



## The ABC's of Meal Counting

Refresh.



Refocus.

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School Nutrition Programs  
Back to School Conference



# Purpose of this Training

To provide guidance for successful implementation of the following at breakfast:

- Meal Pattern
- Offer vs Serve





# Food Component versus Food Item

- **Food Component:** A food component is one of three food groups that comprise a reimbursable breakfast. The three food components are: ***fruits (or vegetables as substitute); grains (with optional meats/meat alternates); and fluid milk.*** Schools must always offer all three food components in at least the minimum daily required quantities.
- **Food Item:** A specific food offered within the three food components.



# What Credits as a Food Item?

Components	1 <i>Item</i> Equals
Fruit	Portion sizes may vary as determined by menu planner (minimum 1/8 cup)
Grains	1 oz eq
Fluid Milk	1 cup (1/2 pt.)

**Fruit Item:** School menu planners must offer at least 1 cup fruit daily by offering one or more food items in various portion sizes. \*\*\*Minimum 1/2 cup fruit must be selected for offer versus serve.

**Grain Item:** One item of grain equals 1 oz grain equivalent; however, schools may plan to offer larger grain components, such as a 2 oz grain equivalent muffin or bagel, which would credit as two items.

**Fluid Milk:** One item of milk is 1 cup (1/2 pt.).



## Examples of Food Items

Credits as 1 Item	Credits as 2 Items
1 Cup Milk (½ pt.)	3 oz. Biscuit
¼ cup Fruit	3.2 oz. Cereal Bar
4 oz. 100% Fruit Juice	2.7 oz. Waffles
4 oz. Yogurt	2 Slices of Bread
1 oz. Cold Cereal	2 oz. Bagel
1 oz. Cheese Stick	3 oz. Muffin
½ cup Fruit	1 Large Egg

***\*\*Nutrition documentation such as Child Nutrition (CN) labels and/or Product Formulation Statements (PFS) must be obtained to determine correct crediting amounts.***



## Breakfast Entrees with a Combination of Components

### ***Examples:***

- Biscuit (credits to 1 oz. grain) and Sausage (credits to 1 oz. meat/meat alternate) sandwich = 2 grain items
- Yogurt (credits to 1 oz. meat/meat alternate) and Berry (1/2 cup fruit) Parfait = 1 grain item & 1 fruit item
- Pancake (credits to 1 oz. grain) wrapped Sausage (credits to 1 oz. meat/meat alternate) on a stick = 2 grain items

***\*\*Nutrition documentation such as Child Nutrition (CN) labels and/or Product Formulation Statements (PFS) must be obtained to determine correct crediting amounts.***



# Breakfast Meal Pattern

Component	K-5	6-8	9-12
Fruit (cups)	(1) 5	(1) 5	(1) 5
Grains (oz. eq)	(1) 7	(1) 8	(1) 9
Fluid Milk (cups)	(1) 5	(1) 5	(1) 5

- The daily required minimum serving sizes are listed in parenthesis and the weekly minimum serving sizes are listed outside the parenthesis.
- Breakfast Requirements Allow for One Menu Plan for All Grades (K-12)

*Optional: Meat/Meat alternate 1 oz = 1 oz equivalent Grain.*

- *A grain must be offered prior to a meat/meat alternate to credit as a grain.*



## Serve Only for Breakfast

- Is optional for all grade levels.
- Students must be served all three components at the required daily minimums.
- All components can be pre-bagged or served individually on the serving line.
- Point of Service (POS) meal counts must be at the end of the serving line to ensure all components are received for a reimbursable breakfast.

### Three Components must be Served:

1) 1 oz. grain equivalent

2) 1 cup fruit *(Portion sizes may vary based on menu planning but must equal at least 1 cup)*

3) 1 cup fluid milk



# Offer versus Serve (OVS) for Breakfast

- Is optional for all grade levels.
- Students must be offered all three components at the required daily minimums.
- At least 4 food items must be offered from the 3 required food components.
- Student must select at least 3 food items which must include at least a  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup fruit and/or vegetable.
- Point of Service (POS) meal counts must be at the end of the serving line to ensure all components are received for a reimbursable breakfast.

