Offering Meats and Meat Alternates at School Breakfast

Grades Kindergarten Through 12 (K-12)

POWER BREAKFAS







Milk

FNS-896 August 2021

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Meats and meat alternates can be healthy and delicious options at school breakfast. Meats and meat alternates in the school meals programs include beef, pork, poultry, seafood, eggs, cheese, yogurt, beans, peas, lentils, tofu, tempeh, nuts, and seeds. As a program operator, you may choose to offer meats and meat alternates at school breakfast!

Why do some schools choose to offer meats and meat alternates at school breakfast?

- Meats and meat alternates are popular menu options among students.
- Meats and meat alternates provide protein, a nutrient that is an important part of a healthy eating pattern.
- Some meats and meat alternates also provide B vitamins, iron, zinc, and other nutrients.

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What are some easy meal patterns to follow?

The school breakfast meal pattern provides you with the flexibility to offer meats and meat alternates at breakfast in combination with grains.¹ There is no limit on the number of times you may offer meats and meat alternates at breakfast during the week.

¹Information about COVID-19 meal pattern waivers (School Year 2021-2022) and proposed rules related to the School Breakfast Meal pattern are available on the Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) website: <u>https://www.fns.usda.gov/sbp/school-breakfast-program</u>. FNS is still considering public comments received in response to the proposed rule on Simplifying Meal Service and Monitoring Requirements in the NSLP and SBP (85 FR 4094).

School Breakfast Meal Pattern for K-12			
Meal Component	Amount		
Grains	1 oz eq daily and 7-10 oz eq weekly Meats and/or meat alternates may credit toward part of the grains requirement at breakfast. At least 1 oz eq of grains must be offered each day.		
Fruits and/or Vegetables ²	1 cup daily and 5 cups weekly		
Milk ³	1 cup daily and 5 cups weekly		



oz eq = ounce equivalent(s)

²Due to the coronavirus pandemic, for School Year 2021-2022, vegetables from any subgroup may be offered in place of fruit during breakfast by SFAs that have received State agency approval under COVID–19: Child Nutrition Response #90, Nationwide Waiver to Allow Specific School Meal Pattern Flexibility for School Year 2021-2022. Additionally, under the 2021 Consolidated Appropriations Act (Section 743), no Federal funds may be used to limit the substitution of vegetables for fruits under the School Breakfast Program through School Year 2021-2022.

³Due to the coronavirus pandemic, for School Year 2021-2022, flavored low-fat milk may be served as part of a reimbursable school meal by SFAs that have received State agency approval under COVID–19: Child Nutrition Response #90, Nationwide Waiver to Allow Specific School Meal Pattern Flexibility for School Year 2021-2022. Additionally, under the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2021, no Federal funds may be used to restrict the offering of flavored low-fat milk in the NSLP or SBP through September 30, 2021.

Sample School Breakfast Meals Featuring Meats and Meat Alternates for Grades K-12

Sample Meal 1: Co	mbination	Sample Meal 2: 0	ombination
Meal Component	Amount	Meal Component	Amount
Meats and Meat Alternates	1 oz eq	Meats and Meat Alternates	½ oz eq
Grains	1 oz eq	Grains	1½ oz eq
Fruits and/or Vegetables	1 cup	C Fruits and/or Vegetables	1 cup
E Milk	1 cup	E Milk	1 cup



Meal components are groups of foods in a reimbursable school breakfast. Meal components shown in these sample meals include milk, vegetables, fruits, grains, and meats and meat alternates. Meats and meat alternates are not a required meal component at school breakfast. However, schools can choose to offer them to meet the weekly required amount of grains, after the minimum daily 1 oz eq grains is met.



School breakfast menus must meet <u>weekly</u> dietary specifications for **calories**, **saturated fat**, and **sodium**.



Check the nutrition information for the foods you plan to offer as part of school breakfast. Work with vendors to purchase meats and meat alternates that are lower in saturated fat and sodium.



To keep school breakfast menus within the weekly calorie ranges, offer items that are lower in added sugars. For example, compare yogurt types and brands to find options that are lower in added sugars.



Plan weekly menus to balance breakfast menu items that are higher in saturated fat, sodium, and added sugars with options that are lower in these nutrients.



Offer a variety of meats and meat alternates over the course of the week. See the sample menus on pages 8 and 9 for ideas.

