



MEALTIME MEMO



The Nutrition Facts label on food packages provides helpful information. For example, it features key information for crediting tofu and determining if a yogurt or cereal meets the sugar limit requirements in the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP). It is a great tool to use when planning menus to determine creditable foods.



A Nutrition Facts label displays nutrient quantities based on the listed serving size of the food. The serving size may be different from the serving sizes specified in the CACFP meal pattern. This Mealtime Memo focuses on how to use the Nutrition Facts label to credit certain foods in the CACFP.

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) updated the Nutrition Facts label on food products. Labels are easier to read and provide nutrition information consumers want and need. Learn more about food labels at these FDA websites:

- [How to Understand and Use the Nutrition Facts Label](#)
- [The New Nutrition Facts Label](#)

Nutrition Facts Information Needed in the CACFP

Programs participating in the CACFP use the information on the Nutrition Facts label for two different purposes:

- To identify creditable foods
- To determine the ounce equivalents for grains

Determine Creditable Food Items

Nutrition Facts	
8 servings per container	
Serving size	2/3 cup (55g)
Amount Per Serving	230
Calories	230
<small>% Daily Value*</small>	
Total Fat 8g	10%
Saturated Fat 1g	5%
Trans Fat 0g	
Cholesterol 0mg	0%
Sodium 160mg	7%
Total Carbohydrate 37g	13%
Dietary Fiber 4g	14%
Total Sugars 12g	
Includes 10g Added Sugars	20%
Protein 3g	6%

Not a significant source of vitamin D, calcium, iron, and potassium.

*The % Daily Value (DV) tells you how much a nutrient in a serving of food contributes to a daily diet. 2,000 calories a day is used for general nutrition advice.

CACFP program operators use the Nutrition Facts label to determine if tofu, yogurt, and breakfast cereals are creditable. Here is a closer look at how to use the Nutrition Facts label information for each of these foods.

Tofu

Extra Firm Tofu

Nutrition Facts	
4.5 servings per container	
Serving size	3 ounces (84g)
Amount Per Serving	
Calories	90
% Daily Value*	
Total Fat 4.5g	6%
Saturated Fat 0.5g	3%
Trans Fat 0g	
Cholesterol 0mg	0%
Sodium 5mg	0%
Total Carbohydrate 3g	1%
Dietary Fiber 1g	4%
Total Sugars 1g	
Includes 0g Added Sugars	0%
Protein 9g	18%
<small>Not a significant source of vitamin D, calcium, iron, and potassium</small>	
<small>*The % Daily Value (DV) tells you how much a nutrient in a serving of food contributes to a daily diet. 2,000 calories a day is used for general nutrition advice.</small>	

In the CACFP, 2.2 ounces (1/4 cup) of commercially prepared tofu, containing at least 5 grams of protein, is creditable as 1.0 ounce equivalent meat alternate.

- 1.0 ounce meat alternate = 2.2 ounces (1/4 cup) with at least 5 grams of protein

Use the Nutrition Facts label to determine if tofu is creditable.

Looking at the Extra Firm Tofu Nutrition Facts label:

- Serving size = 3 ounces (84 grams)
- 3 ounce portion provides 9 grams of protein

Since this example is for a 3 ounce serving, you must determine the number of grams of protein per ounce so you can calculate how many grams of protein are in a 2.2 ounce serving. Divide the grams of protein (9) by the Serving size (3 ounces) to get grams per ounce.

- $9 \text{ grams protein} \div 3 \text{ ounces} = 3 \text{ grams protein per ounce}$

Next, calculate how many grams of protein are in a 2.2 ounce serving:

- $2.2 \text{ ounce serving} \times 3 \text{ grams protein per ounce} = 6.6 \text{ grams protein in a 2.2 oz serving}$

This tofu product is creditable in the CACFP because a 2.2 ounce portion provides 6.6 grams of protein, which is more than the required 5 grams.

Yogurt

Yummy Yogurt

In the CACFP, yogurt must not have more than 23 grams of sugar per 6 ounces. Total sugars include both natural and added sugar. To determine if yogurt is creditable, use the Nutrition Facts label on the yogurt and the *Sugar Limits in Yogurt* chart found in the USDA worksheet [Choose Yogurts That Are Lower in Sugar](#) (pictured below).

