

# Smart Snacks & Competitive Foods Guide

A Quick Reference Guide for  
Colorado School Nutrition  
Professionals

Revised November 2016



**COLORADO**  
Department of Education



## Smart Snacks in School

The Smart Snacks in School nutrition standards support better health for our kids and echo the good work already taking place in schools across the country. The Smart Snacks in School food and nutrition standards became effective on July 1, 2014.

### Definitions

**Combination food** – Products containing two or more components representing two or more of the recommended food groups: fruit, vegetable, dairy, protein or grains.

**Entrée** – A combination food of meat/meat alternate and whole grain rich food; or a combination food of vegetable or fruit and meat/meat alternate; a meat/meat alternate alone, with the exception of yogurt, low-fat or reduced fat cheese, nuts, seeds and nut or seed butters and meat snacks; a food intended as the main dish; or a grain-only item for breakfast entrees only.

**Whole grain-rich** – Foods that contain 100 percent whole grain or contain a blend of whole-grain meal and/or flour and enriched meal and/or flour of which at least 50 percent is whole grain. Whole grain-rich products must contain at least 50 percent whole-grains and the remaining grain, if any, must be enriched.



## Allowable Foods – All Grades

References: Federal Regulation USDA Final Rule 7CFR Parts 210 and 220;  
Colorado Competitive Foodservice Policy 1 CCR 301-3 2202-R-203.00

Effective: Midnight before, to 30 minutes after the end of the official school day.

### Food and Nutrient Standards

- Any food, outside the reimbursable lunch or breakfast meals, sold on the school campus (includes a la carte, school stores, food-based fundraisers, vending machines, etc.) must meet the following **food standards**:
  - 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 fruit and/or vegetable.
  - If water is the first ingredient, the second ingredient must be one of the above.

### AND

- Any food (including accompaniments) must also meet these **nutrient requirements**:
  - Calorie limits (Snack items: ≤200; Entrée items: ≤350)
  - Sodium limits (Snack items: ≤200 mg; Entrée items: ≤480 mg)
  - Fat limits
    - Total fat: ≤35percent of calories
    - Saturated fat: <10percent of calories
    - Trans fat: zero grams
  - Sugar limit: ≤35percent of weight from total sugars in foods.

*See exemptions to food and nutrient standards on page 3.*

## Exemptions

**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.

**Nutrient standards:** Fresh fruits and vegetables with no added ingredients except water; canned and frozen fruits with no added ingredients except water or are packed in 100 percent juice, extra light syrup or light syrup; and low sodium and no-salt added canned vegetables with no added fat or ingredients except water or that contain a small amount of sugar for processing purposes.

**Paired exempt foods:** Peanut butter and celery, celery paired with peanut butter and unsweetened raisins, reduced fat cheese served with apples, and peanuts and apples all retain the total fat and saturated fat exemptions and may be served as long as the calorie and sodium limits are met.

**Total fat:** Reduced fat cheese and part-skim mozzarella; nuts, seeds and nut/seed butters; eggs with no added fat; dried fruit with nuts/seeds with no added nutritive sweeteners or fats; and seafood with no added fat.

**Saturated fat:** Reduced-fat cheese and part skim mozzarella; nuts, seeds and nut/seed butters; eggs with no added fat; and dried fruit with nuts/seeds with no added nutritive sweeteners or fats.

**Sugar:** Dried/dehydrated whole fruits or vegetables with no added nutritive sweeteners; dried whole fruits or pieces with nutritive sweeteners required for processing and/or palatability (dried cranberries, tart cherries, and dried blueberries only); products consisting of only exempt dried fruit with nuts and/or seeds with no added nutritive sweeteners or fats.

**Miscellaneous:** Sugar-free chewing gum.

## Nutrient Calculations

### Percent Calories from Fat

There are two calculations that often provide slightly different results because the FDA has different rounding rules for the labeling of each of these nutrients on the nutrition facts label. However, if either method results in less than or equal to 35 percent of calories from fat (do not round the result), the product will meet the total fat standard.

#### Calculation 1:

$(\text{Calories from Fat}) \div (\text{Total Calories}) \times 100 = (\text{Percent Calories from Fat})$

#### Calculation 2:

$(\text{Total Fat in grams}) \times 9 \div (\text{Total Calories}) \times 100 = (\text{Percent Calories from Fat})$

### Percent Calories from Saturated Fat

$(\text{Saturated Fat in grams}) \times 9 \div (\text{Total Calories}) \times 100 = (\text{Percent Calories from Saturated Fat})$

### Percent Sugar by Weight

$(\text{Sugars in grams}) \div (\text{Total grams of product}) \times 100 = (\text{Percent Sugar by Weight})$

## Elementary School – Beverages

References: Federal Regulation USDA Final Rule 7CFR Parts 210 and 220; Colorado Healthy Beverages Policy 1 CCR 301-79; Colorado Competitive Foodservice Policy 1 CCR 301-3 2202-R-203.00

An elementary school contains grades: Pre-school – 5<sup>th</sup> or 6<sup>th</sup> grade

Effective: Midnight before, to 30 minutes after the end of the official school day and throughout the extended school day as defined by 1CCR 301-79.

