



Policy Update

May 28, 2025

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TEXAS DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
COMMISSIONER SID MILLER

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Food and Nutrition Division
Nutrition Assistance Programs



Updated 5/28/2025
www.SquareMeals.org

01

**ARM
Release
May 5, 2025**



Administrator's Reference Manual (ARM)

New release on May 5, 2025

- Section 17b, Buy American only.
- Incorporated the Final Rule to Revise Nutrition Standards:
 - Exception Threshold
 - Exception Accommodation
 - Determining Country of Origin
- New language is highlighted yellow.
- Remember to replace old versions.

<https://squaremeals.org/Programs/National-School-Lunch-Program/Policy-ARM>

02

Final Rule to Revise Nutrition Standards: Added Sugars



Final Rule to Revise Nutrition Standards

Flexibilities

Final Rule - Child Nutrition Programs: Meal Patterns Consistent With the 2020-2025 Dietary Guidelines for Americans

<https://www.fns.usda.gov/cn/school-nutrition-standards-updates>

Flexibilities effective July 1, 2024:

- Meat/Meat Alternates at Breakfast (Section 8)
- Substituting Vegetables for Fruits at Breakfast (Section 8)
- Crediting of Nuts and Seeds (Sections 7, 8, 9)
- Beans, Peas, and Lentils at Lunch (Section 8)
- Bean Dips Exempt in Smart Snacks (Section 22)
- Geographic Preference as a Procurement Specification (Section 17)
- Buy American “FAR List” (Section 17b)

Final Rule to Revise Nutrition Standards

Added Sugars

Now

No limits to added sugars for SBP and NSLP



SY 2025 – 2026

Product-Based Limits

Limits to the following:

- **Breakfast cereals:** 6 grams added sugars per dry ounce.
- **Yogurts:** 12 grams added sugars per 6 ounces.
- **Flavored milks:**
 - SBP and NSLP
 - 10 g of added sugars per 8 fl oz
 - Competitive Foods (Smart Snacks)
 - Middle & High Schools, 15 g of added sugars per 12 fl oz



SY 2027 – 2028

Weekly Dietary Limits

Limit added sugars to less than 10% of total calories per week.

03

Appropriations Act 2025



Appropriations Act 2025

Effect on CNPs

SP 13-2025, Full-Year Continuing Appropriations and Extensions Act, 2025: Effect on Child Nutrition Programs (May 14, 2025)

<https://www.fns.usda.gov/schoolmeals/appropriations-act-2025-effect>

For SY 2025 – 2026:

- Paid Lunch Equity (PLE)
- Crediting of vegetables at breakfast
- Prohibition on chicken and seafood from China

Appropriations Act 2025

Paid Lunch Equity (PLE)

Flexibility for SY 2025 – 2026

- SFAs with zero or positive balances in their nonprofit food service accounts as of **June 30, 2024** do not have to complete PLE.
- SFAs with negative balances in their nonprofit food service accounts as of **June 30, 2024** must complete PLE.
- ARM Section 19, Meal Pricing



SY 25-26 PLE Tool Coming Soon!

Appropriations Act 2025

Chicken and Seafood from China

Continuation

Prohibition on purchasing chicken and seafood from China through September 30, 2025.



Appropriations Act 2025

Vegetables at Breakfast

Change for SY 2025 – 2026

- Ends flexibility allowing any vegetable to be substituted for a fruit.
- Minimum two vegetable subgroups required if substituting a vegetable for a fruit more than one per week.
- ARM Section 7, Breakfast



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