

# Adding Whole Grains to Your Child and Adult Care Food Program Menu

Whole grain-rich foods are an important part of your menu in the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP). Foods that are whole grain-rich are filled with vitamins, minerals, fiber, and other nutrients that help kids and adults stay healthy.

## How often do I have to serve whole grains in the CACFP?

Each day, at least one of the grain components of a meal or snack must be “whole grain-rich.” Whole grain-rich food items must be offered at least once per day, not once per meal/snack. In the CACFP, whole grain-rich means that at least half the grain ingredients in a food are whole grains, and any remaining grains are enriched grains, bran, or germ. This is required for CACFP child and adult meal patterns only. There is no whole grain-rich requirement for infants.



### If you serve meals and snacks to the same group of children or adults during the day:

- ✓ Serve whole grain-rich items for the grain component at one of the meals or snack each day.

### If you serve meals and snacks to different groups of children or adults during the same day (for example, morning and afternoon sessions):

- ✓ Serve whole grain-rich items for the grain component to one of the groups of children or adults each day.

### If you serve only snacks:

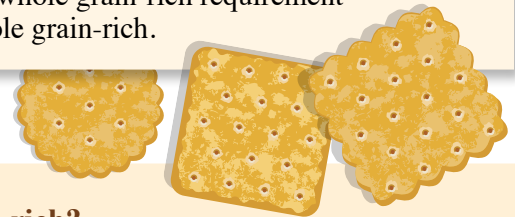
- ✓ You do not have to serve a grain component at snack. But if you do, it must be whole grain-rich.

### If you serve only breakfast and want to serve a meat or meat alternate:

- ✓ You do not need to serve a grain, because you are replacing the grain component with a meat or meat alternate. You may do this up to three times per week. On the days when a meat or meat alternate is not served, you must serve whole grain-rich items for the grain component. If you decide to serve a grain as an “extra” food that does not count toward the CACFP meal pattern requirements, then the grain does not have to be whole grain-rich.

### If your at-risk afterschool site or adult day care serves breakfast, lunch, or supper using Offer Versus Serve:

- ✓ All grain items offered at the meal you wish to count towards the whole grain-rich requirement must be whole grain-rich.



### Can I serve a grain-based dessert if it is whole grain-rich?

- ✗ Grain-based desserts, even those made with whole grains, cannot count towards the grain component of a CACFP meal or snack. There are many other tasty whole grain-rich foods that you can add to your menus.

## What are some ways to serve whole grain-rich foods at meals and snacks?

The requirement is that whole grain-rich food items must be offered at least once per day. But, you may choose to offer whole grain-rich food items more often. Check out these easy ways to serve whole grain-rich foods:

| Breakfast  | Lunch/Supper   | Snacks   |
|--|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Oatmeal*</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Whole Grain-Rich Pancakes or Waffles</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Toast Made with Whole-Wheat Bread</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Whole Grain-Rich English Muffin, Bagel, or Biscuit</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Whole Grain-Rich Muffin</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Whole Grain-Rich Cereal*</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Whole-Wheat Macaroni or Spaghetti</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Brown Rice</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Quinoa</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Bulgur</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Wild Rice</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Whole-Wheat Bun or Roll</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Whole Grain-Rich Pizza Crust</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Whole Grain-Rich Tortilla</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Whole Grain-Rich Crackers</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Whole Grain-Rich Pita Triangles</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Whole Grain-Rich Cereal Mix*</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Whole Grain-Rich Pretzels</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Rice Cakes Made with Brown Rice</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Whole Grain-Rich Banana Bread</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Whole Grain-Rich Chips</li> </ul> |

\*Cereal must meet CACFP sugar limits.

## How can I share information about whole grain-rich foods on my menu?

Some easy ways CACFP providers are highlighting whole grains on their menus include:



Writing “whole wheat” or “WW” in front of an item on the menu, such as “whole-wheat bread” or “WW bread.”



Adding a fun grain icon or picture next to whole grain-rich foods.



Placing a check in a checkbox to show that a food is whole grain-rich.

There are no Federal CACFP requirements that you label which foods are whole grain-rich on your menu. Check with your State agency or sponsoring organization to see what they require. Highlighting whole grain-rich foods on your menu communicates to families how you are providing nutritious foods to their loved ones. Families may see this as a sign of the quality of meals and snacks you are offering.



## Try It Out!

Look at the menus for three CACFP sites below. Which menus meet the CACFP requirement for whole grain-rich?

### Menu 1

Served at a child care center that serves one group of children in the morning and another in the afternoon

**Breakfast:** Chopped strawberries, whole grain-rich waffles, 1% milk

**Lunch:** Baked chicken, 1% milk, broccoli, orange wedges, white rice

**Snack:** Apple slices and string cheese

### Menu 2

Served at an at-risk afterschool center that only serves snack

**Snack:** Enriched pretzels and hummus (bean dip)

**Answer Key:** Menus 1 and 3 meet the CACFP requirement for whole grain-rich. Menu 2 does not meet the CACFP meal pattern requirement for whole grain-rich. Because the center only serves snacks, any grains served at snack must be whole grain-rich. The pretzels in this snack are enriched, not whole grain-rich, so this snack does not meet the requirement.

### Menu 3

Served at an at-risk afterschool center that only serves snack

**Snack:** Celery sticks and sunflower seed butter

