

Child and Adult Care Food Program: Providing Multiple Meals at a Time for Children During the Coronavirus (COVID-19) Pandemic



The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) is working with State Child Nutrition agencies to provide safe and flexible meal service to children during the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic. Under nationwide non-congregate feeding and meal times waivers, State agencies may allow Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) operators to provide more than 1 day’s worth of meals to eligible children via a single meal pick-up (by the child or their parent or guardian) or delivery.^{1,2} For example, a child care site may distribute 4 days of meals on Monday morning, providing children with breakfast and lunch for Monday through Thursday.

What Meals and Snacks Can CACFP Operators Claim for Reimbursement?

- **Child Care:** Up to 2 meals and 1 snack, or 2 snacks and 1 meal, per child per day.
- **At-Risk Afterschool:** Up to 1 meal and 1 snack, per child per day.

What Should Program Operators Consider When Deciding How Many Days of Meals To Provide at a Time?

- How long foods may be safely stored before eating.
- How long foods can be stored before food quality suffers.
- Participants’ access to refrigeration and freezer space for the amounts of food and milk provided.
- Food storage space at the child care site and on meal delivery vehicles (such as buses or food trucks).
- Whether fewer pick-up days and times will decrease access to meals for some children.



<https://www.fns.usda.gov/disaster/pandemic/covid-19>

¹Nationwide Waiver To Allow Meal Service Time Flexibility in the Child Nutrition Programs, COVID-19: Child Nutrition Response #1, <https://www.fns.usda.gov/cn/covid-19-meal-times-nationwide-waiver>.

²Nationwide Waiver To Allow Non-Congregate Feeding in the Child Nutrition Programs, COVID-19: Child Nutrition Response #2, <https://www.fns.usda.gov/cn/covid-19/non-congregate-feeding-nationwide-waiver>.

WHAT FOOD ITEMS MAY BE PROVIDED IN BULK?

- Foods that normally credit towards reimbursable meals under the CACFP, including iron-fortified formula and foods for infants.
- Foods that are recognizable as a meal component in a reimbursable meal.
- Foods that do not require much preparation or the addition of other ingredients (aside from water) before eating.

CAN FROZEN BULK FOODS BE PROVIDED?

Yes. Frozen foods, which require minimal preparation other than heating, may be provided as part of meals if they meet meal pattern requirements. Providing foods in a frozen state may present a safe way to offer perishable foods for consumption later in the week (for example, 4 or 5 days after distribution).

Providing Foods in “Bulk” Packages

Under State-approved non-congregate feeding and meal times waivers, Program operators may provide **bulk food** items that contribute to multiple meals for children. Program operators can provide menus and instructions with the foods to communicate to children and their parents or guardians how to portion and serve foods at mealtime. For example, the Program operator could provide a quart of milk, along with a menu showing that 4 fl oz (½ cup) of milk is part of breakfast and lunch meals (for children 1-2 years of age) during a 4-day period.

During the COVID-19 public health emergency, with State-approved non-congregate feeding and meal times waivers, Program operators are not required to provide “**unitized**” meals. Therefore, in the example above, Program operators would not need to provide the milk in ½-cup containers.

What Meal Pattern Considerations Should Program Operators Keep in Mind When Planning Menus?

- Provide a variety of foods within the meal components to ensure meals meet the nutritional needs of children.
- Provide no more than one serving of fruits or vegetables as 100% juice each day.*
- Ensure nuts and seeds contribute no more than half of the meats/meat alternates component at meals.*
- Ensure two forms of the same fruit or vegetable are not served in the same meal (for example: an orange and orange juice, or two oranges).*
- Consider how “extra” foods will contribute toward children’s nutrition needs.

*State agencies may grant waivers for these and other meal pattern requirements under specific circumstances. For more information, visit <https://www.fns.usda.gov/cn/covid-19-meal-pattern-flexibility-waiver>.

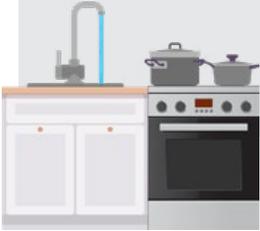
Bulk Foods

Food packaging containing an amount of food that is more than what is required at a single meal under the CACFP meal patterns. A bulk food item may provide food to be eaten at more than one meal or snack.

Unitized Meals

Meals are considered **unitized** when meal components are provided and packaged in amounts for a single meal. For example, a unitized breakfast for a 3- to 5-year-old child might include: 6 fl oz (¾ cup) low-fat milk, ½ oz eq pancake, and ½ cup sliced strawberries.



| Things To Consider When Offering Bulk Food Items | Best Practices |
|---|--|
|  <p>Parent/Guardian Time and Availability</p> | Offering foods that are pre-prepared and do not require cooking and chopping. |
|  <p>Age/Developmental Abilities of the Children Served</p> | Offering foods that are washed, cut, and ready to eat. Offering developmentally appropriate foods to children under 4 years old that minimize the risk of choking. |
|  <p>Literacy Level of Families</p> | Offering foods that require minimal preparation before they are served to children. Providing menus and instructions using pictures and in the primary language spoken at home. |
|  <p>Access to Kitchen Appliances and Cooking Tools</p> | Offering foods that do not require pots, pans, large refrigerators, knives, and other items to prepare or store them. |
|  <p>Access to Potable Water</p> | Offering foods that do not require the addition of water, cooking in water, or washing before eating. |
|  <p>Food Safety Risk</p> | Offering foods that are pre-washed or pre-cooked. Providing food safety instructions using pictures and in the primary language spoken at home. Providing iron-fortified infant formula in its original container. |

Food Amounts

The chart on pages 4-7 shows the minimum amount of foods needed to meet meal pattern requirements for breakfast and lunch when providing 2, 3, or 4 days' worth of meals and snacks. Note that the amounts of foods needed to meet meal pattern requirements do not always equate to can and container sizes available on the retail market. In these instances, more food than what is required would need to be provided if Program operators wish to use bulk packages. Program operators would need to round up and provide the next full-size container.

