Center Sponsors: Manage Grain Ounce Equivalents

All food program participants must use grain ounce equivalents when serving Bread/Alt and Infant Cereal food items. The Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) defines an ounce equivalent as "…the amount of food product that is considered equal to one ounce from the grain or protein food groups."

Grain ounce equivalents aims to account for the different levels of water content in different grains, as higher water content leads to less grain content in the food item. For example, cooked pasta and rice has higher water content than crackers or bread. This policy also brings CACFP in-line with other federal programs, such as the National School Lunch Program, the School Breakfast Program, USDA MyPlate Food Guidance, US Dietary Guidelines, and the NAM report.

In this article:

- Food List
- Missing Calculation Indicators & Claim Errors
- Overrides
- Quantities

Food List

All Bread/Alt and Infant Cereal foods require an ounce equivalents calculation be saved to the food list. This ensures that Minute Menu CX and KidKare calculates quantities for these items correctly and accurately. A calculation consists of the following:
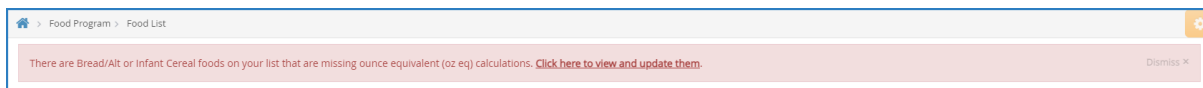
- Exhibit A Grains Group Designation
- Serving Size
- Serving Weight

This information provides the figures to plug into the formula used by the USDA to calculate the ounce equivalents for one serving of the item you have added. This calculator replaces the Food Quantity Group settings that were previously present for Bread/Alt and Infant Cereal food items.

Missing Calculation Indicators & Claim Errors

To help you update your food list, we have added several indicators to the food list itself to show that there are Bread/Alts and Infant Cereals that still need ounce equivalent calculations to be applied.

- A red banner displays on the Food List page to warn you of missing calculations. You can click this banner to filter to only those items that are missing a calculation.

- A displays in the table for Bread/Alt and Infant Cereal items that are missing an ounce equivalents calculation.[img]

- A message displays in the Record Menu window and on the Daily Menu page when you or a center adds a Bread/Alt or Infant Cereal that is missing an ounce equivalents calculation to a menu.

We have also added two new errors to the Office Error Report: Error 107 and Error 108. These errors are warnings only and will not otherwise affect claims processing. Instead, these are meant to help you locate items being claimed that still need ounce equivalents information on your food list.

Overrides

To account for weight differences between brands, a new calculator option will display in the Record Menu window and on the Daily Menu page. This allows your centers to input nutrition label information specific to the

bread/grain they are serving on any particular day. Your centers cannot access this calculator if you have locked the item to the food list calculation.

Quantities

Once you enable ounce equivalents, all quantities referenced for Bread/Alt items will use the new ounce equivalents serving requirements provided by the USDA. Quantities reference the ounce equivalents for one serving of a Bread/Alt as saved to your food list.

For example, suppose there is a 100% Whole Wheat Bread on the food list with the following serving information: 1 slice = 28g = 1 oz eq.

1. Center A serves this bread for Lunch.
2. They estimate attendance for this meal to be five 3-5 year old participants.
3. **Per the USDA**, the minimum serving size for a slice of bread for this age group is 0.5 oz eq.
4. The estimated quantity required for this bread will show as: 2.5 slices - 2.5 oz eq.

Even though the common unit displays, all claims processing and Menu Production Record information will reference the ounce equivalents value. The common unit is there to help centers determine how much of an item to serve.

Note: If your centers must record actual quantities, you may opt to require them to enter quantities in ounce

equivalents using **policy M.01g**. If you set this policy to **N**, all quantities for Bread/Alt and Infant Cereal items display in ounce equivalents only, and centers can only record quantities in ounce equivalents.