*The weight of a serving may be listed in either ounces or grams. Some packages will list both. The *Sugar Limits in Yogurt* chart gives the sugar limits for common serving

Nutrition Facts	
4 servings per container	
Serving size 8 oz (227g)	
Amount per serving	
Calories	130
% Daily Value*	
Total Fat 2g	3%
Saturated Fat 1.5g	8%
Trans Fat 0g	
Cholesterol 10mg	3%
Sodium 160mg	7%
Total Carbohydrate 21g	7%
Dietary Fiber 4g	17%
Total Sugars 9g	
Includes 0g Added Sugars	0%
Protein 10g	
Vitamin D 2mcg	10%
Calcium 257mg	20%
Iron 0mg	0%
Potassium 344mg	8%

In the Yummy Yogurt example, use the following information from the Nutrition Facts label:

- Serving size = 8 ounces (227 grams)*
- Total Sugars = 9 grams

Compare the Serving size and Total Sugars amount from the Nutrition Facts label to the *Sugar Limits in Yogurt* chart. If the yogurt has that amount of sugar or less, the yogurt meets the sugar limit and is creditable.

The Yummy Yogurt is creditable because the 8 ounce (227 grams) serving has 9 grams of Total Sugar, which is less than 31 grams from the *Sugar Limits in Yogurt* chart.

sizes in ounces (oz) and grams (g).

Sugar Limits in Yogurt

Serving Size ¹ Ounces (oz)	Serving Size Grams (g) (Use when the serving size is not listed in ounces)	Total Sugars Grams (g)
If the serving size is:	If the serving size is:	Total sugars must not be more than:
2.25 oz	64 g	9 g
3.5 oz	99 g	13 g
4 oz	113 g	15 g
5.3 oz	150 g	20 g
6 oz	170 g	23 g
8 oz	227 g	31 g



The following USDA resources help determine if yogurt is creditable in the CACFP. They are available in English and Spanish:

- [Calculating Sugar Limits for Yogurt in the CACFP](#)
- [Choose Yogurts That Are Lower in Sugar](#)

Breakfast Cereal

In the CACFP, all breakfast cereals, including ready-to-eat, instant, and regular hot cereal, must contain no more than 6 grams of sugar per dry ounce. Total sugars include both natural and added sugar. To determine if cereal is creditable, use the Nutrition Facts label for the cereal and the *Sugar Limits in Cereal* chart found in the USDA worksheet [Choose Breakfast Cereals That Are Lower in Sugar](#) (pictured below).

In the Toasty Oats Cereal example, use the following information from the Nutrition Facts label:

- Serving Size = 1 cup (43 grams)*
- Total Sugars = 8 grams

Find the Serving size in grams and the Total Sugars amount from the Nutrition Facts label. Use the

*Some Nutrition Facts labels may show more than one serving size column. For cereals, the second column shows amounts if milk is served. The serving sizes on the label may vary from the serving sizes for the CACFP Meal Pattern.

Toasty Oats Cereal

Nutrition Facts	
about 10 servings per container	
Serving Size 1 cup (43g)	
Calories	170 210
% DV*	
Total Fat	2.5g 3% 2.5g 3%
Saturated Fat	0g 0% 0g 0%
Trans Fat	0g 0g
Cholesterol	0mg 0% <5mg 1%
Sodium	170mg 7% 220mg 9%
Total Carbohydrate	36g 13% 42g 15%
Dietary Fiber	3g 9% 3g 9%
Total Sugars	8g 14g
Incl. Added Sugars	8g 16% 8g 16%
Protein	3g 8g

Sugar Limits in Cereal

Total Sugar amount from the column without milk and compare it to the *Sugar Limits in Cereal* chart. If the cereal has that amount of sugar or less, the cereal meets the sugar limit and is creditable.

The Toasty Oats Cereal meets the sugar limit. The 43 gram serving size has 8 grams of Total Sugars, which is less than the 9 grams, as indicated on the chart.

