

CACFP Thinking Thursdays – Whole Grains

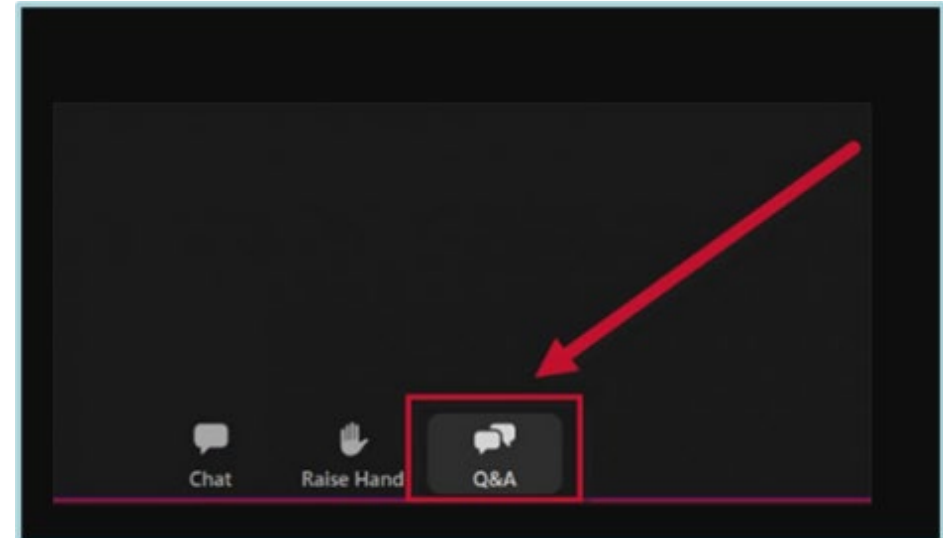
A training for Child and Adult Care Food Program Operators

Kristy Hegner, MPH, RDN

August 28, 2025

Welcome to Thinking Thursdays!

- Participants are muted
- Enter your questions into the Q&A, not the Chat
- CACFP staff will answer questions in the Q&A






Glad you could join us!

- Thinking Thursdays presentations are posted on the CACFP Training page.
- Visit michigan.gov/mde/services/food/cacfp, click on Training then scroll toward the bottom and click on the Thinking Thursdays link.
- Certificate will be emailed if you attend the entire webinar.
- Upcoming Thinking Thursdays: Sept. 25, 2025

Let Us Know Who You Are! I work for a...

- Independent childcare center
- Sponsored childcare center
- Family childcare home
- Family childcare sponsor
- At-risk afterschool care center
- Adult day care center
- Sponsoring organization
- Emergency shelter
- School food authority





Learning Objectives

Participants will be able to:

- Define the importance of whole grains
- Analyze what is meant by whole-grain rich (WGR)
- Understand how to identify a whole grain
- Learn how to incorporate more whole grains into a menu
- Identify credible and non-credible grains

Pre-Test

- 1. True or False:** Enriched grains are the same thing as whole grains.
- 2. True or False:** CACFP requires all grains being served to be whole grains.
- 3. True or False:** If you're only serving snack, you **MUST** serve a grain.
- 4. True or False:** Grain-based desserts can be served **IF** they are whole grains.

Importance of Whole Grains

- Kids ages 1 to 13 years old eat up to **twice the amount** of refined grains that they should, but not enough whole grains.





Importance of Whole Grains (cont.)

- Whole Grains
 - Provide essential nutrients such as fiber
 - Aids in digestion, reduces constipation
 - Promote healthy eating habits at a young age
- Long-Term Benefits
 - Reduces risk of chronic diseases
 - Improves heart health

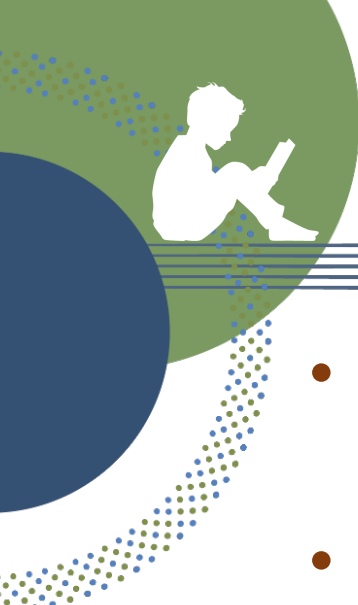


What is Whole Grain Rich?