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Checking the Nutrition Information of Breakfast Items

Use the Nutrition Facts label to compare the saturated fat, added sugars, and sodium in packaged meats and meat alternates. Choosing products that are lower in these nutrients can help you provide healthier breakfasts for students.

Brand A Low-Sodium Ham, Cooked, Sliced

Nutrition Fa	cts
12 servings per container	
Serving size 1¼ o	z (34g)
Amount per serving Calories	37
% Dai	ly Value*
Total Fat 1g	1%
Saturated Fat > 0.5g	0%
<i>Trans</i> Fat 0g	
Cholesterol 18mg	7%
Sodium 290mg	13%
Total Carbohydrate 1g	0%
Dietary Fiber 0g	0%
Total Sugars 1g	
Includes 1g Added Sugars	
	8%

→ Compare



Brand B Ham,

% Dai	ly Value*
Total Fat 2g	2%
Saturated Fat 1g	0%
Trans Fat 0g	
Cholesterol 18mg	6%
Sodium 450mg	20%
Total Carbohydrate 1g	0%
Dietary Fiber 0g	0%
Total Sugars 1g	
Includes 1g Added Sugars	
Protein 6g	8%

Brand A High Protein, Non-Fat Yogurt, Strawberry 4 oz

Nutrition Fa	
Serving size 4 o	oz (113g)
Amount per serving Calories	100
%	Daily Value*
Total Fat Og	0%
Saturated Fat 0g	0%
Trans Fat 0g	
Cholesterol 6mg	2%
Sodium 45mg	2%
Total Carbohydrate 16g	5%
Dietary Fiber 0g	0%
Total Sugars 13g	
Includes 8g Added Sugars	S
Protein 9g	18%

Brand B High Protein, Non-Fat Yogurt, Strawberry 4 oz

Nutrition 1 serving per contain Serving size	
Amount per serving Calories	100
	% Daily Value ³
Total Fat Og	0%
Saturated Fat 0g	0%
Trans Fat 0g	
Cholesterol 8mg	1%
Sodium 45mg	2%
Total Carbohydrate	15g 6%
Dietary Fiber 0g	0%
Total Sugars 14g	
Includes 10g Adde	d Sugars

Compare

What meats and meat alternates are creditable at breakfast?

See the chart below for examples of meats and meat alternates that can be offered at breakfast.

Creditable means how a food counts toward the required meal component for reimbursement. For example, ½ cup of yogurt credits as 1-ounce equivalent meat alternate.

Creditable Meats and Meat Alternates				
Meats and Meat Alternates	½ ounce equivalent =	1 ounce equivalent =		
Beans, cooked (black beans, pinto beans, kidney beans, refried beans, etc.)	% cup	¼ cup		
Beef, ground, cooked (no more than 30 percent fat)	½ ounce	1 ounce		
Canadian bacon, cooked	½ ounce	1 ounce		
Cheese, natural or processed (mozzarella, American, cheddar, etc.)	½ ounce	1 ounce		
Chicken, cooked, breaded patty or tender	Creditable with a Child Nutrition (CN) label or Product Formulation Statement (PFS) signed by the manufacturer.			
Cottage cheese	⅓ cup (1 ounce)	¼ cup (2 ounces)		
Egg	1⁄4 large egg	½ large egg		
Fish (salmon, sardines, etc.), cooked	½ ounce	1 ounce		
Ham, water-added, cooked (97 percent fat-free)	³ ⁄4 ounce	1¼ ounce		
Nut or seed butter (peanut butter, sunflower seed butter, soy nut butter, etc.)	1 tablespoon	2 tablespoons		
Sausage, pork (no binders, cooked, lean meat)	½ ounce	1 ounce		
⁴ Tempeh, commercially prepared	½ ounce	1 ounce		
Tofu, commercially prepared (containing at least 5 g of protein per 2.2 ounce portion)	¼ cup (1.1 ounces)	¼ cup (2.2 ounces)		
Turkey bacon, cooked	Creditable with a CN label or PF	S signed by the manufacturer.		
Turkey, ground, cooked	½ ounce	1 ounce		
Yogurt (regular, Greek, soy, etc.)	¼ cup (2 ounces)	½ cup (4 ounces)		

⁴For tempeh that contains only soybeans (or other beans, peas, or lentils), water, tempeh culture, vinegar, seasonings, and herbs. Tempeh made with other ingredients are creditable with a Child Nutrition (CN) label or a Product Formulation Statement (PFS) signed by the manufacturer.



