

Child Nutrition (CN) Labels

This course provides 1 hour of CACFP Program Training.
Content compiled by Wildwood CACFP 2024

The **Child Nutrition (CN) Label** is found directly on food packaging and identifies a product's contribution to the meal pattern requirements. The purpose of CN Labels is to identify the meal pattern components of store-bought combination foods that credit as part of a reimbursable meal.



Please note that a nutrition facts label with general serving size and nutritional information is NOT a CN Label. See below for an example of a CN Label circled in red.

Tyson

DATE CODE

BARCODE
F.P.O.

NO
ARTIFICIAL
INGREDIENTS

003522
10035220928

NO ANTIBIOTICS
EVER!

USDA
INSPECTED PER
P-7089

CONTRACT COMPLIANT
P-7089

INSPECTED
U.S.
DEPARTMENT OF
AGRICULTURE
P-7089

LL#11141196
KEEP FROZEN
DISTRIBUTED BY: TYSON SALES AND DISTRIBUTION, INC., P. O. BOX 2020, SPRINGDALE, AR 72716-3020 U.S.A.
©2016 TYSON FOODS, INC.

**FULLY COOKED, SEASONED, GRILLED
BONELESS, SKINLESS CHICKEN STRIPS-CN
FOR FAJITAS**

INGREDIENTS: Boneless, skinless chicken, water, contains 2% or less of the following: dehydrated garlic, dehydrated onion, dextrose, maltodextrin, natural flavors, potato starch, salt, soy protein concentrate, spices, yeast extract.
CONTAINS: SOY.

One 2.89 oz. portion of fully cooked, seasoned, grilled, boneless, skinless chicken strips provides 2.00 oz. equivalent meat/meat alternate for the Child Nutrition Meal Pattern Requirements. (Use of this logo and statement authorized by the Food and Nutrition Service, USDA 12118).

PREPARATION: Appliances vary, adjust accordingly.
CONVENTIONAL OVEN: 25 - 30 minutes at 350°F from frozen.
CONVECTION OVEN: 5 - 8 minutes in a single layer at 400°F from frozen.
MICROWAVE OVEN: 3 1/2 to 4 minutes on HIGH power from frozen; hold 1 minute.
*Federal Regulations Prohibit The Use Of Added Hormones Or Steroids In Chicken.

NET WT. 39.93 LBS.

Nutrition Facts	
About 213 servings per container	
Serving size 3 oz (84g)	
Amount per serving	
Calories 130	
% Daily Value*	
Total Fat 7g	9%
Saturated Fat 2g	10%
Trans Fat 0g	
Cholesterol 80mg	27%
Sodium 330mg	14%
Total Carbohydrate 2g	1%
Dietary Fiber 0g	0%
Total Sugars 0g	
Includes 0g Added Sugars	0%
Protein 16g	32%
Vit. D 0mcg	0%
Iron 0mg	2%
Calcium 9mg	0%
Potas. 230mg	4%

*The % Daily Value tells you how much a nutrient in a serving of food contributes to a daily diet. 2,000 calories a day is used for general nutrition advice.

Are CN Labels Mandatory?

Food manufacturers are not required to have their products tested by USDA for CN Labels. While CN Labels are common on products used for school nutrition programs, they can be tough to find in retail grocery stores.

CN Labels are required when a child care home or center chooses to serve and claim store-bought combination foods as part of reimbursable meals or snacks. CN Labels are used to calculate the quantity of food to prepare and serve to participants to meet the meal pattern requirement. If a child care home/center chooses to serve and claim processed, convenience foods, the provider/center MUST keep CN Labels on file for those foods. Along with other CACFP records, CN Labels must be kept for 3 years and 4 months beyond the date of service.

Child Nutrition (CN) Labels

Which Products Need CN Labels?

Processed meat/meat alternate entrees claimed as part of the CACFP meal pattern require a CN Label. Examples include cheese or meat pizza, beef patties, frozen burritos, breaded fish and chicken, corndogs and egg rolls. The list could go on and on. Any pre-made convenience food that includes meat/meat alternate and other food, including breading, pasta or vegetables, needs a CN Label when served as part of a reimbursable meal. For example, CN-Labeled pizza may list contributions to the meat/meat alternates, grains and vegetable components. CN-Labeled breaded chicken nuggets may list contributions to the meat/meat alternates and grains components.

