



CREDITABLE AND NON-CREDITABLE FOODS GUIDE

1-18 Year Olds and
Adult Participants in Adult Daycare Centers

This guide provides information about the CACFP meal components and includes lists of foods that are creditable and non-creditable to each component. To go to a specific meal component's page, click the link in the "Meal Components" table at the bottom of this page.

Creditable Foods

Creditable foods are foods that may be counted toward meeting CACFP meal pattern requirements for a reimbursable meal or snack. Foods listed in this guide do not include all creditable foods. Contact your assigned [Consultant](#) with questions regarding specific foods or required quantities.

Non-Creditable Foods

Non-creditable foods are foods that may not be counted toward meeting CACFP meal pattern requirements. However, they may be served as extra foods. Foods listed in this guide do not include all non-creditable foods. Contact your assigned [Consultant](#) with questions regarding specific foods.

For a CACFP meal to be reimbursable, the minimum required amount of each meal component must be served, and foods served must be creditable.

Refer to [CACFP Meal Pattern for 1-18 Year Olds](#) or [CACFP Adult Meal Pattern](#) for serving sizes.

Foods must be of an appropriate size and texture for participants' eating abilities.

Food must not be used as a punishment or reward.

Some brand names are included on lists in this guide; however, this does not imply product endorsement.

Refer to the [Menu Checklist](#) for information on CACFP meal pattern and menu documentation requirements.

CLICK ON NAME OF MEAL COMPONENT
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[Milk](#)

[Meats/Meat Alternates](#)

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Milk



Meal	Milk Requirements
Breakfast, Lunch, Supper	Must be served <i>Optional at supper for adult day care centers only</i>
Snacks	May be served as one of the two components <ul style="list-style-type: none"> If served at snack, juice cannot be served as the other component

Must be pasteurized and meet Grade A standards. All milk must contain vitamins A and D.

Cannot be served to infants (<12 months of age).

Must be served as a beverage, poured over cereal, or a combination of both.

Not creditable when used in cooking (i.e., cooked cereals, soups, pudding, etc.).

Fluid milk substitutes nutritionally equivalent to cow's milk can be served ([Creditable Non-Dairy Beverages](#)).

Fluid milk substitutes not nutritionally equivalent to cow's milk (ex. oat milk, almond milk) can only be served to accommodate a disability when a valid medical statement is on file.

Age	Required Milk Types
1 year	Unflavored whole milk
2 - 5 years	Unflavored fat-free (skim) or low-fat (1%) milk
6 - 18 years	Unflavored or flavored fat-free (skim) or low-fat (1%) milk
Adult Participants (Adult Day Care)	Unflavored or flavored fat-free (skim) or low-fat (1%) milk 6 oz. yogurt may substitute for 8 oz. milk for one meal per day

Creditable Milk

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A2 milk Acidified milk (acidophilus) Breastmilk, no upper age limit Buttermilk Cow's milk Cultured milk or kefir Goat's milk, if pasteurized and meets state and local standards 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lactose-free milk Lactose-reduced milk Non-dairy beverage nutritionally equivalent to cow's milk (see Creditable Non-Dairy Beverages) Smoothies, when containing milk in required amounts Ultra High Temperature (UHT) shelf stable cow's milk, skim or 1%
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Non-Creditable Milk

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2% (reduced-fat) milk Almond beverage/milk Cashew beverage/milk Cheese (creditable as meat alternate) Coconut milk Cream, Half and half Cream cheese Cream soup/sauces Custard Dry milk Eggnog Evaporated milk Frozen yogurt 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ice cream, Ice milk Imitation milk Oat beverage/milk Powdered milk Pudding Raw milk Rice beverage/milk Reconstituted dry milk Sherbet or sorbet Sour cream Soy beverage/milk not nutritionally equivalent to cow's milk Sweetened condensed milk Yogurt (creditable as meat alternate)
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Meats/Meat Alternates (M/MA)



Meal	M/MA Requirements
Breakfast	May be served in place of the grain component up to three days/week
Lunch and Supper	Must be served
Snacks	May be one of the two components

Yogurt (regular and soy) must contain **no more than 12 grams of added sugars per 6 ounces**.

- Use the Nutrition Facts Label and [Yogurt Added Sugar Limits](#) guide to determine if a yogurt is creditable.

Cheese: Refer to [Creditable and Non-Creditable Cheeses](#).

Beans, peas, and lentils can be served as the meat alternates or vegetables component. One type of beans, peas or lentils may not be served as both a meat alternate and vegetable in the same meal. However, if serving two different types of beans, peas, or lentils one may credit as a meat alternate and the other as a vegetable.

