

Nutritional Criteria for the GUIDELINES

FOR FOOD AND BEVERAGE SALES IN BC SCHOOLS

The Guidelines for Food and Beverage Sales in BC Schools are one part of a broader healthy schools approach that promotes healthy choices both in and out of the classroom. These standards also apply at the cafeteria, school store, vending machines, Parent Advisory Council events and for fundraising – in short, all school sanctioned events.

In general, the Guidelines encourage the consumption of foods that are less processed and lower in fat, sodium and sugars.

Rating Foods and Beverages

The Guidelines are a series of nutritional criteria for groups of foods and beverages that are used to define a healthy food. Criteria are divided into 3 rankings:

- **Sell Most** (50% or more of items offered)
- **Sell Sometimes** (up to 50% of items offered)
- **DO NOT SELL**

Rankings are established by comparing the nutritional content of each food against the most applicable category. e.g. bread would be compared to the Criteria for Grain Products

To save time, freshly prepared foods can be rated using the Checklists provided and must meet or exceed the criteria for the Sell Sometimes standard to be categorized as SELL.

Rankings for some prepared foods like restaurant foods and packaged foods can be found on line at www.brandnamefoodlist.ca.

Need Help?

Food and Nutrition Services is available to help you plan a healthy menu for your event using the Guidelines. Please call us at 604-595-5300.

The Nutritional Groups

1. VEGETABLES AND FRUIT
2. GRAIN PRODUCTS
3. MILK AND ALTERNATIVE BASED FOODS
4. MEAT AND ALTERNATIVES
5. VEGETABLE AND FRUIT JUICES
6. MILK AND ALTERNATIVE BEVERAGES
7. OTHER BEVERAGES
8. MIXED ENTREES
9. SIDE DISHES
10. SOUP
11. SNACK BARS AND TRAIL MIX
12. CONDIMENTS, DRESSINGS, SPREADS AND DIPS
13. CONFECTIONARY.

VEGETABLES AND FRUIT

Food in this category has a fruit or vegetable as the first ingredient (not including water).

Examples of Food Scored in this Category:

Applesauce, dried seaweed, dried fruit, French fries, frozen fruit bars, fruit cups, fruit gummies, fruit or vegetable chips, hash browns, mashed potatoes, roasted potatoes, vegetable-only salad with dressing, vegetable-only stir fry.

	SELL Most	SELL Sometimes	Do Not SELL
Fat	< 5g or less		More than 5g
Trans Fat	< 5% or less of total fat		More than 5% of total fat
Sodium	< 140mg or less	< 300mg or less	More than 300mg
Sugars	< 20g or less	< 30g or less	More than 30g
Sugar Ingredients	First ingredient may not be a sugar		First ingredient is a sugar
Sugar Substitutes	NO Sugar Substitutes	NO Sugar Substitutes except in Secondary Schools	Contains sugar substitutes except in Secondary Schools
Caffeine	<15mg or less		More than 15mg or 'caffeine' listed in ingredient list and amount not indicated on label
Additional Ingredients	NO cautionary statements or NO specific quantity of botanical ingredients listed on the label		Food label has a cautionary statement or a cautionary quantity of botanical ingredients on the label

GRAIN PRODUCTS

Food in this category has a grain listed as the first or second ingredient (not including water). Some examples of grain ingredients include flour, oats, barley, rice and bran.

Examples of Food Scored in this Category:

Bagels, bread, buns, cakes, chapatti, cookies, crackers, doughnuts, English muffins, loaves, muffins, naan, pancakes, pita bread, pizza crust, pretzels, rice cakes, seasoned or sauced noodles, pasta or rice, toaster pastries, tortilla chips, tortilla wraps, waffles.