Whole grain-rich (WGR):

- At least half the grain ingredients in a food are **whole-grain**
- Any remaining grain ingredients are **enriched, bran,** or **germ**

*In the CACFP, grains served at **one** meal or snack every day must be **whole grain-rich.**



CACFP Whole Grain-Rich Requirement

- Once per day, offer whole grain-rich foods at meals or snacks
- Requirement applies to the day care center or home, not participant
- You can serve whole grain-rich foods more than once a day
- Portions served must meet the minimum serving size for the age group



Identifying Whole Grains

- WGR foods contain 100% whole grains or at least 50% whole grains and the remaining grain ingredients are enriched, bran, or germ.
- 6 methods for identifying whole grains



Flours: Whole Grain vs. Enriched

Whole Grains

- whole-wheat flour
- whole-grain corn flour
- cracked wheat
- whole-grain oat flour

Enriched

- enriched wheat flour
- enriched white flour
- enriched durum flour
- enriched rice flour



Whole Grain-Rich Food Examples

- Oats (steel cut, old fashioned, quick cooking, instant oatmeal, oat groats)
- Brown rice
- Wild rice
- Quinoa
- Bulgur
- Cracked wheat
- whole-wheat bread, whole-wheat buns, and whole-wheat rolls
- graham bread, graham buns and graham rolls
- whole-wheat pasta (spaghetti, macaroni, etc)



Whole Grain Snack Ideas

- Whole grain-rich crackers and cheese slices
- Whole grain-rich tortilla chips and salsa/guacamole
- Whole Grain-Rich Cereal Mix* (Cheerios cereal, pretzels, raisins, etc.)
- WG fish crackers with apple slices
- WG English Muffin with peanut/soy butter, strawberries
- Turkey/cheese pinwheels on WG tortilla

*Must meet the added sugar limit for cereals in the CACFP.

10/28/2025

www.michigan.gov/mde



Minimum Grain Serving Sizes

Minimum per Meal/Snack for CACFP Meal Pattern

Ages 1–2 & 3–5

- Meal: ½ oz. eq.
- Snack: ½ oz. eq.*

Ages 6–18:

- Meal: 1 oz. eq.
- Snack: 1 oz. eq.

Adult Meals (adult day care): 2 oz. eq.

Adult Snacks (adult day care): 1 oz. eq.

*Grains not required at snack

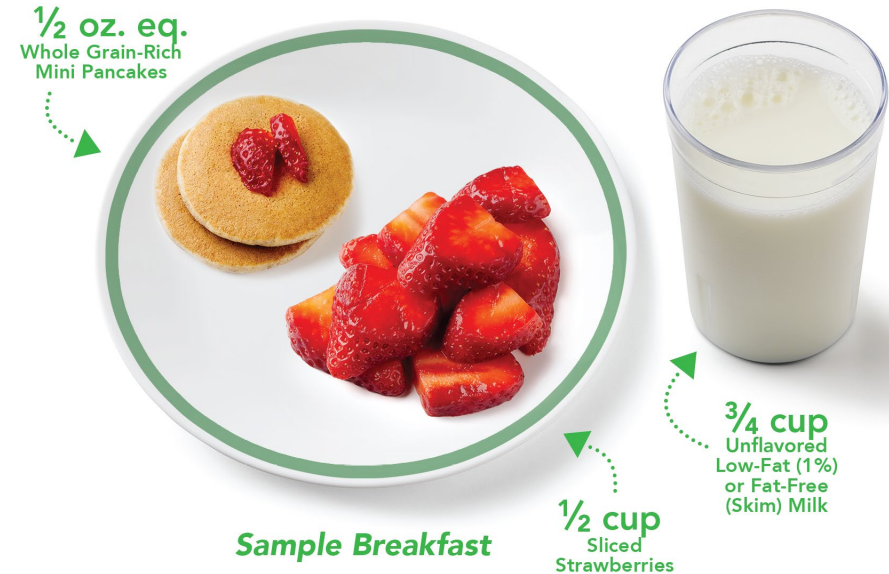
At breakfast – meat/meat alternate may be served in place of the grain up to 3 times/week



Minimum Serving Sizes: Breakfast

3-5 year olds

- Serve at least $\frac{1}{2}$ oz. eq.
 - Examples:
 - $\frac{1}{2}$ oz eq. whole grain-rich pancakes = 17 g or about $\frac{1}{2}$ 4" pancake
- OR
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup ready-to-eat flakes or rounds cereal (1/2 cup/14 g)



WGR Breakfast Ideas

- Oatmeal
- Whole Grain-Rich Pancakes
- Whole Grain-Rich Waffles
- Toast made with Whole-Wheat Bread
- Whole Grain-Rich Muffin
- Whole Grain-Rich Cereal*
- Whole Grain-Rich English Muffin, Bagel, or Biscuit

