

Cafeterias and Cafes

Food Standards Implementation Guide



Background

Established in 2008, the NYC Food Standards aim to reduce the prevalence of chronic diseases, such as diabetes and cardiovascular disease, by increasing access to healthy foods.

There are a total of six sets of Food Standards that address different settings where food is served. These include NYC government agency meal programs, vending machines, meetings and events, commissaries at correctional facilities, and cafeterias and cafes. The Standards for Cafeterias and Cafes (Cafeteria Standards) were created for institutional retail settings, such as those at hospitals or college campuses, to increase the availability of healthier foods and beverages and to promote sustainable food service practices.

The Cafeteria Standards are voluntary to implement and can be used by any institutional food retail operation — from a small cafe to a large hospital or university cafeteria — to make it easier for customers to make a healthier choice.

How To Use This Guide

This guide supports the use of the Cafeteria Standards by providing definitions, examples, guidance, and tips to help meet all 30 Cafeteria Standards. Share this guide with vendors, caterers, and staff involved in planning, purchasing, or preparing food and beverages served at your institution. For more information, and to read the Cafeteria Standards, visit nyc.gov/healthyworkplaces.

Look for these symbols to help you navigate this guide:



Implementation Tips



Time-Saving Tips



Cost-Saving Tips



Links to external resources



Go the Extra Mile! Suggestions for ways to make your institution even healthier, beyond the requirements for meeting a standard.

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1. Lay the Groundwork

Preparing Your Institution for Successful Implementation of the Cafeteria Standards

Build Buy-In

Gaining buy-in from stakeholders such as leadership, staff members, and customers at your institution is the first step in adopting the Cafeteria Standards.

Obtain Leadership Approval

- Share the benefits of adopting the Cafeteria Standards and how they will promote healthier eating habits and help your institution promote health and wellness.
- Provide data on diet-related diseases, such as diabetes and heart disease, in the neighborhoods served by your institution. Use statistics collected by your institution, if applicable, or visit nyc.gov/health and search for [community health profiles](#). Discuss how healthy eating can help reduce the risk for diet-related diseases in your community.
- Ask leaders to sign a pledge of support. Share this pledge with the rest of your institution to gain buy-in from staff members and other stakeholders.

Engage Food Service and Procurement Staff

- Introduce the policy as a positive opportunity for the institution.
- Invite staff to ask questions and support an open dialogue.
- Ask staff to sign a voluntary pledge to support the Cafeteria Standards.
- Survey food service staff to see what they think and know about healthy cooking techniques and ingredients and what they would like to learn.
- Post the Cafeteria Standards in a visible location where food and beverages are ordered, prepared, or served.

Communicate With Distributors

- Notify your distributors of plans to meet the Cafeteria Standards and your time frame for doing so.
- Review the Cafeteria Standards with them and ask if they have a list of products they offer that meet the Cafeteria Standards.

Learn From Customers

Conduct an intercept survey with potential customers. Notify them that plans are underway to improve the healthier offerings of the cafeteria.

Anticipate Questions

Implementing change can be challenging, and some stakeholders may have questions or concerns. Below are some commonly asked questions about implementing the Cafeteria Standards. Use the answers below to address them.



“We offer products based on what our customers purchase, not necessarily what’s healthiest or most sustainable. Why should we go against consumer demand?”



“Customers are increasingly looking for healthier, more sustainable products! By offering these options, there is an opportunity to acquire new customers who want healthier or more environmentally friendly options and thus gain additional revenue.”



“Don’t healthier products cost more?”



“Sometimes they do, but there are several ways these changes can be cost-neutral. For example, reducing beef, processed meat, and cheese and adding more whole and minimally processed plant proteins like beans, nuts, and seeds can reduce costs. These savings can help offset the cost of making other changes.”



“There is no way we’re going to carry out [a particular standard]. Should we still consider adopting the Cafeteria Standards for our institution?”



“Absolutely! While the NYC Health Department encourages institutions to implement as many Cafeteria Standards as possible, even small changes made in a cafeteria can make a big impact over time. You should use the standards that make sense for you.”

2. Implement the Cafeteria Standards

Here are some general tips to support you when implementing the Cafeteria Standards:

- Set short-, medium-, and long-term goals with timelines to keep yourself on track. For example, identify three standards that can be carried out in the next three months, four standards that can be carried out in six months, and five standards that can be carried out in nine months.
- Develop action steps and identify who is responsible for each (refer to Appendix F: Progress Tracker on Page 48).
- Make sure everyone involved is aware of timelines and responsibilities. Meet periodically to assess progress and address challenges.

Each standard is listed with examples, tips and information to help apply the Cafeteria Standards to your institution.

A. Fruits and Vegetables (Standards 1 to 3)



1. At least four different types of fresh fruit must be offered daily.

Examples of fresh fruit:

- Whole, fresh fruits like pears, bananas, oranges, or apples; fresh fruit salad

Understanding the Cafeteria Standards

- Canned and dried fruits do not meet the standard.
- Any fruit offered as a discrete item counts as a single fruit offering. Different varieties of the same fruit, such as a green apple and a red apple, count as separate types of fruit offerings.
- Sliced mixed fruit, such as a container of honeydew melon cubes and blueberries or a fruit salad, count as a single type of fruit offering.



Implementation Tips

- If you have a salad bar, add fresh fruits such as berries or melon.
- Include locally or regionally grown fruit that is in season to also help meet Standard 3 on Page 7.
- Whole fruit is easier to store than cut fruit and doesn't require preparation or additional packaging. Try stocking a variety of whole fruits such as apples, bananas, oranges, peaches, or pears near the checkout area. Each fruit would count as a separate type of fruit offering.



Go the Extra Mile!

Offer a frequent buyer promotion to encourage buyers to purchase more fresh fruit. For example, offer a “buy five, get one free” punch card.

2. Leafy green salads and at least one vinegar-based salad dressing that contains 290 milligrams of sodium or less per serving must be offered daily.

Examples of salads and dressings:

- Salads: A salad bar, side salads, grab-and-go salads, made-to-order salads
- Vinegar-based salad dressings: Oil and vinegar, balsamic vinaigrette, Italian dressing (with 290 milligrams of sodium or less per serving)



Implementation Tips

- Be sure to check the sodium content on the Nutrition Facts label for all prepackaged salad dressings.
- Olive oil (or any heart-healthy oil such as avocado or grapeseed) offered with any variety of unseasoned vinegar (balsamic, or white or red wine) will always meet this standard.
- Try making your own low-sodium salad dressings using a hearty-healthy oil, vinegar, lemon or lime juice, and fresh or dried herbs. Make dressings in bulk and refrigerate for future use.
- If a salad bar isn't feasible, offer prepackaged salads.
- Introduce a seasonal salad to the cycle menu to also move toward meeting Standard 3.

3. At least one seasonal, regional, or local produce item must be offered daily.

Definitions:

- **Seasonal regional:** “Grown, agriculturally produced and harvested within the states of Connecticut, Delaware, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New Jersey, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Vermont, Virginia or West Virginia.”¹
- **Seasonal local:** “Grown, agriculturally produced and harvested within New York State.”¹

¹ Local Law No. 52 (2011) of City of New York. Accessed October 24, 2024.
https://s-media.nyc.gov/agencies/planyc2030/pdf/ll52_food_metrics_report_1012.pdf

Understanding the Cafeteria Standards

- Produce items must be grown regionally or locally and be fresh in season or frozen to meet the standard.
- Canned or dried produce, beans, and grains do not meet the standard.
- Seasonally available regional and local produce options must be posted for the customer to see along with the origin of the produce in order to meet the standard. This might mean the information is listed on signs, posted on menus, or placed in other promotional material.



Implementation Tips

- If available, display a photo of the farm the produce came from – or even the farmer! You can include the name and location of the farm next to the item on the menu. Use a QR code to connect customers to information about the farm.
- Work closely with your distributor and ask for data, such as origin or farm name, for all the produce you purchase.
- Look for the New York State Grown & Certified label for assurance that the produce you are buying is local. The label also verifies that items reflect food safety standards.
- Offer a local-spotlight option at the salad bar.
- See the table below for examples of fruits and vegetables grown in New York State and when they are typically available.



Examples of Available New York State Produce by Season²

	Winter	Spring	Summer	Fall
	January-March	April-June	July-September	October-December
Vegetables	Beets Carrots Cabbage Turnips	Asparagus Radishes Spinach	Broccoli Lettuce Mustard greens Squash, summer	Kale Parsnips Potatoes Squash, winter
Fruits	Apples Pears	Strawberries	Peaches Plums Blueberries Cantaloupe	Grapes Pears Watermelon

² New York State Agriculture and Markets. From A(pples) to Z(ucchini), your guide to New York's produce. Accessed October 24, 2024. <https://agriculture.ny.gov/system/files/documents/2019/03/harvestchart2016english.pdf>



Links

- GrowNYC:
gownyc.org
- The Common Market:
thecommonmarket.org
- New York State Grown & Certified:
certified.ny.gov



Go the Extra Mile!

Consider featuring additional local products, such as milk, yogurt, beans, or grains, and post signs promoting them.

B. Sandwiches, Salads, and Entrees (Standards 4 to 14)



4. All sandwiches, salads, and entrees offered must contain 700 calories or less.
5. At least 75% of all sandwiches, salads, and entrees offered must contain 600 milligrams of sodium or less.
6. At least 75% of all sandwiches, salads, and entrees offered must contain less than 10% of total calories from saturated fat.
 - Salads may contain $\leq$ 20% of calories from saturated fat.
7. At least 75% of all sandwiches, salads, and entrees offered must contain less than 10% of total calories from added sugar.

Definitions and Examples:

Sandwiches, salads, and entrees include: All grab-and-go entrees, items on the cycle menu, default orders at customizable stations, and daily specials.

Examples of sandwiches, salads, and entrees:

- Breakfast entrees: Omelets, whole wheat pancakes, oatmeal, yogurt parfaits, overnight oats, prepackaged egg-and-cheese wrap
- Lunch and dinner entrees: Vegetable bean burger combo with roasted vegetable side, Greek salad, roasted chicken, grilled fish with vegetables, pasta primavera, miso baked tofu and quinoa grain bowl, grab-and-go sandwich

Customizable station: Food station that allows the customer to put together their own combination of items to create a dish such as “make your own” or “prepared to order” (for example, a deli counter, burrito bar, or yogurt bar).

