



Nutrition Facts	
Serving Size _____	
Amount Per Serving	
% Daily Value*	
Total Fat	
Cholesterol	
Sodium	
Total Carbohydrate	
Dietary Fiber	
Sugars	
Protein	
*Percent Daily Values are based on a diet of other people's misdeeds.	

# Understanding Food Labels: What's in a Food?

## Overview of Food Labeling

Modern American supermarkets are different from food markets in most other countries around the world. Foods are in boxes, bottles, jars and other packages. Food labels are present on most packaged food products. Labels help consumers better understand how to make informed decisions about the foods they eat.

The U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS) and the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' (DHHS) Food and Drug Administration (FDA) are responsible for assuring that food labels contain truthful and accurate information. The FSIS has authority over all products containing more than 3 percent fresh meat or at least 2 percent cooked poultry. The FDA oversees the labeling of most other food products.

According to law, every food label must include:

- the common name of the product
- the name and address of the manufacturer, packer or distributor

- the net contents in terms of weight, measure or count
- the ingredients, in order of predominance by weight from greatest to least
- nutrition information
- serving size

## The Nutrition Labeling and Education Act

Under the Nutrition Labeling and Education Act (NLEA) of 1990, the format and content of food labels were improved to provide more complete, useful and accurate nutrition information.

In addition, FDA encouraged retailers to voluntarily provide nutrition information for fresh fruits, vegetables and fish. This nutrition information is to be provided in the store close to where these foods are displayed for sale. Nutrition information may be on signs, posters, brochures, notebooks or leaflets, video, live demonstration, or may be on the individual food package.



Nutrition Facts	
Serving Size 1/2 Cup (125g)	
Amount Per Serving	
<b>Total Fat</b>	10g 20%
<b>Total Crap</b>	10g 20%
<b>Total Sugar</b>	10g 20%
<b>Total Protein</b>	10g 20%
<b>Total Cholesterol</b>	10g 20%
<b>Total Sodium</b>	10g 20%
<b>Total Fiber</b>	10g 20%
<b>Total Calcium</b>	10g 20%
<b>Total Iron</b>	10g 20%
<b>Total Vitamin A</b>	10g 20%
<b>Total Vitamin C</b>	10g 20%
<b>Total Vitamin D</b>	10g 20%
<b>Total Vitamin E</b>	10g 20%
<b>Total Vitamin K</b>	10g 20%
<b>Total Vitamin B1</b>	10g 20%
<b>Total Vitamin B2</b>	10g 20%
<b>Total Vitamin B3</b>	10g 20%
<b>Total Vitamin B6</b>	10g 20%
<b>Total Vitamin B12</b>	10g 20%
<b>Total Folate</b>	10g 20%
<b>Total Magnesium</b>	10g 20%
<b>Total Zinc</b>	10g 20%
<b>Total Selenium</b>	10g 20%
<b>Total Phosphorus</b>	10g 20%
<b>Total Potassium</b>	10g 20%
<b>Total Manganese</b>	10g 20%
<b>Total Copper</b>	10g 20%
<b>Total Molybdenum</b>	10g 20%
<b>Total Nickel</b>	10g 20%
<b>Total Boron</b>	10g 20%
<b>Total Vanadium</b>	10g 20%
<b>Total Chromium</b>	10g 20%
<b>Total Cobalt</b>	10g 20%
<b>Total Iodine</b>	10g 20%
<b>Total Fluoride</b>	10g 20%
<b>Total Silicon</b>	10g 20%
<b>Total Sulfur</b>	10g 20%
<b>Total Chlorine</b>	10g 20%
<b>Total Bromine</b>	10g 20%
<b>Total Strontium</b>	10g 20%
<b>Total Barium</b>	10g 20%
<b>Total Cadmium</b>	10g 20%
<b>Total Lead</b>	10g 20%
<b>Total Mercury</b>	10g 20%
<b>Total Arsenic</b>	10g 20%
<b>Total Aluminum</b>	10g 20%
<b>Total Beryllium</b>	10g 20%
<b>Total Gallium</b>	10g 20%
<b>Total Germanium</b>	10g 20%
<b>Total Tin</b>	10g 20%
<b>Total Antimony</b>	10g 20%
<b>Total Tellurium</b>	10g 20%
<b>Total Platinum</b>	10g 20%
<b>Total Gold</b>	10g 20%
<b>Total Silver</b>	10g 20%
<b>Total Mercury</b>	10g 20%
<b>Total Lead</b>	10g 20%
<b>Total Cadmium</b>	10g 20%
<b>Total Arsenic</b>	10g 20%
<b>Total Aluminum</b>	10g 20%
<b>Total Beryllium</b>	10g 20%
<b>Total Gallium</b>	10g 20%
<b>Total Germanium</b>	10g 20%
<b>Total Tin</b>	10g 20%
<b>Total Antimony</b>	10g 20%
<b>Total Tellurium</b>	10g 20%
<b>Total Platinum</b>	10g 20%
<b>Total Gold</b>	10g 20%
<b>Total Silver</b>	10g 20%

