

The health of today's school environment continues to improve. Students across the country are now offered healthier school meals with more fruits, vegetables and whole grains through the National School Lunch Program and the School Breakfast Program.

The Smart Snacks in School standards published by USDA will build on those healthy advancements by ensuring that all other snack foods and beverages available for sale to students in school are tasty and nutritious.

Nutrition Standards for Foods

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).*

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

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, snack items must contain ≤ 200 mg sodium per item.

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.



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 alternatives permitted by NSLP/SBP
- 100% fruit or vegetable juice and
- 100% fruit or vegetable juice diluted (with or without carbonation), and no sweeteners.

Elementary schools may sell up to 8-ounce portions, while middle schools and high schools 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" beverages for high school students.

- No more than 20-ounce portions of calorie-free, flavored water (with or without carbonation); and other flavored and carbonated beverages that are labeled to contain < 5 calories per 8 fluid ounces and ≤ 10 calories per 20 fluid ounces.
- No more than 12-ounce portions of beverages with ≤ 40 calories per 8 fluid ounces and ≤ 60 calories per 12 fluid ounces.