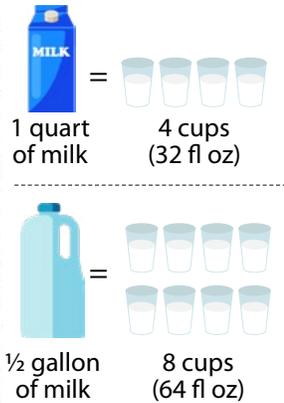
Food Quality

Distributing 2, 3, or 4 days of meals may present food quality challenges. Below are some tips to consider:

- For sandwiches and wraps, package bread separately from sandwich fillings and provide instructions on how parents, guardians, and older children can assemble the sandwiches at mealtime.
- For pre-made salads, package dressings separately from salad greens and provide instructions on how to dress the salad at home.
- Avoid stacking meals to prevent damage. Large rolling carts can help transport meals in single layers around the child care site.

Breakfast (B), Lunch (L), Snack (S): Minimum Amounts of Food Needed for 2, 3, or 4-Day Distribution

This chart shows how minimum required amounts compare to container sizes commonly available on the retail market. Amounts are based on information from the Food Buying Guide for Child Nutrition Programs (<https://www.fns.usda.gov/tn/food-buying-guide-for-child-nutrition-programs>).



These are common container sizes.

| | 1-2 years old | | | 3-5 years old | | |
|---|--------------------------------|-------------------------------------|-----------------------------|--------------------------------|-------------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| | 2-day | 3-day | 4-day | 2-day | 3-day | 4-day |
| Milk | 4 fl oz | | | Serving amount varies | | |
| Milk (B) | Breakfast: 4 fl oz | | | Breakfast: 6 fl oz | | |
| | 8 fl oz (1 cup) | 12 fl oz (1.5 cups) | 16 fl oz (2 cups) | 12 fl oz (1.5 cups) | 18 fl oz (2.25 cups) | 24 fl oz (3 cups) |
| Milk (L) | Lunch: 4 fl oz | | | Lunch: 6 fl oz | | |
| | 8 fl oz (1 cup) | 12 fl oz (1.5 cups) | 16 fl oz (2 cups) | 12 fl oz (1.5 cups) | 18 fl oz (2.25 cups) | 24 fl oz (3 cups) |
| Milk (S) | Snack: 4 fl oz | | | Snack: 4 fl oz | | |
| | 8 fl oz (1 cup) | 12 fl oz (1.5 cups) | 16 fl oz (2 cups) | 8 fl oz (1 cup) | 12 fl oz (1.5 cups) | 16 fl oz (2 cups) |
| Total Milk | 0.75 qt (24 fl oz) | 1 qt plus 0.5 cup (36 fl oz) | 1.5 qts (48 fl oz) | 1 qt (32 fl oz) | 0.75 half-gallon (48 fl oz) | 1 half-gallon (64 fl oz) |
| Total Milk When Milk is Not Served at Snacks | 0.5 qt (16 fl oz) | 0.75 qt (24 fl oz) | 1 qt (32 fl oz) | 0.75 qt (24 fl oz) | 1 qt plus 0.5 cup (36 fl oz) | 0.75 half-gallon (48 fl oz) |
| Applesauce (23-oz jar) | Serving amount varies | | | Serving amount varies | | |
| Applesauce, smooth or chunky (B) | Breakfast: 1/4 cup per serving | | | Breakfast: 1/2 cup per serving | | |
| | 0.20 jar (0.5 cup) | 0.30 jar (0.75 cup) | 0.40 jar (1 cup) | 0.40 jar (1 cup) | 0.59 jar (1.5 cups) | 0.79 jar (2 cups) |
| Applesauce (L) | Lunch: 1/8 cup per serving | | | Lunch: 1/4 cup per serving | | |
| | 0.10 jar (0.25 cup) | 0.15 jar (0.38 cup) | 0.20 jar (0.5 cup) | 0.20 jar (0.5 cup) | 0.30 jar (0.75 cup) | 0.40 jar (1.0 cup) |
| Applesauce (S) | Snack: 1/2 cup | | | Snack: 1/2 cup | | |
| | 0.40 jar (1.0 cup) | 0.59 jar (1.5 cups) | 0.79 jar (2.0 cups) | 0.40 jar (1.0 cup) | 0.59 jar (1.5 cups) | 0.79 jar (2.0 cups) |
| Total Jars (23-oz jars) of Applesauce | 0.70 jar (1.75 cups) | 1.04 jars (2.63 cups) | 1.39 jars (3.5 cups) | 1 jar (2.5 cups) | 1.49 jars (3.75 cups) | 2 jars (5 cups) |
| Fruit Juice | 1/2 cup (4 fl oz) | | | 1/2 cup (4 fl oz) | | |
| Juice, 100% full-strength (S) | 8 fl oz (1 cup) | 12 fl oz (1.5 cups) | 16 fl oz (2 cups) | 8 fl oz (1 cup) | 12 fl oz (1.5 cups) | 16 fl oz (2 cups) |
| Total Juice | 8 fl oz (1 cup) | 12 fl oz (1.5 cups) | 16 fl oz (2 cups) | 8 fl oz (1 cup) | 12 fl oz (1.5 cups) | 16 fl oz (2 cups) |

These are common container sizes.

Reminder
Round up when the amount needed is only part of a container. For example, provide a half gallon of milk, when the minimum required amount is 0.75 (3/4) of a half-gallon.

Reminder
Under CACFP meal pattern requirements, pasteurized full-strength juice may only be used to meet the vegetable or fruit requirement at 1 meal/snack per day.

Reminder
 Providing a variety of foods can help children get important nutrients. Look for ways to balance the use of bulk foods with this best practice of providing variety during the week.

Reminder
 Round up when the amount needed is only part of a can. For example, provide 4 cans when the minimum required amount is 3.13 cans.

These are common container sizes.

