service Program Meal Patterns](#). 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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## Exhibit A: Grain Requirements for Child Nutrition Programs

The USDA's chart, [Exhibit A: Grain Requirements for Child Nutrition Programs](#), summarizes the required quantities for nine groups (A-I) of grain foods. Groups A-F include baked goods, such as crackers, breads, rolls, taco shells, muffins, waffles, pancakes, and grain-based desserts, e.g., cookies, cake, granola bars, and pastries. Group H includes cereal grains, such as pasta, rice, cooked breakfast cereals, barley, cornmeal, and quinoa. Group I includes ready-to-eat cold breakfast cereals.

The Exhibit A quantities are not the same for all Child Nutrition Programs because the meal patterns are different. The CSDE's grains/breads servings chart, [Servings for Grains/Breads in the Summer Food Service Program](#), indicates the Exhibit A servings that apply to the SFSP meal patterns.

The Exhibit A quantities are one of the two methods for determining the grains/breads servings of a grain menu item for the SFSP meal patterns; the other method is the creditable grains per serving. For guidance on the creditable grains method for determining grains/breads servings, refer to the CSDE's resource, [Calculation Methods for Grains/Breads Servings in the Summer Food Service Program](#).

### Grain-based desserts

Grain-based desserts are listed in groups C-G of the CSDE's grains/breads servings chart. Grain-based desserts do not credit at lunch or supper. Only certain grain-based desserts are allowed at snack and breakfast. Sweet crackers (like graham crackers and animal crackers) are not included in the restrictions for grain-based desserts.

- **Breakfast and snack:** Examples of grain-based desserts allowed at breakfast and snack include coffee cakes, cinnamon rolls, doughnuts, cereal bars, granola bars, breakfast bars, sweet rolls, pastries, toaster pastries, and fruit turnovers.
- **Snack:** Examples of grain-based desserts allowed only at snack include cookies, cakes, cupcakes, plain brownies, and piecrusts in sweet pies like apple, coconut, blueberry, and pecan.

Grain-based desserts often contain more fat and added sugars than traditional grains. The CSDE encourages SFSP sponsors to limit all grain-based desserts and sweet crackers to no more than twice per week and offer nutrient-dense whole grains instead. For example, if the SFSP menu includes cookies as a snack on Monday and granola bars for breakfast on Thursday, no other grain-based desserts should be served during that week. For more information, refer to the CSDE's [Crediting Grain-based Desserts in the Summer Food Service Program](#).

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## Exhibit A Calculation Method

SFSP sponsors must know the applicable weight or volume of the grain menu item to use the Exhibit A grains/breads servings calculation method. The grains/breads servings contribution is calculated by dividing the grain menu item's serving weight or volume by the required weight or volume for 1 grains/breads serving for the applicable Exhibit A grain group.

### Commercial products

For commercial products, the serving weight or volume is determined from the serving information listed on the Nutrition Facts label or product formulation statement (PFS). The grains/breads servings chart cannot be used if the product's ingredients statement and packaging do not provide sufficient information to determine if it meets the SFSP crediting criteria. These products require a PFS. For guidance on when a PFS is required and what it must include, refer to the CSDE's resources, [When Commercial Grain Products Require a Product Formulation Statement to Credit in the Summer Food Service Program](#) and [Using Product Formulation Statements in the Summer Food Service Program](#).

### Foods made from scratch in groups A-G

To use the grains/breads servings chart for foods made from scratch in groups A-G, SFSP sponsors must have a standardized recipe on file that indicates the weight of the prepared (cooked) serving. If the standardized recipe does not provide this information, SFSP sponsors must either 1) determine the average serving weight by weighing several portions (refer to the CSDE's [Yield Study Data Form for Child Nutrition Programs](#)), then use the grains/breads servings chart; or 2) use the creditable grains method for determining grains/breads servings (refer to the CSDE's resource, [Calculation Methods for Grains/Breads Servings in the Summer Food Service Program](#)). The grains/breads servings chart cannot be used if the grain menu item's serving weight is not known.