## Understanding Food Labels: What's in a Food?

### Key Requirements in Food Labeling Under the Nutrition Labeling and Education Act

The Nutrition Labeling and Education Act of 1990 requires:

- **Nutrition labeling for almost all foods.**
- **Information on the amount per serving of saturated fat, cholesterol, dietary fiber and other nutrients that are of major health concern.**
- **Nutrient reference values (percent of daily values) to show how a food fits into an overall daily meal plan.**
- **Standardized serving sizes based on the amounts customarily consumed for products to make nutritional comparison of similar products easier.**
- **Nutrition information for non-labeled products near their point-of-purchase.** Twenty of the most popular types of raw seafood, fruits and vegetables, and meat and poultry may have nutrition information provided near their display in grocery stores or on the package.
- **Declaration of the total percentage of juice in juice drinks.**

- **Uniform definitions for terms that describe a food's nutrient content.** Terms such as "low-fat," "high-fiber," "free," "low," "light" and others are defined. A chart providing definitions of nutrient content descriptors is on the following page.

In addition, the NLEA allows:

- **Specific health claims about the relationship between nutrients and diseases** such as: (1) calcium and osteoporosis, (2) fat and cancer, (3) sodium and hypertension, (4) saturated fat and cholesterol and coronary heart disease, (5) fiber-containing grain products, fruits and vegetables and cancer, (6) fruits, vegetables and grain products that contain fiber and coronary heart disease, (7) fruits and vegetables and cancer, (8) folic acid and neural tube defects, (9) sugar alcohols and dental caries, and (10) soluble fiber from whole oats and coronary heart disease.





## Nutrient and Food Descriptors and Their Definitions

Description	Definition
Free	The reference amount used on the food label contains none or a very small amount: less than 5 calories; less than 5 mg sodium; less than 0.5 g total fat and saturated fat; less than 2 mg cholesterol or 0.5 g sugar.
Low	The reference amount contains no more than 40 calories; 140 mg sodium; 3 g fat; 1 g saturated fat; 20 mg cholesterol.
Lean	The reference amount of meat, poultry, seafood, and game meats contains less than 10 g fat, 4.5 g or less saturated fat and less than 95 mg cholesterol.
Extra lean	The reference amount contains less than 5 g fat, 2 g saturated fat, and 95 mg cholesterol.
High	The reference amount contains 20% or more of the Daily Value for a particular nutrient.
Good source	The reference amount contains 10-19% of the Daily Value for a particular nutrient.
Reduced	The reference amount of a nutritionally altered product contains 25% less of a nutrient or 25% fewer calories than a reference food. "Reduced" cannot be used if the reference food already meets the requirement for a "low" claim.
Less	The food contains 25% less of a nutrient or 25% fewer calories than a reference food.
Light	(1) If 50% or more of the calories are from fat, the fat must be reduced by at least 50% per reference amount; or if less than 50% of the calories are from fat, the fat must be reduced at least 50% or calories reduced at least 1/3 per reference amount. OR (2) The sodium is reduced by 50%. OR (3) The term identifies a specific food with a definition and standard of identify. Example: "Light Cream" is a cream that contains not less than 18 percent but less than 30 percent milk fat.
More	A serving contains at least 10% more of the Daily Value of a nutrient than a reference food.
% Fat free	A product must be low-fat or fat-free, and the percentage must accurately reflect the amount of fat in 100 g of a food. Thus, 2.5 g of fat in 50 g of food results in a "95% fat-free" claim.
Healthy	A food is low in fat and saturated fat, and a serving contains no more than 480 mg sodium and no more than 60 mg of cholesterol. A "healthy food" contains at least 10% of Daily Value/Reference Amount (DV/RA) for vitamins A or C, calcium, iron, protein or fiber.
Fresh	1) A food is raw, has never been frozen or heated, and contains no preservatives. OR (2) The term accurately describes the product "fresh milk," or "freshly baked bread").
Fresh frozen	The food has been quickly frozen while still fresh; blanching is allowed before freezing to prevent nutrient breakdown.

