CN Labeled Products

Detailed information on the USDA Child Nutrition (CN) Labeling Program can be found in the Appendix of A Menu Planner for Healthy School Meals. The information below provides a summary of some important points.

The CN Labeling Program is a voluntary federal labeling program for the Child Nutrition Programs. It is run by the Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) of USDA in cooperation with the following agencies: http://www.fns.usda.gov/cnd/CNlabeling/default.htm

• Food Safety and Inspection Service
• Agricultural Marketing Service
• National Marine Fisheries Service

FNS operates the program directly with commercial food processing firms.

Food manufacturers may submit their product’s formulations for evaluation by FNS to determine the product’s contribution toward meal pattern requirements according to the USDA Food Buying Guide. The program provides a warranty against audit claims but does not provide a guarantee of product quality.

Products Eligible for CN Labels

• Main dish products that contribute to the meat/meat alternate component. Examples: beef patties, pizzas, burritos, egg rolls.
• Juice and juice drink which contain 50 percent full-strength juice by volume.
  Examples: grape drink, fruit punch, frozen juice drink bars.

CN Label

A CN label is easy to identify since it will always have the following information. CNP managers and CNP assistants who are responsible for receiving should be trained in how to identify a CN label.

• The CN logo, which is a distinct border
• The meal pattern contribution statement
• A 6-digit product identification number
• USDA/FNS authorization
• The month and year of approval (by FNS)

Standardized Recipes

Standardized recipes are necessary to produce quality food products in any foodservice operation. Use of standardized recipes is a requirement for the School Meals Initiative for
NuMenus, Assisted NuMenus, and Food-Based Menus in order to have data for an accurate and valid nutrient analysis of menus. All foods prepared from scratch or finished in a kitchen must have a standardized recipe on file.

It is the CNP director’s responsibility to make sure:

- All schools have standardized recipes for all menu items,
- CNP assistants are trained to use them, and
- CNP managers hold cooks accountable for using the standardized recipes.

A standardized recipe is one that has been tested, adapted for use by a specific foodservice operation, and 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.

**Advantages of Using Standardized Recipes**

- Control quality by using recipes that have been tested and evaluated for schools.
- Control portion and yield, thus reducing leftovers and menu substitutions.
- Control costs by allowing for accurate purchasing and storage.
- Provide accurate nutrient analysis.
- Foster creativity by encouraging CNP assistants to improve standardized recipes through controlled modification and testing.

A reference on standardizing recipes is *Measuring Success with Standardized Recipes* from The national Food Service Management Institute.


**Sources for Tested Recipes**

- USDA Quantity Recipes for School Meals may be ordered through [TN.Orders@fns.usda.gov](http://TN.Orders@fns.usda.gov) Recipes will be sent to only State Agencies or School Districts not to individual schools.
- School Foodservice and Nutrition (monthly journal of the American School Food Service Association)
Steps to Standardize a Tested Recipe

1. **Begin with a tested recipe.**
   Review the ingredients and the directions.

2. **Make sure that the recipe can be prepared with the equipment and staff in the school kitchen.**
   Make sure that ingredients are weighed or measured exactly and that the directions are followed exactly. Have the cook make a note of any problems with preparation.

3. **Prepare the recipe in a 25-portion amount.**
   Make sure that ingredients are weighed or measured exactly and that the directions are followed exactly. Have the cook make a note of any problems with preparation.

4. **Taste the product and judge it for quality.**
   Use the Quality Score Cards from *Culinary Techniques*.

5. **Taste-test the product with a small number of students.**
   Obtain student feedback regarding taste and appearance.

6. **Make the needed changes to the recipe and record them.**
   The changes needed to standardize the recipe for a specific school kitchen may involve ingredients, equipment, preparation or cooking timing, pan sizes, portion size.

7. **Review the recipe with the cook who usually prepares it.**
   Include the new recipe on the school menu. The manager should be aware of student acceptance, student comments, plate waste, and leftovers.
Follow the Formula When Adjusting the Yield of a Tested Recipe

Most tested recipes for school kitchens give a yield of either 50 servings or 100 servings. This is always shown on the recipe. You will use this information and a formula to adjust the yield of recipes for the amount you need to prepare. To adjust the recipe yield, you have to adjust the amount of each ingredient in the recipe.

Use your calculator:
- When you see this sign in the formula, \( X \), you should multiply.
- Always put the decimal point in your calculator.
- If you end up with more than three numbers after the decimal on your calculator, round to the third number.
- If your calculator does not have a tape, record the answers at each step.
- Enter numbers in your calculator in this order:
  - To multiply—enter numbers from left to right.
  - To divide—enter the top number first, press the divide sign, and enter the bottom number.
- Round numbers after you have finished the Formula.