Added sugar: Any nutritive sweetener added to food during processing; food packaged as a sweetener; or sugar from syrup, honey, or concentrated fruit or vegetable juice. Added sugar includes sugars used in recipes, cooking, and baking but not naturally occurring sugars found in milk, fruits, and vegetables.³

³ Adapted from: U.S. Food and Drug Administration. Added sugars on the nutrition facts label. Updated March 5, 2024. Accessed May 24, 2024. <https://www.fda.gov/food/nutrition-facts-label/added-sugars-nutrition-facts-label>

Examples of added sugar: Table, brown, invert, raw and turbinado sugar; honey; corn sweetener; corn and malt syrup; high-fructose corn syrup; dextrose; fructose; glucose; lactose; maltose; sucrose; evaporated cane juice; fruit juice concentrates; molasses; trehalose

Understanding the Cafeteria Standards

- Percentages in Standards 5 to 7 are calculated based on all offerings on the current full cycle menu.
- Side items that are always served with an entree are included in the total calorie, sodium, saturated fat, and added sugar count for that entree item.
- Side items not always served with an entree are counted as entrees if they contain more than 200 calories.
- When an item is offered premade or made-to-order, it counts as one option. If the same item is offered in different portion sizes, it counts as separate options.
- For all customizable stations:
 - Determine station compliance by calculating the average⁴ calorie, sodium, saturated fat, and added sugar values. Count each customizable station's average as one item to determine the total items on the menu that are compliant. See Appendix C on Page 40 to learn how to calculate compliance for these stations.
- For grab-and-go salads and salads that appear on the menu:
 - If multiple protein options for the same salad are available, count them as separate options (for example, a Caesar salad available with chicken, steak, tofu, or shrimp counts as four options).
 - Use the default dressing for nutrition analysis. If there is no default, use the average calories, sodium, saturated fat, and added sugar of all available dressing options.

⁴ If outliers are present that skew the average, use the median instead of the average.



Implementation Tips

General:

- Use standardized recipes that measure ingredients, and analyze them for nutrition content.
 - For how to calculate calories, sodium, saturated fat, and added sugar in recipes, refer to Appendix A on Page 36.
 - For how to calculate percentage of calories from saturated fat and added sugar in recipes, refer to Appendix B on Page 39.
- Ask your distributor to help you find foods that are lower in sodium, saturated fat, and added sugar than those you are already purchasing.
- Identify menu items that might be high in all of the following: calories, sodium, saturated fat, and added sugar. That way one menu change can improve compliance with multiple standards.
 - Remove some of these menu items altogether.
 - Reduce portion sizes, or replace with healthier options that meet the standard. For example, replacing a cheeseburger with a bean burger will most likely reduce calories, sodium, and saturated fat.
 - Identify the ingredients that contribute the most sodium, saturated fat, or added sugar and then swap or reduce. For example:
 - Reduce the amount of ground beef in a burger by replacing with mushrooms to reduce saturated fat.
 - Swap regular stock or broth for a “No Salt Added” or low-sodium option.
- Conduct tastings of the new offerings with public-facing staff so they can promote them to customers.⁵
- Include healthier default options across the menu. For example, serve entrees with a fruit or salad instead of chips or french fries. This will lower calories, sodium, and saturated fat.

Calories:

- Use healthier cooking techniques that require less oil, such as baking, grilling, sautéing, steaming, roasting, or broiling.
- Add vegetables to provide bulk and extra flavor in burgers, pasta dishes, soups, and stir-fries and to help offset higher-calorie ingredients.

Sodium:

- Prepare entrees from scratch and use seasonings such as citrus, vinegar, herbs, and spices to replace some or all of the salt.
- Cook using whole or minimally processed plant foods (such as fresh, frozen, or dried fruits and vegetables; whole grains; beans; and nuts and seeds), which generally contain less sodium, rather than using canned, prepared, or ready-to-serve foods.

⁵ Jilcott Pitts S, Schwartz B, Graham J, et al. Best practices for financial sustainability of healthy food service guidelines in hospital cafeterias. *Prev Chronic Dis*. 2018;15:170477. doi:[10.5888/pcd15.170477](https://doi.org/10.5888/pcd15.170477)

- Implementing Standard 11 (see Page 17) will reduce the use of processed meat (for example, deli meats, bacon, or sausage), which is high in sodium. This will lower the amount of sodium in many menu items.
- Use the Nutrition Facts labels to compare similar products. Make sure to purchase lower-sodium bread products, including sliced bread, rolls, and tortillas, to help reduce sodium in sandwich items. If purchasing canned products, choose the varieties with the lowest sodium content or ask your distributor for “No Salt Added” options.
- Create premade seasoning blends with little or no salt for seasoning meats, fish, and poultry.

Saturated fat:

- Choose heart-healthy oils such as canola, olive, and avocado when making entrees, salad dressings, and marinades.
- Replace recipes that feature animal protein with ones that feature whole or minimally processed plant-based protein, such as beans, peas, lentils, or tofu.
- Switch ingredients high in saturated fat — such as whole milk, cheese, cream, butter, processed meat, and fatty cuts of meat — for lower-fat versions when possible.
- Choose ingredients like vegetables, whole grains, lean meats, fish, beans, lentils, peas, nuts, and seeds. Update existing recipes by using less meat and more vegetables.

Added sugar:

- Check the Nutrition Facts label to determine how much added sugar is in one serving of a food or beverage product. Twenty percent or more of the daily value of added sugars per serving is considered high. Look for products that have 10% or less of the daily value of added sugars per serving.
- Products that typically contain a high amount of added sugar include waffles and pancakes served with syrup or toppings, sweetened yogurt, sauces (such as marinara, tomato, or teriyaki), glazes, dressings, and baked beans. Compare Nutrition Facts labels and purchase versions of these products with less added sugar.
- Items labeled “diet,” “lite,” “sugar-free” or “no sugar added” on the product packaging usually, but not always, contain low- or no-calorie sweeteners (for example, aspartame, saccharin, sucralose, stevia leaf extract, or monk fruit extract). Be sure to check the ingredient list to avoid unintentionally procuring and offering foods that contain these sweeteners.
- Reduce the amount of added sugar used in recipes, especially when baking. If you are cooking from scratch (for example, muffins, French toast, or oatmeal), reduce the amount of added sugar in your recipe by one-third or one-half, or substitute sugar with mashed fruit or unsweetened applesauce.



Cost-Saving Tips

Reduce portion sizes to cut calories, sodium, saturated fat, and added sugar without impacting costs.



Time-Saving Tips

- Identify products that appear in multiple dishes and switch to a variety lower in sodium, saturated fat, or added sugar. That way, one product change can affect multiple dishes at once.
- Implementing Standards 12 and 13 (see Page 18) to reduce both beef and dairy on menus will help to reduce saturated fat in many menu items.

8. At least half of all sandwiches, salads, and entrees offered must be served or made, when applicable, with whole grains (for example, whole wheat bread or pasta, or brown rice).

Definitions and examples:

- **Whole grain:** A product must have a whole grain first on its ingredient list to be considered whole grain.⁶

Examples of sandwiches, salads, and entrees with whole grains:

- Vegetable stir-fry with brown rice; quinoa salad with chickpeas, cucumbers, and bell peppers; whole wheat pesto pasta primavera with roasted vegetables; roasted chicken salad on a whole wheat wrap

Understanding the Cafeteria Standards

- This standard does not apply to daily specials.
- If a recipe calls for multiple grain items, the recipe is considered whole grain if the largest amount of grain in the recipe is whole grain (for example, if a bean burrito contains a 2-ounce (oz) flour tortilla and 4 oz of brown rice, then it is considered whole grain).



Go the Extra Mile!

Make all grains served whole grain.



Implementation Tips

- Make the default bread at the sandwich or deli station a whole grain bread, roll, or wrap.
- Add a whole grain-based salad to the salad bar, such as quinoa with roasted vegetables or whole wheat pasta salad.
- Always offer a whole grain at the hot entree station (for example, brown rice instead of white rice).

⁶For more information on whole grains, visit wholegrainscouncil.org.

How To Identify Whole Grain Products

- Whole grains include amaranth, barley, brown rice, brown rice flour, buckwheat, bulgur, millet, oatmeal, popcorn, quinoa, rolled oats, spelt, teff, wheat berries, whole corn, whole oats, whole rye, whole wheat, and wild rice.
- All cereals, tortillas, rolls, bagels, sliced bread, and pasta with whole wheat or whole grain flour listed as the first ingredient are considered whole grain.
- Foods labeled with the words “multigrain,” “stone-ground,” “100% wheat,” “cracked wheat,” “seven-grain,” or “bran” are usually **not** whole grain products.
- Foods with any of the following as the first ingredient are **not** whole grains: all-purpose flour, enriched flour, rice flour, semolina, or unbleached flour.

9. At least one vegetarian option that features a whole or minimally processed plant-based protein (for example, beans, lentils, peas, nuts, edamame, or tofu) must be offered at each station.

Definitions and examples:

- **Vegetarian option:** A sandwich, salad, or entree that does not include meats, poultry, or seafood but may include egg or dairy (for example, cheese, yogurt, or milk).

Examples of vegetarian options at various stations (may contain animal products):

- Grab-and-go: Mediterranean vegetable wrap with 2 oz hummus, 2 oz grilled eggplant, 1 tablespoon tahini dressing, and 1 oz hard-boiled egg
- Hot entree: Enchiladas with 4 oz sweet potato, 2 oz black beans, and a 1 oz sprinkle of queso fresco served with lime and cilantro
- Deli/sandwiches: Panini with 2 oz white bean spread, fresh tomato, 1 tablespoon pesto, and 1 oz fresh mozzarella
- Grill: California burger with a 4 oz lentil patty and 1 oz guacamole
- Soup: Vegetarian black bean chili with 4 oz beans or vegetarian tortilla soup with 2 oz pinto beans, served with 1 tablespoon diced avocado

- **Features:** The whole or minimally processed plant protein must be the primary protein source.
- **Primary protein:** The largest protein item by weight or ounce equivalent. For example, an entree with 2 oz equivalent of beans as the primary protein could include less than 2 oz of cheese.⁷
- **Whole plant-based protein:** Any unprocessed plant-based proteins.
Examples of whole plant-based proteins: Beans, chickpeas, lentils, edamame, nuts, seeds

⁷ Adapted from: U.S. Department of Agriculture. Protein foods. Accessed May 24, 2024.
<https://www.myplate.gov/eat-healthy/protein-foods>

- **Minimally processed plant-based proteins:** Any item with an unprocessed plant-based protein or flour made from unprocessed plant protein listed first or second on its ingredient list.⁸

Examples of minimally processed plant-based proteins: Tofu, seitan, hummus, some bean-based burgers

Note: Green beans and green peas are not considered plant proteins.