### Allowable Beverages

- **Fruit and Vegetable Juice**
  - 100 percent juice and full-strength juice diluted with water, carbonated or non-carbonated
  - Up to 8-ounce portions
  - No added sweeteners
- **Milk**
  - Must be low-fat (1 percent unflavored) or nonfat (flavored or unflavored)
  - Up to 8-ounce portions
  - Non-dairy milk must be nutritionally equivalent to milk per USDA requirements
- **Bottled Water**
  - Plain water or plain carbonated water
  - No size limit



## Middle School – Beverages

References: Federal Regulation USDA Final Rule 7CFR Parts 210 and 220; Colorado Healthy Beverages Policy 1 CCR 301-79; Colorado Competitive Foodservice Policy 1 CCR 301-3 2202-R-203.00

A middle school contains grades: 6<sup>th</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup> grades

Effective: Midnight before, to 30 minutes after the end of the official school day and throughout the extended school day as defined by 1CCR 301-79.

### Allowable Beverages

- **Fruit and Vegetable Juice**
  - 100 percent juice and full-strength juice diluted with water, carbonated or non-carbonated
  - Up to 12-ounce portions
  - No added sweeteners
- **Milk**
  - Must be low-fat (1 percent unflavored) or nonfat (flavored or unflavored)
  - Up to 12-ounce portions
  - Non-dairy milk must be nutritionally equivalent to milk per USDA requirements
- **Bottled Water**
  - Plain water or plain carbonated water
  - No size limit



## High School – Beverages

References: Federal Regulation USDA Final Rule 7CFR Parts 210 and 220; Colorado Healthy Beverages Policy 1 CCR 301-79; Colorado Competitive Foodservice Policy 1 CCR 301-3 2202-R-203.00

A high school contains grades: 9<sup>th</sup> – 12<sup>th</sup> grades

Effective: Midnight before, to 30 minutes after the end of the official school day and throughout the extended school day as defined by 1CCR 301-79.

### Allowable Beverages

- **Fruit and Vegetable Juice**
  - 100 percent juice and full-strength juice diluted with water, carbonated or non-carbonated
  - Up to 12-ounce portions
  - No added sweeteners
- **Milk**
  - Must be low-fat (1 percent unflavored) or nonfat (flavored or unflavored)
  - Up to 12-ounce portions
  - Non-dairy milk must be nutritionally equivalent to milk per USDA requirements
- **Bottled Water**
  - Plain water or plain carbonated water
  - No size limit
- **Other beverages** (i.e., unsweetened or diet teas, low calorie sport drinks, fitness waters, flavored waters, seltzers, and coffees\*)
  - Other flavored and/or carbonated beverages that are ≤20 ounces must:
    - Contain ≤5 calorie per 8 ounces or ≤10 calories per 20 ounces
  - Other flavored and/or carbonated beverages that are ≤12 ounces must:
    - Contain ≤40 calories per 8 ounces or ≤60 calories per 12 ounces



- Caffeinated beverages are allowed

\* If fat-free flavored, fat-free unflavored, or low-fat, 1 percent unflavored is used in a coffee drink, calories from the milk can be subtracted from the total calories of the coffee drink. If low-fat, 1 percent flavored milk (and other non-reimbursable milk varieties) is used, this must be added to the total calories for the coffee drink.

## Competitive Food Service

Competitive foods are food or beverage items sold in competition to the reimbursable school meal and the goal is to limit access to these foods. Consequently, **any food or beverage** service available to students on the school campus during the school day that is separate and apart from the district's nonprofit federally reimbursed food service program, and is operated by school approved organizations or by school-approved outside vendors, shall not operate in competition with the district's food service program and shall be closed for a period beginning 30 minutes prior to and remain closed until 30 minutes after each meal service.

## Exemptions

The competitive food service restriction does not apply to the service of competitive, mechanically-vended beverages offered to students at the senior high level.

Beverages sold at school-related events occurring outside of the regular and extended school day where parents and other adults are in attendance are exempt from the above beverage standards.

## Additional Resources

USDA FNS

<http://www.fns.usda.gov/school-meals/smart-snacks-schools>

Colorado Department of Education Office of School Nutrition

<http://www.cde.state.co.us/nutrition/nutricompetitivefoods.htm>

Alliance for a Healthier Generation Smart Snacks Calculator

<https://foodplanner.healthiergeneration.org/>

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To request a copy of the complaint form, call (866) 632-9992. Submit your completed form or letter to USDA by: (1) mail: U.S. Department of Agriculture Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights; 1400 Independence Avenue, SW Washington, D.C. 20250-9410;

(2) fax: (202) 690-7442; or (3) email: [program.intake@usda.gov](mailto:program.intake@usda.gov).

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