

Meat and Meat Alternatives (M/MA)

Main Dish must contain 2 to 3 Meat or Meat Alternative "Units." Units may be combined (example: ground beef and black beans)

Chicken, Turkey, Fish (fresh or frozen)	1 M	= 1 oz.	Example: 2 oz. of these meats are 2 units.
Salmon, Tuna, Chicken (canned)	1 M	= 1 oz.	
Beef, ground (fresh or frozen, no more than 26% fat)	1 M	= 1 oz. cooked	Weigh ground meats after cooking!
Turkey, ground (fresh or frozen)	1 M	= 1 oz. cooked	
Any canned bean – garbanzo, black, pinto, cannellini, etc.	1 MA	= 1/2 cup	Beans count as a vegetable side OR protein but not both in the same dish.
Refried Beans	1 MA	= 1/4 cup cooked	
Edamame (frozen or dry roasted) shelled	1 MA	= 1/4 cup cooked	
Hummus	1 MA	= 2 tbsp	
Eggs	1 MA	= 1 Egg	
Tofu	1 MA	= 1/4 cup	
Sunflower, Sesame or Pumpkin Seeds	1 MA	= 2 oz.	
Sunbutter Sunflower Spread	1 MA	= 2 tbsp	
Yogurt, nonfat, plain or flavored, Greek or non-Greek, sweetened or unsweetened	1 MA	= 1/2 cup	
Cheese	Cheese may be used as a garnish only. not as a stand-alone component		

Vegetables

Recipes must have at least One (1) cup Vegetables. The National School Lunch Program (NSLP) requires weekly servings from [five vegetable subgroups](#). Meals created for the Culinary Challenge must include at least one (1) of these groups. More are encouraged.

	Serving	Serving Size Equivalent	Notes
Any Fresh, Canned or Frozen Vegetable	1/2 cup	= 1/2 cup	Teams selecting a vegetable from the Starchy subgroup are encouraged to combine it with a vegetable from another subgroup.
Salad Greens	1 cup	= 1/2 cup	
Any canned bean – garbanzo, black, pinto, cannellini, etc.	1/2 cup	= 1/2 cup	Beans may also be used as a Main Dish but not as both protein and vegetable in same dish.
Refried Beans	1/2 cup	= 1/2 cup cooked	
Edamame (frozen or dry roasted) shelled	1/2 cup	= 1/2 cup cooked	May be used as a garnish only, not as a stand-alone component
Jalapeno Peppers, canned, sliced			

Fruits

Recipes must have at least 1/2 Cup of Fruit

	Serving	Serving Size Equivalent	Notes
Any Fresh, Canned or Frozen Fruit	1/2 cup	= 1/2 cup	
Craisins or Seedless Raisins	1 cup	= 1/2 cup	

Grains

Recipes must have 2 Grain "Units." Grains must be 50% or more Whole Grain

	Grain "Unit"	Serving Size Equivalent	Notes
Cereal Grains, such as barley or quinoa	1	= 1 oz dry or 1/2 cup cooked	Example: 2 Grain Units of Brown Rice is 1 cup cooked per serving
Bulgur, Cracked Wheat	1		
Brown Rice	1	= 1 oz dry or 1/2 cup cooked	Pasta dishes must have 1 cup of pasta per serving
Pasta	1		
Wraps or Tortillas	1	8 to 10 inch	
Croissants	1	2.2 oz	
Flatbread	1	2.2 oz	

Bases, Sauces and Spices

Bases, sauces and spices are important flavor components to recipes. Teams are encouraged to build their own spice blends (which are counted as one ingredient – see Recipe Template) and use fresh herbs to enhance dishes without additional calories and sodium. When using prepared bases (such as chicken broth) and sauces (such as soy sauce, sriracha), teams should pay close attention to sodium levels and divide by the number of servings as instructed. Although school lunch guidelines do not limit sugars, teams should be mindful of the calorie impact from bases and sauces.