Learn more about Child Nutrition (CN) labels and Product Formulation Statements (PFS) at **https://www.fns.usda.gov/cn/labeling-program**.

What are some foods that are not creditable at breakfast?

Sometimes, the foods below are misunderstood to be meats or meat alternates. However, these foods are <u>not</u> creditable as meats or meat alternates.



Menu Planner for K-12

Cafeteria Meal Service, Without Offer Versus Serve (OVS)

The menu planner below shows examples of different breakfast menus that meet meal pattern requirements. Some food items on the menu provide more than 2 oz eq of grains and meats or meat alternates. This means that more than 2 oz eq of grains, meats, or meat alternates are offered at breakfast on some days, and more than 10 oz eq of grains, meats, or meat alternates are offered over the week. This "extra" food counts toward weekly dietary specifications.

Meal Component	Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Day 4	Day 5
Grains	Cheese Grits (WG) (1 cup cooked grits = 2 oz eq grains, of which 1 oz eq is considered "extra")	Ham and Cheese Sandwich (WG) (2 slices bread = 2 oz eq grains, of which 1 oz eq is considered "extra")	Toast (WG) (1 slice bread = 1 oz eq grains)	Muffin (WG) (1 oz eq grains)	Pancake (WG) (1 oz eq grains)
Meats and Meat Alternates	Cheese Grits (WG) (¹ / ₈ cup cheese = 1 oz eq meat alternates)	Ham and Cheese Sandwich (WG) (1 slice ham = ½ oz eq meats and 1 slice cheese = ½ oz eq meat alternates)	Scrambled Eggs (¼ cup = 2 oz eq meat alternates, of which 1 oz eq is considered "extra")	Strawberries with Yogurt Smoothie (8 fl oz smoothie made with ½ cup of yogurt = 1 oz eq meat alternates)	Turkey Sausage* (1 oz eq meats)
Fruits and/or Vegetables	Cantaloupe (½ cup) Raisins (¼ cup credits as ½ cup fruits)	Orange Wedges (½ cup) Applesauce (½ cup)	100% Fruit Juice (½ cup) Black Bean Salsa (½ cup)	Strawberries with Yogurt Smoothie (8 fl oz smoothie made with ½ cup strawberry puree = ½ cup fruits) Apple Slices (½ cup)	Grapes (½ cup) Oven-Baked Sweet Potato Fries (½ cup)
Milk	Choice of Milk (1 cup)	Choice of Milk (1 cup)	Choice of Milk (1 cup)	Choice of Milk (1 cup)	Choice of Milk (1 cup)
low-fat (1%)	Choice of Milk: low-fat (1%) milk fat-free (skim) milk WG = whole grain-rich oz eq = ounce equivalent				

*Remember, crediting of some processed food products may vary. Verify the crediting of foods you wish to include on your menus by using the Food Buying Guide, a standardized recipe, CN label, or PFS.

Menu Planner for K-12

Classroom Friendly, Without Offer Versus Serve (OVS)

The menu planner below shows examples of different breakfast menus that can be offered in different environments such as breakfast-in-the-classroom. Some food items on the menu provide more than 2 oz eq of grains and meats or meat alternates. This means that more than 2 oz eq of grains, meats, or meat alternates are offered at breakfast on some days, and more than 10 oz eq of grains, meats, or meat alternates are offered over the week. This "extra" food counts toward weekly dietary specifications.

Meal Component	Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Day 4	Day 5
Grains	Muffin (WG) (1 oz eq grains)	Granola (WG) (¼ cup = 1 oz eq grains)	Graham Cracker Seed Butter Sandwich (WG) (2 graham crackers = 1 oz eq grains)	Ready-To-Eat Cereal (1 cup = 1 oz eq grains)	Chicken Slider (WG) (1 bun and breading on chicken = 1½ oz eq grains, of which ½ oz eq is considered "extra")
Meats and Meat Alternates	Hard-Boiled Egg (1 large egg = 2 oz eq meat alternates, of which 1 oz eq is considered "extra")	Yogurt (½ cup = 1 oz eq meat alternates)	Graham Crackers with Sunflower Seed Butter (WG) (2 tablespoons of sunflower seed butter = 1 oz eq meat alternates)	Cheese Stick (1 oz eq meat alternates)	Chicken Slider (WG)* (1 baked and breaded chicken patty = 1 oz eq meats)
Fruits and/or Vegetables	100% Fruit Juice (½ cup) Apple Slices (½ cup)	Mixed Berries (1 cup)	Pear (½ cup) Peaches (½ cup)	Mandarin Oranges (½ cup) Fruit Cocktail (½ cup)	Grapes (½ cup) 100% Fruit Juice (½ cup)
Milk	Choice of Milk (1 cup)	Choice of Milk (1 cup)	Choice of Milk (1 cup)	Choice of Milk (1 cup)	Choice of Milk (1 cup)
low-fat (1%	Choice of Milk: low-fat (1%) milk fat-free (skim) milk WG = whole grain-rich oz eq = ounce equivalent				unce equivalent

