

CHILD NUTRITION (CN) LABELS AND PRODUCT FACT SHEETS

Purchasing food for a child nutrition program can sometimes be a challenge. Not only do buyers have to plan menus that meet federal meal pattern requirements and nutrition standards but the foods they purchase must also provide quality and value and at the same time be appealing to children. Buyers must also be able to identify the contribution that a food or food product makes towards meeting meal pattern requirements. The challenge arises when buyers purchase convenience food products that are either breaded, battered, provide a combination of foods or contain a mixture of ingredients because it is difficult to determine these products' contribution to the meal pattern.

CN Labels found on certain food products, as well as Product Fact Sheets, can be used by buyers to verify the meal pattern contributions of a convenience food. The chart below defines both and summarizes their differences.

The following comparison chart summarizes the major differences between a Child Nutrition (CN) Label and a Product Fact Sheet.

COMPARISON CHART

	<u>CHILD NUTRITION LABELS</u>	<u>PRODUCT FACT SHEETS</u>
DESCRIPTION	Product label, which contains a statement that clearly identifies the meal pattern contribution of the product.	Signed statement, by the manufacturer's president, that identifies the contribution that the food makes towards meeting meal pattern requirements.
STANDARD INFORMATION IS REQUIRED	Yes – see page 2	No
REVIEWED AND MONITORED BY THE USDA	Yes	No
CARRIES A USDA GUARANTEE	Yes - provides a warranty	No
PRODUCT IDENTIFICATION NUMBER	Each CN labeled product is assigned its own distinct six-digit identification number.	The same product identification number may be used for many different products.