This category also includes prepackaged cold breakfast cereals or prepackaged hot cereal mixes such as ready-to-eat cold cereals, instant cream of rice, instant cream of wheat, instant oatmeal

	SELL Most	SELL Sometimes	Do Not SELL
Whole Grain	First ingredient must be a whole grain (not including water, fruit or vegetable)	No <i>whole grain</i> criteria	
Fat	< 5g or less	< 7g or less	More than 7g
Saturated Fat	< 3g or less		More than 3g
Trans Fat	< 5% or less of total fat		More than 5% of total fat
Sodium	< 350mg or less	< 450mg or less	More than 450mg
	For cereal: <200mg or less	<300 mg or less	>300 mg
Sugars	< 6g or less *If fruit is the first or second ingredient may have up to 14g sugar	< 16g or less *If fruit is first or second ingredient may have up to 20g sugar	More than 16g *If fruit is the first or second ingredient may have up to 20g sugar
Sugar Ingredients	First ingredient may not be a sugar		First ingredient is a sugar
Sugar Substitutes	NO Sugar Substitutes	NO Sugar Substitutes except in Secondary Schools	Contains sugar substitutes except in Secondary Schools
Caffeine	< 15mg or less		More than 15mg or 'caffeine' listed in ingredient list and amount not indicated on label
Additional Ingredients	NO cautionary statements or NO specific quantity of botanical ingredients listed on the label		Food label has a cautionary statement or a cautionary quantity of botanical ingredients on the label

MILK AND ALTERNATIVE-BASED FOOD

Food in this category has milk or milk ingredients as the first ingredient. Some examples of milk ingredients include cream, evaporated milk, milk, modified milk ingredients, milk solids, skim milk powder, and whey. Fortified plant based yogurts and cheese are also scored in this group.

Examples of Food Scored in this Category:

Cheese, custard, frozen soy-based desserts, frozen yogurt, gelato, ice cream, pudding, yogurt.

	SELL Most	SELL Sometimes	Do Not SELL
Fat	< 15g or less		More than 15g
Trans Fat	< 5% or less of total fat		More than 5% of total fat
Sodium	< 350mg or less	< 450mg or less	More than 450mg
Sugars	< 13g or less	< 20g or less	More than 20g
Calcium	10% DV or more	5% DV or more	Less than 5% DV
Sugar Substitutes	NO Sugar Substitutes	NO Sugar Substitutes <i>except</i> in Secondary Schools	Contains sugar substitutes <i>except</i> in Secondary Schools
Caffeine	<15mg or less		More than 15mg or 'caffeine' listed in ingredient list and amount not indicated on label
Additional Ingredients	NO cautionary statements or NO specific quantity of botanical ingredients listed on the label		Food label has a cautionary statement or a cautionary quantity of botanical ingredients on the label

MEAT AND ALTERNATIVES

Food in this category has a meat or alternative as the first or second ingredient.

Examples of Food Scored in this Category:

Breaded fish, burger patties, chicken fingers, hot dogs, luncheon meats, meatloaf, plain or seasoned nuts, plain or seasoned seeds, sausages, seasoned chicken, seasoned tofu, Swedish meatballs, tuna salad, veggie breakfast links, veggie burger patties.

	SELL Most	SELL Sometimes	Do Not SELL
Calcium	250 calories or less	350 calories or less	More than 350 calories
Fat	< 12g or less (Peanut, nut or seed products are exempt from fat criteria)	< 16g or less (Peanut, nut or seed products are exempt from fat criteria)	More than 16g
Saturated Fat	5g or less	7g or less	More than
Trans Fat	< 5% or less of total fat		More than 5% of total fat
Sodium	< 250mg or less (Peanut, nut and seed products must have 200mg or less)	< 450mg or less (Peanut, nut and seed products must have 300mg or less)	More than 450mg (Peanut, nut and seed products with more than 300gm)
Sugars	< 4g or less	< 8g or less	More than 8g
Protein	> 7g or more (Peanut, nut and seed products are exempt from protein criteria)	> 5g or more (Peanut, nut and seed products are exempt from protein criteria)	Less than 5g (Peanut, nut and seed products are exempt from protein criteria)
Sugar Substitutes	NO Sugar Substitutes	NO Sugar Substitutes except in Secondary Schools	Contains sugar substitutes except in Secondary Schools
Caffeine	< 15mg or less		More than 15mg or 'caffeine' listed in ingredient list and amount not indicated on label
Additional Ingredients	NO cautionary statements or NO specific quantity of botanical ingredients listed on the label		Food label has a cautionary statement or a cautionary quantity of botanical ingredients on the label