*Remember, crediting of some processed food products may vary. Verify the crediting of foods you wish to include on your menus by using the Food Buying Guide, a standardized recipe, CN label, or PFS.

Meats and Meat Alternates at Breakfast Using Offer Versus Serve Meal Service

When using Offer Versus Serve meal service at breakfast, you must offer three meal components and four food items.

Meal components are groups of foods in a reimbursable meal. The <u>three</u> required meal components to offer at breakfast are:





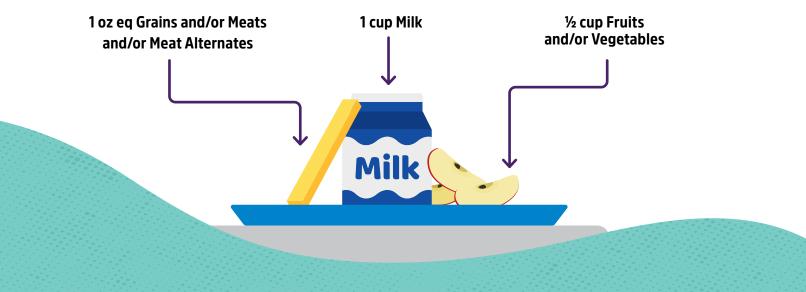


Food items are foods that are part of a meal component. For example, an egg is a food item that is a meat alternate, which can contribute toward the grains requirement at breakfast.

Offer at least <u>four</u> food items in the minimum required amount from the three required meal components (milk, fruits and/ or vegetables, and grains). For example, this menu offers five food items from the three required meal components.



Students **must take** at least <u>three</u> food items (including at least ½ cup of fruit and/or vegetable) for the meal to be reimbursable. For example, the student could select a reimbursable meal of ½ cup apples, 1 oz eq cheese stick, and 1 cup of milk. The student could select other reimbursable meals from the same menu as well.



Can a food count as more than one food item?

In some cases, foods may count as more than one food item at breakfast. Here are some examples:

How this Food May Count Example Food

The food has 2 oz eq grains

Example: Large Muffin (4 oz = 2 oz eq)

You may decide that this 2 oz eg muffin counts as two food items. This muffin contains two servings, each of which are 1 oz eg grains.

as Two Food Items

The food has 2 oz eg grains (or meats and/or meat alternates)

Example: Egg Sandwich (1 oz eq bread + 1 oz eq eqg)

The food has $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of fruits or vegetables and at least 1 oz eg of grains (or meats and/or meat alternates)

> Example: **Blueberries and Yogurt Smoothie** $(\frac{1}{2} \text{ cup fruit and } 1 \text{ oz eq yoqurt})$

You may decide that this sandwich is two food items. This sandwich contains one serving of 1 oz eg grains and one serving of 1 oz eg meat alternates, which counts toward the grains requirement.

You may decide that this smoothie is two food items. This smoothie contains one serving of $\frac{1}{2}$ cup fruits and one serving of 1 oz eg meat alternates, which counts toward the grains requirement.

In the examples above, it is up to you to determine if the food item (e.g., the egg sandwich) will count as one or two food item(s) at the meal. You must ensure that staff and students understand what food items need to be selected to create a reimbursable school breakfast. You can provide training for teachers and school nutrition staff and post signs for students so everyone knows what combination of foods may be selected.

Help students to quickly select the foods in the breakfast line that make up a reimbursable meal with these OVS posters at: https://www.fns.usda.gov/tn/offer-versusserve-national-school-lunch-program-posters.