The Food and Drug Administration will not allow the use of the above nutrient claims on infant and toddler foods. The terms "unsweetened" and "unsalted" are allowed on infant and toddler foods because they relate to taste and not nutrient content.



## Understanding Food Labels: What's in a Food?

### The Nutrition Panel

The nutrition panel provides information on the nutrient content of a food. This panel is headed by the title, "Nutrition Facts." See the sample of a nutrition panel on the next page. Under the Nutrition Labeling and Education Act (NLEA), nutrition information must be listed for the following nutrients unless the food qualifies for a simplified form:

- total calories
- total fat
- cholesterol
- total carbohydrate
- calories from fat
- saturated fat
- sodium
- dietary fiber

- sugars
- vitamin A
- calcium
- protein
- vitamin C
- iron

By 2006, information on trans fat will be required. Labels may also include information on: polyunsaturated fat, monounsaturated fat, potassium, soluble fiber, insoluble fiber and other essential vitamins and minerals. Information from the nutrition panel can be used to see if diets are meeting the Dietary Guidelines. The Dietary Guidelines recommend that 30% or less of a diet's calories come from fat daily and less than 10% of daily calories come from saturated fat.

#### Determining Percent of Calories from Fat in a Day's Diet

1. Total number of grams of fat in a \_\_\_\_\_(1)  
day's diet.
2. Multiply grams of fat (1) by 9 to \_\_\_\_\_(2)  
find total calories from fat for the  
day. (9 calories per fat gram)
3. Total calories from the day's diet \_\_\_\_\_(3)
4. Divide the total calories from fat \_\_\_\_\_(4)  
(2) by total calories for the day (3).
5. Multiply (4) by 100 to find percent \_\_\_\_\_(5)  
of calories from fat in the day's diet.

Example:

- |                                      |             |
|--------------------------------------|-------------|
| 1. Grams of fat.                     | <u>50</u>   |
| 2. Calories from fat.                | <u>450</u>  |
| 3. Total calories in the day's diet. | <u>1500</u> |
| 4. Step 2 divided by step 3.         | <u>0.30</u> |
| 5. Percent of calories from fat.     | <u>30%</u>  |

#### Determining Percent of Calories from Fat in a Serving of Food

1. Total number of grams of fat in a \_\_\_\_\_(1)  
serving of food.
2. Multiply grams of fat (1) by 9 to \_\_\_\_\_(2)  
find total calories from fat in a  
food. (9 calories per fat gram)
3. Total calories in the serving. \_\_\_\_\_(3)
4. Divide the total calories from fat \_\_\_\_\_(4)  
(2) by total calories in (3).
5. Multiply (4) by 100 to find percent \_\_\_\_\_(5)  
of calories from fat in the food.

