

Professional Cooking

Every production record tells a story.....

"Schools must keep production and menu records for meals they produce. These records must show how the meals contribute to the required food components, food items or menu items every day." (7CFR Section 210.10(a)(3) This federal regulation means that production records must be maintained daily, for all meals, breakfast, lunch and snack, for each serving line.

Production records document that the daily menu served was in full compliance with the food based menu plan. They are working tools that serve multiple functions in your school food service operation. By filling out the document correctly, legibly, and in its entirety, it creates a tool for success, providing a full and clear picture of what happened on a particular day.

Tips for using production records effectively

After the menu is planned and written, and BEFORE the meal service, the menu planner can begin the process, by prefilling the daily document for each meal service with the following:

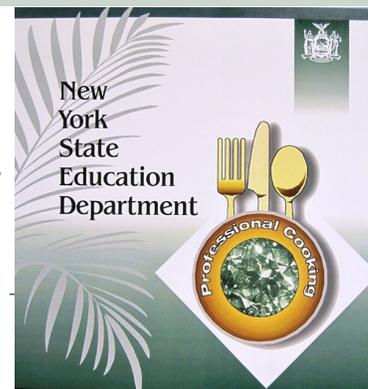
- Name of the school building
- Date
- Age/grade level
- All items included in a reimbursable meal, to include condiments and milk
- Recipe #, CN number, or brand specific item (Tyson chicken patty # 80025)
- Actual serving size (1 melon wedge, ½ cup/wedge) Remain consistent using either volume or weight measurements, keeping in mind that ½ cup volume measure is not the same as 4 oz. by weight.
- Number of planned servings. This means how many to plan on serving in the future, not what was actually served. (400 wedges)
- Number of servings per unit (10 wedges /melon or 64- ½ cup serving/pan)
- Substitutions (dark green veg for dark green veg, being consistent in the veg sub groups)

These preliminary steps are beneficial for the purposes of ordering and minimizing inventory. It reduces food waste and leftovers, helping the operation to run in an efficient and cost effective manner. It provides clear and concise expectations for the food service staff, so there is no uncertainty as to what the serving size should be or how much of a particular food item should be prepared. It tells a story for the unexpected substitute who must recreate the same delicious meal the regular cook makes. It is a great communication tool!

The next steps occur AFTER the meal service is over. Cooks and food service staff complete the remaining data on the sheet. These areas include:

- # of total actual servings prepared
- # of those servings that were reimbursable meals
- # of servings that were a la carte, adult or second meals
- # of servings that were leftover (when leftovers are served on another day, be sure to record them as meals served on the day they are served)
- Comments (bad weather, large number ill or missing students because of a field trip)

Once all of the data has been entered, retained the document in the building for three years, plus the current year. Production records are documents needed for an Administrative Review. The information is supporting documentation used for submitting claims for reimbursement, justifying meal counts and items served on a particular day. It identifies information needed for the nutrient analysis. It builds a history of student selections, helping to plan future menus. Be sure to track it as it happens. Do not rely on memory to write things later, because most likely you will forget. So as you can see, the information gathered each day tells a story. If you need help with how to write one, contact your School Food Program Specialist today!



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