These are common container sizes.

| | 1-2 years old | | | 3-5 years old | | |
|--|------------------------------|------------------------------|-----------------------------|------------------------------|------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| | 2-day | 3-day | 4-day | 2-day | 3-day | 4-day |
| Canned Peaches (16-oz can) | Serving amount varies | | | Serving amount varies | | |
| Peaches, Sliced (B) | Breakfast: ¼ cup | | | Breakfast: ½ cup | | |
| | 0.31 can (0.5 cup) | 0.47 can (0.75 cup) | 0.63 can (1 cup) | 0.63 can (1 cup) | 0.94 can (1.5 cups) | 1.25 cans (2 cups) |
| Peaches, Sliced (L) | Lunch: ⅛ cup | | | Lunch: ¼ cup | | |
| | 0.16 can (0.25 cup) | 0.23 can (0.38 cup) | 0.31 can (0.5 cup) | 0.31 can (0.5 cup) | 0.47 can (0.75 cup) | 0.63 can (1 cup) |
| Peaches, Sliced (S) | Snack: ½ cup | | | Snack: ½ cup | | |
| | 0.63 can (1 cup) | 0.94 can (1.5 cups) | 1.25 cans (2 cups) | 0.63 can (1 cup) | 0.94 can (1.5 cups) | 1.25 cans (2 cups) |
| Total Cans (16-oz cans) of Peaches | 1.1 cans (1.75 cups) | 1.64 cans (2.63 cups) | 2.19 cans (3.5 cups) | 1.57 cans (2.5 cups) | 2.35 cans (3.75 cups) | 3.13 cans (5 cups) |
| Canned Pears (15-oz can) | Serving amount varies | | | Serving amount varies | | |
| Pears, Halves (B) | Breakfast: ¼ cup | | | Breakfast: ½ cup | | |
| | 0.29 can (0.5 cup) | 0.43 can (0.75 cup) | 0.57 can (1 cup) | 0.57 can (1 cup) | 0.85 can (1.5 cups) | 1.14 cans (2 cups) |
| Pears, Halves (L) | Lunch: ⅛ cup | | | Lunch: ¼ cup | | |
| | 0.14 can (0.25 cup) | 0.21 can (0.38 cup) | 0.29 can (0.5 cup) | 0.29 can (0.5 cup) | 0.43 can (0.75 cup) | 0.57 can (1 cup) |
| Pears, Halves (S) | Snack: ½ cup | | | Snack: ½ cup | | |
| | 0.57 can (1 cup) | 0.85 can (1.5 cups) | 1.14 cans (2 cups) | 0.57 can (1 cup) | 0.85 can (1.5 cups) | 1.14 cans (2 cups) |
| Total Cans (15-oz cans) of Pears | 1 can (1.75 cups) | 1.49 cans (2.63 cups) | 2 cans (3.5 cups) | 1.43 cans (2.5 cups) | 2.13 cans (3.75 cups) | 2.85 cans (5 cups) |
| Frozen Strawberries (16-oz bag) | Serving amount varies | | | Serving amount varies | | |
| Strawberries, Sliced, Sweetened (B) | Breakfast: ¼ cup per serving | | | Breakfast: ½ cup per serving | | |
| | 0.28 bag (0.5 cup) | 0.42 bag (0.75 cup) | 0.56 bag (1 cup) | 0.56 bag (1 cup) | 0.85 bag (1.5 cups) | 1.13 bags (2 cups) |
| Strawberries, Sliced, Sweetened (L) | Lunch: ⅛ cup | | | Lunch: ¼ cup | | |
| | 0.14 bag (0.25 cup) | 0.21 bag (0.38 cup) | 0.28 bag (0.5 cup) | 0.28 bag (0.5 cup) | 0.42 bag (0.75 cup) | 0.56 bag (1 cup) |
| Strawberries, Sliced, Sweetened (S) | Snack: ½ cup | | | Snack: ½ cup | | |
| | 0.56 bag (1 cup) | 0.85 bag (1.5 cups) | 1.13 bags (2 cups) | 0.56 bag (1 cup) | 0.85 bag (1.5 cups) | 1.13 bags (2.0 cups) |
| Total Packages (16 oz bags) of Strawberries | 1 bag (1.75 cups) | 1.48 bags (2.63 cups) | 2 bags (3.5 cups) | 1.40 bags (2.5 cups) | 2.12 bags (3.75 cups) | 2.82 bags (5.0 cups) |

| | 1-2 years old | | | 3-5 years old | | |
|---|-----------------------------|-------------------------------|----------------------------|-----------------------------|-------------------------------|----------------------------|
| | 2-day | 3-day | 4-day | 2-day | 3-day | 4-day |
| Canned Green Beans (15-oz can) | Serving amount varies | | | Serving amount varies | | |
| Green Beans, Cut, Drained, Heated (L) | Lunch: ⅓ cup | | | Lunch: ¼ cup | | |
| | 0.20 can (0.25 cup) | 0.30 can (0.38 cup) | 0.40 can (0.5 cup) | 0.40 can (0.5 cup) | 0.60 can (0.75 cup) | 0.80 can (1 cup) |
| Green Beans, Cut, Drained, Heated (S) | Snack: ½ cup | | | Snack: ½ cup | | |
| | 0.80 can (1 cup) | 1.20 cans (1.5 cups) | 1.60 cans (2 cups) | 0.80 can (1 cup) | 1.20 cans (1.5 cups) | 1.60 cans (2 cups) |
| Total Cans (15-oz cans) of Green Beans | 1 can (1.25 cups) | 1.5 cans (1.88 cups) | 2 cans (2.5 cups) | 1.2 cans (1.5 cups) | 1.8 cans (2.25 cups) | 2.4 cans (3 cups) |
| Frozen Broccoli (16-oz bag) | Serving amount varies | | | Serving amount varies | | |
| Broccoli, Florets (L) | Lunch: ⅓ cup | | | Lunch: ¼ cup | | |
| | 0.07 bag (0.25 cup) | 0.11 bag (0.38 cup) | 0.14 bag (0.5 cup) | 0.14 bag (0.5 cup) | 0.21 bag (0.75 cup) | 0.29 bag (1 cup) |
| Broccoli, Florets (S) | Snack: ½ cup | | | Snack: ½ cup | | |
| | 0.29 bag (1 cup) | 0.43 bag (1.5 cups) | 0.57 bag (2 cups) | 0.29 bag (1 cup) | 0.43 bag (1.5 cups) | 0.57 bag (2 cups) |
| Total Bags (16-oz bags) of Broccoli | 0.36 bag (1.25 cups) | 0.54 bag (1.88 cups) | 0.71 bag (2.5 cups) | 0.43 bag (1.5 cups) | 0.64 bag (2.25 cups) | 0.86 bag (3 cups) |
| Frozen Green Beans (16-oz bag) | Serving amount varies | | | Serving amount varies | | |
| Green Beans (L) | Lunch: ⅓ cup | | | Lunch: ¼ cup | | |
| | 0.09 bag (0.25 cup) | 0.13 bag (0.38 cup) | 0.17 bag (0.5 cup) | 0.17 bag (0.5 cup) | 0.26 bag (0.75 cup) | 0.34 bag (1.0 cup) |
| Green Beans (S) | Snack: ½ cup | | | Snack: ½ cup | | |
| | 0.34 bag (1 cup) | 0.52 bag (1.5 cups) | 0.69 bag (2 cups) | 0.34 bag (1 cup) | 0.52 bag (1.5 cups) | 0.69 bag (2 cups) |
| Total Bags (16-oz bags) of Green Beans | 0.43 bag (1.25 cups) | 0.65 bag (1.88 cups) | 0.86 bag (2.5 cups) | 0.51 bag (1.5 cups) | 0.78 bag (2.25 cups) | 1 bag (3 cups) |
| Bread, Whole Grain-Rich (20-oz loaf) | ½ oz eq (½ slice) | | | ½ oz eq (½ slice) | | |
| Bread, Whole Grain-rich (B) | 1 slice (1 oz eq) | 1.5 slices (1.5 oz eq) | 2 slices (2 oz eq) | 1 slice (1 oz eq) | 1.5 slices (1.5 oz eq) | 2 slices (2 oz eq) |
| Bread, Whole Grain-rich (L) | 1 slice (1 oz eq) | 1.5 slices (1.5 oz eq) | 2 slices (2 oz eq) | 1 slice (1 oz eq) | 1.5 slices (1.5 oz eq) | 2 slices (2 oz eq) |
| Bread, Whole Grain-rich (S) | 1 slice (1 oz eq) | 1.5 slices (1.5 oz eq) | 2 slices (2 oz eq) | 1 slice (1 oz eq) | 1.5 slices (1.5 oz eq) | 2 slices (2 oz eq) |
| Total Loaves (20-oz loaf) of Bread | 0.15 loaf (3 slices) | 0.23 loaf (4.5 slices) | 0.3 loaf (6 slices) | 0.15 loaf (3 slices) | 0.23 loaf (4.5 slices) | 0.3 loaf (6 slices) |