***Breakfast cereals must be WGR, enriched, or fortified and cannot contain more than 6 grams of added sugars per dry ounce.**



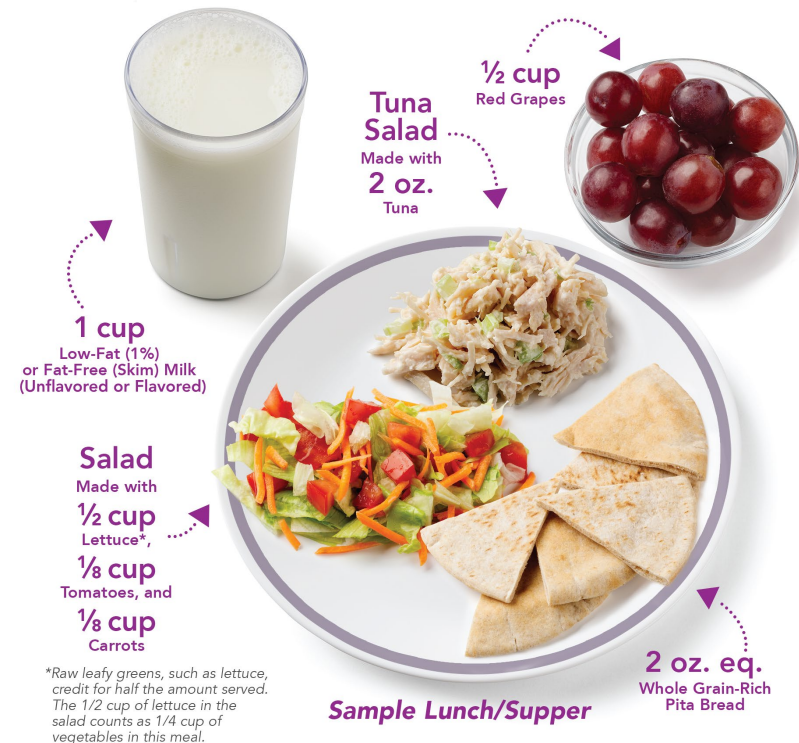
Minimum Serving Sizes: Lunch

3-5 year olds

- Serve at least 1/2 oz. eq.
- Examples:
 - 1/2 oz. eq. whole grain pita bread=1/4 pita (14 g)

Adults

- Serve at least 2 oz. eq.
- Examples:
 - 2 oz. eq. whole grain pita bread = 1 pita (56 g)



WGR Lunch/Supper Ideas

- Macaroni and Cheese with Whole Wheat Noodles
- Beef Spaghetti with Whole Wheat Spaghetti
- Turkey/Cheese on Whole-Wheat Bun or Roll
- Whole Grain-Rich Pizza Crust
- Bean Burrito on Whole Grain-Rich Tortilla
- Chicken and Brown or Wild Rice

Practice Question: 2 Meals, 1 Snack

Does this menu meet the whole grain-rich requirement for CACFP?

Monday's Menu

Breakfast: enriched toast

Lunch: brown rice

Snack: yogurt and fruit

Yes

No

Answer: 2 Meals, 1 Snack

Does this menu meet the whole grain-rich requirement for CACFP?

Monday's Menu

Breakfast: enriched toast

Lunch: brown rice

Snack: yogurt and fruit

Yes

No

Practice Question: Snack Only

Your afterschool program only serves snacks. It does not serve breakfast, lunch, or supper. Which snack(s) **do not** meet the whole grain-rich requirement in the CACFP?

- Enriched muffin and low-fat (1%) milk
- Whole-wheat toast and peanut butter
- Applesauce and low-fat (1%) milk
- Diced pears and whole grain mini bagels

Practice Question: Snack Only

Your afterschool program only serves snacks. It does not serve breakfast, lunch, or supper. Which snack(s) **do not** meet the whole grain-rich requirement in the CACFP?

- Enriched muffin and low-fat (1%) milk**
- Whole-wheat toast and peanut butter
- Applesauce and low-fat (1%) milk
- Diced pears and whole grain mini bagels

Grains at Meals

- Required at **meals**:
 - Breakfast*
 - Lunch
 - Supper
- If you only serve one **meal** per day, then grains served must be whole grain-rich

*At breakfast – meat/meat alternate may be served in place of the grain up to 3 times/week



Offer Versus Serve (OVS)

For at-risk afterschool or adult participants only:



- Can be used only at meals:
 - Breakfast
 - Lunch
 - Supper
- If counting OVS meal towards whole grain-rich requirement, all grains offered must be whole grain-rich



Question: At-Risk Afterschool

Scenario: Your at-risk afterschool center serves supper using OVS and also serves snack.