Understanding the Cafeteria Standards

- For cafeterias that do not have dedicated areas for grilled items, hot entrees, deli counters, or other stations, at least one sandwich, salad, or entree item must be a vegetarian option that features a whole or minimally processed plant-based protein.



Implementation Tips

- Take favorite staple dishes and give them a makeover to include plants as the main protein.
- Substitute whole and minimally processed plant-based proteins (beans, nuts, seeds, tofu) into menu items your customers enjoy, but keep the same seasonings and sauces.
- Include more traditional dishes that feature plants as the main protein. Look for recipes from places like India, the Caribbean, Italy, Vietnam, Mexico, and the Middle East.
- Offering more entrees featuring whole and minimally processed plant proteins can help to replace sandwiches, salads, and entrees that are high in saturated fat.



Go the Extra Mile!

- Consider offering more than one of these options daily or offering dishes with a plant protein as the featured offering at every station.
- Have all vegetarian options that meet this standard also meet the nutrient criteria in Standards 5 to 7.

⁸ Adapted from NOVA, a food classification system.

<https://openknowledge.fao.org/server/api/core/bitstreams/5277b379-0acb-4d97-a6a3-602774104629/content>

10. At least two sandwiches or entrees that feature a whole or minimally processed plant-based protein and do not contain animal products must be offered daily.

Examples of sandwiches made without animal products: Chipotle lentil tacos with avocado, falafel burger, tofu báhn mi

Examples of entrees made without animal products: Garden Bolognese made with lentils, jerk-style black beans, tofu and green bean stir-fry, sweet potato and red bean chili, coconut chickpea curry, white bean and roasted broccoli grain bowl

Examples of products to **exclude** for sandwiches or entrees without animal products: Meat, poultry, fish and shellfish, eggs, dairy products (for example, milk, cheese, yogurt, butter), mayonnaise, ranch dressing, Caesar dressing, Worcestershire sauce, horseradish sauce (if it contains cream), honey



Implementation Tips

- Name vegan sandwiches or entrees something that even meat lovers would find delicious! Appeal to customer senses and use words to describe the texture, flavor, or aroma. For example, instead of “Vegan Curry,” name the dish “Warm Butternut Squash Curry With Spicy Roasted Chickpeas.”
- Implementing Standard 10 can count toward Standard 9 at any station offering sandwiches or entrees.
- Make your own plant burgers without animal products instead of purchasing processed ones, which are usually high in sodium. Choose a recipe with whole grains, beans, and vegetables.
- Beans, peas, lentils, tofu, tempeh, nuts (walnuts and pecans), nut butters (almond and peanut), and seeds (chia, hempseed) can stand in for animal-based protein foods while providing many additional nutrients.



Links

- Greener by Default Resource Guide: bit.ly/greener-resource-guide
- World Resources Institute’s Food Service Playbook for Promoting Sustainable Food Choices: bit.ly/wri-food-playbook



Go the Extra Mile!

- Include a locally or regionally grown vegetable as part of the featured daily sandwich or entree option.
- Have all sandwich and entree options that meet this standard also meet the nutrient criteria in Standards 5 to 7.

11. At least 90% of all sandwiches, salads, and entrees offered must not contain processed meat. Recommend processed meat be phased out.

Definitions and examples:

- **Processed meat:** Meat, poultry, or fish that has been transformed through any of the following processes to enhance flavor or improve preservation.^{9,10}
 - Curing: To add salt, sugar, or any source of nitrates or nitrites including those listed in Code of Federal Regulations Title 21 Subpart B,¹¹ celery-based products, wine, Swiss chard-based products, lactic acid starter culture, cherry-based products, or vegetable juice powder or rosemary extract to meat for color development, flavor enhancement, preservation, or safety.
 - Fermentation: To add fermentative bacteria to meat to add flavor or stop the growth of harmful organisms.
 - Salting: To preserve meat with sodium.
 - Smoking: To expose meat to smoke from burning wood or apply liquid smoke ingredients to meat.

Examples of processed meat: Hot dogs, sausages, bacon, deli meat (such as turkey, ham, bologna, or salami), pepperoni, jerky, smoked salmon

Examples of sandwiches, salads, and entrees that contain processed meat: Pepperoni pizza, BLT (bacon, lettuce, and tomato sandwich), sausage with onions and peppers, ham and cheese sandwich, deli turkey sandwich

Understanding the Cafeteria Standards

- Processed meat products labeled “nitrate-free” or “nitrite-free” do not necessarily meet this standard. Read the full ingredient list to check for items listed in the definition above.



Implementation Tips

- For deli sandwiches, use sliced fresh roasted chicken or turkey or canned tuna instead of cold cuts. Experiment with new sandwiches that feature plant-based protein like a white bean spread or baked tofu.
- To phase out processed meat, replace it with nut or seed butters, hard-boiled eggs, tuna salad, tempeh bacon and avocado, minimally processed veggie burgers, chicken breast, chickpea salad, hummus or bean spread, or roasted vegetables.
- Caramelized onions, sautéed mushrooms, and sun-dried tomatoes add lots of flavor and make a great substitute for bacon, ham, or sausage.
- Processed breakfast meat (for example, bacon, turkey bacon, or sausage) typically contains a high amount of sodium. If you serve processed breakfast meat, aim to purchase products that contain no more than 290 milligrams of sodium per serving.

⁹ Adapted from: World Health Organization. Cancer: carcinogenicity of the consumption of red meat and processed meat. Accessed May 24, 2024. <https://www.who.int/news-room/questions-and-answers/item/cancer-carcinogenicity-of-the-consumption-of-red-meat-and-processed-meat>

¹⁰ Murano, PS. *Understanding Food Science and Technology*. Wadsworth/Thomson Learning; 2003.

¹¹ Available at: <https://www.ecfr.gov/current/title-21/chapter-I/subchapter-B/part-172/subpart-B>

12. At least 75% of all sandwiches, salads, and entrees offered must not contain beef.



Implementation Tips

- Replace menu items featuring beef with beans, lentils, chickpeas, nuts, or seeds to help meet Standards 9 and 10.
- Substitute meat wisely. Use more beans or add tofu, tempeh, or a combination of the two in soups and chilis; firm to extra-firm tofu to replace chicken or beef in salads or stir-fries; and cooked lentils for ground beef in lasagnas, Bolognese, or burgers.
- You don't always need to replace the missing meat with another protein. Try simply adding extra vegetables such as mushrooms, sun-dried tomatoes, cauliflower, eggplant, or jackfruit.



Go the Extra Mile!

- Rather than using beef as the center of the plate, consider it as a “condiment” or flavoring for an otherwise plant-rich dish, or experiment with ways to blend plants (for example, mushrooms) into dishes that contain ground meat, such as lasagna or tacos.
- Purchase meat, poultry, dairy, and eggs raised without the routine use of nontherapeutic antibiotics. The package label will indicate if it was raised without antibiotics.
- Phase out beef completely from all meals.
- Limit all ruminant meats, for example goat, lamb, and bison, in addition to beef.
- For every menu item featuring animal protein, offer two plant-based protein items to increase overall options.

13. At least 90% of all sandwiches, salads, and entrees offered must not contain dairy as the primary protein.

Definitions and examples:

- **Dairy products:** Include milk, cheese, and yogurt.
- **Primary protein:** The largest protein item by weight or ounce equivalent. For example, an entree with a 2 oz equivalent of beans as the primary protein could include less than 2 oz of cheese and count toward meeting this standard.¹²

Examples of salads, sandwiches, and entrees that contain dairy as the primary protein: Macaroni and cheese, cheese quesadilla, pizza, mozzarella sticks, cheese ravioli, cheese lasagna, stuffed shells, manicotti, caprese salad

¹² Adapted from: U.S. Department of Agriculture. Protein foods. Accessed May 24, 2024. <https://www.myplate.gov/eat-healthy/protein-foods>



Implementation Tips

- Replace cheese in recipes with whole plant-based proteins such as beans, lentils, peas, nuts, or seeds. Instead of macaroni and cheese, replace it with roasted veggie macaroni with navy beans. Use nutritional yeast as a seasoning to give dishes a cheese-like flavor.
- For cheese-based menu items like cheese quesadillas or pizza, reduce the amount of cheese or increase the amount of vegetables or beans.
- Use cheese as a garnish instead of as the primary protein.

Understanding the Cafeteria Standards

- This standard does not apply to yogurt or milk-based smoothies.

14. Seafood must be offered as an entree at least twice per week (with at least one serving containing heart-healthy oils) and prepared using a healthy cooking method.

Definitions and examples:

- **Seafood that contains heart-healthy oils:** Any fish or shellfish that contains beneficial fatty acids (such as eicosapentaenoic acid [EPA] or docosahexaenoic acid [DHA]).¹³

Examples of seafood: Salmon, anchovies, herring, sardines, trout, and Atlantic and Pacific mackerel

Examples of entrees featuring seafood: Garlic-ginger salmon (heart-healthy), pan-seared trout (heart-healthy), baked codfish tacos, herb-crusted tilapia, grilled shrimp fajitas

- **Healthy cooking method:** Steaming, baking, roasting, pan-searing, or grilling.



Implementation Tips

- Designate two days on your cycle menu each week to feature a seafood dish.
- Substitute dishes made with beef or processed meat with seafood dishes.

Understanding the Cafeteria Standards

- This standard only applies to menus that already offer seafood.
- Seafood offered as the primary protein on a salad or sandwich also meets this standard.

¹³ Adapted from: U.S. Department of Agriculture and U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. Dietary Guidelines for Americans, 2020-2025. 9th ed. December 2020. Available at [dietaryguidelines.gov](https://www.dietaryguidelines.gov).



Go the Extra Mile!

- Procure seafood that supports environmental sustainability. Aim for at least 75% of seafood purchased monthly to be identified as Good Alternative, at a minimum, on the Monterey Bay Aquarium Seafood Watch list or another similar program, and recommend seafood that is identified as Best Choice.
- Have all seafood entrees that meet this standard also meet the nutrient criteria in Standards 5 to 7.



Links

Seafood Watch: seafoodwatch.org/seafood-recommendations

C. Soups and Sides (Standards 15 and 16)



15. At least two types of vegetables (steamed, baked, roasted, or grilled) that contain 200 milligrams of sodium or less must be offered daily.