Example:

- |                                  |             |
|----------------------------------|-------------|
| 1. Grams of fat.                 | <u>3</u>    |
| 2. Calories from fat.            | <u>27</u>   |
| 3. Total calories in the food.   | <u>90</u>   |
| 4. Step 2 divided by step 3.     | <u>0.30</u> |
| 5. Percent of calories from fat. | <u>30%</u>  |



# How to Read a Nutrition Facts Label

## Macaroni & Cheese

**Start Here** →

**Limit these Nutrients**

**Get Enough of these Nutrients**

**Footnote**

<b>Nutrition Facts</b>	
Serving Size 1 cup (228g)	
Serving Per Container 2	
<b>Amount Per Serving</b>	
<b>Calories</b> 250	Calories from Fat 110
<b>% Daily Value*</b>	
<b>Total Fat</b> 12g	<b>18%</b>
Saturated Fat 3g	<b>15%</b>
<b>Cholesterol</b> 30mg	<b>10%</b>
<b>Sodium</b> 470mg	<b>20%</b>
<b>Total Carbohydrate</b> 31g	<b>10%</b>
Dietary Fiber 0g	<b>0%</b>
Sugars 5g	
<b>Protein</b> 5g	
Vitamin A	4%
Vitamin C	2%
Calcium	20%
Iron	4%

\* Percent Daily Values are based on a 2,000 calorie diet. Your Daily Values may be higher or lower depending on your calorie needs:

	Calories:	2,000	2,500
Total Fat	Less than	65g	80g
Sat Fat	Less than	20g	25g
Cholesterol	Less than	300mg	300mg
Sodium	Less than	2,400mg	2,400mg
Total Carbohydrate		300g	375g
Dietary Fiber		25g	30g

**Quick Guide to % DV**

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**5% or less is Low**

**20% or more is High**

1. Look at the Nutrition Facts panel for the serving size and number of servings in the package.
2. Calories provide a measure of how much energy you get from a serving of this food. The label also tells you how many calories in one serving come from fat.
3. The nutrients listed first are the ones Americans generally eat in adequate amounts or even too much. **Limit these nutrients—total fat, cholesterol, and sodium.** Eating too much fat or too much sodium may increase your risk of certain chronic diseases, like heart disease, some cancers, or high blood pressure. Eating too many calories is linked to overweight and obesity.
4. **Get enough of these nutrients – dietary fiber, vitamin A, vitamin C, calcium, and iron.** Eating enough of these nutrients can improve your health and help reduce the risk of some diseases and conditions.
5. The percent daily value (%DV) tells you whether the nutrients in a serving of food contribute a lot or a little to your total diet. %DV is based on recommendations for a 2000 calorie diet.

Nutrition Facts	
Serving Size 1/2 cup (125g)	
Amount Per Serving	
Calories 100	
% Daily Value*	
Total Fat	2g
Sodium	100mg
Total Carbohydrate	20g
Dietary Fiber	3g
Sugars	10g
Protein	2g
*Percent Daily Values are based on a diet of other people's misdeeds.	

## Understanding Food Labels: What's in a Food?

**Daily Reference Values and Percent Daily Value** are both new under the NLEA. Daily reference values, or “daily values”, are included for total fat, saturated fat, cholesterol, sodium, total carbohydrate and fiber. The daily values provide recommendations for daily intake of the nutrients based on daily caloric intakes of 2000 and 2500 calories. Some of these daily values are maximums, as with total fat (65 grams or less). Others are minimums, as with carbohydrates (300 grams or more). Review the lower section of the sample Nutrition Facts label on the preceding page.

Percent daily values are a quick way to know if a food is high or low in a nutrient. The daily values show how well the nutrients in a food fit into an overall daily diet with 2000 calories. The sample label in this section shows that 18% of the daily value for total fat and 15% of the daily value for saturated fat are provided by one serving (based on a 2000 calorie intake).



## Some Things to Know About Grains/Breads



Grains/Breads are credible if made from whole-grain, bran, germ or enriched meal and/or flour. Refer to the Crediting Foods section of What's In a Meal? for required serving sizes of grains/breads products.