Pasta made of 100% bean/legume flour(s) may credit as the meat alternates or vegetables component, but not both in the same meal. 1/2 cup cooked pasta credits as 2 oz equivalent m/ma. To credit as the meat alternate, it must be served with another 0.25 oz equivalent visible meat or meat alternate.

Local Foods: For information on wild and domesticated game animals and birds: [Local Meats, Poultry, and Eggs](#).

Creditable Meats/Meat Alternates

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Beans, peas, and lentils (pinto, kidney, black, lentils, split peas, garbanzo beans (chickpeas), soybeans (canned or dry)) Canadian bacon and ham Cheese, natural or processed; Cheese spread; Cheese food; Ricotta Combination foods (ex. chicken nuggets, fish sticks) with CN label or PFS (see page 4) Cottage cheese Crab meat Eggs, whole only – fresh, frozen, dried or liquid (must be federally inspected) Fish, cooked (cod, tilapia, salmon, haddock, walleye, perch, tuna, mahi mahi, and mackerel) Lean meat (beef) Liver, kidney, tripe Nuts and nut butters (peanuts, tree nuts) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pasta made of 100% bean/legume flour(s) Poultry Processed meats/meat alternates with CN label or PFS (see page 4) Sausage (labeled “fresh pork sausage” or “fresh Italian sausage”) Seeds and seed butters Shellfish, cooked (shrimp, crab) Soup, bean or split pea (½ cup = 1 oz. meat) Soy nuts and soy nut butter Soy products or alternate protein products with CN label or PFS (see page 4) Surimi seafood, imitation crab and shellfish Tahini (credited as a seed butter) Tempeh Tofu (see page 4 for more information) Yogurt (dairy or soy) – commercial only |
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Non-Creditable Meat/Meat Alternates

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bacon, bacon-bits, imitation bacon products Beans and peas (green beans, string beans, green peas, snap peas) – these are a vegetable Canned cheese sauce Cheese, powdered (ex. mac and cheese, boxed) Cheese product (Velveeta) Coconut Cream cheese Egg substitutes, and yolks only or whites only Fish, home caught or home pickled Ham hocks, pigs’ feet, neck bones, tail bones Home canned meats, home slaughtered meat Imitation cheese Imitation seafood | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Nut butter spreads Nutella Potted, pressed, or deviled canned meat (e.g., Spam) Raw fish, sushi (raw seafood and sashimi) Seitan Soup, commercial canned- except bean or split pea (i.e., chicken noodle) Tofu in drinks, such as smoothies, or other dishes to add texture, such as in baked desserts Velveeta™ Yogurt above sugar limits Yogurt products (frozen yogurt, drinkable yogurt, yogurt bars, yogurt-covered fruit or nuts) |
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Meats/Meat Alternates (M/MA)

Tofu

Must be commercially prepared firm, extra firm, soft, or silken.
 2.2 oz. (1/4 cup) of tofu containing at least 5 grams of protein = 1.0 oz. meat alternate
 Use the Nutrition Facts Label and the calculation below to determine if tofu is creditable:
 Protein (g) ÷ Serving Size (oz.) or (g) = 2.27 ounces or more OR 0.08 grams or more



Processed Food Items

Processed food items are commercially purchased combination foods, processed meats/meat alternates, and other foods like smoothies, pasta salad containing vegetables, and other items that do not have a standard of identify, contain two or more meal components, and/or contain non-creditable ingredients.

Processed food items are ONLY creditable with a CN Label or PFS.*

See common items in the table below. *This is not all-inclusive list of foods that require a CN Label or PFS.*

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Breaded items (e.g., chicken nuggets, fish sticks) Burritos Canned pasta w/ meat Corndogs Dried and semi-dried meat, poultry, and seafood snacks, shelf-stable, such as jerky or summer sausage Egg rolls Falafel Frozen Entrees Kielbasa Lasagna 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Liverwurst Macaroni and cheese Meat loaf Meat sauce Meat analogs (breakfast links, textured vegetable protein crumbles, veggie burgers) Meat/poultry sticks (not dried/semi-dried) Meatballs Pasta salad containing meat, vegetables Pepperoni 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pizza Plant based meat alternate food items Polish sausage Pot pie Quiche Ravioli Salami Salisbury Steak Sausage not labeled "fresh pork sausage" / "fresh Italian sausage" Smoothies Soups Soy cheese 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Soy products (soy sausage, veggie burgers) Spaghetti with meat sauce Stews Tempeh with other ingredients (i.e., brown rice, sunflower seeds, sesame seeds, flax seed, and/or vegetables) Tofu products (links, sausages) Turkey bacon
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Processed meats/meat alternates in the table to the right do not require a CN Label or PFS when ingredients are 100% creditable meat ingredients (may contain salt and seasoning). However, if these items contain binders/extenders, fillers, byproducts, or cereals (see below) they are not 100% meat and require a CN label or PFS.*