Examples of vegetable side dishes:

- Steamed spinach with garlic, roasted (baked) broccoli, steamed asparagus, grilled eggplant or zucchini, steamed vegetable medley, sautéed bok choy, stewed collard greens, raw veggie sticks (carrots, celery, red peppers)

Understanding the Cafeteria Standards

- Vegetables in salad bars, starchy vegetables (for example, white potatoes, yams, yuca, plantains, green peas, or corn), glazed vegetables, vegetables in a cream sauce, and vegetable mashes made with cream or butter **do not** meet this standard.¹⁴
- Sweet potatoes count as a vegetable. To meet this standard, they may not be fried or prefried and then baked.



Implementation Tips

- Dedicate two spaces at the hot bar daily to sautéed, steamed, roasted, baked, or grilled vegetable options.
- Offer a local vegetable of the day to also meet Standard 3.
- Skip the salt when preparing vegetables and instead set up a “flavor station.” Stock a variety of low-sodium seasoning blends and spices (for example, pepper-based Mexican seasoning or herb-based Italian seasoning) to allow customers to experiment with flavors on their own.

¹⁴ For a complete list of starchy vegetables, visit myplate.gov/eat-healthy/food-group-gallery#vegetables.



Go the Extra Mile!

Offer dark-green vegetables and red and orange vegetables daily.¹⁵

16. All soups must contain 480 milligrams of sodium or less per 8 ounces.

Understanding the Cafeteria Standards

- This standard applies to daily specials and soups regularly available, including prepackaged soups and self-serve soup stations.



Implementation Tips

- Prepare soups from scratch to control the amount of salt used.
- If time allows, make homemade stock to reduce food waste and limit salt. Alternatively, look for low-sodium soup bases, consommés, and broths.
- Experiment with a variety of herbs and spices, vinegar, or a squeeze of lime or lemon juice for a fresh, complex flavor that doesn't rely on salt.
- Consider using dried beans instead of canned beans. If using canned beans, look for "No Salt Added" options.
- Bulk up the soup with fresh or frozen produce, which has a minimal amount of sodium.

D. Breakfast Breads, Desserts, and Snacks (Standards 17 to 20)



17. At least 75% of all breakfast breads offered must contain 300 calories or less, 290 milligrams of sodium or less, and less than 8 grams of added sugar.

Examples of breakfast breads:

- Bagels, cinnamon buns, coffee cakes, cornbread, croissants, Danishes, doughnuts, English muffins, loose sliced breads, muffins, other sweet puff pastries, pound cakes, rolls, scones, quick breads (for example, banana bread, zucchini bread, pumpkin bread)

Understanding the Cafeteria Standards

- This standard applies to all freshly made, premade, and prepackaged breakfast breads available.

¹⁵ For a complete list of dark-green and red and orange vegetables, visit myplate.gov/eat-healthy/food-group-gallery#vegetables.



Implementation Tips

- If your cafeteria has the time and space, make breakfast breads from scratch. When purchasing prepared items, see if your vendor can supply miniature pastries, bagels, or muffins.
- Avoid stocking items labeled “jumbo,” “value-size,” “sharing,” or “king-size,” which likely contain larger portions that exceed the calorie, sodium, or added sugar limit.
- Ask your vendor to provide all nutrition information for their breakfast breads and only purchase items that meet this requirement.



Cost-Saving Tips

- When baking, double your yield by halving the portion size.
- If sweet breads are purchased as unsliced loaves, increase yield and reduce calories, sodium, and added sugar by cutting into smaller sizes than suggested.



Go the Extra Mile!

Make at least half the available breakfast breads whole grain.

18. At least 75% of all desserts offered must contain 200 calories or less.

Examples of desserts:

- Brownies, cakes, cookies, cupcakes, dessert bars, flan, frozen yogurt, gelatin, ice cream, mousses, pies, pudding

Understanding the Cafeteria Standards

- This standard applies to all freshly made, premade, and prepackaged desserts available.
- Items produced for the mass market that would typically be sold in a vending machine are classified as prepackaged snacks. See examples under Standards 19 and 20.



Implementation Tips

- If your cafeteria has the time and space, make desserts from scratch.
- When baking from scratch, substitute half of the oil or melted butter with unsweetened applesauce in a 1-to-1 ratio to reduce calories in cake, muffin, and brownie recipes.
- Offer 1 oz dessert cups or small individual portions of layered cakes, such as tiramisu or strawberry shortcake.
- Sell desserts individually instead of packaging multiple portions together. For example, sell single cookies rather than a package of three.



Cost-Saving Tips

- Cut preportioned slices of cakes, pies, and brownies in half.
- Decrease portion sizes of puddings, gelatins, custards, flans, and ice creams. Try filling a 6 oz container with only 4 oz.



Go the Extra Mile!

- Only offer desserts that contain 200 calories or less.
- Offer desserts that do not contain artificial flavors, colors, or low- or no-calorie sweeteners.

19. All prepackaged snacks must meet the following criteria per package:

- **Calories:** No more than 200 calories.
 - Snacks that contain only nuts, nut butter, or seeds (may also contain seasoning or flavoring) may contain up to 250 calories.
- **Saturated fat:** No more than 2 grams.
 - Cheese and snacks that contain only nuts, nut butter, or seeds (may also contain seasoning or flavoring) are exempt.
- **Trans fat:** No trans fats or partially hydrogenated oils.
- **Sodium:** No more than 200 milligrams.
 - Cottage cheese may have up to 350 milligrams of sodium.
- **Added sugar:** Less than 5 grams.
 - Yogurt may contain no more than 14 grams of added sugar per 8 oz.
- **Fiber:** Grain- and potato-based products must contain at least 2 grams of fiber (products that are not grain- or potato-based are exempt from this minimum).

Definitions and examples:

- **Prepackaged snacks:** Single-serve food items packaged by the manufacturer (for example, items often found in vending machines).
Examples of prepackaged snacks: Trail mix, nuts, frozen fruit bars, ice-cream cups, yogurt, string cheese
- **Grain- and potato-based products:** An item in which the first ingredient is flour, wheat, potatoes, corn, oats, rice, or any other grain.
Examples of grain- and potato-based prepackaged snacks: Chips, granola bars, cereal cups, cookies, crackers, pretzels

Understanding the Cafeteria Standards

- Foods that are exempt from one nutrient requirement must still meet all other criteria. For example, a package of nuts is exempt from the saturated fat requirement but must meet criteria for calories, sodium, trans fat, and added sugar.
- Items that can be consumed as a meal and are made either on-site or by the manufacturer, such as yogurt parfaits, chia pudding, snack boxes with fruit, nuts and cheese, or hummus and crackers, are counted as entrees.



Implementation Tips

- Check the ingredient list to determine if a product is grain- or potato-based and required to meet the fiber minimum.
- Offer fewer prepackaged snacks overall.
- If you have multiple flavors of the same snack, make sure they all meet the requirements.
- Replace a product with a similar, healthier option. Advertise the new product and offer a week-long introductory discount to give customers the opportunity to try it.
- Request a list of items that meet the criteria from your vendor or create a list to share with them. Update the list or meet with your vendor regularly to discuss new and discontinued items.



Cost-Saving Tips

Raise the price of unhealthy items to offset the costs of healthier items that may be more expensive.



Go the Extra Mile!

Ask your vendor to help identify items that are locally or regionally sourced.



Links

Qualifying snack food item examples:

nyc.gov/assets/doh/downloads/pdf/cardio/ex-snacks.pdf

20. At least 25% of all prepackaged snacks offered must list whole or minimally processed fruit, vegetables, beans, lentils, peas, nuts, or seeds as the first ingredient and contain no artificial colors, artificial flavors, or low- or no-calorie sweeteners.

Definitions and examples:

- **Whole or minimally processed fruit, vegetables, beans, lentils, peas, nuts, or seeds:** Must be listed as the first ingredient. Corn, potatoes, or fruit purees or concentrates listed as the first ingredient do not meet this standard.

Examples of whole or minimally processed prepackaged snacks:

- Raw or roasted almonds, peanuts, cashews, or walnuts
- Raw or roasted sunflower kernels or seeds
- Nut and seed mixes that contain dried fruit and no added sugar
- Baked or dried apple, dried apricots, raisins, unsweetened applesauce pouches

- Nut- or fruit-based bars
- Roasted chickpeas or edamame
- Dehydrated vegetable chips

- **Artificial color:** Any dye, pigment, or substance (excluding natural coloring from fruits and vegetables) that adds color to food.¹⁶ Artificial colors are named on ingredient lists.

Examples of artificial colors: Food, Drugs and Cosmetics (FD&C) Blue Nos. 1 and 2, FD&C Green No. 3, FD&C Red Nos. 3 and 40, FD&C Yellow Nos. 5 and 6, Citrus Red No. 2, Orange B, titanium dioxide

- **Artificial flavor:** Any substance that adds flavor to food but does not come from a spice; a fruit or fruit juice; a vegetable or vegetable juice; edible yeast; an herb, bark, bud, root, leaf, or similar plant material; meat; fish; poultry; eggs; or a dairy or fermentation product (such as cheese or milk).¹⁷

Examples of artificial flavors: Artificial or artificially flavored vanilla, strawberry, or grape

- **Low- or no-calorie sweetener:** Any low- or no-calorie alternative to added sugar. These sweeteners contain fewer calories per gram than nutritive sweeteners because they are not completely absorbed by the digestive system.¹⁸

Examples of low- or no-calorie sweeteners: Acesulfame potassium, aspartame, saccharin, sucralose, stevia leaf extract, sorbitol, mannitol, maltitol, isomalt, xylitol, erythritol, monk fruit extract

Understanding the Cafeteria Standards

- Corn, potatoes, or fruit purees or concentrates cannot be listed as the first ingredient.
- Items should also meet all criteria outlined in Standard 19.



Implementation Tips

- Recommend that snacks meeting this standard be priced the same as or less than other snacks.
- Promote healthier snacks by conducting on-site taste tests and surveys to learn about staff and client snack preferences.

¹⁶ Adapted from: U.S. Food and Drug Administration. Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) citations for color additives, food ingredients and packaging. Accessed October 24, 2024.

<https://www.ecfr.gov/current/title-21/chapter-I/subchapter-A/part-70>

¹⁷ Adapted from: U.S. Food and Drug Administration. Title 21 CFR § 101.22. Accessed October 24, 2024.

<https://www.ecfr.gov/current/title-21/chapter-I/subchapter-B/part-101/subpart-B/section-101.22>

¹⁸ Adapted from the U.S. Department of Agriculture and U.S. Food and Drug Administration. Accessed October 24, 2024.

<https://www.nal.usda.gov/human-nutrition-and-food-safety/food-composition/sweeteners>



Go the Extra Mile!

- Offer only prepackaged snacks that do not contain artificial colors, artificial flavors, or low- or no-calorie sweeteners.
- Increase the percentage of items that meet this standard to more than 25%.

