

Child Nutrition Programs Regulations. Issued April 2, 2024. The rule, for the first time, establishes added sugar limits in school lunch and breakfast programs, including proposed limits for breakfast cereals, yogurt, and flavored milk and a limit on weekly calories from added sugars. Beginning on July 1, 2025, breakfast cereals served in school lunch and breakfast programs will be limited to no more than 6 grams of added sugars per dry ounce; yogurt may have no more than 2 grams of added sugars per ounce; and flavored milk may have no more than 10 grams of added sugars per ounce. In addition, starting on July 1, 2027, added sugars must be less than 10% of calories across the week in school lunch and breakfast programs.

The rule also implements a single sodium reduction in school lunch and breakfast programs. Beginning on July 1, 2027, schools must scale back sodium in lunches by 15% from current limits, and by 10% sodium in breakfast meals. The USDA said it is allowing current sodium standards to remain for the next three years to give schools and manufacturers time to adapt.

The rule maintains the current whole grains requirement that at least 48% of the weekly grains offered in the school lunch and breakfast programs are whole grain. The rule adds to the current definition of whole grain: “the grain content of a product is between 50% and 100% whole grain with any remaining grains being enriched.”

Additional changes that will be implemented over the next years include making it easier for schools to accommodate vegetarian diets, the cultural and religious food preferences of students, and to offer healthier proteins at breakfast. Schools will have the ability to phase changes, allowing schools to update their menus gradually.

Nearly 30 million children receive breakfasts and lunches at school every school day. While purchasing high quality foods is expensive, the USDA expects the new rules will result in a 12% increase over the next 10 year.

¹ While the rule takes effect July 1, 2024, the USDA is gradually phasing in required changes over time. Program operators are not required to make any changes to their menus until school year 2025-2026 at the earliest.

U.S. Department of Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Service

7 C.F.R. PARTS 210, 215, 220, 225, 226 Child Nutrition Programs: Meal
Patterns Consistent With the 2020-2025 Dietary Guidelines for Americans
(released April 25, 2024, effective July 2024)

Authority: 42 U.S.C. 1752, 1758(a)(1)(B), 1758(k)(1)(B), 1758(f)(1)(A), and
1758(a)(4)(B).

[Final rule](#)

[Summary of provisions](#)