**Step 1:** Decide the number of servings of the recipe needed (the yield) and the serving size needed.

\[
\text{# of/svg needed} \quad \times \quad \text{svg size needed}
\]

**Step 2:** Use the Formula to determine the quantity of each ingredient that will be needed for the new yield. Write down your calculations for each step of the Formula for each ingredient in the recipe.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Weight or Measure From Recipe</th>
<th># of/svg Needed</th>
<th>The Formula</th>
<th>Quantity Needed in Adjusted Recipe</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>( X )</td>
<td>( \frac{\text{# of/svg needed}}{\text{# of/svg listed}} \times \frac{\text{svg size needed}}{\text{svg size listed}} )</td>
<td>( \frac{\text{Quantity Needed}}{\text{in Adjusted Recipe}} )</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A. Ingredient
   Weight or measure of the ingredient from the recipe =
   Change to a decimal number.

B. \( \frac{\text{# of/svg needed}}{\text{# of/svg listed}} \) =

C. \( \frac{\text{svg size needed}}{\text{svg size listed}} \) =

D. Complete the Formula to find the quantity needed:

\[(A) \times (B) \times (C) = (D)\]

**Step 3:** Always round up to the nearest practical measure. (See page 84 for Common Measures.)

\[
\text{Quantity needed} = \quad \text{Nearest Practical Measure}
\]

*The formula was developed with the guidance of Dr. Eldon L. Miller, Professor of Mathematics, University of Mississippi.*
Training in Food Production

Foodservice personnel need training as new hires and as experienced employees in order to prepare foods that are consistent with the nutrition and quality standards of the Child Nutrition Program. This section provides some important points for the CNP director to consider. There are many excellent resources that provide detailed information on managing food production.

1. Consider the Dietary Guidelines for Americans in food production.
2. Control portion sizes to control food cost and meet meal requirements.
3. Encourage CNP managers and CNP assistants to routinely evaluate menu items before placing them on the service line. Use the Quality Score Cards in Culinary Techniques [http://www.nfsmi.org/Information/Guide.html](http://www.nfsmi.org/Information/Guide.html)

Consider the Dietary Guidelines in Food Production

Planning healthy school meals is just the beginning; producing healthy school meals is the real challenge for a CNP director and CNP manager. *A Menu Planner for Healthy School Meals* provides excellent guidance for “Putting the Dietary Guidelines to Work for You.”

Control Portion Sizes to Control Food Cost and Meet Meal Requirements

1. Control food cost - Controlling portions when serving is a critical factor in management of the costs of the CNP. All employees should be trained to scale pans according to the recipe and use the correct portion control utensil for each menu item. The CNP manager should specify the portion control utensil to be used for each menu item on the production schedule. Serving size and portioning information should be on every standardized recipe.

Example:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The USDA Lasagna Recipe No. D-25</th>
<th>Cost per Pan</th>
<th>Cost Per Serving</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cut 5 X 5 per recipe</td>
<td>$13.22</td>
<td>.53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cut 5 X 4</td>
<td>$13.22</td>
<td>.66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Panned into 3 instead of 4 pans, cut 5 X 5</td>
<td>$17.66</td>
<td>.71</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- Increasing the amount of meat or cheese in this recipe would also increase cost.
- Decreasing the amount of meat or cheese would change the way the recipe could be credited for the meat/meat alternate requirement for Food-Based Menus.

2. Meet meal pattern requirements - The Food-Based Menu system requires specific portion sizes for each food component for various age groups. The meal is not
reimbursable when the required, minimum portion sizes have not been served. It is very important that CNP managers and CNP assistants use the correct portion control utensils to serve required minimum servings.

**Planning, Controlling, and Documenting Food Production**

**Planning Food Production**

Food production plans have traditionally been used in all foodservice operations to provide information to employees on the food items and amounts to be prepared. School kitchens should have a form that is used by the CNP manager to plan amounts to prepare for each menu item. The standard Production Record has been designed so parts are completed by the manager before the meal, thus, it becomes a production plan.

**Controlling Food Production**

The food production plan is a management control tool for the CNP manager. Both the manager and staff should check the plan throughout the production period to be sure the amounts planned are being prepared. The production plan also specifies the serving size for each menu item.

**Documenting Food Production**

USDA requires menu records and food production records. The records must include specific information depending on the menu system being used by the school/school system. Detailed requirements for food production records can be found in *A Menu Planner for Healthy School Meals*, [http://www.nfsmi.org/Information/Guide.html](http://www.nfsmi.org/Information/Guide.html)

**Production Record for Enhanced Food-Based Menus.**

The SDE has developed a standard Production Record form for use in school systems using either of the Food-Based Menus Alternatives (Traditional or Enhanced Food-Based). The Production Record meets the USDA requirements for information required on a production record for Food-Based Menu Planning. [http://www.cnp.alsde.edu/nslp/forms/ProductionRecord.pdf](http://www.cnp.alsde.edu/nslp/forms/ProductionRecord.pdf) If the school system has its own form, the form must include the required information and must be approved by SDE.