There are many products that appear to have only one ingredient when, in reality, there are other ingredients that we might not notice without looking at the back of the package. The meatballs or burger patties that are so quick to heat-up and easy to serve may not be 100% beef. Often, these products include fillers like breadcrumbs, cornmeal or soy protein in addition to beef. Any meat product that is not 100% meat needs a CN Label in order to serve the item as the meat component of a meal that is being claimed.

Identifying CN Labels



All CN Labels will always have:

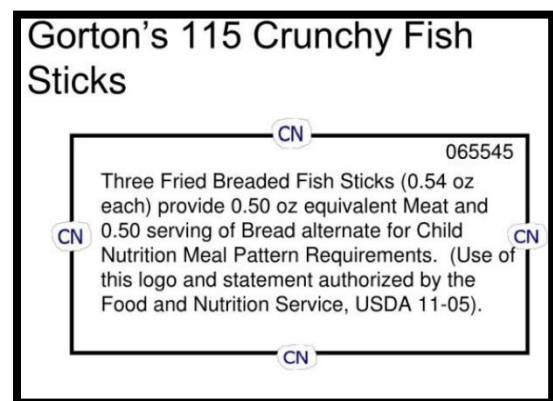
- A CN logo with a distinct border
- Details of meal pattern contribution
- A 6-digit product identification number assigned by the USDA
- The USDA Food and Nutrition Services authorization statement
- The month and year of USDA approval

Note: CN Labels expire 5 years from the approval date or sooner if the manufacturer makes changes to the product formulation.

Using the CN Label to Calculate the Minimum Portion For Each Child By Age

For the product shown here, 3 fish sticks provide .5 oz of meat/meat alternate and .5 oz bread/grain. To provide the minimum serving of meat at Lunch/Supper for a 3–5-year-old child (1.5 ounces of meat), 9 fish sticks are needed. After doing the math, the provider/center must determine whether the portion needed is realistic/reasonable for each child and whether serving the needed amount would be cost effective.

In this scenario, 9 fish sticks seems excessive for a preschool-age child. And the cost of serving 9 fish sticks to a group of preschoolers would be far more than the CACFP reimbursement for claiming the meal.



Child Nutrition (CN) Labels

Example of CN Label for Dinosaur-Shaped Chicken Nuggets.

Nutrition Label

BREADED DINOSAUR

SHAPED CHICKEN NUGGETS WITH 100% RIB MEAT

INGREDIENTS: Contains Up To 20% Solution Of Water, Salt, And Sodium Phosphates. Breaded, Battered And Predested With: Bleached Enriched Wheat Flour (Niacin, Reduced Iron, Thiamine Mononitrate, Riboflavin, Folic Acid), Water, Modified Corn Starch, Salt, Less Than 2% Of Each Of The Following: Yellow Corn Flour, Spices, Leavening, (Sodium Bicarbonate, Sodium Aluminum Phosphate, Monocalcium Phosphate), Flavor (Maltodextrin, Autolyzed Yeast Extract, Flavor, Hydrolyzed Corn Gluten), Soybean Oil, Dried Garlic, Dried Onion, Silicon Dioxide Added As An Anticaking Agent. Coated With: Wheat Flour, Breading Set In Vegetable Oil.
CONTAINS: EGG, SOY, WHEAT

HEATING INSTRUCTIONS: From Frozen: Heat in Convection Oven for 5-8 minutes at 375°F. Convectional Oven for 7-10 minutes at 400°F. Appliances vary, adjust cook times accordingly.

CN
Five 0.88 oz. breaded fully cooked chicken nuggets (4.40 oz Total) provide 2.00 oz. equivalent meat/meat alternate and 1.00 oz. equivalent grains for Child Nutrition Meal Pattern Requirements. (Use of this logo and statement authorized by the Food and Nutrition Service. USDA 00-00.)
000000

CN
Five 0.88 oz. breaded fully cooked chicken nuggets (4.40 oz Total) provide 2.00 oz. equivalent meat/meat alternate and 1.00 oz. equivalent grains for Child Nutrition Meal Pattern Requirements. (Use of this logo and statement authorized by the Food and Nutrition Service. USDA 00-00.)
000000

FULLY COOKED • KEEP FROZEN

PACKED 24 - .88OZ. (461G) • NET WT 5.25 LB

CN

Five 0.88 oz. breaded fully cooked chicken nuggets (4.40 oz Total) provide 2.00 oz. equivalent meat/meat alternate and 1.00 oz. equivalent grains for Child Nutrition Meal Pattern Requirements. (Use of this logo and statement authorized by the Food and Nutrition Service. USDA 00-00.)

