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Breakfast Meal Pattern (Grades K-12)

Overview

Program operators of the School Breakfast Program (SBP) are required to use meal patterns and dietary specifications established by U.S. Department of Agriculture to develop menus and serve meals to students. The meal patterns were revised in April 2020 to reflect the overturn of the meal pattern flexibilities of 2018 by the U.S. District Court. Starting with the 2020–2021 school year (SY), schools operating the National School Lunch Program and SBP, must once again follow the 2012 meal pattern requirements. The updates include: flavored milk, if offered, may only be non-fat; all grains served must be whole-grain rich; and school lunches and breakfasts offered must meet Target 2 weekly sodium levels.

Meal Pattern Requirements

Measurement abbreviations: Cup = c, Ounce Equivalent = oz eq, Calories = kcal, Grams = g, and Milligrams = mg


Minimum Amount of Food^a Per Week

Meal Components	Grades K–12	Grades K–5	Grades K–8	Grades 6–8	Grades 6–12	Grades 9–12
Fruits^{b,c}	5 c (1 c per day)	5 c (1 c per day)	5 c (1 c per day)	5 c (1 c per day)	5 c (1 c per day)	5 c (1 c per day)
Vegetables^{b,c}	0 c	0 c	0 c	0 c	0 c	0 c
Grains^{*,d}	9-10 oz eq (1 oz per day)	7-10 oz eq (1 oz per day)	8-10 oz eq (1 oz per day)	8-10 oz eq (1 oz per day)	9-10 oz eq (1 oz per day)	9-10 oz eq (1 oz per day)
Meat/Meat Alternates^e	0 oz eq	0 oz eq	0 oz eq	0 oz eq	0 oz eq	0 oz eq
Fluid Milk^f	5 c (1 c per day)	5 c (1 c per day)	5 c (1 c per day)	5 c (1 c per day)	5 c (1 c per day)	5 c (1 c per day)

Specifications: Daily Amount Based on the Average for a 5-Day Week

Specifications	Grades K–12	Grades K–5	Grades K–8	Grades 6–8	Grades 6–12	Grades 9–12
Min-max calories	450–500 kcal	350–500 kcal	400–500 kcal	400–550 kcal	450–550 kcal	450–600 kcal
Saturated Fat (% of calories)^h	<10%	<10%	<10%	<10%	<10%	<10%
Sodium Target 2^{h,i}	≤ 485 mg	≤ 485 mg	≤ 485 mg	≤ 535 mg	≤ 535 mg	≤ 570 mg
Trans Fat^{h,j}	0 g	0 g	0 g	0 g	0 g	0 g

* U.S. Department of Agriculture has lifted the weekly maximums for grains. The daily and weekly minimums for grains and the weekly calorie ranges still apply. The maximums are used as a guide for menu planning purposes only.

^a Food items included in each group and subgroup and amount equivalents as outlined in the [U.S. Department of Agriculture’s Food Buying Guide web page](#) .

^b One quarter cup of dried fruit counts as one half cup of fruit; one cup of leafy greens counts as one half cup of vegetables. No more than half of the fruit or vegetable offerings may be in the form of juice. All juice must be 100 percent full-strength. The minimum creditable serving for a fruit or vegetable is at least one eighth cup.

^c Vegetables may be substituted for fruits, but the first two cups per week of any such substitution must be from the dark green, red/orange, beans and peas (legumes) or “Other Vegetables” subgroups, as defined in 7 *CFR* Section 210.10(c)(2)(iii).

^d All grains offered weekly must be whole grain rich. Schools may substitute one ounce equivalent of meat/meat alternate for one ounce equivalent of grains after the minimum daily grains requirement is met. Meat/meat alternates may be offered as extra food items that do not count toward the grain component or as food items for Offer Versus Serve. These extra food items need to be included in the weekly calories, sodium, and saturated fat. The minimum creditable serving for a grain, a meat, or a meat alternate is at least one quarter ounce equivalent.

^e There is no meat/meat alternate requirement.

^f At **least two** milk choices must be offered. Pasteurized, fluid types of milk that meet state and local standards and contain vitamins A and D at levels specified by the Food and Drug Administration must be offered. All milk must be fat-free or low-fat. Milk with higher fat content is not allowed. Fat-free fluid milk may be flavored or unflavored, and low-fat fluid milk must be unflavored. Low-fat or fat-free, lactose-free, and reduced-lactose fluid milk may also be offered.

^g The average daily calories for a five-day school week must be within the range (at least the minimum and no more than the maximum values).

^h Discretionary sources of calories (solid fats and added sugars) may be added to the meal pattern if within the specifications for calories, saturated fat, trans fat, and sodium. Food products and ingredients must contain zero grams of trans fat (less than 0.5 grams) per serving.

ⁱ Sodium Target 2 is effective from July 1, 2017 to June 30, 2022 and is contained in 7 *CFR* Section 220.8 (c).

^j Nutrition label of manufacturer specifications must indicate zero grams of trans fat per serving.

Please note: For offer versus serve, every student must take either ½ cup fruit (or substituted vegetable) or a combination of both to count as a reimbursable meal.

Questions: Nutrition Services Division | 800-952-5609

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