



Food and  
Nutrition  
Service

Park Office  
Center

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DATE: April 17, 2019

MEMO CODE: SP 21-2019, CACFP 08-2019, SFSP 07-2019

SUBJECT: Crediting Shelf-Stable, Dried and Semi-Dried Meat, Poultry, and Seafood Products in the Child Nutrition Programs

TO: Regional Directors  
Special Nutrition Programs  
All Regions

State Directors  
Child Nutrition Programs  
All States

This memorandum is intended to clarify that shelf-stable, dried, and semi-dried meat, poultry, and seafood, such as beef jerky or summer sausage, are now creditable as meat in the Child Nutrition Programs (CNPs). These items were creditable as of December 4, 2018, when the Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) published SP 08-2019, CACFP 02-2019, SFSP 02-2019: *Update of Food Crediting in the Child Nutrition Programs*.

Dried meat products are now allowable for use throughout the CNPs as part of reimbursable meals or snacks at the discretion of the Program operators. FNS expects these products to be most useful in meals served off-site, for example, during school field trips or picnics. However, in order to simplify meal planning for operators, use of the products is not limited to meals and snacks served off-site.

Program operators will follow the crediting principles used for all other products made from meat, poultry, or seafood to credit dried meat, poultry, and seafood products. For specific crediting guidance, please visit the *Manufacturer's Product Formulation Statement* section of the Child Nutrition (CN) Labeling Program website at <https://www.fns.usda.gov/cnlabeling/food-manufacturersindustry>. Dried meat, poultry, or seafood products are not included in the *Food Buying Guide for CNPs* because industry production standards for these products vary widely. *Product Formulation Statements* (PFSs) or products labeled under the CN Labeling Program are the two acceptable formats for documenting meal contributions from dried meat, poultry, and seafood products.

When a PFS is provided for a dried meat product, it should be evaluated to ensure the following crediting principles are followed:

- The creditable meat ingredient listed on the PFS must match or have a similar description as the ingredient listed on the product label (e.g., Ground Beef, Not More Than 30% Fat or Beef Round Roast);

- The creditable meat ingredient listed on the PFS must have a similar description to a food item in the *Food Buying Guide for CNPs*; and
- The creditable amount cannot exceed the finished weight of the product.

FNS remains committed to simplifying the menu planning process for all CNP operators, promoting the efficient use of Program funds, and ensuring Program operators and participants have a wide variety of nutritious food choices. We recognize that crediting decisions have an impact on schools, child care centers, adult day care centers, day care homes, the food industry, and most importantly, participating children and adults. The agency is committed to staying up to date with the evolving food and nutrition environment through continued engagement with a variety of stakeholders. Through these efforts, FNS will work to maximize the availability of wholesome food options while minimizing administrative burden in the CNPs.

State agencies are reminded to distribute this memorandum to Program operators. Program operators should direct any questions concerning this guidance to their State agency. State agencies with questions should contact the appropriate FNS Regional Office.

**Original Signed**

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Policy and Program Development Division