VEGETABLE AND FRUIT JUICES

Beverages in this category have a vegetable or fruit juice, or a vegetable or fruit puree as the first ingredient (not including water)

Examples of Food Scored in this Category:

Frozen fruit juice/puree bars, fruit cocktails, fruit juice, fruit juice smoothies, fruit & vegetable juice blends, tomato juice, vegetable juice

	SELL Most	SELL Sometimes	Do Not SELL
Serving Size	No juices fit in this category	Elementary < 250ml or less	Elementary More than 250ml
Fat		< 5g or less	More than 5g
Trans Fat		< 5% or less of total fat	More than 5% of total fat
Added Sugars		No Added Sugars ("concentrated fruit juice" is considered an added sugar if it is not preceded by water in the ingredient list)	Added Sugars ("concentrated fruit juice" is considered an added sugar if it is not preceded by water in the ingredient list)
Sodium		< 200mg or less per 250ml	More than 200mg per 250ml
Sugars Substitutes		NO Sugar Substitutes except in Secondary Schools	Contains Sugar Substitutes except in Secondary Schools
Caffeine		< 15mg or less	More than 15mg or 'caffeine' listed in ingredient list and amount not indicated on label
Additional Ingredients		NO cautionary statements or NO specific quantity of botanical ingredients listed on the label	Food label has a cautionary statement or a cautionary quantity of botanical ingredients on the label

MILK AND ALTERNATIVE BEVERAGES

Beverages in this category have milk or milk ingredients listed as the first ingredient. Fortified plant-based beverages are also scored in this group.

Examples of Food Scored in this Category:

Almond beverage, plain and flavoured milk, rice beverage, soy beverage, yogurt drinks.

	SELL Most	SELL Sometimes	Do Not SELL
Serving Size	Elementary < 250ml or less Middle/Secondary <500ml or less		Elementary More than 250ml Middle/Secondary More than 500ml
Fat	< 5g or less per 250ml	< 10g or less per 250ml	More than 10g per 250ml
Trans Fat	< 5% or less of total fat		More than 5% of total fat
Sodium	< 150mg or less per 250ml	< 250mg or less per 250ml	More than 250mg per 250ml
Sugars	< 13g or less per 250ml	< 20g or less per 250ml	More than 20g per 250ml
Protein	6g or more per 250ml	Less than 6g per 250ml	No criteria
Calcium	30% DV or more per 250ml	20% DV or more per 250ml	Less than 20% DV per 250ml
Vitamin D	44% DV or more per 250ml	Less than 44% DV per 250ml	No criteria
Sugar Substitutes	NO Sugar Substitutes	NO Sugar Substitutes except in Secondary Schools	Contains sugar substitutes except in Secondary Schools
Caffeine	< 15mg or less		More than 15mg or 'caffeine' listed in ingredient list and amount not indicated on label
Additional Ingredients	NO cautionary statements or NO specific quantity of botanical ingredients listed on the label		Food label has a cautionary statement or a cautionary quantity of botanical ingredients on the label

OTHER BEVERAGES

Beverages in this category are non-juice, non-milk based drinks.

Examples of Food Scored in this Category:

Bottled water, flavoured water, fruit-flavoured drinks, ice tea, soft drinks, sparkling water, sport/electrolyte drinks, and vitamin-enhanced water.