Sample Breakfast Menus

Below are some examples of how to offer meats and meat alternates under OVS meal service:

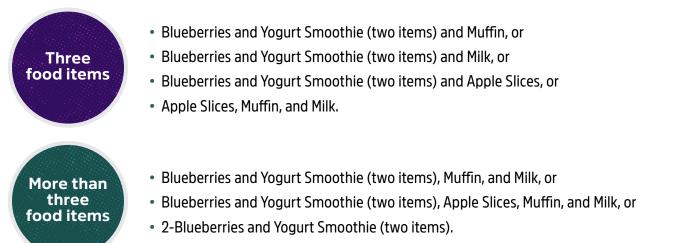
Sample Breakfast Menu 1: Offer Versus Serve Breakfast Menu for K-12 in the Classroom (offering at least <u>four</u> food items from the <u>three</u> meal components).

Students: Choose the smoothie and one other food item. **OR** Choose the apple slices and two other food items.



Reimbursable Student Selections

A few examples of reimbursable meals the student could select include (there are other OVS combinations possible):



The students **must take** ½ cup of fruit. In this example, they can choose either the smoothie or the apple slices to meet the requirement.



Can students choose two of the same food item (such as two cheese sticks) with a ½ cup of fruit and/ or vegetable and have a reimbursable breakfast under OVS? Yes, but program operators can encourage students to choose a variety of foods at breakfast through nutrition education.

Remember, students must select <u>at least three</u> food items including a half cup of fruits or vegetables.

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Sample Breakfast Menu 2: Breakfast Menu for K-12 in the Cafeteria (offering at least four food items from the three meal components).

Choose one:



Reimbursable Student Selections

In the example above, the program operator has determined that the orange wedges and egg sandwich each count as two food items. A few examples of reimbursable meals the student could select include (there are other OVS combinations possible):

- Orange Wedges (two items) and Egg Sandwich (two items), or
- Orange Wedges (two items), Egg Sandwich (two items), and Milk, or
- Orange Wedges (two items), Egg Sandwich (two items), Cereal, and Milk.

In this example, the students do not have the option to choose between two fruits, so they **must** take the orange wedges. Since the orange wedges count as two food items, the student must choose at least one additional item from the menu.

Learn more about the Offer Versus Serve Guidance for the National School Lunch Program and the School Breakfast Program at: https://www.fns.usda.gov/ updated-offer-vs-serve-guidance-nslp-and-sbp-beginning-sy2015-16.



School Spotlights: Offering Meats and Meat Alternates at School Breakfast



Breakfast in the Classroom

Meats or meat alternates are served in the classroom 4 out of 5 days a week in **Greeley-Evans Weld County School District** in **Colorado**. Cheese, yogurt, breakfast sandwiches (turkey ham and cheese), and an egg and cheese breakfast boat are the main offerings. The cheese and the yogurt credit as 1 oz eq of meat alternates and, on average, the sandwiches credit 1½ oz eq meats and meat alternates, and 1½ oz eq grains. Each breakfast boat credits as 1 oz eq meat alternates and 1½ oz eq grains. The egg and cheese breakfast boats come individually wrapped and are warmed to serve in the classroom.



Three in One, To-Go!

A fruit, granola, and yogurt parfait is a popular grab-and-go item at breakfast. Staff from **New Hampshire's Oyster River School District** make a compote out of USDA Foods blueberries for use in the parfaits. This yogurt parfait credits as 1 oz eq meat alternates, 1 oz eq grains, and ½ cup fruits.

Looking for breakfast recipes? Find USDA's standardized recipes at the Institute for Child Nutrition's Child Nutrition Recipe Box: https://theicn.org/cnrb/recipes-for-schools.





School Spotlights: Offering Meats and Meat Alternates at School Breakfast (continued)



Sandwiches are Breakfast Favorites

One of the most popular breakfast items at Prince William County Public

• Schools in Virginia is a baked chicken slider on a whole grain-rich bun, crediting as 1 oz eq meats and 1½ oz eq grains. A small peanut butter and jelly sandwich, which credits as 1 oz eq meat alternates and 1 oz eq grains, is part of a popular second-chance breakfast at Hutchinson Public Schools in Kansas.



Making Breakfast Fresh and Local

The most popular breakfast item in Colorado's Greeley-Evans Weld County
 School District is a breakfast burrito made with scrambled eggs, cheese, local potatoes, green chilies, and tortillas. This breakfast burrito credits as 1½ oz eq meat alternates and 2 oz eq grains. The District prepares the burritos in a central kitchen and individual schools reheat and serve them.