For planning or production purposes it is strongly recommended that columns 1-9 for the standard Production Record be completed before the meal is served.

**Required Information on a Production Records for Food-Based Menus**
• Food components (meat/meat alternate, etc.) and other items, including condiments.
• Recipe or food product used (note if a USDA recipe).
• Planned/projected number of portions and serving sizes for each age/grade group.
• Planned/projected number of portions and serving sizes for adults.
• Total amount of food prepared (for example, number of servings, pounds, cans).
• Actual number of reimbursable meals served (indicate this information for each age/grade group).
• Actual number of non-reimbursable meals served (such as to adults or as a la carte sales).
• Leftovers and substitutions.

**Production Record for NuMenus:** If the school/school system uses NuMenus or Enhanced NuMenus, the production record needed is somewhat different than the standard form. See *A Menu Planner for Healthy School Meals* [http://www.nfsmi.org/Information/Guide.html](http://www.nfsmi.org/Information/Guide.html) for sample forms. If the system develops its own form different from the prototype, the form must be approved by the SDE.

**Maintaining Records**

Completed production records for each school must be maintained for the current school year plus four additional years for a total of five years. **Keep Production Records for Five Years.** The CNP director should establish a procedure for each CNP manager to turn in or file in the school the production records for the year. Destruction of records must be done according to state policy.

**Accountability for Production Records**

Completing production records is one of the challenging tasks for many CNP managers. Reasons for not completing the forms vary from a perceived lack of time, to lack of training on how to complete and use a production record. It is the CNP director’s responsibility to train CNP managers to complete the records correctly.

Sources of training materials on production records:


CNP managers cannot be held accountable for completing food production records if they have not been trained to complete them correctly. Some training tips for use with CNP managers are listed below.

• Begin training with a review of basic math skills needed when using the *Food Buying Guide* to plan amounts to prepare (multiplication, conversion of fractions to decimals, using a calculator).
• Teach how to complete the production record as a step-by-step process using the directions for the form.
• Demonstrate how to complete a production record.
- Allow time for the CNP manager to practice completing a production record. Review each step and give specific feedback on parts done correctly and parts that are incorrect. Re-teach as needed.
- Provide follow-up and coaching for the CNP manager.
- Work with the manager to establish a routine procedure to use the production record as a plan (complete parts before the meal) and to complete the required parts after the meal on the day the meal is served. Be aware that production records should not be completed long after the meal is served since required data must often be “invented” after a period of time.

**Hold CNP Managers Accountable for Maintaining Production Records**

The CNP director must hold managers accountable for maintaining production records because of the following.

- Use of production records for planning and controlling food production is a basic management tool in any foodservice operation,
- Production records are required to document that reimbursable meals served meet requirements for components and serving sizes. Lack of production records for documentation can mean a reclaim of reimbursement.

How to hold CNP managers accountable.
1. Be sure that each CNP manager knows how to correctly complete a production record.
2. The requirement to maintain complete production records should be understood as a basic job requirement for every CNP manager.
3. Review with each CNP manager instructions for completing the production record each day and keeping completed records on file for the school year (and four more years).
4. Periodically check production records for completion and accuracy. Do not wait until the end of the school year or a SDE review or audit to find out that production records are not complete.
5. If a CNP manager is not completing production records, coach. If the person still does not complete this important task, consider the standard school system discipline procedure.

**Work Schedules for Increased Productivity**

Scheduling is a challenge in any type of foodservice operation. Developing a production schedule can be difficult because meals come at designated times of the day, so food production has peaks and valleys. Scheduling for school foodservice production, more than some other kinds of foodservice, is a challenge because of the large number of meals served in short time periods.
Teaching CNP managers how to prepare work schedules for production, line service, and cleaning is a challenge to every CNP director. This section provides some tools that the CNP director may choose to use or adapt in order to promote high productivity in each school kitchen.

Some foodservice experts suggest that up to one-third of all labor time may be either wasted or severely limited by poor scheduling alone (Keiser, 1989). Studies have not been done in school foodservice operations, but we know that scheduling in school kitchens has a big effect on productivity.

**Parkinson’s Law: “Work takes up the time available.”**

Since people generally work at the speed needed to accomplish an assigned task in the time available, it is the CNP manager’s responsibility to determine how long a task should take.

There are several kinds of schedules that a manager can use to encourage employees to work more efficiently. Some managers use the term, “work schedule” to describe a list of general duties for each employee. In some kitchens, a work schedule is posted once or twice a year, with assignments such as baking, preparing main dishes, serving, and other general categories of tasks. This type of schedule allows the employees to determine their own rate of work, since they have not been given a time standard. A time standard is a specific amount of time in which an assigned task should be completed.