E. Cooking Methods (Standard 21)



21. Foods must not be deep-fried.

Definitions:

- **Deep-fry:** To completely submerge in hot oil or fat in a deep fryer or other cooking equipment such as a saucepan or wok.

Understanding the Cafeteria Standards

- This standard does not apply to items that are prefried and finished in an oven, pan-fried, or sautéed.
- This standard applies to all items that are made using deep fryers.



Implementation Tips

- Replace the fryer station with a new food station where customers can make their own bowls with whole grains, such as quinoa or farro, and top with ingredients like roasted vegetables, grilled proteins, and healthy fats like nuts and seeds.
- Consider a pricing special for a limited time to encourage customers to try the new options.



Go the Extra Mile!

Eliminate items that are purchased prefried and frozen.

F. Beverages (Standards 22 to 24)



22. Water must be offered at no cost.

Examples of water at no cost:

- Cups of water with sit-down service; a clearly marked tab on fountain drink machines; a water cooler or fountain available in cafeteria or cafeteria seating area

Understanding the Cafeteria Standards

- Offer free cups for water if no water fountain is available.
- Advertise clearly that free water is available.
- If cafeteria is a kiosk or is not an “eat-in” establishment, water cups must be available and a sign indicating the nearest water cooler or fountain must be prominently displayed.



Cost-Saving Tips

When beverages are offered from a fountain-drink machine, water cooler, or water fountain, encourage customers to bring their own water bottle by placing water cups behind the cashier station and indicating on signs that cups are available upon request.

23. All beverage options must contain no more than 24 calories per 8 ounces and no added sugar.

Beverages that can be offered:

- Water
- Plain seltzer
- Flavored seltzer and waters that do not have added sugars
- Unsweetened teas
- Drinks labeled “diet” or “zero”
- 100% fruit juice in 12 oz or smaller containers

Beverages that cannot be offered:

- Flavored waters with added sugars
- Lemonade
- Juice drinks
- Sweetened iced tea and coffee drinks
- Flavored milk
- Sodas, sports drinks, or energy drinks not labeled “diet” or “zero”

Understanding the Cafeteria Standards

- Nonfat and 1% milk with no added sweeteners, soy milk that contains no more than 9 grams total sugar or 5 grams added sugars per 8 oz, and 100% fruit juice in 12 oz or smaller containers are exempt from this standard.
- This standard does not apply to made-to-order juice or smoothies or creamer offered as condiment for coffee or coffee bars.



Implementation Tips

Share educational materials to promote healthier beverages and to help customers understand why your cafeteria is going “sugary drink-free.”



Links

- NYC Health Department’s added sugar resources: [nyc.gov/health/added-sugars](https://www.nyc.gov/health/added-sugars)
- NYC Health Department’s example beverage list: <https://www.nyc.gov/assets/doh/downloads/pdf/cardio/ex-beverage.pdf>



Go the Extra Mile!

- Set lower prices for water and seltzer than for beverages labeled “diet” or “zero.”
- Place water and unflavored seltzers in the top-selling positions of beverage coolers.
- Place bottled water in baskets or bins at the entrance, by the exit, and near popular foods to make it more accessible.
- Eliminate all beverages that contain artificial colors, artificial flavors, or low- or no-calorie sweeteners.
- Eliminate single-use plastic bottles.

24. All juice offered must be 100% fruit juice and served in a 12-ounce or smaller container.

Understanding the Cafeteria Standards

- Made-to-order juice bars must only offer 12 oz or smaller portions.
- This standard applies to fruit juice offered in fountain machines.
- Smoothie bars are exempt from this standard.



Implementation Tips

- Notify your beverage distributor of your commitment to meeting this standard. They can help make sure all 100% fruit juice options are 12 oz or smaller.
- Only offer juice labeled “100% juice.” Avoid juices labeled “cocktail” or “juice drink,” as they usually contain added sweeteners.



Go the Extra Mile!

- If smoothies are available, consider limiting sizes to 12 oz or smaller.
- Place 100% fruit juice in the lowest-selling positions of beverage coolers.
- Consider offering only water.
- Reduce the number of 100% juice offerings or phase them out completely.

G. Placement, Promotion, and Pricing (Standards 25 to 30)



25. Only the following foods and beverages may be stocked at cash registers:

- Prepackaged snacks that contain only nuts, nut butter, seeds, or dried fruit or vegetables (may also contain seasoning or flavoring) that meet the criteria of Standards 19 and 20 (see Pages 23 and 24)
- Fresh fruit or vegetables
- Water, seltzer, or beverages that contain no more than 24 calories per 8 oz and no added sugar (see Standard 23 on Page 27)

Understanding the Cafeteria Standards

- Prepackaged snacks that contain only beans, peas, or lentils (which also may contain seasoning or flavoring) meet this standard.
- Only items that meet the above criteria may be displayed within a 6-foot radius of any cash register.
- This standard does not apply to items placed behind a counter that would need to be requested by a customer.



Implementation Tips

- Work that goes toward meeting Standard 1 (see Page 6), Standard 20 (see Page 24) and Standard 23 (see Page 27) will also help you meet this standard.
- Use the sample planogram to help plan the layout of the checkout area — see Appendix D: Sample Checkout Planogram on Page 47.

26. Advertisements and promotional materials must be of healthy foods, water, or unflavored seltzer only.

Definitions:

- **Healthy foods:** Fruits, vegetables, whole grains, or any sandwich, salad, or entree that meets all nutrition criteria outlined in Standards 4 to 7 and does not feature beef, processed meat, or dairy.

Understanding the Cafeteria Standards

- Advertisements or promotional materials that would meet this Standards include healthy value meals listed on the menu board and promotional posters depicting fruits, vegetables, and whole grains.
- This standard applies to promotions by vendors, internal promotions, and promotions as part of a value meal.



Implementation Tips

- Use this as an opportunity to advertise all the positive changes taking place in your retail space.
- Remove existing advertisements for things like sugary beverages and fried foods. Focus on bringing customers' attention to fresh, bold flavors in dishes made with whole foods.
- Advertisements depicting brands may only be for products that meet the Cafeteria Standards. Remove company logos that are also brand names of unhealthy products.

27. Calorie information must be posted for items that do not have a Nutrition Facts label.

Understanding the Cafeteria Standards

- This standard does not apply to items with a Nutrition Facts label, whole fresh fruits or vegetables, condiments, or custom orders. Packaged or cut fruit must be labeled.
- Clearly label all foods and beverages with calories per item served.
- Clearly display labels on the menu board or on a sign adjacent to the food station.
- At self-serve and customizable food stations, calories for similar food categories may be displayed using ranges.
- Calorie information for each ingredient must be available upon request, and this should be stated on the menu board.

For more information about calorie labeling, see Appendixes A and C on Pages 36 and 40.



Implementation Tips

If a redesign of menu boards is not in the budget, list available items and corresponding calorie information in a sign holder at each station. You can also laminate the list or place it in a clear sheet protector and post it at the station.



Go the Extra Mile!

Consider labeling ingredients or other relevant nutrients, such as sodium, saturated fat, added sugar, and fiber.

28. At least one value meal, if value meals are offered, must:

- Feature a whole or minimally processed plant-based protein and include fresh fruit or a nonstarchy vegetable and water
- Contain no more than 700 calories, no more than 600 milligrams of sodium, less than 10% of calories from saturated fat, and less than 10% of calories from added sugar
- Be priced lower than other value meals

Definition and examples:

Value meal: A combination of menu items that would otherwise be sold separately, offered together at a lower total price.

Examples of value meals: Black bean tacos on a whole grain tortilla with roasted cauliflower and water, half white bean hummus and grilled vegetable sandwich with fruit and water, tofu and cashew stir-fry with fruit salad and water

Understanding the Cafeteria Standards

- This standard does not apply if value meals are not offered. Once a value meal is introduced, at least one option should meet these criteria.
- If value meals are offered at lunch but not at dinner, a healthy value meal only needs to be offered at lunch.
- A beverage is required only if other value meals include a beverage.



Implementation Tips

Rather than “Healthy Value Meal,” give the meal an enticing name, such as “Spicy Tofu and Crunchy Edamame Combo Value Meal” or “Mediterranean Chickpea Salad Bowl Meal Deal.”

29. Half-size sandwiches must be offered at no more than half the price of full-size sandwiches.

Understanding the Cafeteria Standards

- Offer at least one type of sandwich in a half-size portion. The sandwich could be, for example, a premade wrap or made-to-order sandwich.
- If a half sandwich is offered as part of a healthy value meal, it must also be offered separately to be counted for this standard.



Implementation Tips

Add “Half sandwiches are available at half the price of a full sandwich!” to your menu board or post a sign at the sandwich station that advertises this.



Cost-Saving Tips

To reduce waste, train staff to produce just the half sandwich per order.

30. Customer feedback regarding cultural preferences, taste, and food quality must be solicited annually. Results must be considered when planning menus.

Examples of ways to collect customer feedback:

- Focus groups, QR codes, paper or electronic surveys, or taste tests

Below are example questions for you to include in customer surveys to meet this standard and understand and improve customer experiences.

Quality

Read each statement and place an “X” in the box that best describes your experience with the foods served.

	Very Unsatisfied	Unsatisfied	OK	Satisfied	Very Satisfied
1. Overall, how would you rate your satisfaction with the meals and/or snacks served?					

Taste and Cultural Preferences

Read each statement and place an “X” in the box that best describes your experience with the foods served.

	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Always
2. I like the way the meals and/or snacks taste.					
3. The menu has enough foods or dishes that represent my culture.					

4. What are some foods or dishes from your culture you would like to see offered?

Consider if additional questions might be helpful for understanding client satisfaction and improving the healthfulness and sustainability of meals offered.

Additional Questions To Consider:

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
1. The portions are a good size.					
2. The meals are a good value.					
3. The meals are healthy.					
4. There are enough options with whole plant proteins (such as beans, lentils, tofu, nuts, or seeds).					
5. The meals meet my dietary needs (vegetarian, vegan, pescetarian, food allergy or intolerance, or other).					
6. The staff are friendly and polite.					

7. My favorite food or dish that is offered is _____

8. Is there anything you would like to see on the menu that's missing? _____

**Implementation Tips**

- Tell customers why you are soliciting feedback from them and how you will use the information they provide.
- Make sure feedback questions are clear, easy to understand, and asked in languages spoken by your clients.
- Recommend using a five-point scale for responses, such as those used in the example questions above.
- Follow up with clients regularly and share how you have used their feedback in menu planning.