Eggs Your Way!

Eggs are popular at breakfast and pair well with a grain. **New Hampshire's Oyster River School District** serves over 100 omelets to high school and middle school students once a week. Students use an order form to request a customized omelet with vegetable options that include bell peppers, mushrooms, spinach, broccoli, and onions. Each omelet has two eggs and one cheese, which credits as 5 oz eq meat alternates. To serve the omelets quickly, school nutrition staff use multiple burners: two for cooking omelets and additional burners for sautéing vegetables. **School District of Superior** in **Wisconsin** offers hard-boiled eggs to students because they are popular, inexpensive, and do not require much staff time to prepare. This hard-boiled egg credits as 2 oz eq meat alternates.

What are some budget-friendly ways to include meats and meat alternates on the breakfast menu?



Use USDA Foods

Each State receives a specific value of USDA Foods (also known as entitlement) to provide to schools. Schools can use their USDA Foods entitlement to purchase items for breakfast or lunch. USDA Foods provides a variety of high quality, domestically produced meats and meat alternates that can be offered for breakfast, including yogurt, cheese, peanut butter, sunflower seed butter, eggs, ham, and turkey. The full list of foods is available online at <u>https://www.fns.usda.gov/usda-fis/usda-foods-available</u>. Contact your State agency for more information on how to work with processors to turn USDA Foods (such as eggs) into breakfast items such as cheese omelets.

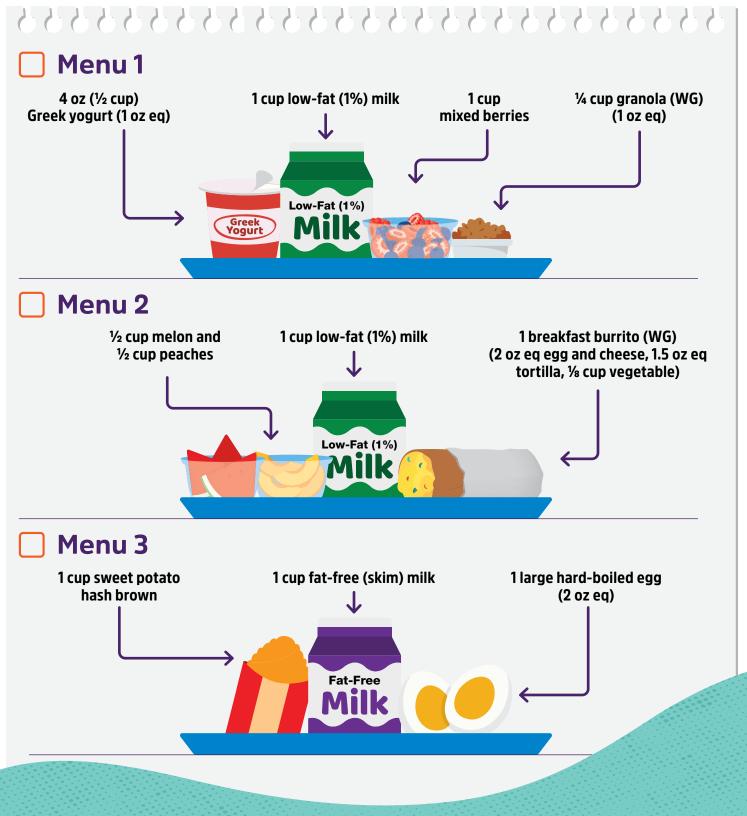
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Work with Local Meat Vendors

Try buying local meats in bulk or speaking with your distributor or processor about packaging options to lower costs. You may also consider using different cuts of meat to save money. For more information, refer to the *Local Meats in Schools: Increasing Opportunities for Small and Mid-Sized Livestock Ranchers and Fisherman* fact sheet (https://www.fns.usda.gov/cfs/local-meat-schools).

Give It a Try!

Which of the following menus are reimbursable breakfasts for K-12 (without Offer Versus Serve)?



Menus 1 and 2 include all required meal components in the correct amounts. Menu 3 is missing a grain term to meet the grains requirement. All breakfast menus must offer 1 oz eg grains daily.

For more training, menu planning, and nutrition education materials for the National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program go to **TeamNutrition.USDA.gov**.

