

1

Meats/Meat Alternates

Food Buying Guide for Child Nutrition Programs



1 | Meats/Meat Alternates

Meats/Meat Alternates Component for the Child Nutrition Programs

Child Nutrition Program regulations require all schools, centers, and day care homes participating in the National School Lunch Program (NSLP), National School Breakfast Program (SBP), Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP), and Summer Food Service Program (SFSP) to follow a food-based menu planning (FBMP) approach. FBMP helps Program operators serve cost-effective meals that are varied, balanced, safe, wholesome, and health promoting.

Meats and meat alternates (M/MA) include meat, poultry, fish, cheese, yogurt, dry beans and peas, whole eggs, alternate protein products, soy yogurt, tofu, peanut butter or other nut or seed butters, and nuts and seeds. Child Nutrition Program operators must serve meals that contain the amount of M/MA required in the lunch and supper Meal Pattern Charts as shown on pages I-7 to I-13. Program operators have the choice to serve a M/MA as one of the two components of a snack served in the NSLP, CACFP, or as part of the breakfast for the SBP and CACFP.

For the NSLP and SFSP, enriched macaroni-type products with fortified protein as defined in 7 CFR Part 210 Appendix A, may be counted as meeting part of the M/MA requirement. Products formulated with alternate protein may be counted as meeting all or part of the meats/meat alternates requirement for all Child Nutrition Programs.

For detailed information and assistance on the proper use of these products, please contact your State agency.

- The M/MA for the lunch or supper must be served in the main dish or in the main dish and one other menu item.
- In order for a food to contribute to the M/MA component, it must contain a minimum of 0.25 oz of a M/MA.
- For the SBP, M/MA can be an extra food, not a component for a reimbursable meal, or it may credit toward the required weekly total grains, only after meeting the daily grains requirement.
- For the CACFP, M/MA may be served in place of the entire grains component at breakfast a maximum of three times per week.

Optional Best Practices for All Child Nutrition Programs

To further strengthen the nutritional quality of meals served, Program operators are encouraged, but not required, to:

- Serve a variety of lean protein foods, including seafood, lean meats and poultry, eggs, legumes (beans and peas), and nuts, seeds, and soy products.
- Limit serving processed meats and poultry as they are typically sources of sodium and saturated fats. According to Dietary Guidelines for Americans (DGAs), processed meats are products preserved by smoking, curing, salting, and/or the addition of chemical preservatives.
- Serve only natural cheeses and choose low-fat or reduced-fat cheeses.



This section contains yield data for:

- Fresh and frozen boneless meat, poultry, and fish in servings of 1 and 1-1/2 oz equivalent;
- Some fresh and frozen meats, poultry, and fish with bones (e.g., chicken drumstick) in servings of 1 and 1-1/2 oz equivalent;
- Commercially prepared tofu in a serving of 1 oz equivalent for the NSLP, SBP, and CACFP;
- Peanut butter and other nut butters in 2 Tbsp and 3 Tbsp measures that are equivalent to 1 and 1-1/2 oz of meat alternate respectively;
- Whole eggs are expressed in large egg equivalents (1 large egg = 2 oz equivalent meat alternate) and 1/2 large egg equivalent (1/2 large egg = 1 oz equivalent meat alternate);
- “USDA Foods” or “Market pack” is listed in column 1. For items where the USDA Foods and Market pack are both available, the items are designated as “Includes USDA Foods”;
- Commercially-prepared combination foods that meet USDA, Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS) standards that require a minimum percent of meat or poultry. Products listed include canned and frozen meat and poultry products at portion sizes to provide at least 1 ounce equivalent of cooked meat or poultry per average-size serving;
- Cooked dry beans and peas in servings of 1/4 cup and 3/8 cup (1 and 1-1/2 oz equivalent meat alternate respectively); and
- Standard commercially prepared canned bean or pea soups where one 1/2 cup serving provides 1/4 cup cooked beans (1 oz equivalent meat alternate).

NOTE: Information for nonspecific products such as chicken, beef, or pork nuggets and patties is not provided in this Food Buying Guide. Nonspecific products do not require a minimum amount of meat by FSIS labeling standards of identity. There is no general way to determine how much meat or poultry is contained in these products, especially since each manufacturer has its own formulation. Program operators using these products must either request the manufacturer to obtain a Child Nutrition label or request the manufacturer's documentation known as the product formulation statement to credit each specific product used. For more information on CN Labeling, please see Appendix C. Sample manufacturer's product formulation statement (PFS) templates may be accessed via the CN Labeling website at: <http://www.fns.usda.gov/cnlabeling/food-manufacturersindustry>.

