



United States
Department of
Agriculture

Food and
Nutrition
Service

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SUBJECT: Questions & Answers on the School Breakfast Program
Meal Pattern in School Year 2013-2014

TO: Regional Directors
Special Nutrition Programs
All Regions

State Directors
Child Nutrition Programs
All States

Attached are Questions & Answers (QAs) on the final rule to update the meal patterns and nutrition requirements for meals offered under the School Breakfast Program (SBP), as required by the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010. As the breakfast meal pattern requirements are being phased-in over multiple years, this memorandum also provides a brief overview of the breakfast meal pattern for School Year (SY) 2013-2014 *only*. This memorandum has been revised to reflect consistency with the additional flexibility described in the Offer versus Serve guidance.

Please refer to Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) memorandum SP 10-2012 (<http://www.fns.usda.gov/cnd/Governance/Policy-Memos/2012/SP10-2012ar6.pdf>) for QAs specifically related to the National School Lunch Program meal pattern, or general questions applicable to both breakfast and lunch.

Overview of Breakfast Meal Pattern in SY 2013-2014

General Requirements

In SY 2013-2014 all schools must use a food based menu planning approach for breakfast.

Schools must implement the three age-grade groups (K-5, 6-8 and 9-12). There is significant overlap in the component requirements between the age-grade groups, with the primary difference being increased minimum grain requirements for older students as described below.

Schools must plan breakfast meals that meet the calorie ranges, on average, over the course of the week. There is overlap between the age-grade groups, which provides further flexibility for schools that serve more than one age-grade group at breakfast. It is

important to emphasize that the calorie requirements are average calorie requirements and that the calorie limits do not apply on a per-meal or per-student basis.

Foods offered must contain zero grams of *trans* fat per portion.

Definitions

A *food component* is one of three food groups that comprise reimbursable breakfasts. These are grains (with optional meat/meat alternate allowed); fruit/vegetable; and milk.

A *food item* is a specific food offered within the three food components. For the purposes of OVS, a school must offer at least four food items and students must select at least three food items.

Food Components

Grains

- For all grade groups, schools must offer at least 1 ounce equivalent (oz eq) of grains each day.
- The minimum weekly offering varies by age-grade group: 7 oz eq for grades K-5, 8 oz eq for grades 6-8, and 9 oz eq for grades 9-12.
- *Half* of grains offered must be whole grain-rich in SY 2013-2014.

Optional Meat/Meat Alternate

- There is no separate requirement to offer meat/meat alternates in the new SBP meal pattern.
- Schools may offer a meat/meat alternate in place of part of the grains component *after* the minimum daily grains requirement is offered in the menu or planned breakfast. A serving 1 oz eq of meat/meat alternate may credit as 1 oz eq of grains.
- Alternately, a school may offer a meat/meat alternate as an additional food and not credit it toward any component.

Juice/Fruit/Vegetable

- In SY 2013-2014, there is no change to the existing Juice/Fruit/Vegetable component.
- Schools must offer at least ½ cup of fruits and/or vegetables to all age-grade groups.
- Vegetables and fruits may be offered interchangeably, there are no substitution requirements and no vegetable subgroup requirements.
- There are no limitations on juice in SY 2013-2014.
- Students are not required to take fruit under OVS in SY 2013-2014.

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Fluid Milk

- Schools must offer only fat-free (unflavored or flavored) or low-fat (unflavored) milk.
- For all age-grade groups, schools must offer at least 1 cup of milk daily.
- A variety of milk, at least two options, must be offered.

Offer vs. Serve (OVS)

Under OVS, for SY 2013-2014, a student must be offered at least four food items and must select at least three food items. The food items selected may be from any of the required components and must be offered in at least the minimum daily portion.

As noted above, for the SBP in SY 2013-2014, students are not required to take a minimum ½ cup of fruit or vegetables for OVS.

Additional Information

Because aspects of the SBP meal pattern are being phased-in over multiple years, this guidance document reflects only those requirements in effect SY 2013-2014. Additional guidance will be provided for SY 2014-2015 and beyond, when all of the component requirements are in effect.

These Questions & Answers and other materials related to the new meal requirements are available on the FNS website at <http://www.fns.usda.gov/cnd/Governance/Legislation/nutritionstandards.htm>.

We appreciate all you do for the School Meal Programs and look forward to continue working with you to improve the nutrition of America's children. State agencies are reminded to distribute this memo and enclosure to program operators immediately. SFAs should contact their State agencies for additional information. State agencies may direct any questions concerning this guidance to the appropriate Food and Nutrition Service Regional Office.

Original Signed

Cynthia Long
Director
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Attachment