You want to meet the CACFP whole grain-rich requirement at supper, and offer two options from the grains component:

- whole grain-rich rolls
- enriched crackers

Question: Does offering these two options meet the whole grain-rich requirement in the CACFP?

- Yes
- No



Answer: At-Risk Afterschool

Scenario: Your at-risk afterschool center serves supper using OVS and also serves snack.

You want to meet the CACFP whole grain-rich requirement at supper, and offer two options from the grains component:

→ whole grain-rich rolls and enriched crackers

Question: Does offering these two options meet the whole grain-rich requirement in the CACFP?

- Yes
- No



Ways to Identify Whole Grain-Rich Foods

Whole grain-rich (WGR) is defined by the USDA as a product is between 50 and 100 percent whole grain, with any remaining grains being enriched.

1. Food labeled as: “whole wheat” breads/rolls/buns, “graham” rolls, whole wheat macaroni

- **Be aware of terms such as, “made with whole grain,” “made with whole wheat,” or “contains whole grains.” These terms are NOT necessarily whole wheat products.**

Ways to Identify Whole Grains: WIC Food Guide

2. Food is found on Michigan's WIC Food Guide with the wheat symbol.

Cold Cereals - Store Brands

* These brands and flavors **ONLY**


• 12-36 oz box/bag

•  No organic allowed

Always Save

Corn Flakes
Crisp Rice
Frosted Shredded Wheat 
Toasted Oats

Best Choice

Bran Flakes 
Crispy Rice
Crispy Rice Squares

Crispy Rice
Crispy Rice Squares
Crispy Hexagons
Frosted Shredded Wheat
Strawberry Cream 
Honey Oats and Flakes
Toasted Oats 

Freedom's Choice

Bran Flakes 

Shredded Wheat 
Toasted Oats 

Kiggins

Bran Flakes 
Corn Flakes
Crispy Rice
Rolling Oats 

Kroger

Corn Flakes

Our Family

Bran Flakes 
Corn Flakes
Corn Biscuits
Crispy Hexagons
Crispy Rice
Crispy Rice Squares
Crunchy Corn Squares
Frosted Shredded Wheat 

Ways to Identify Whole Grains: FDA Statements

3. One of the following FDA statements is included on the labeling:

“Diets rich in whole grain foods and other plant foods and low in total fat, saturated fat, and cholesterol may reduce the risk of heart disease and some cancers.”

“Diets rich in whole grain foods and other plant foods, and low in saturated fat and cholesterol, may help reduce the risk of heart disease.”



Ways to Identify Whole Grains: Rule of 3

4. Rule of 3

- First ingredient (second if after water), must be whole grains
- Next 2 grains (if any) must be whole grains, enriched grains, bran or germ.

Ways to Identify Whole Grains: WGR Criteria under NSLP

5. Food meets the whole grain-rich criteria under National School Lunch Program (NSLP) - excluding grain-based desserts

View the Whole Grain Resource here: <https://fns-prod.azureedge.us/sites/default/files/resource-files/tn-whole-grain-resource.pdf>

10/28/2025

www.michigan.gov/mde

USDA Food and Nutrition Service
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE



Whole Grain Resource

for the National School Lunch and School Breakfast Programs

A Guide to Meeting the Whole Grain-Rich Criteria

FNS-464

Ways to Identify Whole Grains: Manufacturer Documentation – CN Label

- Manufacturer documentation such as a Child Nutrition (CN) label

Whole-Grain Cheese Pizza

Ingredient Statement: White whole-wheat flour, part skim mozzarella cheese, tomatoes, tomato paste, water, salt.

CN XXXXXX*

CN Each 5.00 oz. slice Whole-Grain Cheese Pizza provides 2.00 oz. equivalent meat alternate, 2.00 oz. equivalent grains, and 1/8 cup red/orange vegetable for Child Nutrition Meal Pattern Requirements. (Use of this logo and statement authorized by the Food and Nutrition Service, USDA mm/yy**).