### Rounding rules

SFSP sponsors must follow the rounding rules below when calculating the grains/breads servings of a commercial grain product or recipes for foods made from scratch.

- **Grains/breads servings contribution:** When determining the grains/breads servings of a grain food, always round down to the nearest  $\frac{1}{4}$  grains/breads serving. For example, if the calculation indicates that a bagel contains 1.49 grains/breads servings, round down to 1.25 grains/breads servings.

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- **Number of pieces per serving:** When determining the number of pieces needed to credit as 1 grains/breads serving., always round up to the next whole number. For example, if the calculation indicates that 6.7 pretzels credit as 1 grains/breads serving, round up to 7 pretzels.

Make sure to use the appropriate rounding rule to correctly calculate the grain item's grains/breads servings contribution.

### Crediting Examples

The examples below show the steps for using the Exhibit A quantities in the CSDE's grains/breads servings chart to determine the grains/breads servings for grain menu items in groups A-G. These steps are used for commercial grain products and may also be used for recipes if the menu planner knows the weight of the prepared (cooked) serving (refer to "[Foods made from scratch in groups A-G](#)" in this document).

The examples include three different categories of commercial products and standardized recipes: 1) grain items that contain multiple small pieces per serving, such as crackers, hard pretzels, and animal crackers ([example 1](#)); 2) grain items that contain multiple large pieces per serving, such as pancakes, slices of bread, and waffles ([example 2](#)); and 3) grain items that contain one piece per serving, such as muffins, bagels, and rolls ([example 3](#)). The calculation steps are different for each category.

Before determining a menu item's grains/breads servings, make sure the commercial grain product or recipe is creditable. The grain food must be whole grain, enriched, or contain a blend of whole and enriched grains. For information on how to identify creditable grains, refer to the CSDE's resources, [Crediting Whole Grains in the Summer Food Service Program](#) and [Crediting Enriched Grains in the Summer Food Service Program](#). Training on the crediting requirements for the grains/breads component is available in the CSDE's Summer Meals annual training module, [Crediting Foods in the Summer Food Service Program Meal Patterns: Part 4: Grains/Breads Component](#).

## How to Use the Grains/Breads Servings Chart for the Summer Food Service Program

### Example 1: Multiple small pieces per serving

For grain items that contain multiple small pieces per serving (such as crackers, hard pretzels, and animal crackers), calculate the number of pieces in 1



grains/breads serving by dividing the required weight (grams) for 1 grains/breads serving of the applicable grain group listed in Exhibit A by the grams per piece. The steps below show this calculation for an example of whole grain-rich crackers in group A.

#### Whole grain-rich crackers (group A)

##### Nutrition Facts

About 9 Servings per container  
**Serving Size** 6 crackers (28g)

##### Amount per serving

**Calories** **120**

#### Group A

Bread sticks, hard  
Bread-type coating  
Chow Mein noodles  
**Crackers, savory, e.g., saltines and snack crackers**  
Croutons  
Pretzels, hard  
Stuffing, dry **Note:** weights apply to bread in stuffing

#### Servings for Group A

**1 serving= 20 grams or 0.7 ounce**  
 $\frac{3}{4}$  serving= 15 grams or 0.5 ounce  
 $\frac{1}{2}$  serving= 10 grams or 0.4 ounce  
 $\frac{1}{4}$  serving= 5 grams or 0.2 ounce

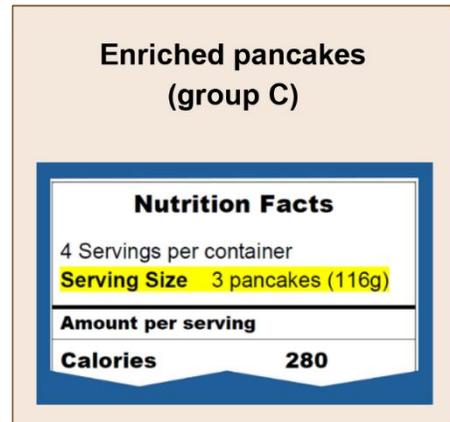
### Steps for determining grains/breads servings: multiple small pieces per serving