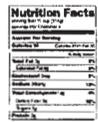
Grains/Breads products are rich sources of protein, B-vitamins (thiamin, riboflavin and niacin) and iron. In addition, whole-grain breads and cereals provide folate, vitamins B6, A and E; the antioxidant nutrients vitamin E and selenium; and the minerals zinc and copper. Usually whole-grain breads (whole wheat or whole grain listed **FIRST** in the ingredient list) provide more vitamins and minerals than refined enriched products such as white bread.

Most bread products contain significant quantities of **dietary fiber**. Check the label for fiber content. Breads with two or more grams of fiber per slice are good sources of fiber.

**Flour** is made by finely grinding and sifting wheat or other grains. Flour may be from any grain (wheat, rye, corn, etc.).

**Meal** is made by coarsely grinding corn, oats, wheat, etc.

**Whole-grain** is the edible part of wheat, corn, rice, oats, rye, barley, etc. “Whole-grain flour” is made by grinding the entire grain and includes the bran, the germ and the endosperm. If a flour or meal does not contain all parts of the grain, it is not whole-grain.



Nutrition Facts	
Amount Per Serving	
% Daily Value*	
Total Fat	15g
Sodium	200mg
Total Carbohydrate	30g
Dietary Fiber	5g
Sugars	10g
Protein	5g
*Percent Daily Values are based on a diet of other people's secrets.	

**Refined** grains have their coarse parts removed. Refined flour does not include the bran or germ. When the bran and germ are removed, some essential nutrients, including fiber, are lost. White bread and hot dog buns are examples of breads that are often made from refined flours. Refined bread products are only creditable for the CACFP if they are enriched and/or fortified.

**Enrichment** of bread or bread products refers to the process by which nutrients (thiamin (B<sub>1</sub>), niacin (B<sub>2</sub>), riboflavin (B<sub>3</sub>), and iron) are added to refined grains and grain products at levels specified by law. If the flour in the product is enriched, the ingredient statement will indicate that enriched flour was used. A bread product, rather than the flour, may also be enriched. In this case, the ingredient list will show that thiamin, riboflavin, niacin and iron were added to the product.



**Fortification** refers to the addition of one or more vitamins, minerals or proteins to a food. If a food is fortified, then the label will

state specifically that it is fortified.

**Whole-wheat bread** contains the whole grain, including the fiber-rich bran and germ. Whole-wheat flour should be the first ingredient.

**Wheat bread** often has wheat flour or enriched wheat flour (not whole-wheat flour) as the main ingredient. This bread is low in fiber unless the manufacturer has added fiber.

**Oat bread** is usually white bread with a small amount of oats added. Check the

What's in a Meal?

ingredient list to see how far down on the list "oats" are listed. If it appears toward the end of the list, the bread contains little fiber.

## Some Things to Know About Fruit Juices



Full -strength (100%) fruit juices are creditable.

**Full-strength fruit juice** is a product which contains no additional water or other ingredients such as sweeteners, spices or flavorings. Examples of full-strength fruit juice are: apple (including cider), grape, grapefruit, orange, pineapple, prune, tangerine and any combination of any of these full-strength juices.

Fruit drinks are beverages that contain full-strength juice along with added water, and possibly other ingredients such as sweeteners, spices or flavorings. Some commonly seen fruit drinks that cannot count toward the meal pattern include: nectars, lemonade or cranberry juice cocktail. These drinks contain less than 50% full-strength juice.

Fruit juice labels should be read carefully. Look for 100% fruit juice. Other juice products contain water and sweeteners such as corn syrup or sugar.

Some State agencies and sponsors credit only full-strength juices (100%). Others may credit fruit drinks that contain at least 50% fruit juice when twice the required amount is served.

Nutrition Facts	
Serving Size 1/2 cup (125g)	
Amount Per Serving	
Total Fat	10g 20%
Total Crap	10g 20%
Total Sugar	10g 20%
Total Protein	10g 20%
*Percent Daily Values are based on a diet of pure nonsense.	

