



DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

OFFICE OF THE STATE SUPERINTENDENT OF

EDUCATION

## MEMORANDUM

To: School Food Authorities

From:   
Janna dePorter, MS, RD, LD  
Program Specialist

Date: August 28, 2019

Re: Child Nutrition Program Meal Component Crediting

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State Agency Memo  
National School Lunch Program (NSLP) #3-19

The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) recently released seven memos providing program operators with information on how to credit a series of newly creditable food items in Child Nutrition Programs (CNPs). The intent of this state agency memo is to provide School Food Authorities (SFAs) with a summary of the USDA memos for reference and use. The chart below, followed by a summary of each memo, includes the major crediting information for each food item. For additional details, please reference the original USDA memos listed in the resources section of this memo. For further questions, please reach out to your program specialist.

Food item	Crediting
Dried meat, poultry and seafood	Mimics crediting of non-dried meat, creditable amount cannot exceed the finished weight of the product. Use Product Formulation Statements (PFS) and Child Nutrition (CN) labels.
Coconut, frozen or fresh	1/8 cup coconut = 1/8 cup fruit

Coconut, dried	1/8 cup dried coconut = ¼ cup fruit
Hominy - whole form	1/4 cup canned, drained hominy or cooked, whole hominy = 1/4 cup starchy vegetables
Hominy - dried, milled form (e.g., grits)	1/2 cup cooked (or 1 oz. (28 g)) dry hominy grits = 1 oz. equivalent of whole grains
Corn Masa, Corn Flour and Cornmeal	Credits like all other grains, use <a href="#">Exhibit A</a> . Enriched versions credit as grains, not whole grains
Popcorn	3 cups or (1 oz. (28 grams)) popped popcorn as 1 oz. whole grains
Surimi	1 oz. surimi = 0.25 oz. M/MA; 3 oz. surimi = 1 oz. M/MA; 4.4 oz. surimi = 1.5 oz. M/MA
Tempeh (made of soybeans, water, tempeh culture, vinegar, seasonings and/or herbs only)	1 oz. tempeh = 1 oz. M/MA
Pasta made with 100% vegetable flour	1/2 cup pasta = 1/2 vegetable. Subgroup depends on vegetable flour used
Pasta made with 100% legume flour	1/2 cup pasta = 2 M/MA. Note - must be served with at least an additional 0.25 oz. M/MA (e.g. tofu, cheese and/or meat) to credit

**Memo Code:** SP 21-2019, CACFP 08-2019, SFSP 07-2019

**Subject:** [Crediting Shelf-Stable, Dried and Semi-Dried Meat, Poultry and Seafood Products in the Child Nutrition Programs](#)

**Memo Summary:**

- Shelf-stable, dried and semi-dried poultry and seafood, such as beef jerky and summer sausages are now creditable as meat in Child Nutrition Programs (CNPs).
- To credit these items, program operators must follow the crediting principles used for crediting all other meat, poultry or seafood.
- CN labels and PFS are two acceptable forms of documentation for crediting dried meats.

- When a PFS is used, the following principles must be followed:
  - The creditable meat ingredient listed on the PFS must match or have a similar description as the ingredient listed on the product label.
  - The creditable meat ingredient on the PFS must have a similar description to a food item in the Food Buying Guide (*note: dried meats/poultry/seafood are not included in the Food Buying Guide*).
    - Ground pork and beef must include the percent fat.
    - Ground poultry ingredients do not need to include the percent fat.
  - The creditable amount cannot exceed the finished weight of the product.

**Memo Code:** SP 22-2019, CACFP 09-2019, SFSP 08-2019

**Subject:** [Crediting Coconut, Hominy, Corn Masa, and Corn Flour in the Child Nutrition Programs](#)

**Memo Summary:**

- Coconut:
  - Fresh or frozen coconut may be credited as a fruit based on volume served. Dried coconut credits as a fruit at twice the volume served.
    - At least 1/8 cup of coconut must be served to credit toward the fruit component.
  - Coconut flour and coconut oil are **not** creditable in CNPs.
  - 100% coconut water may continue to be credited toward the fruit component per volume served.
- Hominy:
  - In its whole form, hominy credits as a starchy vegetable.
    - 1/4 cup canned, drained hominy or cooked, whole hominy (from dried hominy) credits as 1/4 cup vegetable (starchy).
  - In its dried, milled form, such as grits, hominy credits as a whole grain food.
    - 1/2 cup cooked (or 1 oz. (28 g)) dry hominy grits credits as 1 oz. equivalent of whole grains.
- Corn Masa, Corn Flour and Cornmeal:
  - Corn masa, corn flour, and cornmeal are now creditable as whole grain-rich ingredients.
    - If any non-whole corn ingredient (corn masa, corn flour and cornmeal) is labeled as enriched or includes nutrients sub-listed after the corn ingredient, then the corn ingredient can contribute only to the enriched grain requirements, not whole grains.
  - Program operators may now credit corn masa, corn flour and cornmeal in the same manner as all other creditable grain ingredients and foods. Crediting is determined by weight as listed in [Exhibit A](#) or by grams of creditable grains per portion.