1. **Grams per manufacturer's serving:** List the manufacturer's serving size in grams (g) from the Nutrition Facts label or PFS: 28 grams
2. **Pieces per manufacturer's serving:** List the number of pieces per manufacturer's serving from the Nutrition Facts label or PFS: 6 pieces
3. **Calculate grams per piece:** Divide grams per serving (step 1) by pieces per serving (step 2): 28 grams divided by 6 pieces = 4.67 grams per piece
4. **Required weight for 1 grains/breads serving:** List the required weight for 1 grains/breads serving for the product's group (A-G) in Exhibit A. 20 grams
5. **Calculate number of pieces in 1 grains/breads serving:** Divide the required weight for 1 grains/breads serving (step 4) by the grams per piece (step 3): 20 grams divided by 4.67 grams per piece = 4.28 pieces per 1 grains/breads serving
6. **Round up to next whole number:** 5 pieces (crackers) = 1 grains/breads serving

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## Example 2: Multiple large pieces per serving

For grain items that contain multiple large pieces per serving (such as pancakes, slices of bread, and waffles), calculate the grains/breads serving contribution per piece by dividing the required weight (grams) for 1 grains/breads serving of the applicable grain group listed in Exhibit A by the grams per piece. The steps below show this calculation for an example of enriched pancakes in group C.



### Group C

Cookies, plain, including vanilla wafers <sup>1</sup>

Cornbread

Corn muffins

Croissants

Pancakes

Piecrust (dessert pies <sup>1</sup>, cobblers <sup>1</sup>, fruit turnovers <sup>2</sup>, and meat or meat alternate pies)

Waffles

### Servings for Group C

1 serving = 31 grams or 1.1 ounces

$\frac{3}{4}$  serving = 23 grams or 0.8 ounce

$\frac{1}{2}$  serving = 16 grams or 0.6 ounce

$\frac{1}{4}$  serving = 8 grams or 0.3 ounce

<sup>1</sup> Allowed only at snack.

<sup>2</sup> Allowed at breakfast and snack.

## Steps for determining grains/breads servings: multiple large pieces per serving

1. **Grams per manufacturer's serving:** List the manufacturer's serving size in grams (g) from the Nutrition Facts label or PFS: 116 grams
2. **Pieces per manufacturer's serving:** List the number of pieces per manufacturer's serving from the Nutrition Facts label or PFS: 3 pieces
3. **Calculate grams per piece:** Divide grams per manufacturer's serving (step 1) by pieces per manufacturer's serving (step 2): 116 grams divided by 3 pieces = 38.67 grams per piece
4. **Required weight for 1 grains/breads serving:** List the required weight for 1 grains/breads serving for the product's group (A-G) in Exhibit A. 31 grams
5. **Calculate grains/breads servings per piece:** Divide the grams per piece (step 3) by the required weight for 1 grains/breads serving (step 4): 38.67 grams divided by 31 grams = 1.24 grains/breads servings per piece.
6. **Round down to nearest  $\frac{1}{4}$  serving:** 1 grains/breads serving per piece (1 pancake)

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### Example 3: One piece per serving

For grain items that contain one piece per serving (such as muffins, bagels, and rolls), calculate the grains/breads serving per manufacturer's serving by dividing the grams per manufacturer's serving by the required weight (grams) for 1 grains/breads serving of the applicable grain group listed in Exhibit A. The steps below show this calculation for an example of a whole grain-rich blueberry muffin in group D.