These are common container sizes.

This is a common container size.

| | 1-2 years old | | | 3-5 years old | | |
|---|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|----------------------------|
| | 2-day | 3-day | 4-day | 2-day | 3-day | 4-day |
| Canned Black Beans (15.5-oz can) | | | | | | |
| Black Beans (L) | Lunch: 1 oz eq (¼ cup) | | | Lunch: 1½ oz eq (¾ cup) | | |
| | 0.34 can (0.5 cup) | 0.51 can (0.75 cup) | 0.68 can (1 cup) | 0.51 can (0.75 cup) | 0.76 can (1.13 cups) | 1 can (1.5 cups) |
| Black Beans (S) | Snack: ½ oz eq (⅛ cup) | | | Snack: ½ oz eq (⅛ cup) | | |
| | 0.17 can (0.25 cup) | 0.25 can (0.38 cup) | 0.34 can (0.5 cup) | 0.17 can (0.25 cup) | 0.25 can (0.38 cup) | 0.34 can (0.5 cup) |
| Total Cans (15.5-oz cans) of Black Beans | 0.51 can (0.75 cup) | 0.76 can (1.13 cups) | 1 can (1.5 cups) | 0.68 can (1 cup) | 1 can (1.5 cups) | 1.34 cans (2 cups) |
| Canned Refried Beans (16-oz can) | | | | | | |
| Refried Beans (L) | Lunch: 1 oz eq (¼ cup) | | | Lunch: 1½ oz eq (¾ cup) | | |
| | 0.28 can (0.5 cup) | 0.42 can (0.75 cup) | 0.57 can (1 cup) | 0.42 can (0.75 cup) | 0.64 can (1.13 cups) | 0.85 can (1.5 cups) |
| Refried Beans (S) | Snack: ½ oz eq (⅛ cup) | | | Snack: ½ oz eq (⅛ cup) | | |
| | 0.14 can (0.25 cup) | 0.21 can (0.38 cup) | 0.28 can (0.5 cup) | 0.14 can (0.25 cup) | 0.21 can (0.38 cup) | 0.28 can (0.5 cup) |
| Total Cans (16-oz cans) of Refried Beans | 0.42 can (0.75 cup) | 0.63 can (1.13 cups) | 0.85 can (1.5 cups) | 0.56 can (1 cup) | 0.85 can (1.51 cups) | 1.13 cans (2 cups) |
| Canned Tuna (6-oz can) | | | | | | |
| Tuna (L) | Lunch: 1 oz eq (1 oz) | | | Lunch: 1½ oz eq (1½ oz) | | |
| | 0.38 can (2 oz) | 0.57 can (3 oz) | 0.76 can (4 oz) | 0.57 can (3 oz) | 0.86 can (4.5 oz) | 1.14 cans (6 oz) |
| Tuna (S) | Snack: ½ oz eq (½ oz) | | | Snack: ½ oz eq (½ oz) | | |
| | 0.19 can (1 oz) | 0.29 can (1.5 oz) | 0.38 can (2 oz) | 0.19 can (1 oz) | 0.29 can (1.5 oz) | 0.38 can (2 oz) |
| Total Cans (6-oz cans) of Tuna | 0.57 can (3 oz) | 0.86 can (4.5 oz) | 1.14 cans (6 oz) | 0.76 can (4 oz) | 1.14 cans (6 oz) | 1.52 cans (8 oz) |
| Yogurt, Commercially Prepared (32-oz container) | | | | | | |
| Yogurt (L) | Lunch: 1 oz eq (½ cup) | | | Lunch: 1½ oz eq (¾ cup) | | |
| | 0.25 container (8 oz) | 0.38 container (12 oz) | 0.5 container (16 oz) | 0.38 container (12 oz) | 0.56 container (18 oz) | 0.75 container (24 oz) |
| Yogurt (S) | Snack: ½ oz eq (¼ cup) | | | Snack: ½ oz eq (¼ cup) | | |
| | 0.13 container (4 oz) | 0.19 container (6 oz) | 0.25 container (8 oz) | 0.13 container (4 oz) | 0.19 container (6 oz) | 0.25 container (8 oz) |
| Total Containers (32-oz containers) of Yogurt | 0.38 container (12 oz) | 0.57 container (18 oz) | 0.75 container (24 oz) | 0.51 container (16 oz) | 0.75 container (24 oz) | 1 container (32 oz) |
| oz = ounce; oz eq = ounce equivalent; fl oz = fluid ounces; qt = quart; gal = gallons | | | | | | |

These are common container sizes.