	SELL Most	SELL Sometimes	Do Not SELL
Serving Size	No beverages other than plain water (still or carbonated) fits in this category	< 600ml or less	More than 600ml
Fat		< 3g or less	More than 3g
Trans Fat		< 5% or less of total fat	More than 5% of total fat
Sodium		< 200mg or less per 250ml	More than 200mg per 250ml
Sugars		< 8g or less	More than 8g
Sugars Substitutes		NO Sugar Substitutes except in Secondary Schools	Contains Sugar Substitutes except in Secondary Schools
Caffeine		< 15mg or less	More than 15mg or 'caffeine' listed in ingredient list and amount not indicated on label
Additional Ingredients		NO cautionary statements or NO specific quantity of botanical ingredients listed on the label	Food label has a cautionary statement or a cautionary quantity of botanical ingredients on the label

MIXED ENTREES

Food in this category contains core ingredients from two or more food groups and do not fit into the single food categories. These foods are served as the main part of a meal. Hearty soups such as minestrone and fish chowders served as the main part of a meal are scored in this category. Smaller portions of these foods that are not served as the main part of a meal should be scored in the “Side Dish” category.

Examples of Food Scored in this Category:

Breakfast bagels, burritos, chili, curries, lasagna, macaroni & cheese, meal-style salads, pizza, samosas, sandwiches, spaghetti with meatballs, stews, stir-fries, sushi, tofu with noodles, wraps, chicken enchiladas, paella, shepherd’s pie, seafood casserole, taco salad.

	SELL Most	SELL Sometimes	Do Not SELL
Whole Grain	If first ingredients is a grain, the grain must be a whole grain	No whole grain criteria	No whole grain criteria
Fat	<17g or less		More than 7g
Saturated Fat	< 5g or less	<8g or less	More than 8g
Trans Fat	5% or less of total fat		More than 5% of total fat
Sodium	<700mg or less	< 900mg or less	More than 900mg
Sugars	< 24g or less		More than 24g
Protein	10g or more		Less than 10g
Sugar Substitutes	NO Sugar Substitutes	NO Sugar Substitutes except in Secondary Schools	Contains sugar substitutes except in Secondary Schools
Caffeine	<15mg or less		More than 15mg or ‘caffeine’ listed in ingredient list and amount not indicated on label
Additional Ingredients	NO cautionary statements or NO specific quantity of botanical ingredients listed on the label		Food label has a cautionary statement or a cautionary quantity of botanical ingredients on the label

SIDE DISHES

Food in this category contains core ingredients from more than one food group. These foods are sold in smaller portions and are not served as the main part of a meal.

Examples of Food Scored in this Category:

Beans and rice, bean salad, broccoli or cauliflower with cheese, Greek salad, green salad with seeds or cheese, half-portion of a sandwich or wrap, noodle sides, quinoa salad, rice pilaf, scalloped potatoes, vegetable casserole.

	SELL Most	SELL Sometimes	Do Not SELL
Whole Grain	If first ingredients is a grain, the grain must be a whole grain	No whole grain criteria	No whole grain criteria
Calories	300 calories or less		More than 300 calories
Fat	< 8g or less		More than 8g
Trans Fat	5% or less of total fat		More than 5% of total fat
Sodium	< 350mg or less	< 450mg or less	More than 450mg
Sugars	< 12g or less		More than 12g
Sugar Substitutes	NO Sugar Substitutes	NO Sugar Substitutes except in Secondary Schools	Contains sugar substitutes except in Secondary Schools
Caffeine	< 15mg or less		More than 15mg or 'caffeine' listed in ingredient list and amount not indicated on label
Additional Ingredients	NO cautionary statements or NO specific quantity of botanical ingredients listed on the label		Food label has a cautionary statement or a cautionary quantity of botanical ingredients on the label

SOUPS

Food in this category includes dry, canned and fresh soups.

Examples of Food Scored in this Category:

Chicken noodle soup, cream of vegetable soup, tomato soup, vegetable soup, wonton soup.