#### Whole grain-rich blueberry muffin (group D)

Nutrition Facts	
<b>Serving Size</b>	1 muffin (57g)
Servings per container 6	
Amount per serving	
<b>Calories</b>	<b>210</b>

#### Group D

Cereal bars, breakfast bars, granola bars, plain <sup>2</sup>  
 Doughnuts, cake and yeast raised, unfrosted <sup>2</sup>  
**Muffins, all except corn**  
 Sweet rolls, unfrosted <sup>2</sup>  
 Toaster pastries, unfrosted <sup>2</sup>

#### Servings for Group D

**1 serving = 50 grams or 1.8 ounces**  
<sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub> serving = 38 grams or 1.3 ounces  
<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub> serving = 25 grams or 0.9 ounce  
<sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub> serving = 13 grams or 0.5 ounce

<sup>2</sup> Allowed at breakfast and snack.

### Steps for determining grains/breads servings: one piece per serving

1. **Grams per manufacturer's serving:** List the serving size in grams (g) from the Nutrition Facts label or PFS: 57 grams
2. **Required weight for 1 grains/breads serving:** List the required weight for 1 grains/breads serving for the product's group (A-G) in Exhibit A: 50 grams
3. **Calculate grains/breads servings per manufacturer's serving:** Divide the grams per serving (step 1) by the required weight for required weight for 1 grains/breads serving (step 2): 57 grams ÷ 50 grams = 1.14 grains/breads servings
4. **Round down to the nearest 1/4 serving:** 1 grains/breads serving per muffin

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## Grain Crediting Tools

The tools below help menu planners determine the meal pattern contribution (including grain oz eq) of creditable products and standardized recipes.

- **USDA’s Exhibit A Grains Tool for commercial grain products:** This [online tool](#) of the USDA’s *Food Buying Guide for Child Nutrition Programs* (FBG) determines the grains/breads servings of commercial grain products. For more information, watch the USDA’s webinars, *Exhibit A Grains Tool to the Rescue* and *How to Maximize the Exhibit A Grains Tool*.
- **USDA’s Recipe Analysis Workbook:** The FBG’s online [Recipe Analysis Workbook](#) allows menu planners to search for ingredients, develop a standardized recipe, and determine the recipe’s meal pattern contribution per serving. To access this tool, users must create a free account on the USDA’s FBG website.

For more information on grains/breads servings, visit the “[Grains/Breads Component](#)” section of the CSDE’s Crediting Foods in the Summer Food Service Program webpage.

## Resources

Calculation Methods for Grains/Breads Servings in the Summer Food Service Program (CSDE):  
[https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/sde/nutrition/sfsp/creditingfsfp/grain\\_calculation\\_sfsp.pdf](https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/sde/nutrition/sfsp/creditingfsfp/grain_calculation_sfsp.pdf)

Crediting Breakfast Cereals in the Summer Food Service Program (CSDE):  
[https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/sde/nutrition/sfsp/creditingfsfp/credit\\_cereals\\_sfsp.pdf](https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/sde/nutrition/sfsp/creditingfsfp/credit_cereals_sfsp.pdf)

Crediting Enriched Grains in the Summer Food Service Program (CSDE):  
[https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/sde/nutrition/sfsp/creditingfsfp/credit\\_enriched\\_grains\\_sfsp.pdf](https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/sde/nutrition/sfsp/creditingfsfp/credit_enriched_grains_sfsp.pdf)

Crediting Whole Grains in the Summer Food Service Program (CSDE):  
[https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/sde/nutrition/sfsp/creditingfsfp/credit\\_whole\\_grains\\_sfsp.pdf](https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/sde/nutrition/sfsp/creditingfsfp/credit_whole_grains_sfsp.pdf)

Crediting Grain-based Desserts in the Summer Food Service Program (CSDE):  
[https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/sde/nutrition/sfsp/creditingfsfp/credit\\_grain\\_based\\_desserts\\_sfsp.pdf](https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/sde/nutrition/sfsp/creditingfsfp/credit_grain_based_desserts_sfsp.pdf).