This is a common container size.

Food Safety

When providing meals, Program operators are encouraged to help parents and guardians identify which foods require refrigeration, cooking, or heating for food safety. Examples of strategies include:

- Labeling foods that require refrigeration or freezing.
- Providing a list of foods that require refrigeration, freezing, and heating.
- Sorting foods into 2 different bags prior to distribution—one for refrigerated foods and another for shelf-stable foods.

In addition, Program operators are encouraged to remind parents and guardians to:

- Wash hands with soap and warm water for at least 20 seconds before preparing or handling food.
- Wash dishes, utensils, tables, and countertops with hot, soapy water before and after eating food.
- Refrigerate or freeze meals and milk immediately after pick-up or delivery. Set home refrigerator temperatures to 40 °F or below, and home freezer temperatures to 0 °F or below.
- Eat perishable food (e.g., prepared chicken, cooked pasta, etc.) earlier in the week. Eat shelf-stable or frozen meals (e.g., nut butter, canned foods, frozen foods) later in the week.
- Discard leftovers and open containers/packages of refrigerated food within 3-4 days.
- Unopened containers of milk are typically safe for up to 1 week after the sell-by date. Look for signs of spoilage (for example, a bad smell) before drinking milk.
- Reheat prepared foods, like pasta with meat sauce, to an internal temperature of 165 °F. Heat frozen foods according to package instructions.

| Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday |
|---|---------|-----------|--|--------|
| Eat perishable food (e.g., prepared chicken, cooked pasta, etc.) earlier in the week. | | | Eat shelf-stable or frozen meals (e.g., nut butter, canned foods, frozen foods) later in the week. | |

For more information on food safety, visit <https://www.foodsafety.gov>.

Documentation

When providing multiple meals at a time, Program operators must continue to maintain documentation and menu records that show the served meal components and quantities for each age group. Program operators must keep supporting menu documentation, such as labels, recipes, and manufacturer specifications in accordance with Program regulations.

Meal Accommodations

Program operators must continue to provide reasonable modifications to Program meals or the meal service to accommodate children with disabilities.

Communicating What Makes a Meal

Program operators are strongly encouraged to provide parents, guardians, and older children with a list of the items they are receiving and menus showing which foods and how much of each food should be served at each meal. When possible, Program operators should provide this information in multiple languages and use visual aids, such as pictures. See examples on pages 9-16.

Sample Parent Communication To Accompany Meals for a Child 1-2 Years Old (4 Days of Breakfasts, Lunches, and Snacks)

What's Inside?

These bags include meals for your child. They include foods for 4 breakfasts, 4 lunches, and 4 snacks.

Cold Bag:

- 1 Quart Milk (32 fl oz or 4 cups) 
 - 1-year-olds: Unflavored Whole Milk
 - 2-year-olds: Unflavored Fat-Free (Skim) or Low-Fat (1%) Milk
- 1 Container Low-Fat Vanilla Yogurt (4 oz) 
- Cooked Enriched Rice (1/4 cup) 
- Refried Beans (1/8 cup) 
- Shredded Chicken (1 oz) 
- Prepared Spaghetti and Meat Sauce (1/2 cup) 
- 2 Frozen Pre-Cooked Meatballs 
- Sliced Cheddar Cheese (1 oz) 

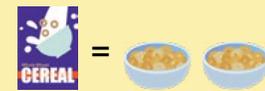
This quart of milk provides 8 servings of milk for your child. Each serving is 1/2 cup.



This container of yogurt provides 2 servings.



This box of cereal provides 2 servings.



Pantry Bag:

- 1 Box of Toasted O's Cereal (1 ounce or 1 cup)
- 1 Can Sliced Peaches (16 oz)  after opening
- 1 Can Pear Halves (15 oz)  after opening
- 1 Can Green Beans (15 oz)  after opening
- 1 Box Apple Juice (4.23 fl oz or 1/2 cup)
- 1 Whole-Wheat Dinner Roll (1 oz)
- 1 Slice Whole-Wheat Bread (1 oz)
- 1 Package Graham Crackers (0.5 oz; 2 Crackers Total)
- 2 Packages Saltine Crackers, Enriched (0.2 oz each; 4 Crackers Total)
- 1 Ketchup Packet
- 12 Utensil Packets

These cans provide fruits and vegetables for more than 1 meal for your child. See the menu for amounts for each meal.

The canned pear halves provide an extra 1/4 cup of fruit. Your child can have this extra fruit at breakfast, lunch, or snack, or as part of another meal.

One-half of a dinner roll is a typical portion for a child 1-2 years old at lunch. Serve more of the roll if your child is still hungry at lunchtime, or store the leftover half of the roll in its plastic bag. Your child can enjoy the rest of the roll as part of another meal or snack.

 Store in the refrigerator at 40 °F or below

 Store in the freezer until ready to heat and serve.

 Reheat in the microwave or oven until the internal temperature is 165 °F. Remove packaging before reheating.

Modify foods to meet the developmental abilities of your child. For example:

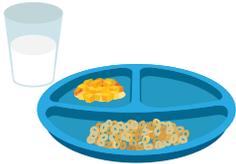
- Cut canned fruits and vegetables into small pieces (no larger than 1/2 inch).
- Cut the bread and dinner roll into thin strips.
- Cut the meatballs into small pieces (no larger than 1/2 inch).

See menus on the back of this page.

Sample Parent Communication To Accompany Meals for a Child 1-2 Years Old (4 Days of Breakfasts, Lunches, and Snacks) - Continued

On the Menu | Menus for Children 1-2 Years Old

Day 1 Menu



Breakfast

- ½ Cup Milk
- ¼ Cup Canned Peaches
- ½ Cup Toasted O's Cereal^{WG}

Tip: Modify foods to meet the developmental abilities of your child. Cut foods into small pieces no larger than ½ inch. Cut breads and cheese into thin strips.



Lunch

- ½ Cup Milk
- ⅛ Cup Canned Peaches
- ½ Cup Spaghetti and Meat Sauce^{WG} 

Serving Instructions

Heat Spaghetti and Meat Sauce by microwaving on high for 30 seconds at a time and stirring until hot. Let stand 2 minutes before serving.