H. Sustainability



The food service industry has a significant impact on the environment. The above standards incorporate environmental considerations that reflect the ways that promoting individual, community, and planetary health work together. Some of these efforts can include reducing food waste, offering more plant-based meals, purchasing responsibly raised meat, and supporting local economies. Consider implementing these additional standards that promote healthy and sustainable food practices:

- Commit to the Coolfood Pledge to help your organization commit to and achieve a science-based target to reduce the climate impact of the food you serve.
- Incorporate a food waste reduction plan into standard operating procedures, such as donating extra food to food banks or composting during food preparation.
- Reduce unnecessary food waste by using all parts of plants for stock or sauces, eliminating garnishes from service, and serving smaller portions.
- Purchase condiments in bulk instead of individually packaged products.
- Eliminate single-use serving ware.
- Encourage use of electric equipment that can be powered by renewable energy instead of gas, which is not renewable.

City agencies or others following government procurement are encouraged to consult with procurement staff for best approach to sustainability specifications.



Links

Coolfood Pledge: coolfood.org/pledge

Food waste reduction:

- Environmental Protection Agency Toolkit for Reducing Food Waste and Packaging: epa.gov/sustainable-management-food/tools-preventing-and-diverting-wasted-food#packaging

Food donation resources:

- Food Bank for NYC: foodbanknyc.org/donate-food
- City Harvest: cityharvest.org/become-a-food-donor
- DonateNYC: nyc.gov/assets/donate/site/donatefood

3. Communicate the Cafeteria Standards

Communicating changes to customers is an important step in implementing the Cafeteria Standards. Making customers aware of changes helps to promote new items and gain customer acceptance. Below are some ideas for communicating to customers.

- Create materials to promote new items.
 - Materials like table tents help bring awareness to the changes taking place. To download table tents and other tools and promotional materials, visit nyc.gov/healthyworkplaces and scroll down to “Cafeteria and Cafés.”
- Focus on concepts like freshness, deliciousness, and excitement, rather than only the healthfulness of new offerings.
- Offer taste tests to increase customer awareness of new offerings.

4. Establish a System for Sustaining the Cafeteria Standards

Once you have finished implementing the Cafeteria Standards, it’s helpful to create a system to ensure that the standards are being maintained. Over time there might be changes to the food-service contract or staffing, and having a system can help ensure continued compliance with the Cafeteria Standards. Here are some tips to keep you on track:

- Conduct quarterly assessments and schedule follow-up meetings to discuss results and develop action plans to ensure continued compliance when necessary.
- Set up monthly or every-other-month check-ins with assigned staff to discuss progress and address any challenges.
- Meet with your food distributors regularly to discuss new products that meet the Cafeteria Standards.
- Conduct culinary training for food service staff if additional skills are required.
- Update food service manuals to include the Cafeteria Standards.
- Include the Cafeteria Standards in all contracts related to food service.
- Create a committee (such as a worksite wellness committee) to oversee priority areas like compliance, promotion, and customer feedback. Invite different stakeholders to be a part of this committee, including:
 - Preventive medicine and nutrition teams
 - Sustainability committee members
 - Management or administration
 - Food service staff
 - Facilities and custodial service staff
 - Any other staff interested in wellness
 - Community members and customers such as students, staff, or patients, if applicable
 - If your institution has multiple locations, consider including staff members from different sites to join the committee, or develop a plan to incorporate feedback from the various sites.

5. Take the Next Step: Consider Other Sets of Standards

Once you've adopted the Cafeteria Standards, you might be wondering what else you can do to improve the food environment in your institution. Check out nyc.gov/healthyworkplaces to find the other sets of NYC Food Standards and implementation tools for food and beverage vending machines, meetings and events, and meals and snacks served.

6. Appendixes

Appendix A: Calculating Calories, Sodium, Saturated Fat, and Added Sugar

Use the tips below to help you obtain calorie, sodium, saturated fat, and added sugar information for the foods you serve.

Food Made From Recipes

1. Ask your chef for the recipe. You will need to look at serving size, the number of servings the recipe makes, and the exact amount of each ingredient needed for the recipe.
2. Enter the recipe into nutrition software. If you do not have nutrition software, free resources available include:
 - USDA FoodData Central: fdc.nal.usda.gov
 - MyFoodData: myfooddata.com
 - WebMD Food Calculator: webmd.com/diet/healthtool-food-calorie-counter
 - Verywell Fit: verywellfit.com/recipe-nutrition-analyzer-4157076

Purchased Foods

1. If an item is packaged, read the Nutrition Facts label on the individual or bulk packaging to determine calories, sodium, saturated fat, and added sugar content per serving (see example on Page 46).
2. If no nutrition information is available, look for product information online or contact your vendor to obtain the Nutrition Facts label.

Tips for Entering Nutrition Information Accurately

When entering ingredients from a recipe into nutrition software, always choose the option from the database that is closest to what you use in your kitchen. For example, if the recipe includes tomatoes, you need to know whether they are fresh, frozen, or canned. If canned, find out if they are whole, diced, or crushed, and whether they are regular, low sodium, or “No Salt Added.”

Whenever possible, enter the exact brand of ingredients you are using into the nutrition software. Sodium values may vary significantly between brands, so your calculations will be more accurate if you enter the values exactly as they appear on the Nutrition Facts label.

You must also take care to select the correct form of an ingredient to accurately determine the nutrient values of the final product, for example by selecting cooked rice instead of dry (or uncooked) rice.

Example Calculation of a Standardized Recipe

1. Find calorie, sodium, saturated fat, and added sugar information for each ingredient.

Tofu and Green Bean Stir-Fry With Corn (Makes 4 Servings)

- 2 tablespoons vegetable oil
- 14 oz firm tofu, drained, pressed, and cut into cubes
- 2 garlic cloves, minced
- 1 jalapeño, seeded and minced
- 4 cups chopped green beans (fresh or frozen)
- 1 cup corn (fresh, frozen, or no- or low-sodium canned, drained and rinsed)
- 2 tablespoons chopped scallions
- 1 cup chopped cilantro
- 2 tablespoons low-sodium soy sauce
- 1 teaspoon honey
- 4 cups cooked brown rice

How To Calculate Calories, Sodium, Saturated Fat, and Added Sugar in a Standardized Recipe: Tofu and Green Bean Stir-Fry With Corn (Makes 4 Servings)

Ingredient	Amount	Calorie calculation	Sodium calculation	Saturated fat	Added sugar
Vegetable oil	2 tablespoons	245 calories	0 milligrams (mg)	4 grams (g)	0 g
Firm tofu, drained, pressed, cubed	14 oz	278 calories	48 mg	3 g	0 g
Garlic cloves, minced	2 each	9 calories	1 mg	0 g	0 g
Jalapeño, seeded and minced	1 each	4 calories	0 mg	0 g	0 g
Green beans, frozen, chopped	4 cups	193 calories	15 mg	0 g	0 g
Corn, frozen	1 cup	125 calories	22 mg	0 g	0 g
Scallions, chopped	2 tablespoons	2 calories	0 mg	0 g	0 g
Cilantro, chopped	1 cup	4 calories	7 mg	0 g	0 g
Low-sodium soy sauce	2 tablespoons	27 calories	867 mg	0 g	0 g
Honey	1 teaspoon	20 calories	0 mg	0 g	5 g
Brown rice, cooked	4 cups	874 calories	8 mg	1 g	0 g
Total recipe	12 cups	1781 calories	968 mg	8 g	5 g
Total per serving	3 cups	445 calories	242 mg	2 g	1.25 g

- Add up the total calories, sodium, saturated fat, and added sugar. Then divide each total by the number of servings (4 in this example) to get the total amount of calories, sodium, saturated fat, and added sugar per serving.
- Display the total calories on the menu board to meet Standard 27. Include sodium, saturated fat, and added sugar amounts to provide the customer with additional information about the menu item.

When displaying calories on signs or menu boards round as follows:

- Round down to zero if the item is < 5 calories per serving
- Round to the nearest 5 calories if the item is < 50 calories per serving (for example, 42 would be displayed as 40).
- Round to the nearest 10 calories if the item is ≥ 50 calories per serving (for example, 106 would be displayed as 110).



Appendix B: Calculating Percentage of Calories From Saturated Fat and Added Sugar

After obtaining the total grams of saturated fat and added sugar per serving as described in Appendix A, a few extra steps are needed to calculate the percentage of calories from saturated fat and added sugar. Follow the steps below.

To determine the percentage of calories from saturated fat:

1. Add up the total calories and grams of saturated fat for each ingredient (see Appendix A).
2. Multiply the total grams of saturated fat by 9 (1 gram of fat contains 9 calories) to get the number of calories from saturated fat.
3. Divide the number of calories from saturated fat by the total calories. Multiply the result by 100 to get the percentage.

Example: If a tofu and broccoli stir-fry contains 370 calories and 3 grams of saturated fat per serving, it would contain 27 calories from saturated fat, or 7% of calories:

- Multiply 3 grams of saturated fat by 9, which is 27 calories from saturated fat.
- Divide 27 calories from saturated fat by 370 total calories, which is 0.07.
- Multiply 0.07 by 100, which equals 7% of total calories. This entree would count toward the 75% of salads, sandwiches, and entrees that meet the standard for having less than 10% of total calories from saturated fat.

To determine the percentage of calories from added sugar:

1. Add up the total calories and grams of added sugar for each ingredient (see Appendix A).
2. Multiply the total grams of added sugar by 4 (1 gram of sugar contains 4 calories) to get the number of calories from added sugar.
3. Divide the number of calories from added sugar by the total calories. Multiply the result by 100 to get the percentage.

Example: If a chocolate chip pancake entree contains 450 calories and 20 grams of added sugar per serving, it would contain 80 calories from added sugar, or 18% of calories.

- Multiply 20 grams of added sugar by 4, which is 80 calories from added sugar.
- Divide 80 calories from added sugar by 450 total calories, which is 0.18.
- Multiply 0.18 by 100, which equals 18% of total calories. This entree would not count toward the 75% of salads, sandwiches, and entrees that meet the standard for having less than 10% of total calories from added sugar.

Appendix C: Assessing Compliance for Customizable Stations

Some cafeterias have customizable stations that offer many possible meal combinations. Each customizable station will count as one item when calculating the compliance for Standards 4 to 7 and Standards 11 to 13.

Follow the general steps below to assess for compliance.

Step 1: Group together the like ingredients or ingredients that belong in the same food category. For ingredients that are served as a default base, calculate the sum of the calories, sodium, saturated fat, and added sugar (nutrients) per serving from the ingredients that make up the default base. For ingredients that the customer chooses, calculate the average nutrients per serving of all available options in each food category.