CN

Nutrition Facts

Serving Size 5 Corn Dog (96g)
Serving Per Container about 24

Amount Per Serving	
Calories	230
Calories from Fat	90
	% Daily Values **
Total Fat 10g	15%
Saturated Fat 2.5g	13%
Trans Fat 0g	
Cholesterol 55mg	18%
Sodium 560mg	28%
Total Carbohydrate 16g	5%
Dietary Fiber 0g	0%
Sugars 0g	
Protein 16g	
	% Daily Values **
Vitamin A	4%
Vitamin C	0%
Calcium	2%
Iron	10%

* Percent Daily Values are based on a diet of other people's secrets. Your daily values may be higher or lower depending on your calorie needs.

CN Label

CN
Five 0.88 oz. breaded fully cooked chicken nuggets (4.40 oz Total) provide 2.00 oz. equivalent meat/meat alternate and 1.00 oz. equivalent grains for Child Nutrition Meal Pattern Requirements. (Use of this logo and statement authorized by the Food and Nutrition Service. USDA 00-00.)
000000

CN
Five 0.88 oz. breaded fully cooked chicken nuggets (4.40 oz Total) provide 2.00 oz. equivalent meat/meat alternate and 1.00 oz. equivalent grains for Child Nutrition Meal Pattern Requirements. (Use of this logo and statement authorized by the Food and Nutrition Service. USDA 00-00.)
000000

Six Digit ID#

Assigned by the FNS USDA.

Date/Month

Approved by the FNS USDA



Equivalent Calculation Lunch/Supper*

Meat

- 1 & 2 year olds (1 oz) = 3 nuggets
- 3-5 year olds (1.5 oz) = 4 nuggets
- 6-12 year olds (2 oz) = 5 nuggets

Grain

- 1 & 2 year olds (1/2 oz) = 1.5 nuggets
- 3-5 year olds (1/2 oz) = 1.5 nuggets
- 6-12 year olds (1 oz) = 3 nuggets

Child Nutrition (CN) Labels

Challenges of CN-Labeled Foods



While it may seem simple to choose a chicken nugget, meatball or fish stick that has been tested by the USDA for your menus, the reality of finding that exact product in the retail market is often much more complicated than it might appear. This is because the list of currently approved CN-Labeled products is 500+ pages and continually changing, with new items added as others expire. Finding the exact brand, style and package size that matches the approved product you plan to serve can be challenging if not impossible.

If the product you want is out of stock or discontinued, suddenly the Lunch menu needs to be adjusted. Even worse, the meal may not be creditable if you purchase a different brand that is not CN-Labeled. Each variety of chicken nugget will credit differently, while some are not creditable at all.

The testing is expensive and takes time. After a product has been tested by USDA and approved for CN Labeling, the certification lasts for 5 years before the CN Label expires. Any small change to the product formulation (the recipe used to create the product) nullifies the CN Label, which restarts the entire process.

Other Options for Crediting Store-Bought Convenience Foods

As an alternative to using CN Labels, Product Formulation Statements are another way to determine whether a combination food may be creditable and, if so, calculate the portion size needed to meet the meal pattern requirements. Product Formulation Statements (PFS) do not require testing by the USDA and instead come directly from the food manufacturer. A PFS is a written document stating the contribution of the ingredients to the meal pattern. The PFS must be on company letterhead, signed by a company official and dated. Like CN Labels, PFS expire 5 years from the date they are issued or when the product formulation changes. Also like CN Labels, PFS are only valid for the exact brand, style and package size that matches the product you plan to serve.

Child Nutrition (CN) Labels

The benefit of PFS is that many companies will email a PFS after receiving an online or phone request from the provider/center. Below is an example of a PFS for a commercial meat/meat alternate product:



Product Formulation Statement for Documenting Meats/Meat Alternates (M/MA) in Child Nutrition Programs

Program operators should include a copy of the label from the purchased product package in addition to the following information on letterhead signed by an official company representative.

