

USDA Smart Snacks in Schools

Effective July 1, 2014
Food Guidelines

Nutrition Standards for Foods (per item as packaged or served)



General Standards for ALL food sold on the school campus, during the school day must:

- Be a whole grain-rich grain product: OR
- Have as the first ingredient a fruit, vegetable dairy product, or protein food; OR
- Be a combination food that contains at least 1/4 cup fruit and/or vegetable; OR
- Contain 10% of the Daily Value (DV) of a nutrient of public health concern in the 2010 Dietary Guidelines for Americans (Calcium, potassium, vitamin D, or dietary fiber).*

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

Foods must also meet all of the specific nutrient standards (with accompaniments):

Calorie Limits

- Entrée items: ≤350 Calories
- Snack/side items: ≤200 calories

Sodium limits

- Entrée items: ≤480 mg
- Snack/side items: ≤230 mg**

Fat limits

- Total fat: ≤35% of total calories
 - Exemptions: Reduced fat cheese (including part skim mozzarella) , nuts & seeds & nut/seed butters, dried fruit with nuts and/or seeds with no added nutritive sweeteners or fats, seafood with no added fat
- Saturated fat: <10% of total calories
 - Exemptions: Reduced fat cheese (including part skim mozzarella), nuts & seeds & nut/seed butters, Dried fruit with nuts and /or seeds with no added nutritive sweeteners or fats
- Trans Fat: Zero grams (<0.5g)

Sugar limit

- Total sugar: ≤35% of weight from total sugars
 - Exemptions: Dried/dehydrated fruits or vegetables with no added nutritive sweeteners, dried fruits with nutritive sweeteners for processing and/or palatability, products consisting of only exempt dried fruit with nuts and/or seeds with no added nutritive sweeteners or fats

** Effective July 1, 2016, snack/side items must contain ≤ 200 mg sodium

Exemptions from meeting all nutrient standards:

- Fresh, frozen and canned fruits and vegetables with no added ingredients
- Canned vegetables that contain a small amount of sugar for processing purposes
- Entrée items offered as part of the lunch program or breakfast program on the day of service or the day after service (entrée item is a combination food of M/MA and G or combination of M/MA and F or V or a M/MA served alone
- Sugar-free chewing gum