

A School Food Service Professional's Guide to Standardizing Recipes

A standardized recipe is one that has been tried, tested, evaluated and adapted for use by a specific food service operation. It produces a consistent quality and yield each time when the exact procedures, equipment and ingredients are used.

Recipe Standardization Steps

1. Prepare the menu item using the quantity recipe that you have selected to standardize. Test the recipe, adjusting until a high- quality product is produced that is acceptable to students. This step should include taste testing by students to judge the appearance, texture, flavor, and overall acceptability of the product. In addition, evaluate ease of preparation and time commitment to prepare the recipe.
2. Determine the portion size if it is not indicated on the quantity recipe or if you wish to change the portion size. Refer to the **Helpful Hints** box for help with this step.
3. Determine how one portion credits toward the meal pattern. If the result is not desirable, adjust the recipe or portion size as needed to increase or decrease the crediting per portion.
4. Determine if portion size will vary by grade groups and do necessary computations to determine the number of portions in the recipe for the different portion sizes.
5. Retest the recipe after making changes to verify that a high-quality outcome is still produced.
6. Develop a written recipe that includes:
 - a. Name of recipe (reflects contents and appeals to customers).
 - b. Number/Category/M meal Type for easy reference.
 - c. Exact ingredients by form (canned, frozen, dehydrated) and any pre-preparation steps needed (diced, chopped, grated).
 - d. Detailed step-by-step procedures for preparation, cooking and serving. Include all steps for assembling ingredients.
 - e. Cooking temperatures, cook time, and holding temperatures.
 - f. Portion sizes(s) for single serving.
 - g. Total recipe yield (measured or weighed), pans size, number of pans (if more than one), weight or measure in a pan.
 - h. Equipment and specific serving utensil(s).

Important Considerations for Meal Pattern

1. Meal pattern contribution per portion. A Recipe Crediting Tool is available at <https://foodbuyingguide.fns.usda.gov/Raw/Edit/0>
2. Portion size variations by grade group.
3. Vegetable Subgroup contributions.
4. Nutrient analysis for total calories, saturated calories, and sodium.

Other Considerations

1. Recipe variations, alternative ingredients, optional ingredients which will not alter yield, meal pattern crediting, and/or nutrient content. If changes will alter the yield, crediting, or nutrient content, or if different procedures or equipment are used, test and re-standardize the recipe.
2. Food safety job aids that designate if recipe is categorized as Process 1 (no cook), Process 2 (heated and served the same day) or Process 3 (includes a cooling stage).
3. Special diet information (allergens, gluten-free, etc.).

Helpful Hints

1. When portion size is not known, measure the volume in gallons, convert gallons to cups and divide by number of expected servings. Remember: 1 gallon = 16 cups Example: 4 gallons $\times$ 16 cups/gallon = 64 cups $\div$ 125 servings = 0.51 cups per serving = $\frac{1}{2}$ cup per serving
2. Consider adjustments to the recipe if the original recipe no longer fits the operation. For example, a recipe developed when participation was at 300 is not appropriate if you now serve an average of 150 customers. Re-size the recipe if there are significant leftovers after meal service.