Exhibit A: Grain Requirements for Child Nutrition Programs (USDA):  
<https://foodbuyingguide.fns.usda.gov/Content/TablesFBG/ExhibitA.pdf>

Food Buying Guide Exhibit A Grains Tool (USDA):  
<https://www.fns.usda.gov/tn/food-buying-guide-interactive-web-based-tool>

Grains and Breads 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/grains-and-breads>

## How to Use the Grains/Breads Servings Chart for the Summer Food Service Program

Product Formulation Statement for Documenting Grains in Child Nutrition Programs (USDA):

[https://www.fns.usda.gov/sites/default/files/resource-files/PFS\\_Grains\\_Oz\\_Eq\\_Fillable\\_508.pdf](https://www.fns.usda.gov/sites/default/files/resource-files/PFS_Grains_Oz_Eq_Fillable_508.pdf)

Product Formulation Statement for Documenting Grains in Child Nutrition Programs  
– Completed Sample (USDA):

[https://www.fns.usda.gov/sites/default/files/resource-files/PFS\\_Example\\_Grains\\_Oz\\_Eq.pdf](https://www.fns.usda.gov/sites/default/files/resource-files/PFS_Example_Grains_Oz_Eq.pdf)

Requirements for the Grains/Breads Component of the Summer Food Service Program Meal Patterns (CSDE):

[https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/sde/nutrition/sfsp/creditingfsp/component\\_grains\\_breads\\_sfsp.pdf](https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/sde/nutrition/sfsp/creditingfsp/component_grains_breads_sfsp.pdf)

Servings for Grains/Breads in the Summer Food Service Program (CSDE):

[https://portal.ct.gov/sde/nutrition/-/media/sde/nutrition/sfsp/mealpattern/servings\\_grains\\_breads\\_sfsp.pdf](https://portal.ct.gov/sde/nutrition/-/media/sde/nutrition/sfsp/mealpattern/servings_grains_breads_sfsp.pdf)

Tips for Evaluating a Manufacturer's Product Formulation Statement (USDA):  
<https://www.fns.usda.gov/sites/default/files/resource-files/manufacturerPFStipsheet.pdf>

Summer Meals Annual Training Module: Crediting Documentation for Summer Meals ("Annual Training" section of CSDE's SFSP webpage):

<https://portal.ct.gov/sde/nutrition/summer-food-service-program/annual-training#CreditingDocumentation>

Summer Meals Annual Training Module: Crediting Foods in the Summer Food Service Program Meal Patterns: Part 4: Grains/Breads Component ("Annual Training" section of CSDE's SFSP webpage):

<https://portal.ct.gov/sde/nutrition/summer-food-service-program/annual-training#CreditingFoods>

USDA Memo SP 05-2025, CACFP 04-2025, and SFSP 02-2025: Guidance for Accepting Processed Product Documentation for Meal Pattern Requirements:

<https://www.fns.usda.gov/cn/labeling/guidance-accepting-processed-product-documentation>

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](https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/sde/nutrition/sfsp/creditingfsp/product_formulation_statements_sfsp.pdf)

When Commercial Grain Products Require a Product Formulation Statement to Credit in the Summer Food Service Program (CSDE):

[https://portal.ct.gov/sde/nutrition/-/media/sde/nutrition/sfsp/mealpattern/when\\_commercial\\_grain\\_products\\_require\\_pfs\\_sfsp.pdf](https://portal.ct.gov/sde/nutrition/-/media/sde/nutrition/sfsp/mealpattern/when_commercial_grain_products_require_pfs_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/sde/nutrition/-/media/sde/nutrition/sfsp/mealpattern/how\\_to\\_use\\_grains\\_breads\\_servings\\_chart\\_sfsp.pdf](https://portal.ct.gov/sde/nutrition/-/media/sde/nutrition/sfsp/mealpattern/how_to_use_grains_breads_servings_chart_sfsp.pdf).

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1. mail: U.S. Department of Agriculture  
Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights  
1400 Independence Avenue, SW  
Washington, D.C. 20250-9410; or
2. fax: (833) 256-1665 or (202) 690-7442; or
3. email: [program.intake@usda.gov](mailto:program.intake@usda.gov)

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