To work most efficiently, CNP managers need three different types of schedules to manage employees’ time efficiently. It is the responsibility of the CNP director to see that manager’s use these kinds of schedules to maximize productivity.

- Daily Production Schedule
- Service Line Schedule
- Cleaning Schedule

**How to Determine a Time Standard for a Food Production Task**

1. Describe the task.
2. Estimate the time in minutes for each activity involved in the task.

   Below is information that will help you in estimating time for each activity in the task of preparing one batch recipe.
   - **Pre-preparation** - assembling equipment and ingredients
   - **Preparation** - combining ingredients, mixing, panning convenience foods (check recipe for estimate)
   - **Cooking** - (check recipe for time estimate)
   - **Set-up** - pre-portioning, placement on service line, garnishing pans
   - **Cleaning** - cleaning food preparation area and equipment used
   - **Other** - describe any other special work necessary
   - **Total** time in minutes for one batch
3. **Estimate the time for the total task by adding the minutes for each activity.** Considering the number of batches to be prepared, how many minutes are needed for the total amount. Keep in mind that some recipes must be prepared in batches in order to maintain quality or because of equipment capacity. For example, scratch-prepared cakes should be made only in amounts specified in the recipe in order to maintain volume.

   Equipment can limit amount of a food to prepare at one time. The main dish cook may be able to prepare only 20 gallons of chili because of the size of the steam-jacketed kettle. If 30 gallons is needed, preparation would be needed for two batches.

4. **Estimate the time needed for the task by the CNP assistant who typically does the task in the most efficient way.**

5. **Note any special skills or equipment needed to complete the task most efficiently.**

6. **Determine ways the CNP manager can coach the assistant.**
   Describe the training, help, and support the manager can give the employee.

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**Daily Production Schedule**

A Daily Production Schedule puts the manager in charge of the entire operation so each CNP assistant’s work is balanced against the workload of everyone else in the kitchen. When one cook has less to do because of a simple recipe or convenience food, that person can be assigned other food production tasks for the menu of that day or later in the week. This kind of schedule allows the manager to use her knowledge of the whole operation to be sure that every person is using time for the greatest productivity.

**Steps to Develop a Daily Production Schedule**

1. **Plan the Daily Production Schedule for at least five days at a time.** This allows the CNP manager to do a better job of planning pre-preparation. For schools using cycle menus, the Daily Production Schedules can be re-cycled along with the menus.

2. **Determine which menu items should be prepared just-in-time for service** (batch cooked). Schedule the times for these tasks first by subtracting the time standard from the beginning of the service time. Then assign all other tasks.

3. **Determine which menu items can be prepared, cooked, and held for service.**

4. **Plan for the best use of the equipment.**

5. **Assign a beginning and ending time for each task,** including routine tasks like setting up a salad bar, potato bar, sandwich line, or preparing boxed lunches.

6. **Stagger breaks** and lunch times for employees.

**How to Plan for Just-In-Time Food Preparation**

There are many menu items, particularly convenience foods that have their best quality when they are prepared just-in-time for service (batch-cooked).

**Just-In-Time Food Preparation Worksheet**

1. Determine the number of portions for each service period.
What is the estimated number of portions to be served for the whole meal?  A._____
How many 20 to 30 minute service periods during the meal period?  B._____
(Determine whether the product should be in batches for the amount
served in a 20 to 30 minute service period. Some foods will need to be cooked
in batches served in a 15-minute time period.)
Number of portions needed for each service period (A ÷ B = C).  C._____

2. What is the total amount of time needed to finish pre-preparation
   for one batch?
   Consider the time needed for each of the following.
   • Loading and unloading the equipment,
   • Cooking,
   • Finishing the product with seasoning, sauces, or garnish,
   • Taking the finished product to the service line.

3. Determine the Start Time and the Service Time for each batch of the product. Set up a
   production schedule for the convenience product.

**EXAMPLE**

**Individual Cheese Pizza**
(Estimate the 500 servings will be needed for the whole meal)
Panning = 5 minutes, plus Baking = 10 to 13 minutes, plus Line Placement = 2 minutes =
20 minutes to finish

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Start Time</th>
<th>Service Time</th>
<th>Portions Needed for Each Service Period</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>11:10 AM</td>
<td>11:30 AM</td>
<td>6 pans (96 servings)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11:30 AM</td>
<td>11:50 AM</td>
<td>6 pans</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11:50 AM</td>
<td>12:10 PM</td>
<td>6 pans</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12:10 PM</td>
<td>12:30 PM</td>
<td>6 pans</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12:30 PM</td>
<td>12:50 PM</td>
<td>6 pans</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4. The manager will assign food production and service line responsibilities.
Person responsible for pre-preparation
Person responsible for final preparation
Person responsible for line service