## Understanding Food Labels: What's in a Food?

### Some Things to Know About Processed Meats

Frankfurters, bologna, knockwurst and Vienna sausage may be served in the CACFP. Only the meat in these products can be credited. Many processed meats contain large amounts of binders and extenders. Therefore, the composition of these processed meats must be known in order to properly credit the meat/meat alternate portion.

Binders and extenders hold processed meats together and may aid in retaining product moisture. When the binder/extender is a fortified vegetable protein product, it may be credited along with the meat portion of the product. All other binders and extenders may not count as meat/meat alternates.

Examples of binders/extendents include:

- soy flour \*
- starchy vegetable flour
- calcium reduced dried skim milk

- soy protein concentrate \*
- cereal
- isolated soy protein \*
- dried milk
- carrageenan

*\* These products can generally be categorized as vegetable protein products (VPP), and **only** when fortified and used according to regulations (7 CFR 226, Appendix A) can they be credited toward the meal pattern as a meat alternate.*

It is recommended that processed meat products containing any non-VPP binders/extendents not be credited because it is difficult to determine the amount of meat in these products. Meat products without binders/extendents may be fully credited based on weight. An exception to this rule is a meat product with fortified VPP as the only binder/extender.





## Reading Ingredient Lists

Ingredient lists can be used to determine if some foods such as processed meats and juices meet the meal pattern requirements.

### Processed Meats

#### Frankfurters

Ingredients: pork, turkey, water, salt, corn syrup, dextrose, flavoring, sodium erythorbate, sodium nitrite.

These frankfurters are **creditable** toward the meal pattern because they are all meat and do not contain binders/extenders. The serving size will be based on the weight of the product.

#### Low Fat Polish Sausage

Ingredients: pork, water, turkey, beef, starch (modified food and vegetable), hydrolyzed milk protein, dextrose, corn syrup, salt, flavorings, autolyzed yeast, sodium lactate, sodium phosphate, gelatin, vitamin C (ascorbic acid), sodium nitrite.

This label shows that the product contains modified food and vegetable starch and hydrolyzed milk protein which are binders/ extenders. These sausages are **creditable only if** the manufacturer provides sufficient information on the amount of meat in a serving. Only the meat portion is creditable. Also refer to information on processed meats in this section.

### Fruit Juices

Apple Mixed Fruit Juice - 100 % Pure Fruit Blend  
Ingredients: concentrated juices (apple, grape, pear, and boysenberry), water, a combination of citric acid, calcium hydrate, and malic acid (calcium fortification), natural flavor, and vitamin C.

This juice is **creditable** because it is a full-strength fruit juice. Juices are not full-strength when sweeteners, spices and flavorings are added.

#### Fruit Punch

Ingredients: water, corn syrup, fruit juice from concentrate (apple, pineapple, cherry), citric acid, xanthan gum, sodium citrate, ascorbic acid (vitamin C), gum arabic, glycerol abietate, brominated vegetable oil, citrus oils, natural and artificial flavors, artificially colored (red #40).

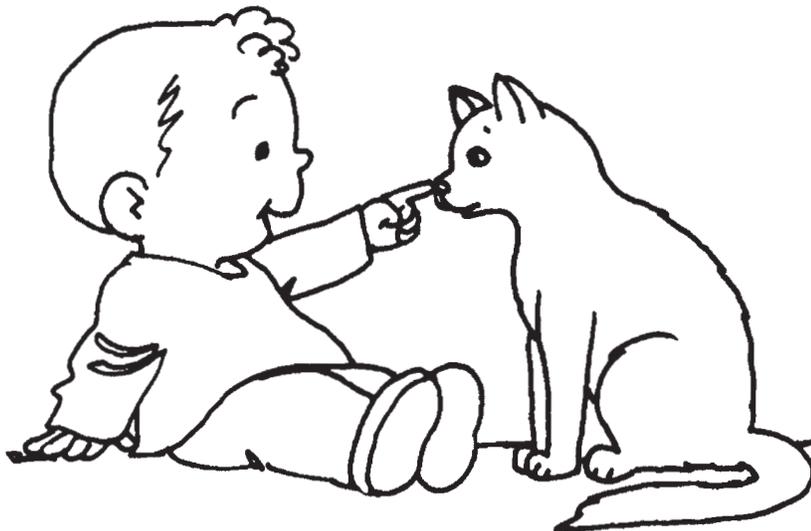
Fruit punch is **not creditable**. Fruit punch commonly contains less than 50% full-strength fruit juice. Some State agencies and sponsors credit only full-strength (100%) fruit juice. Others may credit fruit drinks that contain at least 50% fruit juice when twice the required amount is served.