	SELL Most	SELL Sometimes	Do Not SELL
Fat	<4g or less	<7g or less	More than 7g
Saturated Fat	<2g or less	<3g or less	More than 3g
Trans Fat	5% or less of total fat		More than 5% of total fat
Sodium	<400mg or less	< 500mg or less	More than 500mg
Sugar Substitutes	NO Sugar Substitutes	NO Sugar Substitutes <i>except</i> in Secondary Schools	Contains sugar substitutes <i>except</i> in Secondary Schools
Caffeine	<15mg or less		More than 15mg or 'caffeine' listed in ingredient list and amount not indicated on label
Additional Ingredients	NO cautionary statements or NO specific quantity of botanical ingredients listed on the label		Food label has a cautionary statement or a cautionary quantity of botanical ingredients on the label

SNACK BARS AND TRAIL MIXES

Food in this category includes bar-type snacks and trail mixes.

Examples of Food Scored in this Category:

Cereal bars, fruit bars & leathers, fruit & nut bars, granola bars, meal replacement bars, protein bars, sports bars.

	SELL Most	SELL Sometimes	Do Not SELL
Whole Grain	If first ingredients is a grain, the grain must be a whole grain	No whole grain criteria	No whole grain criteria
Calories	300 calories or less		More than 300 calories
Fat	<5g or less (If peanuts, nuts or seeds are the first or second ingredient, it is exempt from the fat criteria)	<7g or less (If peanuts, nuts or seeds are the first or second ingredient, it is exempt from the fat criteria)	More than 7g
Saturated Fat	<3g or less		More than 3g
Trans Fat	5% or less of total fat		More than 5% of total fat
Sodium	<200mg or less	< 300mg or less	More than 300mg
Sugars	< 6g or less *If fruit is the first or second ingredient may have up to 20g sugar.	< 16g or less *If fruit is the first or second ingredient may have up to 30g sugar.	More than 16g *If fruit is the first or second ingredient may have up to 30g sugar.
Sugar Substitutes	NO Sugar Substitutes	NO Sugar Substitutes except in Secondary Schools	Contains sugar substitutes except in Secondary Schools
Caffeine	<15mg or less		More than 15mg or 'caffeine' listed in ingredient list and amount not indicated on label
Additional Ingredients	NO cautionary statements or NO specific quantity of botanical ingredients listed on the label		Food label has a cautionary statement or a cautionary quantity of botanical ingredients on the label

CONDIMENTS, DRESSINGS, DIPS AND SPREADS

Food in this category includes condiments, dressings, dips and spreads that are served on the side with meals.

Examples of Food Scored in this Category:

Barbeque sauce, butter, cream cheese, honey, ketchup, margarine, mayonnaise, salad dressing, salsa, sour cream, soy sauce.

	SELL Most	SELL Sometimes	Do Not SELL
Fat	<10g or less		More than 10g
Trans Fat	5% or less of total fat (soft spreadable margarine and oil must have 2% or less of total fat)		More than 5% of total fat (soft spreadable margarine and oil must have 2% or less of total fat)
Sodium	<200mg or less		More than 200mg
Sugars	< 8g or less		More than 8g
Sugar Substitutes	NO Sugar Substitutes	NO Sugar Substitutes <i>except</i> in Secondary Schools	Contains sugar substitutes <i>except</i> in Secondary Schools
Caffeine	<15mg or less		More than 15mg or 'caffeine' listed in ingredient list and amount not indicated on label
Additional Ingredients	NO cautionary statements or NO specific quantity of botanical ingredients listed on the label		Food label has a cautionary statement or a cautionary quantity of botanical ingredients on the label

CONFECTIONERY (e.g. candies, chocolates, gum)

Food in this category does not contain a major ingredient from any of the four food groups in Canada's Food Guide, and is rated **DO NOT SELL**.

Examples of Food Scored in this Category:

Candies, chewing gum with sugar, chocolate bars, gummies, gelatin desserts (e.g. jello) licorice, popsicles and freezies if not prepared with fruit or fruit juice.