

Lunch Meal Pattern (5-Day School Week)

FRUITS	Grades K-5		Grades 6-8		Grades 9-12	
Meal Pattern	Per Week	Min Per Day	Per Week	Min Per Day	Per Week	Min Per Day
Fruits (cups) ^a	2.5	0.5	2.5	0.5	5	1
VEGETABLES	Grades K-5		Grades 6-8		Grades 9-12	
Meal Pattern	Per Week	Min Per Day	Per Week	Min Per Day	Per Week	Min Per Day
Vegetables (cups) ^{a, i}	3.75	0.75	3.75	0.75	5	1
• Dark green ^b	0.5		0.5		0.5	
• Red/Orange ^b	0.75		0.75		1.25	
• Beans, Peas, & Lentils ^{b, c}	0.5		0.5		0.5	
• Starchy ^b	0.5		0.5		0.5	
• Other ^{b, d}	0.5		0.5		0.75	
Additional Vegetable to Reach Total ^e	1		1		1.5	
MEATS ^{f, g}	Grades K-5		Grades 6-8		Grades 9-12	
Meal Pattern	Per Week	Min Per Day	Per Week	Min Per Day	Per Week	Min Per Day
Meats/Meat Alternates (oz eq)	8-10	1	9-10	1	10-12	2
GRAINS ^{h, i}	Grades K-5		Grades 6-8		Grades 9-12	
Meal Pattern	Per Week	Min Per Day	Per Week	Min Per Day	Per Week	Min Per Day
Grains (oz eq)	8-9	1	8-10	1	10-12	2
AT LEAST 80% OF THE GRAINS OFFERED WEEKLY MUST BE WHOLE GRAIN-RICH. ^h						
MILK ^{j, k, m, n}	Grades K-5		Grades 6-8		Grades 9-12	
Meal Pattern	Per Week	Min Per Day	Per Week	Min Per Day	Per Week	Min Per Day
Fluid milk (cups)	5	1	5	1	5	1
DIETARY SPECIFICATIONS	Grades K-5		Grades 6-8		Grades 9-12	
Daily amount based on the average for a 5-Day Week						
Calories ^{l, m}	550-650		600-700		750-850	
Saturated Fat ^{m, n} (% of total calories)	<10		<10		<10	
Sodium Interim Target 1A (milligrams) ^m Effective July 1, 2023	≤ 1,110		≤ 1,225		≤ 1,280	

^a One-quarter cup of dried fruit counts as ½ cup of fruit; 1 cup of leafy greens counts as ½ cup of vegetables. No more than half of the fruit or vegetable offerings may be in the form of juice. All juice must be 100% full-strength.

^b Larger amounts of these vegetables may be served.

- ^c Schools may count beans, peas, and lentils offered as a meat alternate at lunch and may also count them toward the weekly beans, peas, and lentils vegetable subgroup requirement. When offered toward the protein sources component, beans, peas, and lentils may count toward the weekly beans, peas, and lentils vegetable subgroup requirement, but may not count toward the daily or weekly vegetable component requirement.
- ^d This subgroup consists of “Other vegetables” as defined in [7 CFR 210.10 \(c\)\(2\)\(ii\)\(E\)](#). For the purposes of the NSLP, the “Other vegetables” requirement may be met with any additional amounts from the dark green, red/orange, and beans, peas, and lentils vegetable subgroups in [7 CFR 210.10\(c\)\(2\)\(ii\)](#).
- ^e Any vegetable subgroup may be offered to meet the total weekly vegetable requirement.
- ^f Nuts and seeds may credit for the full meats/meat alternates component, although it is not required. Program operators may choose to offer nuts and seeds toward only a portion of the component, alongside another meat/meat alternate.
- ^g Effective July 1, 2025, yogurt may have no more than 12 grams of added sugars per 6 ounces (2 grams of added sugars per ounce).
- ^h At least 80 percent of grains offered weekly must meet the whole grain-rich criteria as defined in 7 CFR 210.2, and the remaining grain items offered must be enriched.
- ⁱ All schools in Guam and Hawaii are allowed to substitute any creditable vegetables for the grains or bread component. However, USDA emphasizes the importance of traditional and culturally relevant vegetables. Examples of traditional and cultural vegetables, such as breadfruit and taro, are provided in the revised regulatory text at [7 CFR 210.10\(c\)\(3\)](#), [220.8\(c\)\(3\)](#), [225.16\(f\)\(3\)](#), and [226.20\(f\)](#).
- ^j SFAs must offer at least two different varieties of fluid milk. Effective January 14, 2026, schools may offer students at lunch whole, reduced-fat (2%), low-fat (1%), and fat-free fluid milk. Milk may be unflavored or flavored, provided that unflavored milk is offered at each meal service.
- ^k Effective July 1, 2025, flavored milk may have no more than 10 grams of added sugars per 8 fluid ounces or, for flavored milk sold as a competitive food for middle and high schools, 15 grams of added sugars per 12 fluid ounces.
- ^l The average daily calories for a 5-day school week menu must be within the range (at least the minimum and no more than the maximum values).
- ^m Discretionary sources of calories (solid fats and added sugars) may be added to the meal pattern if within the specifications for calories, saturated fat, trans fat, and sodium. Foods of minimal nutritional value are not allowed.
- ⁿ Schools may exclude the saturated fat from fluid milk offered as a beverage, served over cereal, or blended in a smoothie when calculating the weekly average saturated fat limit for lunch and breakfast. All other dietary specifications (including calories, sodium, and beginning July 1, 2027, added sugars), still apply on average to the entire weekly menu, and the contribution from fluid milk must be included in those calculations.

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Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights
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2. **fax:**
(833) 256-1665 or (202) 690-7442; or
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