## Crediting Commercial Grains/Breads Products

Purchasing ready-made bread products can save time. The following information will help in the selection of creditable products and correct serving sizes.

The weight and “Nutrition Facts” label on the product package may be used to determine the CACFP serving size. A step-by-step example of how this can be done for purchased graham crackers is found in this section. To determine the CACFP serving size for other purchased products, use the blank worksheet in this section.





## Determining the CACFP Serving Size Based on Package Information Example: Graham Crackers

### Determining the Amount of Food Needed to Equal One CACFP Serving

1. Determine the serving size needed for the age being served using the Meal Pattern chart in the Crediting Foods section. 1/2 (1)  
*3-5 year olds need 1/2 slice of bread or equivalent*
2. Using the Grains/Breads chart in the Crediting Foods section, select the group that includes the food being evaluated and determine the weight in grams of a CACFP serving. B/13 (2)  
*1/2 slice of bread or equivalent in Group B = 13 grams or 0.5 oz*
3. Find and record the net weight stated on the food package. 454 (3)  
*Net package weight = 454 gm (1 lb)*
4. Divide the package weight (3) by the CACFP serving weight (2) to determine the number of CACFP servings in the package.\* 35 (4)  
*454 grams in package divided by 13 gm in one CACFP serving = 35 CACFP servings*
5. Use the "Nutrition Facts" label to determine the number or amount of food items in the package by multiplying the serving size by the servings in the package. 128 (5)  
*16 servings of 8 crackers (8 x 16) = 128 crackers in the package*
6. Divide the total number of items in the package (5) by the number of CACFP servings (4) to show how many items must be served for one CACFP serving for this age group. Round up to the nearest reasonable serving.\* 4 (6)  
*128 crackers divided by 35 CACFP servings = 3.6 crackers. Round up to 4.*

\* Because of rounding, a package may not have as many CACFP servings as calculated by weight.

### Determining the Amount of CACFP Servings in One Serving of Food

1. Determine the serving size needed for the age being served using the Meal Pattern chart in the Crediting Foods section. 1/2 (1)  
*3-5 year olds need 1/2 slice of bread or equivalent*
2. Using the Grains/Breads chart in the Crediting Foods section, select the group that includes the food being evaluated and determine the weight in grams of a CACFP serving. B/13 (2)  
*1/2 slice of bread or equivalent in Group B = 13 grams or 0.5 oz*
3. Using the "Nutrition Facts" label, determine the weight in grams of one serving of food. 28 (3)  
*package lists 1 serving as 28 grams*
4. Divide the weight of one serving of food (3) by the weight required for one CACFP serving (2). Round down to the nearest quarter serving. 2 (4)  
*28 grams in one serving of food divided by 13 grams in one CACFP serving = 2.15 servings.  
Round down to 2.  
Note that the CACFP serving in this example is 1/2 of the manufacturer's serving size.*



