

Smarter Snacking in Schools

The latest addition to the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act is concerned with school food sold outside of reimbursable meals and targets vending machine and a la carte food and beverages available to students. These **Smart Snacks in School Standards** regulate all foods sold in schools and aim to ensure that the food schoolchildren have access to all day remain in line with the latest science-based nutrition information.

This interim final rule was published by the USDA on June 28, 2013 and begins to take effect **August 27, 2013**.

- The potable water provision is effective immediately.
- All other provisions must be implemented by July 1, 2014.

The Smart Snacks in School Standards endeavor to reduce junk-food consumption in school by addressing nutritional value, serving sizes, permissible beverages and specifications on accompanying foods and fundraising foods.

"Many parents are working hard every day to make sure they provide healthy, balanced meals and snacks to their kids. Unfortunately, we don't always have control over the snacks our kids have access to when they're away from home. That's why, as a mom myself, I am so excited that schools will now be offering healthier choices to students and reinforcing the work we do at home to help our kids stay healthy."

- First Lady Michelle Obama



Smarter Snacking in Schools (continued)

Standards for a la carte and Vending Machine Foods & Beverages At a Glance

All foods sold in schools must:

- Be “whole grain-rich” product; or
- Have a fruit, vegetable, dairy product or protein food as the first ingredient; or
- Be a combination food containing a minimum of ¼ cup of fruit and/or vegetable; or
- Contain 10 percent of the Daily Value (DV) of one of the nutrients of public health concern in the 2010 Dietary Guidelines for Americans (see box, TK).

Note: On July 1, 2016, foods may not qualify using the 10 percent DV criteria.

Foods served in school must meet the following nutrient requirements:

Calories:

- Snack items: ≤ 200 calories
- Entrée items: ≤ 350 calories

Sodium:

- Snack items: ≤ 230 mg
- Entrée items: ≤ 480 mg

Fats:

- Total fat: ≤35% of calories
- Saturated fat: < 10% of calories
- Trans fat: zero grams

Sugar:

- ≤ 35% of weight from total sugars in foods

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

Nutrients of Concern

The USDA has identified the following nutrients as having low enough levels of intake for Americans to be a public health concern:

- ⊙ Calcium
- ⊙ Potassium
- ⊙ Vitamin D
- ⊙ Dietary fiber

Smarter Snacking in Schools (continued)

Beverage Allowances

All schools of any grade level 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 percent fruit or vegetable juice
- 100 percent 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.

Schools may offer to **high school students only** additional no-calorie or lower-calorie beverages:

- Portions no larger than 20 ounces of calorie-free flavored water (with or without carbonation)
- Other flavored and/or carbonated beverages labeled as containing < 5 calories per 8 fluid ounces or \leq 10 calories per 20 fluid ounces
- Portions no larger than 12 ounces of beverages with \leq 40 calories per 8 fluid ounces or \leq 60 calories per 12 fluid ounces

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.

Smarter Snacking in Schools (continued)

Accompanying Foods

- 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.

A Note on the Smart Snacks in School Standards

The commenting window for these standards remains open through **October 28, 2013**. The USDA is seeking feedback on the standards and how their implementation has positively or negatively affected your operations, staff and students.

Comments can be made online at **www.regulations.gov** by using docket number **FNS-2011-0019**.

2014 Guide: Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act

Additions, Revisions & Updates

Nutrition Standards for All Foods Sold in School

Food/Nutrient	Standard	Exemptions to the Standard
General Standard for Competitive Food.	<p>To be allowable, a competitive FOOD item must:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. meet all of the proposed competitive food nutrient standards; and 2. be a grain product that contains 50% or more whole grains by weight or have whole grains as the first ingredient*; or 3. have as the first ingredient* one of the non-grain main food groups: fruits, vegetables, dairy, or protein foods (meat, beans, poultry, seafood, eggs, nuts, seeds, etc.); or 4. be a combination food that contains at least ¼ cup fruit and/or vegetable; or 5. contain 10% of the Daily Value (DV) of a nutrient of public health concern (i.e., calcium, potassium, vitamin D, or dietary fiber). Effective July 1, 2016 this criterion is obsolete and may not be used to qualify as a competitive food. <p>*If water is the first ingredient, the second ingredient must be one of items 2, 3 or 4 above.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fresh fruits and vegetables with no added ingredients except water are exempt from all nutrient standards. • Canned and frozen fruits with no added ingredients except water, or are packed in 100% juice, extra light syrup, or light syrup are exempt from all nutrient standards. • Canned vegetables with no added ingredients except water or that contain a small amount of sugar for processing purposes to maintain the quality and structure of the vegetable are exempt from all nutrient standards.
NSLP/SBP Entrée Items Sold A la Carte.	Any entrée item offered as part of the lunch program or the breakfast program is exempt from all competitive food standards if it is sold as a competitive food on the day of service or the day after service in the lunch or breakfast program.	
Sugar-Free Chewing Gum	Sugar-free chewing gum is exempt from all competitive food standards.	
Total Fats	Acceptable food items must have ≤ 35% calories from total fat as served.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduced fat cheese (including part-skim mozzarella) is exempt from the total fat standard. • Nuts and seeds and nut/seed butters are exempt from the total fat standard.

Nutrition Standards for All Foods Sold in School (continued)

Food/Nutrient	Standard	Exemptions to the Standard
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Products consisting of only dried fruit with nuts and/or seeds with no added nutritive sweeteners or fats are exempt from the total fat standard. • Seafood with no added fat is exempt from the total fat standard. <p>Combination products are not exempt and must meet all the nutrient standards.</p>
Saturated Fats	Acceptable food items must have < 10% calories from saturated fat as served.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduced fat cheese (including part-skim mozzarella) is exempt from the saturated fat standard. • Nuts and seeds and nut/seed butters are exempt from the saturated fat standard. • Products consisting of only dried fruit with nuts and/or seeds with no added nutritive sweeteners or fats are exempt from the saturated fat standard. <p>Combination products are not exempt and must meet all the nutrient standards.</p>
Sugar	Acceptable food items must have ≤ 35% of weight from total sugar as served.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dried whole fruits or vegetables; dried whole fruit or vegetable pieces; and dehydrated fruits or vegetables with no added nutritive sweeteners are exempt from the sugar standard. • Dried whole fruits, or pieces, with nutritive sweeteners that are required for processing and/or palatability purposes (i.e., cranberries, tart cherries, or blueberries) are exempt from the sugar standard.

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Nutrition Standards for All Foods Sold in School (continued)

Food/Nutrient	Standard	Exemptions to the Standard
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Products consisting of only exempt dried fruit with nuts and/or seeds with no added nutritive sweeteners or fats are exempt from the sugar standard.
Calories	<p>Snack items and side dishes sold a la carte: ≤ 200 calories per item as served, including any added accompaniments.</p> <p>Entrée items sold a la carte: ≤ 350 calories per item as served including any added accompaniments.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Entrée items served as an NSLP or SBP entrée are exempt on the day of or day after service in the program meal.
Caffeine	<p>Elementary and Middle School: foods and beverages must be caffeine-free with the exception of trace amounts of naturally occurring caffeine substances.</p> <p>High School: foods and beverages may contain caffeine.</p>	