**Memo Code:** SP 23-2019, CACFP 10-2019, SFSP 09-2019

**Subject:** [Crediting Popcorn in the Child Nutrition Programs](#)

**Memo Summary:**

- Popcorn may now be credited as a whole grain.
  - Program operators may now credit popcorn as follows:
    - 3/4 cup (or 0.25 oz. (7 grams)) popped popcorn as 0.25 oz. equivalent of whole grains.
    - 1 1/2 cup (or 0.5 oz. (14 grams)) popped popcorn as 0.5 oz. equivalent of whole grains.
    - 3 cups or (1 oz. (28 grams)) popped popcorn as 1 oz. equivalent of whole grains.
- Please note that the amount of popcorn required to credit as 1 oz. whole grains (3 cups) may be too much for some children. Program operators are encouraged to pair popcorn with another creditable grain to reach a total of 1 oz. equivalent of whole grains in these situations.
- Popcorn is a choking hazard, especially for young children and disabled persons. Program operators are encouraged to consider the age group and ability of individuals being served when planning service of popcorn.
- Toppings for popcorn (salt, butter, caramel) can be high in calories, fat and sodium. Ensure that all nutrient analyses include toppings, if applicable.

**Memo Code:** SP 24-2019, CACFP 11-2019, SFSP 10-2019

**Subject:** [Crediting Surimi Seafood in the Child Nutrition Programs](#)

**Memo summary:**

- Surimi is now creditable as an M/MA.
  - Program operators may now credit surimi as follows:
    - 4.4 oz. portion of surimi credits as 1.5 oz. M/MA.
    - 3 oz. portion of surimi credits as 1 oz. M/MA.
    - 1 oz. portion of surimi credits as 0.25 oz. M/MA.
- Program operators and manufacturers should note that the crediting ratio for surimi seafood differs based on portion size due to rounding rules that require crediting down to the nearest 0.25 oz.
- As with all products, manufacturers can document formulations of surimi seafood with higher percentages of M/MA ingredients.
  - To credit surimi differently, a PFS or CN label is required to show the quantity of M/MA ingredients used to verify the crediting amount claimed.

**Memo Code:** SP 25-2019, CACFP 12-2019, SFSP 11-2019

**Subject:** [Crediting Tempeh in the Child Nutrition Programs](#)

**Memo Summary:**

- Tempeh may now be credited as an M/MA.
  - 1 oz. of tempeh may credit as 1 oz. of M/MA.

- This is limited to tempeh made with soybeans, water, tempeh culture, vinegar, seasonings and herbs.
- Varieties of tempeh that include other creditable foods as ingredients (including but not limited to brown rice, seeds, and/or vegetables) may also credit as meat alternates, grains and/or vegetables.
  - Foods must be present in the minimum creditable quantities (1/8 cup or 0.25 oz) to credit in CNPs. Acceptable documentation includes:
    - CN Labels
    - PFS

**Memo Code:** SP 26-2019, CACFP 13-2019, SFSP 12-2019

**Subject:** [Crediting Pasta Products Made of Vegetable Flour in the Child Nutrition Programs](#)

**Memo Summary:**

- Whole vegetables cut into "noodles" or spirals, such as zucchini or sweet potatoes, continue to credit toward the respective vegetable subgroups based on the volume served.
- Pasta made of vegetable flour(s) may credit as a vegetable, even if the pasta is not served with another recognizable vegetable.
  - **Pasta made of 100% vegetable flour(s) crediting as a vegetable**
    - 1/2 cup pasta made of 100% vegetable flour(s) credits as 1/2 cup vegetables.
    - Pasta made of flour(s) from 1 vegetable subgroup may credit toward the appropriate subgroup (e.g. 100% red lentil flour pasta credits toward the weekly legume requirement).
    - Pasta made of a blend of 100% vegetable flours from multiple vegetable subgroups made credit in two ways:
      - With a PFS detailing the actual volume of each vegetable per serving.
      - If actual volume of each vegetable flour is unknown, the pasta made credit toward the additional vegetables needed from any vegetable subgroup to meet the overall weekly vegetable requirement.
  - **Pasta made of vegetable flour(s) and other non-vegetable ingredients**
    - Pasta products made of vegetable flour and other non-vegetable ingredients may credit toward daily and weekly vegetable requirements (or, in the case of legumes, meat/meat alternate requirements) with a PFS detailing the actual volume of vegetable flour per serving.
    - This crediting **does not** apply to grain-based pasta products that contain small amounts of vegetable powder for color (e.g. spinach, sun-dried tomato).

- **Pasta products made of 100% legume flour crediting as a meat alternate**
  - 1/2 cup cooked pasta made of 100% legume flour(s) may credit as 2 oz. equivalents of meat alternate. To credit as a meat alternate, pasta made of legume flour(s) must be offered with at least 0.25 oz. additional meat/meat alternate such as tofu, cheese or meat.
  - 100% legume flour pasta may credit as a vegetable or meat alternate, but not as both in the same meal.
  - Legume flour pasta may also use the Bean Flour yield information on page C-1 of [Appendix C](#).
- Program operators must indicate when pasta made with vegetable flour credits as a vegetable through signage or nutrition education.
- Serving line staff should be informed when pasta made with vegetable flour is served and how the pasta will credit towards a reimbursable meal.

## Resources

[Update of Food Crediting in the Child Nutrition Programs](#)

[Food Buying Guide](#)