

CACFP Tuesday Talks: Whole Grain Rich (WGR) Questions and Answers

For more information on how to determine grains as WGR, refer to the [CACFP Reference Guide](#) and the following lessons in the [E-Learning courses](#):

- Child Care Centers, Outside of School Hours, Emergency Shelters, and Head Starts: *CACFP Meal Pattern (1-18 years)*
- Adult Day Care Centers: *CACFP Meal Pattern*
- At-Risk Afterschool Centers: *Meal Service Requirements*

1. Where can we get the updated Reference Guides?

The updated Reference Guide was mailed to each site on the CACFP early April 2021. If you did not receive one, you can reach out to your assigned consultant to request a copy or download and print from this [link](#).

2. Is enriched cornmeal considered an enriched grain or a non-creditable grain?

Enriched cornmeal is an enriched grain. If it just states "cornmeal" it is not whole or enriched.

3. For homemade grain items, do we need to meet the exact amount of whole grain (as gram or ounce) such as breakfast cereal bars?

To count homemade items as WGR, at least half of the grain ingredients must be whole grain and the remaining grain ingredients must be whole grain, enriched grain, bran, or germ. Cereal bars, either store-bought or homemade, are a grain-based dessert and are not creditable in the CACFP. They cannot be served as a component of a meal or snack.

4. For homemade items, if I am using whole wheat flour, does it count as whole grain rich (such as whole wheat pancakes)?

Yes. To count homemade items as WGR, at least half of the grain ingredients must be whole grain, such as whole wheat flour, and the remaining grain ingredients must be whole grain, enriched grain, bran, or germ.

5. Is a cereal labeled "whole wheat farina" NOT a whole grain?

You will need to look at the ingredients list of the cereal. If the first ingredient is whole wheat farina and the cereal is fortified with vitamins and minerals, the cereal is WGR. If the cereal is not fortified, use the Rule of Three to determine if the cereal is WGR. If the first ingredient is whole wheat farina and the second and third grain ingredients, if any, are whole grain, enriched grain, bran or germ, the cereal is WGR.

6. Are there any corn chips that you would use with salsa that are creditable?

Yes. The first ingredient of corn/tortilla chips must be whole corn or enriched corn for a chip to be creditable. However, if you want to count the chip as WGR, the first ingredient must be whole corn, and the second and third grain ingredients, if any, must be whole grain, enriched grain, bran, or germ. Also, if the ingredients statement indicates the corn is treated with lime (for example, "ground corn with trace of lime" or "ground corn treated with lime"), then the corn is nixtamalized and the corn ingredient credits as whole grain rich.

7. How long do product labels need to be kept on file?

All CACFP records, including product labels, must be kept on file for the current Federal Fiscal Year plus the three years prior. The DPI recommends programs keep labels for products you currently use in an easily-accessible binder, and archive labels of products no longer served in a file/folder that is kept on-site.

8. Are there any graham crackers for infants (not with honey) that are within sugar limits?

There is no sugar limit requirement for crackers, including graham crackers.

9. Can something be Whole Grain and Gluten Free?

Yes, there are many whole grains that are gluten free including quinoa, brown rice, wild rice, gluten-free oats, buckwheat, millet, and amaranth.

10. If a grain item, such as crackers, only has one grain ingredient listed, do I still use the Rule of Three?

Yes. The Rule of Three is named that because if there are more than three grain ingredients in a product, you only look at the first three grains. However, if there are less than three grain ingredients in the product, then you only look at the number of grains in that item - whether that be one, two or three grains. So, if there is only one grain in the product, the first ingredient must be a whole grain or flour to count it as a whole grain rich item.

11. If I serve a WGR bread at breakfast but have school agers that only come in the afternoon, do I need to serve them a WGR item too?

No. The requirement is to serve one WGR item over the course of a day at one of the meals or snacks. It is not based on groups or shifts of participants. However, if you only serve one WGR item per day, it is recommended to serve it at different meals or snacks each day so that the different groups of participants get the opportunity to be served a WGR item.

12. Can I serve the same WGR item, such as bread, every day because I know it is WGR?

Just as we recommend serving a variety of other items on the menus, we also recommend serving a variety of whole grains each day. There are many options to choose from, and most products offer a whole grain option. For example, brown rice, wild rice, oatmeal, popcorn, and many cereals are WGR. We also know that crackers such as Wheat Thins, Triscuits, and some fish crackers are WGR. And there are many other items that are WGR like pastas, bagels, English muffins, pancakes, waffles, tortillas, and breadsticks.

13. Can I count an item as WGR if the front of the package says "whole grain" or "whole wheat" such as whole wheat bread?

Today we did not discuss how to determine grains as WGR using the front of the package, but if you look at the [CACFP Reference Guide](#) flowchart on the left, the 2nd blue box explains that you can use the front of the package only for bread, buns, and rolls, and some pastas. If the front of the package says, "whole wheat," "entire wheat," or "graham" for bread, buns, and rolls or "whole wheat" for pasta, then you do not have to use the Rule of Three to determine the item as WGR. However, this is different than the front of the package saying "Whole Grain" or "Made with Whole Grain." These phrases do not mean that the item is WGR. Refer to the E-Learning Course lessons linked at the top of page one for more information.

14. Do all WIC Approved Cereals that meet the sugar limits count as whole grain rich?

No. Not all cereals on the WIC Approved Cereals list are whole grain rich. When reviewing the list of WIC Approved Cereals in the [CACFP Reference Guide](#), the cereals that are WGR are identified with an asterisk (*). Remember, cereals are WGR if the first grain ingredient is a whole grain and the cereal is fortified.

15. Can we prepare 50% whole grain pasta and 50% enriched pasta and have it count as the whole grain rich item for the day?

Yes. This same process may also be used with other grains such as brown rice and enriched rice.

16. How should I document homemade whole grain rich food items?

Homemade items require that you maintain a recipe on file to show how it credits to the CACFP. If making a store-bought item (such as a box mix) keep the product package (including name and ingredients) on file.