Step 2: Calculate the sum of the subtotals from each food category to assess where each station is with meeting the Standards.

- If a customizable station allows a specific number of choices per food category, then multiply the average for that particular food category by the number of choices allowed. For example, if a pasta bar allows the customer to choose one protein, two vegetables, and one sauce, then for the vegetable choices you would multiply the average number of calories, sodium, saturated fat, and added sugar by 2 to account for the two possible choices. For an example of how this would be calculated, see Example 2: Smoothie Bar on Page 44.

Step 3: Use the total average of added sugar in grams and saturated fat in grams to calculate the percentage of calories from those nutrients.

Step 4: Assess for compliance with the Standards.

To see how these steps would apply to two different customizable stations, see Examples 1 and 2 below.¹⁹

¹⁹ Values for added sugar and saturated fat are rounded to the nearest tenth. Values for calories and sodium are rounded to the nearest whole number.

Example 1: Burrito Bar

This burrito bar comes with a default base of flour tortilla and rice, plus one protein choice, three vegetable topping choices, and two other topping choices.

Step 1: Group together the like ingredients, which in this case are (1) protein foods, (2) grains, (3) vegetable toppings, and (4) other toppings. Calculate the sum of the calories, sodium, added sugar, and saturated fat (nutrients) for the default base ingredients — in this example, the tortilla and rice. Then calculate the average nutrients in each food category for the available ingredient choices. These will form the subtotals to be added up in Step 2.

	Ingredient	Amount	Calories	Sodium (mg)	Added sugar (g)	Saturated fat (g)
Grains — both rice and tortilla included	Cooked white rice	1/2 cup	130	80	0	0
	Flour tortillas	1 each	200	430	0	1
Sum			330	510	0	1
Protein foods — choose one	Low-sodium black beans	1/2 cup	100	135	0	0
	Chicken breast	3 oz	140	100	1	2
	Ground beef (85% lean meat, 15% fat)	3 oz	180	60	1	4.5
Average			140	98	0.7	2.2
Toppings (vegetables) — choose three	Salsa	2 tablespoons	15	220	3	0
	Fresh cilantro leaves	2 tablespoons	5	0	0	0
	Chopped scallions	2 tablespoons	5	0	0	0
	Banana peppers	2 tablespoons	5	280	0	0
	Shredded romaine lettuce	1/4 cup	5	0	0	0
Average			7	100	0.6	0
Toppings (other) — choose two	Guacamole	2 tablespoons	35	90	0	0.5
	Shredded cheddar cheese	1/4 cup	110	180	0	3
	Sour cream	2 tablespoons	60	9	0	3
Average			68	93	0	2.2

Step 2: Add up the subtotals of nutrients for each food category to get the total values to assess for compliance.

- Since this burrito bar allows three vegetable topping choices and two other topping choices, multiply the averages of each nutrient for the vegetable toppings by 3 and other toppings by 2.

	Calories	Sodium (mg)	Added sugar (g)	Saturated fat (g)
↓ Vegetable toppings average	7	100	0.6	0
↓ Vegetable toppings average × 3	21	300	1.8	0
Other toppings average	68	93	0	2.2
Other toppings average × 2	136	186	0	4.4

In this example burrito bar, total calories from all food categories is 627, total sodium is 1,094 mg, total added sugar is 2.5 g, and total saturated fat is 7.6 g.

	Nutrient total of like ingredients			
	Calories (≤ 700)	Sodium (≤ 600 mg)	Added sugar (g)	Saturated fat (g)
Grains sum	330	510	0	1
Protein foods average	140	98	0.7	2.2
Vegetable toppings average × 3	21	300	1.8	0
Other toppings average × 2	136	186	0	4.4
Total	627	1,094	2.5	7.6

Step 3: Use the total for added sugar in grams and saturated fat in grams to calculate the percentage of calories from those nutrients.

Added sugar = $(2.5 \text{ g} \times 4 \text{ calories}) / 627 \text{ calories} = 2\%$

Saturated fat = $(7.6 \text{ g} \times 9 \text{ calories}) / 627 \text{ calories} = 11\%$

See Appendix B on Page 39 for how to calculate the percentage of calories from saturated fat and added sugar.

Nutrient total of like ingredients and percentage of calories from added sugar and saturated fat						
	Calories (≤ 700)	Sodium (≤ 600 mg)	Added sugar (g)	% Calories added sugar (< 10% total calories)	Saturated fat (g)	% Calories saturated fat (< 10% total calories)
Total	627	1,094	2.5	2%	7.6	11%

Step 4: Assess for compliance with the Standards.Compliance Assessment:

The burrito station is:

- In compliance for calories (≤ 700) and added sugar ($< 10\%$ of total calories)
- Out of compliance for sodium (≤ 600 mg) and saturated fat ($< 10\%$ of total calories)

To reduce the **sodium**:

- Ask your distributor to find lower-sodium salsa, banana pepper, cheese, or tortilla products.
- Eliminate or reduce portion sizes of higher-sodium toppings from your list of options.
- Consider making homemade salsa.
- Offer more fresh vegetable toppings that contain minimal amounts of sodium.

To reduce the **saturated fat**:

- Offer a light or reduced-fat sour cream or low-fat or fat-free plain Greek yogurt option instead.
- Remove ground beef or replace with quinoa and portabella mushrooms or tofu.
- Offer a smaller portion of ground beef or choose a leaner version.

After making any adjustments needed to increase compliance, display the total calories on the menu board to meet Standard 27. For customizable stations, calorie ranges may be used to indicate the range of calories for all possible combinations, without toppings. Post the calorie information for each topping option. Nutrition information for each ingredient must be available if requested, and this must be specified on the board or sign. If room allows, include sodium, saturated fat, and added sugar to provide the customer with additional information about the menu items.



Example 2: Smoothie Bar

Step 1: Group together the like ingredients, which in this case are the (1) bases, (2) fruits and vegetables, and (3) nut butters. Calculate the average nutrients for all the ingredients in each food category.

	Ingredient	Amount	Calories	Sodium (mg)	Added sugar (g)	Saturated fat (g)
Bases — choose one	Unsweetened vanilla almond milk	1/2 cup	15	90	0	0
	Vanilla soy milk	1/2 cup	50	25	5	0.5
	Plain fat-free Greek yogurt	1/4 cup	30	30	0	0
Average			32	48	1.7	0.2
Fruits and vegetables — choose three	Spinach	1 cup	10	20	0	0
	Kale	1 cup	30	30	0	0
	Apple	1/2 cup	30	1	0	0
	Blueberries	1/2 cup	40	2	0	0
	Strawberries	1/2 cup	25	1	0	0
	Mango	1/2 cup	50	0	0	0
	Raspberries	1/2 cup	30	1	0	0
	Melon	1/2 cup	30	10	0	0
	Frozen Pineapple	1/2 cup	40	1	0	0
	Banana	1 each	105	1	0	0
	Grapes	1/2 cup	30	1	0	0
Average			38	6	0	0
Nut butters — choose one	Almond butter	2 tablespoons	190	10	1	3
	Peanut butter	2 tablespoons	190	10	1	3
Average			190	10	1	3

Step 2: Add up the averages for each nutrient from each food category to get the total values to assess for compliance.

- Since this smoothie bar allows three fruit or vegetable choices, multiply the average of each nutrient for fruits and vegetables by 3.

	Calories	Sodium (mg)	Added sugar (g)	Saturated fat (g)
Fruits and vegetables average	38	6	0	0
Fruits and vegetables average × 3	114	18	0	0

In this example smoothie bar, total calories from all food categories is 336, total sodium is 76 mg, total added sugar is 2.7 g, and total saturated fat is 3.2 g.

	Nutrient total of like ingredients			
	Calories (≤ 700)	Sodium (≤ 600 mg)	Added sugar (g)	Saturated fat (g)
Bases average	32	48	1.7	0.2
Fruits and vegetables average × 3	114	18	0	0
Nut butters average	190	10	1	3
Total	336	76	2.7	3.2

Step 3: Use the total for added sugar in grams and saturated fat in grams to calculate the percentage of calories from those nutrients.

Added sugar = $(2.7 \text{ g} \times 4 \text{ calories}) / 336 \text{ calories} = 3\%$

Saturated fat = $(3.2 \text{ g} \times 9 \text{ calories}) / 336 \text{ calories} = 9\%$

See Appendix B on Page 39 for how to calculate the percentage of calories from saturated fat and added sugar.

Nutrient total of like ingredients and percentage of calories from added sugar and saturated fat						
	Calories (≤ 700)	Sodium (≤ 600 mg)	Added sugar (g)	% calories added sugar (< 10% total calories)	Saturated fat (g)	% calories saturated fat (< 10% total calories)
Total	336	76	2.7	3%	3.2	9%

Step 4: Assess for compliance with the Standards.

Compliance Assessment:

The smoothie station is in compliance for calories, sodium, added sugar, and saturated fat.

After determining compliance, display the total calories on the menu board to meet Standard 27. For customizable stations, calorie ranges may be used to indicate the range of calories for all possible combinations. Nutrition information for each ingredient must be available if requested, and this must be specified on the board or sign. If room allows, include sodium, saturated fat, and added sugar to provide the customer with additional information about the menu item.



Appendix D: How To Use the Nutrition Facts Label To Meet the Cafeteria Standards

The Nutrition Facts label is an important tool that can help you determine whether the items you are purchasing meet the nutrient criteria. A Nutrition Facts label is typically found on the individual product packaging or the outside case for bulk products. If the item does not have a label, ask your vendor or the product manufacturer to provide this information. Compare the information on the Nutrition Facts label with each of the criteria to determine if an item can be purchased.

Example: Granola Bar

This product must meet the standards for prepackaged snacks.

Always look at servings per package. Prepackaged snacks must meet the nutrient criteria for the entire package.

This item is grain-based, so the fiber requirement applies.

Oats listed first in the ingredients means this is a grain-based food.

Product assessment: Although all other nutrients meet the criteria, added sugars is too high, so this product does **not** meet the criteria for Standard 19.

Nutrition Facts	
1 serving per package	
Serving Size	1 bar (42 g)
Amount per serving	
Calories	180
% Daily Value*	
Total Fat 6g	8%
Saturated Fat 0.5g	2%
Trans Fat 0g	
Cholesterol 0mg	0%
Sodium 160mg	7%
Total Carbohydrate 29g	1%
Dietary Fiber 2g	7%
Total Sugars 11g	
Includes 11g Added Sugars	22%
Protein 3g	
Vitamin D 0mcg	0%
Calcium 0mg	0%
Iron 1mg	6%
Potassium 0mg	0%
* The % Daily Value (DV) tells you how much a nutrient in a serving of food contributes to a daily diet. 2,000 calories a day is used for general nutrition advice.	