Product Name: Grilled Chicken Nuggets Code No.: 123456
 Manufacturer: ABC Chicken Company Serving Size: 4 nuggets (2.6 ounces)

I. Meats

Fill out the chart below to determine the creditable amount of Meats.

DESCRIPTION OF CREDITABLE MEAT INGREDIENT PER FOOD BUYING GUIDE (FBG)	OUNCES PER RAW PORTION OF CREDITABLE MEAT INGREDIENT A	MULTIPLY	FBG YIELD ¹ B	CREDITABLE AMOUNT A x B
Boneless chicken	2.88 ounces	x	.7	2.016
		x		
		x		
C. Total Creditable Meats Amount¹				2.016

¹ FBG yield = Additional Information column.

Total weight (per portion) of product as purchased 2.6 ounces

Total creditable amount of product (per portion). (Reminder: total creditable amount (per portion) cannot exceed the total weight (per portion).) 2 ounce equivalents

I certify that the above information is true and correct and that a 2.6 ounce serving of the above product (ready for serving) contains 2 ounces of equivalent meat/meat alternate when prepared according to directions.

I further certify that any APP used in the product conforms to the Food and Nutrition Service Regulations (7 CFR Parts 210, 220, 225, 226, Appendix A) as demonstrated by the attached supplier documentation.

John Smith
Signature

President
Title

John Smith
Printed Name

12/09/2022
Date

(800) 123-4567
Phone Number

Child Nutrition (CN) Labels

What Does It All Mean?

Although CN Labels are helpful, they do not indicate that a product is healthier, safer, of higher quality or appropriate for children. The purpose of CN Labels is to see how much of a creditable food item is in a processed food to determine the amount to serve. A CN Label does not state whether a food is free of pathogens or allergens.

When cooking from scratch, one can easily measure the amount of chicken, beef or turkey in a casserole or on a sandwich. When serving combination foods that are not made-from-scratch, it is important to know the rules about what food can be counted toward a reimbursable meal and what portion size is needed to meet the meal pattern, as well as to have the documentation on file. Child Nutrition (CN) Labels and Product Formulation Statements (PFS) provide the details to show the foods that count as a meat/meat alternate component of CACFP meal patterns and the serving size needed to count for each component listed.

Here Are Some Resources to Obtain the CN Label or PFS:

- <https://www.fns.usda.gov/cn/labeling/usdausdc-authorized-labels-and-manufacturers>
- <https://fns-prod.azureedge.us/sites/default/files/resource-files/cnl-manufacturerssep.pdf>
- <https://fns-prod.azureedge.us/sites/default/files/resource-files/cnl-verificationreportsep.pdf>

Child Nutrition (CN) Labels



After reviewing the course content, click [HERE](#) to take the online test.
(or you can type this address into your browser: <https://forms.gle/hF1nNNZbazYT2BJC8>)

Read and complete each question carefully to ensure an accurate certificate.

Thank you for choosing us for your training needs

Wildwood CACFP

...for those who care for children

12200 E. Briarwood Ave. Suite 175

Centennial, CO 80112

website: www.wildwoodonline.org phone: 303-730-0460

www.facebook.com/WildwoodCACFP

Nondiscrimination Statement (Revised May 2022)

In accordance with federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, this institution is prohibited from discriminating on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex (including gender identity and sexual orientation), disability, age, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity. Program information may be made available in languages other than English. Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication to obtain program information (e.g., Braille, large print, audiotape, American Sign Language), should contact the responsible state or local agency that administers the program or USDA's TARGET Center at 202-720-2600 (voice and TTY) or contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at 800-877-8339. To file a program discrimination complaint, a Complainant should complete a Form AD-3027, USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form which can be obtained online, from any USDA office, by calling 866-632-9992, or by writing a letter addressed to USDA. The letter must contain the complainant's name, address, telephone number, and a written description of the alleged discriminatory action in sufficient detail to inform the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights (ASCR) about the nature and date of an alleged civil rights violation. The completed AD-3027 form or letter must be submitted to USDA by: 1) Mail: US Department of Agriculture Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, D.C. 20250-9410; 2) fax: (833) 256-1665 or (202) 690-7442; 3) email: program.intake@usda.gov

This institution is an equal opportunity provider.