



Standardized Recipes

A *standardized recipe* is one that “has been tried, adapted, and retried several times for use by a given foodservice operation and has been found to produce the same good results and yield every time when the exact procedures are used with the same type of equipment and the same quantity and quality of ingredients,” according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA).

A *quantity recipe* is a recipe written to produce large quantities of food, typically 25 servings or more. Quantity recipes are not standardized until they have been adapted for use in an individual foodservice operation.

Local foods can be incorporated into your operation’s standardized recipes. Your standardized recipes should reflect the form in which you receive the produce. Since local produce is often available as a whole product (e.g., a whole butternut squash), your recipes may have to be updated to include steps for peeling, coring, dicing, etc. The [Food Buying Guide](#) is a helpful tool that may be used to determine the yield of edible portion you can expect from a product as purchased.

Standardized recipes produce consistent:

- quality to ensure student satisfaction and expectations,
- crediting and dietary specifications when the same products are used, and the exact measurements are followed,
- yield each time the recipe is produced, and
- planning and purchasing for food cost controls.

When must a recipe be standardized?

When a menu item that contains more than one ingredient or item is created or assembled in-house prior to meal service. Examples: grilled cheese sandwich, chef salad, cheeseburger on a bun.

Standardized Recipe Requirements

- **Recipe name:** Choose a name that reflects the contents of the recipe and will appeal to students.
- **Ingredients:** List in the order added to the recipe and be specific (canned, frozen, fresh, whole, chopped, etc.).



- **Weight or measurement of each ingredient:** Remember that weight and volume are not interchangeable. For more information see the [Weight vs Volume](#) chart.
- **Instructions:** Detailed and step-by-step, based on the kitchen where the recipe is prepared.
- **Serving size:** Based on crediting and the appropriate meal pattern.
- **Recipe yield:** The number of servings that the recipe produces.
- **Total recipe yield by weight and/or volume, number of pans, and pan size:** This information is a good edit check to ensure the recipe is mathematically feasible.

Crediting Standardized Recipes

Crediting a recipe means determining how one serving of the recipe contributes to the meal pattern components. The meal components include grain, meat/meat alternate, fruit, vegetable, and milk. For example, a serving of homemade lasagna may credit as 2 ounce equivalents (oz eq) of M/MA and 2 oz eq of grain. To determine the crediting of a recipe, you must know the yield of the recipe.

Example: Your lasagna recipe contains 150 oz eq of M/MA and 100 oz eq of grain. The yield of this recipe is 100 servings.

- $150 \text{ oz eq M/MA} \div 100 = 1.5 \text{ oz eq M/MA per serving}$
- $100 \text{ oz eq grain} \div 100 = 1 \text{ oz eq grain per serving}$

For more information on crediting, see [Crediting in a Nutshell](#).

The [Food Buying Guide](#) contains a tool called the Recipe Analysis Workbook (RAW), which is used to determine the meal pattern contribution and crediting of a recipe.

Standardization Process

1. Recipe Verification
 - a. Review the recipe: Look over the recipe and note anything missing (ingredients, instructions, equipment needed, etc.).
 - b. Prepare the recipe: While making a small amount of the recipe (25 servings is sufficient), check that the ingredients and amounts are accurate. Keep notes while preparing to document any required changes.
 - c. Verify the recipe yield: Weigh or measure the total recipe yield.
 - d. Record changes to the recipe: Record recipe, including changes, on your standardized recipe template.



2. Product Evaluation

- a. Informal evaluation: Food service managers and employees determine whether the recipe is acceptable and whether efforts to standardize the recipe should continue.
 - i. Recipe may be deemed:
 1. Unacceptable: discontinue standardizing the recipe
 2. Mostly acceptable: recipe goes back to the verification phase so that changes can be made and a new version can be prepared
 3. Acceptable as-is: recipe is prepared for formal evaluation
- b. Formal evaluation: This step includes taste-testing by food service staff, students, and other customers. Use an evaluation form to collect opinions on the final recipe's appearance, flavor, texture, etc. Use these results to determine your next step—either accept recipe as-is, modify the recipe until acceptable, or reject the recipe.

3. Quantity Adjustment

- a. Using the factor method, scale up the recipe to the amount of servings desired for your operation. Recipes are typically scaled up to 50 or 100 servings. It may take a few tries to get everything correct when scaling up a recipe.

The Institute of Child Nutrition's [Child Nutrition Recipe Box](#) is designed for school nutrition professionals. It contains recipes for the National School Lunch Program, School Breakfast Program, Child Care Centers, Family Child Care, Child and Adult Care Food Program, and recipes in Spanish. You may create an account to save and rate recipes, obtain nutrition information, and create a cookbook to save your favorite recipes.