- Beef patties
- Cooked sausage, includes hot dogs, frankfurters, wieners, franks, furters, Vienna, bologna, garlic bologna, knockwurst, and similar cooked sausages (may or may not be smoked, cured or uncured)

Binders/Extenders

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Carrageenan Cellulose Gelatin Hydrolyzed oat flour Hydrolyzed milk protein Modified food & vegetable starch 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Nonfat dry milk Plant proteins Soy flour Soy protein isolate Soy protein concentrate Starch 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Starchy vegetable flour Texturized vegetable protein (TVP) Wheat gluten Whey Whey protein concentrate
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Byproducts

- Glands
- Hearts
- Other organ meats

Fillers

- Breadcrumbs
- Cereals
- Vegetables

Cereals

- Barley
- Corn
- Oats
- Rice
- Wheat

*Child Nutrition (CN) Label or Product Formulation Statement (PFS)

A CN label or PFS provides information on how an item contributes to the meal pattern requirements. A CN Label/PFS must be obtained prior to purchasing and serving/claiming the item. It must be used to determine how much to prepare and serve. Refer to the [Crediting Documentation for Processed Foods](#) for information. If a CN label/PFS cannot be obtained, the item cannot be served as part of a reimbursable meal.

Vegetables



Meal	Vegetable Requirements
Breakfast	A vegetable or fruit or portions of each must be served
Lunch and Supper	Must be served, and a second, different vegetable may be served in place of the fruit component
Snacks	May be served as one of the two required components <ul style="list-style-type: none"> If juice is served, milk cannot be the other component

Combinations such as mixed vegetables, peas and carrots, stew vegetables, and casserole vegetables credit as one vegetable when the amount of each vegetable in a serving is not known.

When serving a second vegetable in place of the fruit component, the two vegetables must be different; i.e., do not serve French fries and roasted sweet potatoes because these are both potatoes. Similarly, do not serve a spinach salad and a mixed greens salad because these are both leafy greens.

Juice can only be served once per day across all meals and snacks, even when served to different groups.

Smoothies: Pureed vegetables served in a smoothie are considered juice. This counts as serving juice once per day. For more information, refer to: [Smoothies in CACFP](#).

Cooked, dry beans and peas can be served as either the vegetable or meat alternate component. One type of beans or peas may not be served as both a meat alternate and vegetable in the same meal. If serving two different types of beans or peas, one may credit as a meat alternate and the other as a vegetable.

Vegetables in mixed dishes must contain at least 1/8 cup of visible vegetable per serving to be creditable.

For a list of vegetables by subgroup, refer to [Vegetable Subgroups](#).

Commercially purchased foods that contain vegetables like coleslaw, potato salad, pasta salad with vegetables, and other items that do not have a standard of identify, contain two or more meal components, and/or contain non-creditable ingredients are **ONLY** creditable with a CN Label or PFS. See box at the bottom of page 4 for more information.

Creditable Vegetables

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Avocado Cooked, beans and peas (pinto, kidney, black, lentils, split peas, garbanzo beans (chickpeas) (canned/dry) Dehydrated vegetables (measure when rehydrated) Hominy (canned, drained or cooked, whole) Juice, 100% full strength (tomato, vegetable blend) Leafy greens, raw (lettuce, kale, mustard greens) (1 cup = ½ cup vegetable) Mixed vegetables (credits as one vegetable) Pasta, made with 100% vegetables, legumes, or vegetable or legume flour Pizza sauce Potatoes, Potato skins | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Salsa, all vegetable including spices Smoothies, vegetable (puree = juice) Soup, canned, condensed, or ready-to-serve (minestrone, tomato, tomato with rice and vegetable, and vegetable with meat/poultry (1 c = ¼ c vegetable) Soup, commercial bean or pea (½ c = ¼ c vegetable) Soy beans, fresh (edamame) and roasted (soy nuts) Spaghetti sauce Tomato paste (1 T = ¼ cup vegetable) Tomato puree (2 T = ¼ cup vegetable) Tomato sauce (4 T or ¼ cup = ¼ cup vegetable) Vegetables, fresh, frozen, canned, or dried |
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Non-Creditable Vegetables

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chili sauce Corn chips (credit as grain if whole grain/enriched) Grain-based pasta products with small amounts of vegetable powder (e.g., spinach, tomato) Home canned vegetables Ketchup, condiments and seasonings | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pickle relish Potato chips, potato sticks Raw sprouts Tomato-based sauce on canned pasta and commercial pizza Veggie straws, chips or sticks |
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Fruits



Meal	Fruit Requirements
Breakfast	A fruit or vegetable or portions of each must be served
Lunch and Supper	Must be served; however, a second, different vegetable may be served in place of the fruit component
Snacks	May be served as one of the two required components <ul style="list-style-type: none"> If juice is served, milk cannot be the other component

Juice can only be served once per day across all meals and snacks, even when served to different groups.

