

Smart Snacks in School

USDA's "All Foods Sold in Schools" Standards

NUTRITION STANDARDS FOR FOOD

Any food sold in schools must:

- Be a "whole-grain-rich" grain product; or
- Have as the first ingredient a fruit, a vegetable, a dairy product, or a protein food; or
- Be a combination food that contains at least ¼ cup of fruit and/or vegetable; or
- Contain 10% of the Daily Value (DV) of one of the nutrients of public health concern in the 2010 Dietary Guidelines for Americans (calcium, potassium, vitamin D, or dietary fiber).*

Foods must also meet several nutrient requirements:

- **Calorie limits:**
 - Snack items: ≤ 200 calories
 - Entrée items: ≤ 350 calories
- **Sodium limits:**
 - Snack items: ≤ 230 mg.**
 - Entrée items: ≤ 480 mg.
- **Fat limits:**
 - Total fat: ≤ 35% of calories
 - Saturated fat: < 10% of calories
 - Trans fat: zero grams
- **Sugar limit:**
 - ≤ 35% of weight from total sugars in foods

*On July 1, 2016, foods may not qualify using the 10% DV criteria.

**On July 1, 2016, snack items must contain ≤ 200 mg. sodium per item.

NUTRITION STANDARDS FOR BEVERAGES

All schools may sell:

- Plain water (with or without carbonation)
- Unflavored low-fat milk
- Unflavored or flavored fat-free milk and milk alternatives permitted by NSLP/SBP
- 100% fruit or vegetable juice and
- 100% fruit or vegetable juice diluted with water (with or without carbonation), and no added sweeteners.
- **Elementary schools may sell up to 8-ounce portions, while middle schools and high schools may sell up to 12-ounce portions of milk and juice. There is no portion size limit for plain water.**
- **Beyond this, the standards allow additional "no calorie" and "lower calorie" beverage options for high school students.**
- No more than 20-ounce portions of calorie-free, flavored water (with or without carbonation), and other flavored and/or carbonated beverages that are labeled to contain < 5 calories per 8 fluid ounces or ≤ 10 calories per 20 fluid ounces.
- No more than 12-ounce portions of beverages with ≤ 40 calories per 8 fluid ounces, or ≤ 60 calories per 12 fluid ounces.

OTHER REQUIREMENTS

Fundraisers

- The sale of food items that meet nutrition requirements at fundraisers are not limited in any way under the standards.
- The standards do not apply during non-school hours, on weekends, and at off-campus fundraising events.
- The standards provide a special exemption for infrequent fundraisers that do not meet the nutrition standards. State agencies may determine the frequency with which fundraising activities take place that allow the sale of food and beverage items that do not meet the nutrition standards.

Accompaniments

- Accompaniments such as cream cheese, salad dressing and butter must be included in the nutrient profile as part of the food item sold.
- This helps control the amount of calories, fat, sugar and sodium added to foods by accompaniments, which can be significant.