1 | Meats/Meat Alternates

Definitions

A serving of cooked meat	A serving of cooked meat is understood to be lean meat without bone. According to Dietary Guidelines for Americans, lean meats and poultry contain less than 10 g of fat, 4.5 g or less of saturated fats, and less than 95 mg of cholesterol per 100 g and per labeled serving size.
A serving of cooked fresh or frozen poultry	A serving of cooked fresh or frozen poultry includes boneless meat and skin unless otherwise indicated.
A serving of yogurt	A serving of yogurt includes plain or flavored, unsweetened or sweetened – all types of yogurt must be commercially prepared and are further defined in the program regulations under 7 CFR parts 210.2, 220.2(bb), 226.2, and 225.2. All yogurt served in the CACFP must contain no more than 23 grams of sugar per 6 ounces (7 CFR 226.20(a)(5)(iii)).
“Market pack”	“Market pack” refers to foods available on the market.
IMPS	IMPS stands for Institutional Meat Purchase Specifications. These specifications describe in exact detail items most commonly used by foodservice establishments and institutional purchasers for purchasing meats. They are also used in USDA commodity specifications. Only meats that are certified by the USDA, Agricultural Marketing Service, Livestock, Poultry, and Seed Program (LPS) may be labeled “IMPS.”
Like IMPS:	Products having the description “like IMPS” imply that the IMPS standard for the described meat cut has been met but the meat has not been certified by LPS; hence, it is “like” or “similar” to IMPS meat but is not labeled as such. The data for the products contained in the FBG was derived using certified IMPS meat, but meats matching the descriptions and specifications may use the FBG yield for the matching IMPS product.
PFF	PFF stands for “Protein Fat Free,” which is a procedure used by cured pork processors to reflect the presence of added ingredients, including water in cured pork products, and relates labeling claims to the percent of meat protein in the product. Manufacturers must monitor the PFF since adding water and other ingredients dilutes the natural protein content. Labeling regulations established by FSIS state that products such as “Ham,” “Ham with Natural Juices,” “Ham Water Added,” etc., must comply with the minimum meat PFF percentages as stated in the regulations.

NOTE: Products named “Ham and Water Product, X% of weight is added ingredients” do not have standardized PFF values since the amount of water/ingredients added is not limited. For products labeled “Ham and Water Product X% of weight is added ingredients” to be properly used in Child Nutrition programs, you should either:

- *purchase a CN labeled product, or*
- *take out the percent of added water/ingredients by multiplying the finished weight by the percent added ingredients and then subtracting that amount from the finished weight, divide by the manufacturer’s cooking yield to obtain the raw weight of the product, and then apply the FBG yield for the specific cut of pork used to process the product.*

Please note that luncheon meats that are not CN Labeled or listed in the FBG are not creditable toward meal pattern requirements.

Yields

Standard commercially prepared combination foods: The yields for commercially prepared combination foods having Federal standards of identity (see 9 CFR parts 319 and 381 for FSIS regulations pertaining to standards of identity for meat and poultry products) listed under Chicken Products (and Beef or Turkey Products) are based on the minimum meat and poultry requirements for food products that are packed for interstate shipment under Federal Meat and Poultry Inspection. The serving size listed for these products will provide at least one ounce equivalent of cooked meat or poultry. Purchasers of these products will need to ensure that the name of the food on the product label exactly matches the FBG description for the “Food As Purchased” in Column 1 before using the crediting information.

Breaded fish portions or sticks: Yields are based on raw fish portions or sticks and the amount of fish in the product. “Precooked” or “Fried” seafood is not fully cooked; only the breading or batter is flash-fried to set. The fish is raw. For serving purposes the product must be fully cooked. For crediting purposes, the calculations were done using the weights and yields for cooked fish.

Yields of cooked meat and poultry vary with type, age, fat content, and weight of the animal, and the method, time, and temperature of cooking. The quantities of food to purchase are based on average yields of cooked meat and poultry.

1 | Meats/Meat Alternates

Explanation of the Columns

The yield information is presented in table form for easy reference. The data on M/MA in the following table include yield information on common types and customary serving sizes of products that you can buy on the market, as well as some USDA Foods products. The columns are numbered 1 through 6 as follows:



Column 1: Food As Purchased, AP

The individual foods are arranged in alphabetical order by species (for example, ham is listed under PORK, MILD CURED). Within each species, all of the raw items are listed first followed by cooked and/or canned products. For Chicken and Turkey, the raw items are presented starting with the whole bird followed by whole parts and then the remaining raw items. Other characteristics are given, such as fat content, with or without bone, percent of fish in fish products, and weight of individual pieces of chicken. The items are listed according to the forms in which they appear in the market – fresh, canned, frozen or dehydrated.

Column 2: Purchase Unit

The purchase unit is generally given as either a pound, a No. 10 can, and, in many cases, a smaller size can.

Column 3: Servings per Purchase Unit, EP (Edible Portion)

This column shows the number of 1 or 1-1/2 ounce lean meat or equivalent servings you will get from each purchase unit. Numbers in this column have been rounded down in order to help ensure enough food is purchased for the number of servings stated.

Column 4: Serving Size per Meal Contribution

The size of a serving is given as 1 or 1-1/2 ounce cooked lean meat or equivalent (1/4 cup or 3/8 cup of cooked beans or peas, 1 or 1-1/2 ounce of cheese, 1/2 large egg (1 ounce) or 1 large egg (2 ounces), or 2 or 3 tablespoons of peanut butter). Individual servings such as frankfurters, chicken pieces, or fish portions are listed by the piece along with the equivalent ounces of lean meat given in parentheses under the portion size.

Column 5: Purchase Units for 100 Servings

This column shows the number of purchase units you need for 100 servings of the corresponding serving size listed in column 4. Numbers in this column have been generally rounded up in order to help ensure enough food is purchased for the number of servings.

Column 6: Additional Information

This column gives other information to help you calculate the amount of food you need to prepare meals. It shows the amount of cooked ready-to-serve meat you will get from 1 pound of meat, poultry, seafood, or acceptable meat alternate as purchased.