Snack

- 1 Box Apple Juice
- 1 Package Graham Crackers

Day 2 Menu



Breakfast

- ½ Cup Milk
- ¼ Cup Canned Peaches
- ½ Cup Toasted O's Cereal^{WG}



Lunch

- ½ Cup Milk
- ⅛ Cup Canned Peaches
- ⅛ Cup Refried Beans 
- ¼ Cup Enriched White Rice 
- 1 oz Shredded Chicken 

Serving Instructions

Heat beans, rice, and chicken by microwaving on high for 15 seconds at a time and stirring until hot. Let stand 2 minutes before serving.

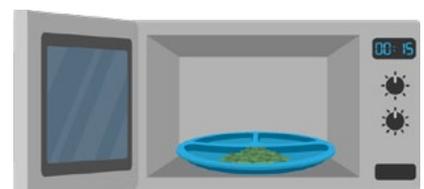


Snack

- ½ Cup Canned Peaches
- ½ Cup Canned Green Beans 

Serving Instructions

Heat drained green beans by microwaving for 15 seconds at a time and stirring until hot. Let stand for 1 minute before serving. Cut green beans into smaller pieces, if needed.



^{WG}Whole Grain-Rich

Sample Parent Communication To Accompany Meals for a Child 1-2 Years Old (4 Days of Breakfasts, Lunches, and Snacks) - Continued

On the Menu | Menus for Children 1-2 Years Old

Day 3 Menu

Breakfast



- ½ Cup Milk
- ¼ Cup Canned Peaches
- ¼ Cup Vanilla Yogurt

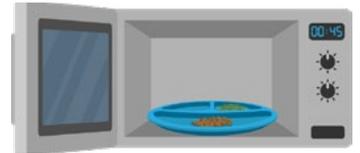
Lunch



- ½ Cup Milk
- ⅛ Cup Canned Pears
- ⅛ Cup Canned Green Beans
- ½ Whole-Wheat Dinner Roll^{WG}
- 2 Meatballs and Ketchup

Serving Instructions

Heat meatballs by microwaving on high for 45 seconds or until hot. Let stand 1 minute before serving. Serve with ketchup on the side. Cut meatballs into small pieces, if needed. Heat drained green beans by microwaving for 15 seconds at a time and stirring until hot. Let stand for 1 minute before serving. Cut green beans into smaller pieces if needed.



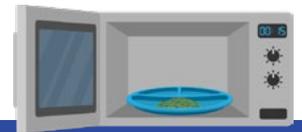
Snack



- ½ Cup Canned Pears
- ½ Cup Canned Green Beans

Serving Instructions

Heat drained green beans by microwaving for 15 seconds at a time and stirring until hot. Let stand for 1 minute before serving. Cut green beans into smaller pieces if needed. Offer water at snacks when juice is not served.



Day 4 Menu

Breakfast



- ½ Cup Milk
- ¼ Cup Canned Pears
- ¼ Cup Vanilla Yogurt

Lunch



- ½ Cup Milk
- ⅛ Cup Canned Pears
- ⅛ Cup Canned Green Beans
- ½ Cheese Sandwich^{WG}

Serving Instructions

Cut bread in half. Place cheese on one-half of the bread. Put remaining half of the bread on the cheese to create a sandwich. Cut sandwich into small pieces no larger than ½ inch. Heat drained green beans by microwaving for 15 seconds at a time and stirring until hot. Let stand for 1 minute before serving. Cut green beans into smaller pieces if needed.

Snack



- ½ Cup Canned Pears
- 2 Packages Saltine Crackers

^{WG}Whole Grain-Rich

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A Closer Look

Notes for Program Operators About the Sample Meal Bags for Children 1-2 Years Old

What's Inside? These bags include meals for your child. They include foods for 4 breakfasts, 4 lunches, and 4 snacks.

Cold Bag:

- 1 Quart Milk (32 fl oz or 4 cups)
 - 1-year-olds: Unflavored Whole Milk
 - 2-year-olds: Unflavored Fat-Free (Skim) or Low-Fat (1%) Milk
- 1 Container Low-Fat Vanilla Yogurt (4 oz)
- Cooked Enriched Rice (1/4 cup)
- Refried Beans (1/8 cup)
- Shredded Chicken (1 oz)
- Prepared Spaghetti and Meat Sauce (1/2 cup)
- 2 Frozen Pre-Cooked Meatballs
- Sliced Cheddar Cheese (1 oz)

Pantry Bag:

- 1 Box of Toasted O's Cereal (1 ounce or 1 cup)
- 1 Can Sliced Peaches (16 oz) *after opening*
- 1 Can Pear Halves (15 oz) *after opening*
- 1 Can Green Beans (15 oz) *after opening*
- 1 Box Apple Juice (4.23 fl oz or 1/2 cup)
- 1 Whole-Wheat Dinner Roll (1 oz)
- 1 Slice Whole-Wheat Bread (1 oz)
- 1 Package Graham Crackers (0.5 oz; 2 Crackers Total)
- 2 Packages Saltine Crackers, Enriched (0.2 oz each; 4 Crackers Total)
- 1 Ketchup Packet
- 12 Utensil Packets

Store in the refrigerator at 40°F or below

Store in the freezer until ready to heat and serve.

Reheat in the microwave or oven until the internal temperature is 165°F. Remove packaging before reheating.

This quart of milk provides 8 servings of milk for your child. Each serving is 1/2 cup.

This container of yogurt provides 2 servings.

This box of cereal provides 2 servings.

These cans provide fruits and vegetables for more than 1 meal for your child. See the menu for amounts for each meal. The canned pear halves provide an extra 1/2 cup of fruit. Your child can have this extra fruit at breakfast, lunch, or snack, or as part of another meal.

One-half of a dinner roll is a typical portion for a child 1 to 2 years old at lunch. Serve more of the roll if your child is still hungry at lunchtime, or save the leftover half of the roll in its plastic bag. Your child can enjoy the rest of the roll as part of another meal or snack.

Modify foods to meet the developmental abilities of your child. For example:

- Cut canned fruits and vegetables into small pieces (no larger than 1/2 inch).
- Cut the bread and dinner roll into thin strips.
- Cut the meatballs into small pieces (no larger than 1/2 inch).

See menus on the back of this page.

