



## CACFP Tuesday Talks Creditable and Non-creditable Foods Part 2: Meat/Meat Alternates & Grains Questions and Answers

If you have additional questions, contact your [assigned consultant](#). If you are a family day care home provider, contact your home sponsor.

**1. If using the 100% veggie or bean pasta, it has to have a CN label, correct?**

If the pasta is made of 100% bean/legume flour(s), a CN label is not required and may credit as a meat alternate or vegetable but not both in the same meal. When shopping for 100% vegetable or bean pasta, the ingredients must only list a vegetable or legume, such as chickpea flour. 1/2 cup cooked veggie/legume pasta credits as 2 oz of meat alternate. However, to credit as a meat alternate, the pasta must be served with another 0.25 oz of visible meat or meat alternate, such as cheese, tofu or whole beans/legumes.

**2. What if the combination food is homemade from a vendor?**

The vendor must provide a standardized recipe that provides information on how much of the item to serve and how it contributes to the meal pattern to ensure each component and serving size is being met for the meal and ages served. This is agreed to in the vendor agreement that must be completed between the CACFP program and vendor.

**3. How often does a PFS have to be obtained? If I have one dated from 2018, how do I know it is still valid?**

There are no specific guidelines for how often a Product Formulation Statement (PFS) must be obtained for the same product. It is recommended to periodically check with the manufacturer or food distributor to ensure the product has not changed. Manufacturers may reformulate their products / ingredients, which may change how it contributes to the CACFP meal pattern. However, if the program starts using a different brand or different type of product (for example, a different type of chicken nugget from the same manufacturer), the program must obtain a new PFS or CN label for the new brand or item being served.

**4. The first ingredient in Nature Valley Biscuits is whole grain wheat. The 2<sup>nd</sup> ingredient is sugar. Is this a grain-based dessert?**

No. Nature Valley Biscuits are not a grain-based dessert. They are considered a sweet cracker and are creditable. For other specific items, contact your [assigned consultant](#). To determine if they are whole grain rich, you will need to use the Rule of Three. For more information, refer to the [CACFP Reference Guide](#).

**5. Is granola a cereal or a snack/dessert item?**

Granola is a cereal and must meet sugar limits to be creditable in the CACFP. It is recommended to purchase and serve store-bought granola and use the nutrition facts label of the granola and the [CACFP Reference Guide](#) to determine if the granola meets the sugar limits. Homemade granola must also meet CACFP sugar limits, and this can be challenging to determine because a nutrient analysis must be completed, which can be difficult because the amount of sugar in a recipe is often unknown. The Institution of Child Nutrition Recipe box has a [granola recipe](#) that meets CACFP sugar limits. For serving size information, refer to the [Cereal Types](#) handout or [Cereal Types for ADC](#) handout.

- 6. Thomas "whole wheat" English muffins, third grain ingredient is farina. Is this whole grain rich?**  
Unfortunately, Thomas Whole Wheat English muffins are not whole grain rich. They do not meet the Rule of Three because farina is the third grain ingredient and is a non-creditable grain. The program may contact the manufacturer to obtain a Product Formulation Statement (PFS) that may determine the product to be whole grain rich. However, these English muffins are creditable as a grain.
- 7. Are RITZ crackers creditable?**  
Yes, Ritz crackers are creditable. The first ingredient is enriched wheat flour.
- 8. If I am making a homemade combination food, such as meatloaf, do I need a recipe if I am only claiming the meat on the production sheet?**  
Homemade combination dishes such as meatloaf or meatballs contain binders that do not contribute to the meal pattern (such as breadcrumbs, crackers or oatmeal) and other dishes such as casseroles often contain two or more components (such as a grain and a meat/meat alternate). When serving these items you need to know how much to serve to each participant to meet the meal pattern. For example, when serving casserole, you must know that enough meat/meat alternate (ex. ground beef/cheese) is in each serving to provide the minimum required amount for each participant. Or, for meatloaf that there is enough ground beef in a serving to provide the minimum amount of meat/meat alternate for each participant. You do not need a recipe if you know how much to serve to each participant to provide the minimum amount of each component per the meal pattern. However, it is recommended to use a standardized recipe that provides crediting information. The [Child Nutrition Recipe Box](#) has a standardized recipe for meatloaf that programs may utilize to ensure the portion served to the participants meets the m/ma requirements.
- 9. Does the first ingredient for corn chips have to be enriched or whole grain corn for them to be creditable?**  
Yes, for corn chips and other tortilla chips to be creditable they must meet one of the following:
1. First ingredient is whole or enriched corn,
  2. Product is enriched with vitamins and minerals, or
  3. Product is treated with lime (nixtamalized). Look for one of the following phrases within the ingredients list that indicates the corn has been treated with lime (nixtamalized):
    - Trace of lime • Treated with lime • Ground corn with trace of lime
    - Ground corn treated with lime • Masa harina • Masa flour • Corn masa flour
    - Calcium hydroxide
- 10. Where do we find the recipe box?**  
The [Child Nutrition Recipe Box](#) provides CACFP programs with recipes to prepare healthy and delicious meals that meet meal pattern requirements. These recipes are standardized to provide meal pattern crediting information for all meal components and include recipes made with legumes, whole grains and vegetables from the vegetable subgroups including dark green, red and/or orange vegetables. There are recipes for Child Care Centers, Family Child Care and CACFP (Adult Portions), as well as recipes in Spanish.