Smoothies: Pureed fruits served in a smoothie are considered juice. This counts as serving juice once per day. For more information, refer to: [Smoothies in CACFP](#).

Fruits in mixed dishes must contain at least 1/8 cup of visible fruit per serving to be creditable.

Commercially purchased foods that contain fruit like smoothies, cranberry sauce, and other items that do not have a standard of identify, contain two or more meal components, and/or contain non-creditable ingredients are **ONLY** creditable with a CN Label or PFS. See box at the bottom of page 4 for more information.

Creditable Fruit

- Apple cider, must be 100% juice & pasteurized
- Berries, all varieties
- Cherimoya (custard apple)
- Coconut, fresh, frozen or dried
- Coconut water, labeled 100% juice
- Cranberry sauce made with whole cranberries (not jellied)
- Dried fruit (e.g., apricots, cherries, dates, figs, prunes, raisins, cranberries, coconut) (¼ cup dried fruit = ½ cup fruit)
- Durian
- Feijoa (pineapple guava or guavasteen)
- Frozen juice bars or popsicles made with 100% fruit and/or juice

- Fruit, fresh, frozen, canned, or dried (all varieties)
- Fruit cocktail, credits as one fruit
- Fruit puree, 100% fruit
- Fruit sauce, homemade
- Fruit in gelatin or pudding (only the fruit credits)
- Jackfruit (jack tree, jackfruit)
- Juice, 100% full strength
- Juice blends, 100% full strength
- Juice concentrates, reconstituted to = 100% juice
- Kumquat
- Lychee (litchi)
- Quince
- Rhubarb
- Smoothies (fruit puree = juice)



Non-Creditable Fruit

- 'Ade' drinks (e.g., Lemonade)
- Coconut flour and coconut oil
- Cranberry Juice Cocktail
- Fig bars
- Frozen fruit-flavored bars (less than 100% juice)
- Fruit butters (e.g., Apple Butter)
- Fruit chips, commercial (banana, apple, pear)
- Fruit-flavored syrup or powder
- Fruit in quick breads, muffins
- Fruit in commercial fruited yogurt
- Fruit snacks (leather, rollups, shapes, strips, drops, or other fruit snack type products)
- Fruit-flavored water
- Gelatin, Jell-O™

- Gummy fruit candy
- Home canned fruits
- Honey, syrup
- Ice cream, fruit-flavored
- Jam, jelly, preserves
- Juice cocktails (less than 100% juice)
- Juice or fruit drinks (less than 100% juice)
- Kool-Aid
- Lemon pie filling
- Popsicles (less than 100% juice)
- Pudding with fruit, commercial
- Punch (less than 100% juice)
- Sherbet, sorbet, commercial

Grains



Meal	Grain Requirements
Breakfast	Must be served <ul style="list-style-type: none">A meat/meat alternate may be served at breakfast, in place of the grain component, up to three days/week
Lunch and Supper	Must be served
Snacks	May be served as one of the two components

Grains must list whole grain/flour, enriched grain/flour, bran, or germ as the 1st ingredient (or 2nd after water).

Grain-based desserts (GBD) are not creditable and cannot be served to meet the grains component at any meal or snack. This includes whole grain-rich and homemade items. For more information see [Is it a Grain-Based Dessert?](#) handout. See next page for a list of GBD.

Commercially purchased foods that contain grains like pizza, breaded chicken nuggets, pasta salad with vegetables or meats/meat alternates, and other items that do not have a standard of identify, contain two or more meal components, and/or contain non-creditable ingredients are ONLY creditable with a CN Label or PFS. See box at the bottom of page 4 for more information.

Whole Grain-Rich (WGR)

At least one serving of grains per day must be whole grain-rich (WGR). WGR foods contain at least 50% whole grains, and the rest of the grain ingredients are enriched, bran, or germ.