## Four food items must be offered:

- 1) 1 oz. grain equivalent
- 2) Fruit (*Portion sizes may vary based on menu planning - minimum 1/8 cup*)
- 3) 1 cup fluid milk
- 4) A grain, meat/meat alternate, fruit, or vegetable



## Reimbursable Breakfast (K-5, 6-8, 9-12, and K-12):

*At least 3 food items were selected with one a ½ cup fruit.*





## Reimbursable Breakfast (K-5, 6-8, 9-12, and K-12):

*At least 3 food items were selected with one a ½ cup fruit.*





## Non-Reimbursable Breakfast (K-5, 6-8, 9-12, and K-12):

*A ½ cup of fruit was not selected.*





**Non-Reimbursable Breakfast (K-5, 6-8, 9-12, and K-12):**

*Only 2 food items were selected, a ½ cup fruit (4 oz. 100% Juice) and a 1 oz. cereal bowl.*





# Offer versus Serve Pre-Bagged Meals

## OVS Breakfast Pre-Bagged Meals

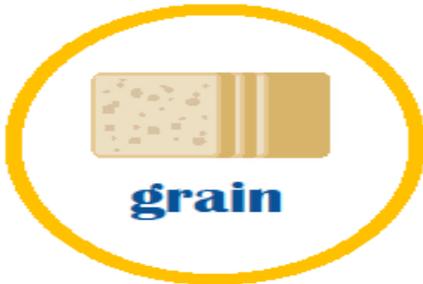
- Should attempt to the extent possible to offer choices (such as a fruit basket) aside from the pre-bagged items
- There is no requirement that all possible combinations of choices be made available to the student





# Example of Breakfast Offer vs Serve Signage

## What Makes a School Breakfast



**grain**



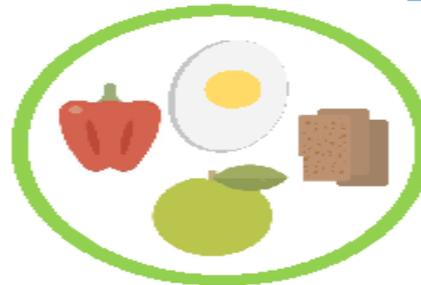
**fruit (or vegetable)**



**milk**

### Offer Vs. Serve

Choose at least 3 items from the four offered, **One must be** a 1/2 cup of **fruit** (or **vegetable**).



The fourth item offered may be another grain, another fruit or veggie, or a meat or meat alternate.

*This institution is an equal opportunity provider.*



## Identifying Reimbursable Meals under OVS (Signage, Menus, and Training)

- Signage and menus should provide clear information about allowable choices. This will help students easily build a reimbursable meal and is especially important to avoid problems at the point of service.
  - ✓ **MENU SIGNAGE (REIMBURSABLE MEAL OPTIONS):** Students, servers and cashiers must be able to identify what constitutes a reimbursable meal. The NSLP regulation at 7 CFR 210.10(a)(2) requires that schools identify, near or at the beginning of serving lines, what foods constitutes a reimbursable meal.
  - ✓ **OFFER VERSUS SERVE SIGNAGE:** Schools implementing OVS must also identify what a student must select to have a reimbursable meal under OVS.
  - ✓ Signage is not required for field trips, breakfast in the classroom and other venues where signage may be problematic.
- Schools are expected to conduct training for cashiers and serving line staff so they can help students select the required food components/food items in the quantities needed for reimbursable lunches and breakfasts. Annual training is required to meet the professional standards requirements.



## Wrap Up

- Ensure all meal components are offered in the correct serving sizes.
- Ensure all staff are trained to recognize a reimbursable meal.  
(Serve Only or Offer vs Serve)



thank  
you!