

# TIP Sheet for Accepting Processed Product Documentation

Child Nutrition (CN) Labels, product formulation statements, and product labels provide a way for food manufacturers to communicate with school program operators about how their products may contribute to the meal pattern requirements for meals served under the Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Child Nutrition programs. Below are tips for acceptable documentation using CN Labels and Product Formulation Statements:

## CN Labeled Products

- ❖ The CN Label provides a warranty against audit claims when the product is used according to the manufacturer's direction.
  - ✓ Program operators may submit an **original CN Label**, or a photocopy or photograph of the original CN Label during an administrative review as acceptable and valid documentation. If using a photocopy or photograph of the CN label, please be sure to follow the criteria below:
    - ✓ Photocopies of the CN label must be shown attached to the original product carton; or
    - ✓ Photographs of the CN Label must be shown attached to the original product carton.  
(CN Labels that are photocopied or photographed must be visible and legible.)
- ❖ When a valid CN logo and crediting statement is provided, State reviewers **must not** request a Product Formulation Statement or other additional crediting information.

## Watermarked CN Labels

- ❖ A CN label with a watermark is used when the CN logo and contribution statement are used on product information other than the actual product carton and is presented as a separate document.
- ❖ If the original CN Label, or the valid photograph or photocopy of the original CN Label **is not** available, program operators may provide the Bill of Lading (invoice) containing the product name **and**:
  - ✓ A hard copy of the CN Label copied with a watermark displaying the product name and CN number provided by the vendor; or
  - ✓ An electronic copy of the CN Label with a watermark displaying the product name and CN number provided by the vendor.

## Product Formulation Statements (PFS)/Other Documentation

- ❖ PFS must be on signed letterhead that demonstrates how the processed product contributes to the meal pattern requirements.
- ❖ Templates for documenting meal components are available on the FNS website at: <http://www.fns.usda.gov/cnlabeling/food-manufacturersindustry>
- ❖ PFS may be modified for various products contributing to more than one meal component. The crediting information for each meal component may be documented on the same PFS.
- ❖ Creditable ingredients listed in the PFS must match a description in the *Food Buying Guide for School Meal Programs* available at: <http://www.fns.usda.gov/tn/food-buying-guide-school-meal-programs>.
- ❖ PFS should verify that the product's contribution to the meal pattern requirements is not greater than the serving size of the product (i.e., a 2.15 ounce beef patty may not credit more than 2.00 ounce M/MA).
- ❖ PFS should assure that the creditable components are in the finished product.