CN

Net Wt.: 20.0 pounds

INSPECTED BY THE
U.S. DEPT. OF AGRICULTURE
IN ACCORDANCE WITH
FNS REQUIREMENTS

STV Foods, Inc
1234 Indigo Street Birchtree, WA 12345



Creditable Grains

- Use the Creditable and Non-Creditable Foods Resources:
 - Creditable and Non-Creditable Foods Guide, Non-Creditable Foods and Crediting Handbook for CACFP can be found here: <https://www.michigan.gov/mde/services/food/cacfp/forms-content/meal-and-menu-planning>
- Grains must list whole grain/flour, enriched grain/flour, bran, or germ as the 1st ingredient (or 2nd after water).
- Examples
 - Crackers, sweet or savory (animal, graham, etc)
 - Grain-based chips with 1st ingredient is whole or enriched grains (some tortilla chips, some Sun Chips)
 - Pancakes
 - Popcorn
 - Pretzels
 - Taco shells, tortillas



Non-Creditable Grains

- Examples of non-creditable grains (not all-inclusive)
 - 1st ingredient, or 2nd after water, is not whole or enriched grain/flour, bran or germ
 - Sugar is listed before 1st grain in ingredient list
 - Cereals not whole grain, enriched, or fortified
 - Cereals above added sugar limits
 - Potatoes – these are creditable as a vegetable
 - Tortilla chips when 1st ingredient, or 2nd after water, is not a whole or enriched grain
 - Veggie straws, chips, or sticks, when first ingredient is not a whole or enriched grain



Grain-Based Desserts (GBD)

- GBD have not been allowed in CACFP since 2017
- GBDs are not creditable even if they are whole grain-rich
- **Common examples of GBD (NOT creditable):**
 - Toaster pastries
 - Cereal bars, breakfast bars, granola bars
 - Fruit-filled rolls/bars/cookies

NOT GBD (creditable):

- muffins
- Crackers, all types
- Banana/zucchini/other quick breads

Labeling WGR Foods on Menus

- Best practice is to indicate WGR foods on your daily menus.
- Allows analysts to quickly identify if you are meeting the whole grain requirements and informs parents and caregivers.

Examples of Highlighting WGR on Menus

- Write “whole wheat” or “WW” in front of foods such as WW bread or WW pasta
- Place a checkmark next to the food indicating WGR
- Add a grain icon next to the WGR food such as this example:



Post-Test

1. True or False: Enriched grains are the same thing as whole wheat.
2. True or False: CACFP requires at least one grain per day to be a whole grain.
3. True or False: If you're only serving snack, you do NOT need to serve a grain.
4. True or False: Grain-based desserts can be served IF they are whole grains.

Whole Grain Resources

WIC Food Guide: <https://bit.ly/46ENM94>

Adding Whole Grains to Your Child and Adult Care Food Program Menu:
<https://bit.ly/3HcJLOS>

Creditable and Non-Creditable Foods Guide: <https://bit.ly/45DT7fJ>

Whole Grain Resource here: <https://bit.ly/3Jnvhfufu>

MDE Training Modules

CNP: Product Labels: <https://bit.ly/4flwmAs>

CACFP: Creditable Menus: <https://bit.ly/3J2IWcX>

Whole Grain Resources (cont.)

Using Ounce Equivalents for Grains in the Child and Adult Care Food Program:
<https://bit.ly/46Lk7Lp>

Crediting Grains Part 1: <https://bit.ly/3UhqeQ7>

Crediting Grains Part 2: <https://bit.ly/3UPIyQy>

Crediting Single-Serving Packages of Grains in the Child and Adult Care Food Program: <https://bit.ly/45ila2Z>

Calculating Ounce Equivalents of Grains in the Child and Adult Care Food Program:
<https://bit.ly/45lYxed>

Grain Based Desserts in the Child and Adult Care Food Program
<https://bit.ly/47iJAvO>

Thank you for joining!

Questions?

Enter your questions into the Q&A box

Contact Us:

CACFP General Email: MDE-CACFP@michigan.gov

USDA Nondiscrimination Statement

In accordance with federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, this institution is prohibited from discriminating on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex (including gender identity and sexual orientation), disability, age, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity.

Program information may be made available in languages other than English. Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication to obtain program information (e.g., Braille, large print, audiotape, American Sign Language), should contact the responsible state or local agency that administers the program or USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TTY) or contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339.

To file a program discrimination complaint, a Complainant should complete a Form AD-3027, USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form which can be obtained online at: [USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form](#), from any USDA office, by calling (866) 632-9992, or by writing a letter addressed to USDA. The letter must contain the complainant's name, address, telephone number, and a written description of the alleged discriminatory action in sufficient detail to inform the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights (ASCR) about the nature and date of an alleged civil rights violation. The completed AD-3027 form or letter must be submitted to USDA by:

mail:

U.S. Department of Agriculture
Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights
1400 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20250-9410; or

1. fax:

(833) 256-1665 or (202) 690-7442; or

2. email:

program.intake@usda.gov

This institution is an equal opportunity provider