Cold Bag:

- 1 Quart Milk (32 fl oz or 4 cups)
 - 1-year-olds: Unflavored Whole Milk
 - 2-year-olds: Unflavored Fat-Free (Skim) or Low-Fat (1%) Milk

- 1 Container Low-Fat Vanilla Yogurt (4 oz)
- Cooked Enriched Rice (1/4 cup)
- Refried Beans (1/8 cup)
- Shredded Chicken (1 oz)
- Prepared Spaghetti and Meat Sauce (1/2 cup)
- 2 Frozen Pre-Cooked Meatballs
- Sliced Cheddar Cheese (1 oz)

Yogurts must contain no more than 23 grams of sugar per 6 ounces.

Meats/meat alternates may be served in place of grains at breakfast up to 3 times per week.

Crediting of meatballs can vary. Check the item's Product Formulation Statement or Child Nutrition (CN) label to ensure you are providing enough to meet the minimum required amount.

Pantry Bag:

- 1 Box of Toasted O's Cereal (1 ounce or 1 cup)
- 1 Can Sliced Peaches (16 oz) *after opening*
- 1 Can Pear Halves (15 oz) *after opening*
- 1 Can Green Beans (15 oz) *after opening*
- 1 Box Apple Juice (4.23 fl oz or 1/2 cup)
- 1 Whole-Wheat Dinner Roll (1 oz)
- 1 Slice Whole-Wheat Bread (1 oz)
- 1 Package Graham Crackers (0.5 oz; 2 Crackers Total)
- 2 Packages Saltine Crackers, Enriched (0.2 oz each; 4 Crackers Total)
- 1 Ketchup Packet
- 12 Utensil Packets

The canned peaches provide a small amount of extra fruit (less than 1/8 cup).

The breads provide more than the minimum required amount of grains for the meals, but providing them in this way reduces preparation and food handling.

Sample Parent Communication To Accompany Meals for a Child 3-5 Years Old (4 Days of Breakfasts, Lunches, and Snacks)

What's Inside?

These bags include meals for your child. They include foods for 4 breakfasts, 4 lunches, and 4 snacks.

Cold Bag:

- 1 Half-Gallon Unflavored Fat-Free (Skim) or Low-Fat (1%) Milk (64 fl oz or 8 cups) 
- 1 Container Low-Fat Vanilla Yogurt (4 oz) 
- 3 Frozen Pre-Cooked Meatballs 
- Prepared Red Beans and Rice (¾ cup) 
- Prepared Spaghetti with Meat Sauce (¾ cup) 
- Sliced Cheese (1.5 oz) 

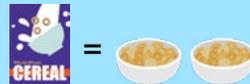
This half-gallon of milk provides 12 servings of milk for your child. Each serving at breakfast and lunch is ¾ cup. Each serving at snack is ½ cup.



This container of yogurt provides 2 servings.



This box of cereal provides 2 servings.



Pantry Bag:

- 1 Box of Toasted O's Cereal (1 ounce or 1 cup) 
- 1 Can Sliced Peaches (16 oz)  after opening
- 1 Can Pear Halves (15 oz)  after opening
- 1 Can Green Beans (15 oz)  after opening
- 2 Boxes Apple Juice (4.23 fl oz or ½ cup each)
- 1 Whole-Wheat Dinner Roll (1 oz) 
- 1 Slice of Whole-Wheat Bread (1 oz)
- 2 Packages Saltine Crackers, Enriched (0.2 oz each; 4 Crackers Total)
- 1 Ketchup Packet
- 12 Utensil Packets

These cans provide fruit and vegetables for more than 1 meal for your child. See the menu for amounts for each meal.

The canned pear halves provide an extra ¼ cup of fruit. Serve these extra pears to your child at another meal or snack.

One-half of a dinner roll is a typical portion for a child 3-to-5 years old at lunch. Serve more of the roll if your child is still hungry at lunchtime, or store the leftover half of the roll in its plastic bag. Your child can enjoy the rest of the roll as part of another meal or snack.



Store in the refrigerator at 40 °F or below



Store in the freezer until ready to heat and serve.



Reheat in the microwave or oven until the internal temperature is 165 °F. Remove packaging before reheating.

Modify foods to meet the developmental abilities of your child. For example:

- Cut canned fruits and vegetables into small pieces (no larger than ½ inch).
- Cut the bread and dinner roll into thin strips.
- Cut the meatballs into small pieces (no larger than ½ inch).

Sample Parent Communication To Accompany Meals for a Child 3-5 Years Old (4 Days of Breakfasts, Lunches, and Snacks) - Continued

On the Menu | Menus for Children 3-5 Years Old

Day 1 Menu

Tip: Modify foods to meet the developmental abilities of your child. Cut foods into small pieces no larger than ½ inch. Cut breads and cheese into thin strips.



Breakfast

- ¾ Cup Milk
- 1 Box Apple Juice
- ½ Cup Toasted O's Cereal^{WG}



Lunch

- ¾ Cup Milk
- ¼ Cup Canned Peaches
- ¼ Cup Canned Green Beans^{WG}
- ¾ Cup Spaghetti and Meat Sauce^{WG}

Serving Instructions

Heat Spaghetti and Meat Sauce by microwaving on high for 30 seconds at a time and stirring until hot. Let stand 2 minutes before serving. Heat drained green beans by microwaving for 15 seconds at a time and stirring until hot. Let stand for 1 minute before serving. Cut green beans into smaller pieces if needed.



Snack

- ½ Cup Milk
- ½ Cup Canned Sliced Peaches

Day 2 Menu



Breakfast

- ¾ Cup Milk
- 1 Box Apple Juice
- ½ Cup Toasted O's Cereal^{WG}

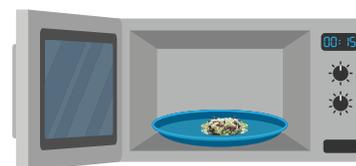


Lunch

- ¾ Cup Milk
- ¼ Cup Canned Peaches
- ¾ Cup Red Beans and Rice^{WG}

Serving Instructions

Heat Red Beans and Rice by microwaving on high for 15 seconds at a time and stirring until hot. Let stand 2 minutes before serving.

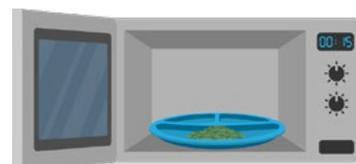


Snack

- ½ Cup Milk
- ½ Cup Canned Green Beans^{WG}

Serving Instructions

Heat drained green beans by microwaving for 15 seconds at a time and stirring until hot. Let stand for 1 minute before serving. Cut green beans into smaller pieces if needed.