If your program:

- Claims more than one meal/snack: you may choose the meal to serve the WGR item
- Only claims snack: if one of the two components served is a grain item, it must be WGR
- Only claims one meal: a grain is required to be served and must be WGR. If breakfast is the only meal, then a WGR item does not need to be served when a meat/meat alternate is served in place of the grain (allowed up to 3 times/week)

Identifying WGR

- To determine if a grain product is WGR, use the [Whole Grain-Rich Flow Chart](#).
- Corn products, such as tortillas and tortilla chips: See [CACFP Training Spotlight: Tortilla Chips and Corn Chips](#) to determine if product is WGR.

Breakfast Cereals (ready-to-eat, instant, and hot cereals)

Cereals must be whole grain, enriched, or fortified. A cereal is whole grain-rich when the first grain ingredient is a whole grain and the cereal is fortified.



Breakfast cereals must contain **no more than 6 grams of added sugars per dry ounce**

- Use a cereal's Nutrition Facts label and charts in the [Cereal Added Sugar Limits](#) handout to determine if a cereal meets this requirement and can be served.
- Cereals on any state's WIC list meet this requirement and can be served. See [Cereal Added Sugar Limits](#) for a list of WI WIC cereals.
- Cereals that meet sugar limits cannot be mixed with cereals that are above sugar limits

Cereals are categorized as flakes, rounds, puffed, or granola. For information on cereals in these categories and amounts to serve of each type, see the [Cereal Types](#) handout:

- [Cereal Types](#)
- [Cereal Types - ADC](#)

Grains

How Much to Serve?

For serving sizes of common creditable grain items, see the CACFP Grains Chart:

- [CACFP Grains Chart](#) OR [CACFP Grains Chart - ADC](#)



Creditable Grains

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Bagels• Biscotti, savory• Biscuits• Bread• Bread sticks, hard or soft• Bread stuffing• Buns• Cereal, dry or cooked• Chips, grain-based (when first ingredient is whole or enriched grain/flour) (Sun Chips, tortilla chips)• Corn masa, masa harina• Cornbread, corn muffins, corn pone• Couscous• Crackers, sweet or savory (animal, fish-shaped or similar, graham, oyster, saltine, zwieback)• Crepes• Croissants• Crusts or puff pastry of main dish pie or quiche• Dumplings• Egg roll skins, won ton wrappers• English muffins• Fry bread (cannot deep-fry onsite)• Grains (e.g., barley, bulgur, millet, rye, wheat) | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Grits, cooked, dry (hominy)• Kasha (toasted buckwheat groats)• Melba Toast• Muffins• Oats, oatmeal (rolled oats, steel cut, quick-cooking, instant, old fashioned)• Pancakes• Pasta (all shapes - macaroni, spaghetti, etc.)• Pita bread or round• Pizza crust• Polenta• Popcorn• Pretzels, soft and hard• Quick breads (banana, carrot, pumpkin, zucchini)• Quinoa• Rice (brown, enriched white, wild)• Rice cakes• Rolls (dinner, white, whole wheat, potato)• Scones, savory• Spoon bread• Taco, tostada or tortilla shells• Tortillas (corn or wheat)• Waffles |
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Non-Creditable Grains

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• When first ingredient, or second after water, is not whole or enriched grain/flour, bran, or germ• When sugar is listed before first grain on ingredient list• Cereals that are not whole grain, enriched, or fortified• Cereals above added sugar limits• Chips, grain-based, when not whole grain or enriched• Nut, legume (bean), or seed flour | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Potatoes (creditable as vegetable, not grain)• Potato chips, potato sticks• Tapioca• Tortilla chips when first ingredient, or second after water, is not a whole or enriched grain• Veggie straws, chips, or sticks, when first ingredient is not a whole or enriched grain |
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Non-Creditable ~ Grain-Based Desserts (GBD)

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Biscotti, sweet with fruits, chocolate, icing• Bread/breadstick with sweet filling (such as pie filling)• Bread pudding• Brownies• Cakes (coffee cake, pound cake, cupcakes)• Caramel popcorn and kettle corn• Cereal bars, breakfast bars, marshmallow cereal treats• Churros• Cinnamon rolls• Cookies• Croissants, sweet (e.g., chocolate-filled)• Crusts of dessert pies, cobblers, and fruit turnovers• Danish pastries (Danishes), sweet pastries | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Doughnuts• Fig or fruit bars/rolls/cookies• Gingerbread• Granola bars, grain-fruit bars• Ice cream cones• Pita chips, sweet (e.g., cinnamon-sugar flavored)• Puppy chow• Rice pudding• Scones, sweet with fruits, chocolate, icing• Sopapillas• Sweet rolls/buns• Toaster pastries (Pop-tarts®)• Vanilla wafers |
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