## Understanding Food Labels: What's in a Food?

### Determining the CACFP Serving Size Based on Package Information Worksheet

#### Determining the Amount of Food Needed to Equal One CACFP Serving

1. Determine the serving size needed for the age being served using the Meal Pattern chart in the Crediting Foods section. \_\_\_\_\_ (1)
2. Using the Grains/Breads chart in the Crediting Foods section, select the group that includes the food being evaluated and determine the weight in grams of a CACFP serving. \_\_\_\_\_ (2)
3. Find and record the net weight stated on the food package. \_\_\_\_\_ (3)
4. Divide the package weight (3) by the CACFP serving weight (2) to determine the number of CACFP servings in the package.\* \_\_\_\_\_ (4)
5. Use the "Nutrition Facts" label to determine the number or amount of food items in the package by multiplying the serving size by the servings in the package. \_\_\_\_\_ (5)
6. Divide the total number of items in the package (5) by the number of CACFP servings (4) to show how many items must be served for one CACFP serving for this age group. Round up to the nearest reasonable serving.\* \_\_\_\_\_ (6)

\* Because of rounding, a package may not have as many CACFP servings as calculated by weight.

#### Determining the Amount of CACFP Servings in One Serving of Food

1. Determine the serving size needed for the age being served using the Meal Pattern chart in the Crediting Foods section. \_\_\_\_\_ (1)
2. Using the Grains/Breads chart in the Crediting Foods section, select the group that includes the food being evaluated and determine the weight in grams of a CACFP serving. \_\_\_\_\_ (2)
3. Using the "Nutrition Facts" label, determine the weight in grams of one serving of food. \_\_\_\_\_ (3)
4. Divide the weight of one serving of food (3) by the weight required for one CACFP serving (2). Round down to the nearest quarter serving. \_\_\_\_\_ (4)



A small graphic of a Nutrition Facts label, showing the standard layout with sections for Total Fat, Sodium, Total Carbohydrate, and Protein.

## Commercially Processed Combination Foods

It is very difficult to determine the amount of bread, meat, fruit or vegetables in some commercially prepared foods. For example, the amount of meat or cheese in frozen ravioli, the amount of tomato in canned chili, the weight of the crust in a pizza, or the amount of breading on fish sticks may not be known. Foods should not be credited toward meeting a meal component when the actual content (i.e. meat, bread) is not known.

A food can be credited when documentation shows that the food contains enough of specific ingredient(s) to count toward the meal pattern. Two types of documentation are acceptable. These are a manufacturer's analysis sheet or a Child Nutrition label.

### Analysis Sheets

A commercially processed combination food can be credited when a product analysis sheet is on file. It must include a statement of the amount of cooked lean meat/meat alternate, grains/breads and/or fruit/vegetable components provided by the food per serving. This analysis must be signed by an official of the manufacturer (not a salesperson). Contact your State agency or sponsor for more information.

## Child Nutrition Labels

The USDA Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) offers a voluntary technical assistance program called the Child Nutrition (CN) Labeling Program for food companies who manufacture meat and poultry products or fruit juices. CN labels list information about a food's contribution toward the meal pattern.

The CN labeling process involves a review of the manufacturer's recipe to determine the contribution that a serving of the commercially prepared product makes toward the meal pattern requirements. CN labels state a product's contribution toward the meal pattern requirements.

Products that can be CN labeled include meat/meat alternate products or fruit juices that contribute to the meal pattern. For example, CN labels may appear on: frankfurters, pizza, breaded chicken patties and apple juice.

CN labeled products are usually packaged in bulk quantities. Schools and institutions that serve meals to large groups of people commonly purchase these foods. CN labeled products are not typically found in neighborhood grocery stores.





## Understanding Food Labels: What's in a Food?

The CN label is a food product label that contains a CN label statement and CN logo. The logo is a distinct border around the edges of the CN label statement. The CN label statement includes:

- a statement of the product's contribution toward meal pattern requirements
- a six-digit product identification number
- a statement specifying that the use of the CN logo and CN statement was authorized by FNS
- the month and year of approval

A CN label on a product does not mean that a food provides an entire serving of a meal component. When using CN labeled products, be sure that the amount served meets the CACFP meal pattern quantity requirements.

CN labels do not address the nutritional value of a product. They only address a product's contribution to the meal pattern. The purpose of a CN label is not to provide nutrition information. For information on the food's nutritive value, review the "Nutrition Facts" label, the ingredient list and/or the manufacturer's nutrient analysis sheet.