^{WG}Whole Grain-Rich

Sample Parent Communication To Accompany Meals for a Child 3-5 Years Old (4 Days of Breakfasts, Lunches, and Snacks) - Continued

On the Menu | Menus for Children 3-5 Years Old

Day 3 Menu



Breakfast

- ¾ Cup Milk
- ½ Cup Canned Peaches
- ¼ Cup Vanilla Yogurt

Tip: Modify foods to meet the developmental abilities of your child. Cut foods into small pieces no larger than ½ inch. Cut breads and cheese into thin strips.

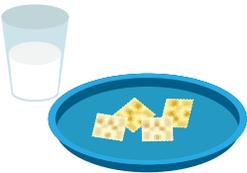


Lunch

- ¾ Cup Milk
- ¼ Cup Canned Pears
- ¼ Cup Canned Green Beans
- ½ Whole-Wheat Dinner Roll ^{WG}
- 3 Meatballs and Ketchup

Serving Instructions

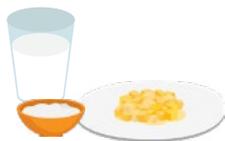
Heat meatballs by microwaving on high for 1 minute or until hot. Let stand 1 minutes before serving. Serve with ketchup on the side. Heat drained green beans by microwaving for 15 seconds at a time and stirring until hot. Let stand for 1 minute before serving. Cut green beans into smaller pieces if needed.



Snack

- ½ Cup Milk
- 2 Packages Saltine Crackers

Day 4 Menu



Breakfast

- ¾ Cup Milk
- ½ Cup Canned Pears
- ¼ Cup Vanilla Yogurt

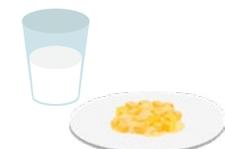


Lunch

- ¾ Cup Milk
- ¼ Cup Canned Pears
- ¼ Cup Canned Green Beans
- ½ Cheese Sandwich ^{WG}

Serving Instructions

Cut bread in half. Place cheese on one-half of the bread. Put remaining half of the bread on the cheese to create a sandwich. Cut sandwich into small pieces no larger than ½ inch. Heat drained green beans by microwaving for 15 seconds at a time and stirring until hot. Let stand for 1 minute before serving. Cut green beans into smaller pieces if needed.



Snack

- ½ Cup Milk
- ½ Cup Canned Pear Halves

^{WG}Whole Grain-Rich

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A Closer Look

Notes for Program Operators About the Sample Meal Bags for Children 3-5 Years Old

What's Inside? These bags include meals for your child. They include foods for 4 breakfasts, 4 lunches, and 4 snacks.

Cold Bag:

- 1 Half-Gallon Unflavored Fat-Free (Skim) or Low-Fat (1%) Milk (64 fl oz or 8 cups)
- 1 Container Low-Fat Vanilla Yogurt (4 oz)
- 3 Frozen Pre-Cooked Meatballs
- Prepared Red Beans and Rice (¾ cup)
- Prepared Spaghetti with Meat Sauce (¾ cup)
- Sliced Cheese (1.5 oz)

Pantry Bag:

- 1 Box of Toasted O's Cereal (1 ounce or 1 cup)
- 1 Can Sliced Peaches (16 oz) after opening
- 1 Can Pear Halves (15 oz) after opening
- 1 Can Green Beans (15 oz) after opening
- 2 Boxes Apple Juice (4.23 fl oz or ½ cup each)
- 1 Whole-Wheat Dinner Roll (1 oz)
- 1 Slice of Whole-Wheat Bread (1 oz)
- 2 Packages Saltine Crackers, Enriched (0.2 oz each; 4 Crackers Total)
- 1 Ketchup Packet
- 12 Utensil Packets

Storage and Reheating:

- Store in the refrigerator at 40°F or below.
- Store in the freezer until ready to heat and serve.
- Reheat in the microwave or oven until the internal temperature is 165°F. Remove packaging before reheating.

Additional Information:

- This half gallon of milk provides 12 servings of milk for your child. Each serving at breakfast and lunch is ½ cup. Each serving at snack is ¼ cup.
- This container of yogurt provides 2 servings.
- This box of cereal provides 2 servings.
- These cans provide fruit and vegetables for more than 1 meal for your child. See the menu for amounts for each meal.
- The canned pear halves provide an extra ½ cup of fruit. Serve these extra pears to your child at another meal or snack.
- One-half of a dinner roll is a typical portion for a child 3-to-5 years old at lunch. Serve more of the roll if your child is still hungry at lunchtime, or save the leftover half of the roll in its plastic bag. Your child can enjoy the rest of the roll as part of another meal or snack.

Modify foods to meet the developmental abilities of your child. For example:

- Cut canned fruits and vegetables into small pieces (no larger than ½ inch).
- Cut the bread and dinner roll into thin strips.
- Cut the meatballs into small pieces (no larger than ½ inch).

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Cold Bag:

- 1 Half-Gallon Unflavored Fat-Free (Skim) or Low-Fat (1%) Milk (64 fl oz or 8 cups)
- 1 Container Low-Fat Vanilla Yogurt (4 oz)
- 3 Frozen Pre-Cooked Meatballs
- Prepared Red Beans and Rice (¾ cup)
- Prepared Spaghetti with Meat Sauce (¾ cup)
- Sliced Cheese (1.5 oz)

Yogurts must contain no more than 23 grams of sugar per 6 ounces.

Meat/meat alternates may be served in place of grains at breakfast up to 3 times per week.

Crediting of meatballs can vary. Check the item's Product Formulation Statement or Child Nutrition (CN) label to ensure you are providing enough to meet the minimum required amount.

Pantry Bag:

- 1 Box of Toasted O's Cereal (1 ounce or 1 cup)
- 1 Can Sliced Peaches (16 oz) after opening
- 1 Can Pear Halves (15 oz) after opening
- 1 Can Green Beans (15 oz) after opening
- 2 Boxes Apple Juice (4.23 fl oz or ½ cup each)
- 1 Whole-Wheat Dinner Roll (1 oz)
- 1 Slice of Whole-Wheat Bread (1 oz)
- 2 Packages Saltine Crackers, Enriched (0.2 oz each; 4 Crackers Total)
- 1 Ketchup Packet
- 12 Utensil Packets

Cereals must contain no more than 6 grams of sugar per dry ounce.

The canned peaches provide a small amount of extra fruit (less than ⅛ cup).