Serving Size	Total Sugars
If the serving size is:	Total sugars must not be more than:
0-2 grams	0 grams
3-7 grams	1 gram
8-11 grams	2 grams
12-16 grams	3 grams
17-21 grams	4 grams
22-25 grams	5 grams
26-30 grams	6 grams
31-35 grams	7 grams
36-40 grams	8 grams
41-44 grams	9 grams
45-49 grams	10 grams



Learn more about the CACFP sugar limits for breakfast cereals with these USDA resources (available in English and Spanish):

- [Choose Breakfast Cereals That Are Lower in Sugar](#)
- [Calculating Sugar Limits for Breakfast Cereals in the CACFP](#)

Determine the Ounce Equivalents Contribution of Creditable Grains

In the [CACFP Meal Pattern](#), the required amounts of grains are listed in ounce equivalents (oz eq). Ounce equivalents tell you the amount of grain in a portion of food. CACFP operators use the Nutrition Facts label and one of the methods below to determine ounce equivalents for grains.

USDA's [Using Ounce Equivalents for Grains in the CACFP](#) worksheet has a grains measuring chart that tells you how much of a grain item you need to serve to meet CACFP meal pattern requirements. The resource provides detailed instructions on using the chart for many types of grains.

CACFP operators can also use the Exhibit A Grains Tool to calculate ounce equivalent grains based on the grain's Nutrition Facts label Serving size and weight. This tool is available in the [Food Buying Guide](#) and on the [FBG Mobile App](#). Below is an example of the Exhibit A Grains Tool from the FBG Mobile App.

Flour Tortilla

Nutrition Facts	
10 servings per container	
Serving size	1 tortilla (31g)
Amount Per Serving	
Calories	70
% Daily Value*	
Total Fat 0.5g	1%
Saturated Fat 0g	0%
Trans Fat 0g	
Cholesterol 0mg	0%
Sodium 15mg	1%
Total Carbohydrate 14g	5%
Dietary Fiber 2g	7%
Total Sugars 1g	
Includes 0g Added Sugars	0%
Protein 1g	2%
<small>Not a significant source of vitamin D, calcium, iron, and potassium</small>	
<small>*The % Daily Value (DV) tells you how much a nutrient in a serving of food contributes to a daily diet. 2,000 calories a day is used for general nutrition advice.</small>	

Locate the Serving size and weight of a product on the Nutrition Facts label. In the Flour Tortilla example:

- Serving size = 1 tortilla (31 grams)

The image on the right shows the FBG Mobile App screen when the product's serving size (31 grams) is entered. Once entered, the mobile app tells you:

- 1 tortilla provides 1 oz eq grains

Here are some resources that provide more information on the Exhibit A Grains Tool:

- [Exhibit A Grains Tool to the Rescue!](#)
- [How to Maximize the Exhibit A Grains Tool](#)

The screenshot shows the 'TORTILLAS' section of the app. Under 'CHOOSE METHOD', 'OUNCE EQUIVALENT GRAINS' is selected. Under 'CHOOSE CALCULATION', 'GRAINS CONTRIBUTION' is selected. The 'SERVING SIZE (AS PROVIDED ON PRODUCT LABEL):' field contains '31'. The 'MEASUREMENT UNIT:' is set to 'GRAMS'. The 'GRAINS CONTRIBUTION:' is '1.00 OZ EQ GRAINS'. There are buttons for 'SAVE CHANGES', 'SHARE', and 'DELETE EXHIBIT A ITEM'.



Nutrition Facts labels have many uses. CACFP operators must understand how to use these labels to credit foods to the CACFP meal pattern. USDA has another resource to help understand Nutrition Fact labels: [Using the Nutrition Facts Label in the CACFP](#)

Menu Ideas

The following menu ideas provide a variety of foods, colors, and textures. Some recipes contain multiple food components listed in parentheses after the recipe.

Breakfast



Lunch/Supper



Snack



Flour Tortilla with Nut
Butter
(Grain, Meat Alternate)

Diced Peaches

1% Milk

Sautéed Tofu with Broccoli
(Meat Alternate, Grain,
Vegetable)

Raspberries

1% Milk

Vanilla Yogurt with
Cinnamon
(Meat Alternate)

Apple Slices

Water



Recipes

You can find the featured recipes from the Menu Ideas section in the resources below:

- The [Child Nutrition Recipe Box](#) has USDA standardized recipes for child care centers and family child care homes.
- The [Child Nutrition Recipe Box: New CACFP Lunch/Supper Recipes](#) has standardized recipes per age group (3–5 and 6–18 year-olds) and for servings of 6, 25, and 50.

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