Ingredients: Whole grain rolled oats, sugar, canola oil, crisp rice (rice flour, sugar, malt, salt), soy protein, honey, brown sugar syrup, high-fructose corn syrup, salt, soy lecithin, baking soda, natural flavor, almond flour, peanut flour, pecan flour, hazelnut flour, walnut flour, nut, pecan, hazelnut and walnut ingredients.

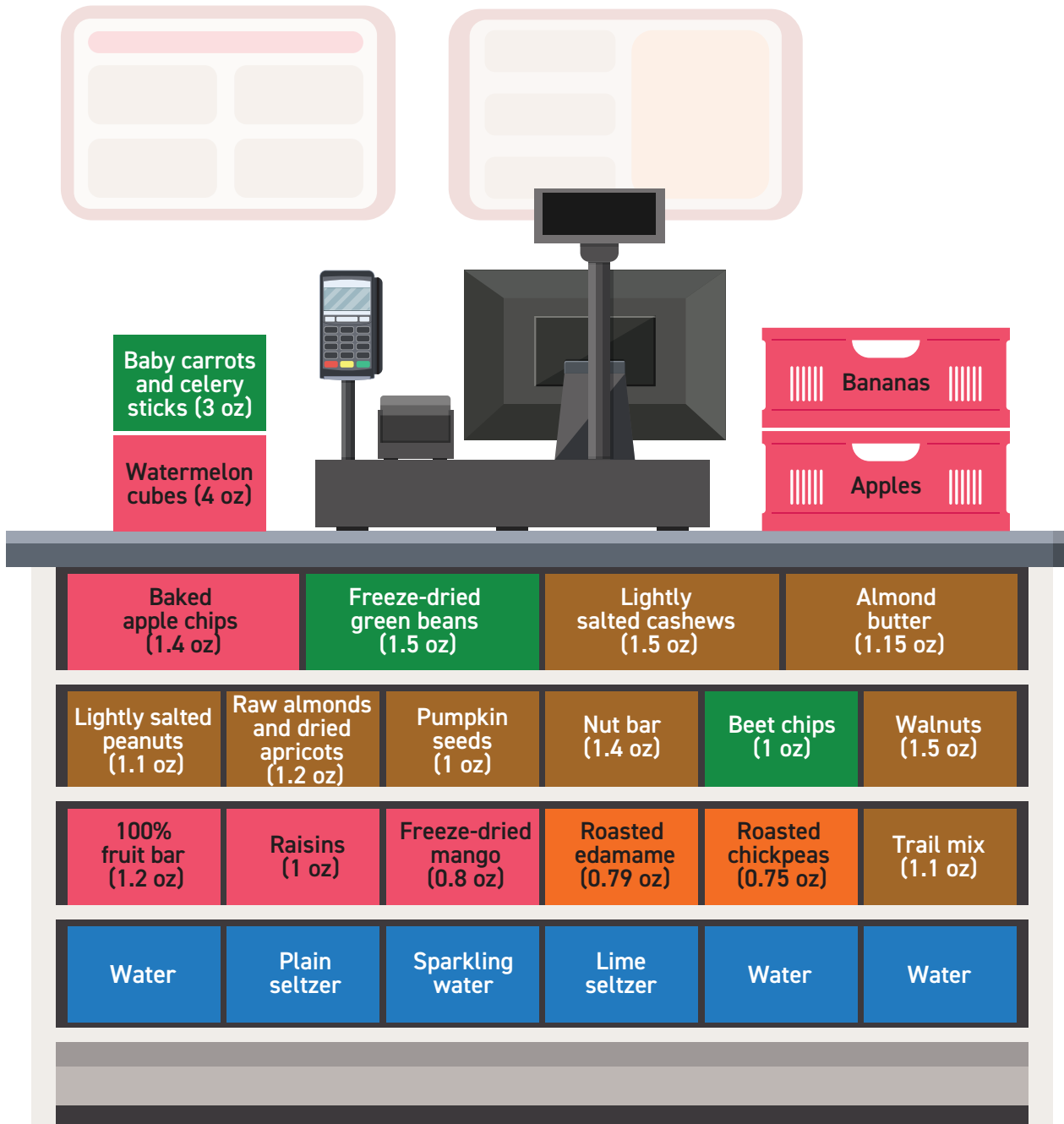


Implementation Tips

Prepackaged items with more than one serving per package require some calculation to determine if they meet the nutrient criteria. For example, if the product says 2 servings per package, all nutrient values must be multiplied by 2 to determine the per-package amounts.

Appendix E: Sample Checkout Planogram

A planogram is a tool that guides product placement at the checkout counter. Planograms can help you ensure that checkout counters are stocked according to the Cafeteria Standards. Create your own planogram and share it with your food service staff members responsible for purchasing snack items and stocking the checkout area. Be sure to indicate the pack size under each item to ensure that the item is meeting the criteria.



KEY

Fruit

Nuts, nut butters, and seeds

Beverages

Vegetables

Beans, Peas, and Lentils

Appendix F. Progress Tracker

Use this tool to keep track of your progress implementing the Cafeteria Standards. Meet as a team regularly to review tracking, progress towards compliance, and eventually maintenance of the Cafeteria Standards. This tracker will help to document implementation progress, action steps, ownership, and timelines as your team works towards implementation of the Cafeteria Standards.

Cafeteria Standard	Information needed to assess implementation	Implemented? (Y/N)	Action steps	Time frame (indicate short-, medium- or long-term) Short-term: Implement within 3 months; Medium-term: Implement within 6 months; Long-term: Implement in 9 months or more
Fruits and vegetables				
1. At least four different types of fresh fruit must be offered daily.	☐ Observation of four fruit options			
2. Leafy green salads and at least one vinegar-based salad dressing that contains 290 milligrams of sodium or less per serving must be offered daily.	☐ Observation of leafy green salad and vinegar-based salad dressing			
3. At least one seasonal, regional, or local produce item must be offered daily.	☐ Full cycle menu ☐ Purchase record of seasonally available regional or local produce showing origin ☐ Observation of signage or promotion of the produce			

Sandwiches, salads, and entrees			
4. All sandwiches, salads, and entrees offered must contain 700 calories or less.	☐ Full cycle menu ☐ Nutrition analysis of all sandwiches, salads, and entrees		
5. At least 75% of all sandwiches, salads, and entrees offered must contain 600 milligrams of sodium or less.			
6. At least 75% of all sandwiches, salads, and entrees offered must contain less than 10% of total calories from saturated fat.			
7. At least 75% of all sandwiches, salads, and entrees offered must contain less than 10% of total calories from added sugar.			

Cafeteria Standard	Information needed to assess implementation	Implemented? (Y/N)	Action steps	Time frame (indicate short-, medium- or long-term) Short-term: Implement within 3 months; Medium-term: Implement within 6 months; Long-term: Implement in 9 months or more
8. At least half of all sandwiches, salads, and entrees must be served or made, when applicable, with whole grains (for example, whole wheat bread or pasta, or brown rice).	☐ Full cycle menu ☐ Recipes			
9. At least one vegetarian option that features a whole or minimally processed plant-based protein (for example, beans, lentils, peas, nuts, edamame, or tofu) must be offered at each station.	☐ Full cycle menu ☐ Recipes or ingredient lists			
10. At least two sandwiches or entrees that feature a whole or minimally processed plant-based protein and do not contain animal products must be offered daily.	☐ Full cycle menu ☐ Recipes or ingredient lists			

11. At least 90% of all sandwiches, salads, and entrees offered must not contain processed meat.	☐ Full cycle menu ☐ Recipes or ingredient lists			
12. At least 75% of all sandwiches, salads, and entrees offered must not contain beef.	☐ Full cycle menu ☐ Recipes or ingredient lists			
13. At least 90% of all sandwiches, salads, and entrees offered must not contain dairy as the primary protein.	☐ Full cycle menu ☐ Recipes or ingredient lists			
14. Seafood must be offered as an entree at least twice per week (with at least one serving containing heart-healthy oils) and prepared using a healthy cooking method.	☐ Full cycle menu ☐ Recipes or ingredient lists			

Cafeteria Standard	Information needed to assess implementation	Implemented? (Y/N)	Action steps	Time frame (indicate short-, medium- or long-term) Short-term: Implement within 3 months; Medium-term: Implement within 6 months; Long-term: Implement in 9 months or more
Soups and sides				
15. At least two types of vegetables (steamed, baked, roasted, or grilled) that contain no more than 200 milligrams or less of sodium must be offered daily.	☐ Full cycle menu ☐ Nutrition analysis for at least two daily vegetable options			
16. All soups must contain 480 milligrams or less per 8 ounces.	☐ Full cycle menu <u>Soups made in-house</u> ☐ Nutrition analysis <u>Purchased soups</u> ☐ Product brand, name, and nutrition information			
Breakfast breads, desserts, and snacks				
17. At least 75% of all breakfast breads offered must contain 300 calories or less, 290 milligrams of sodium or less, and less than 8 grams of added sugar.	<u>Breakfast breads made in-house</u> ☐ Nutrition analysis <u>Purchased breakfast breads</u> ☐ Product brand, name, and nutrition information			

18. At least 75% of all desserts offered must contain 200 calories or less.	Desserts made in-house ☐ Nutrition analysis Purchased desserts ☐ Product brand, name, and nutrition information			
19. All prepackaged snacks must contain 200 calories or less, 200 milligrams of sodium or less, 2 grams of saturated fat or less, and 5 grams of added sugar or less per package. Snacks that contain only nuts, nut butter, or seeds may contain up to 250 calories. Grain- and potato-based snacks must contain at least 2 grams of fiber.	☐ Product brand, name, and nutrition information for all prepackaged snacks offered			
20. At least 25% of all prepackaged snacks offered must list whole or minimally processed fruit, vegetables, beans, lentils, peas, nuts, or seeds as the first ingredient and contain no artificial colors, artificial flavors, or low- or no-calorie sweeteners.	☐ Ingredient lists for all prepackaged snacks offered			

Cafeteria Standard	Information needed to assess implementation	Implemented? (Y/N)	Action steps	Time frame (indicate short-, medium- or long-term) Short-term: Implement within 3 months; Medium-term: Implement within 6 months; Long-term: Implement in 9 months or more
Cooking method				
21. Foods must not be deep fried.	☐ In-person observation			
Beverages				
22. Water must be offered at no cost.	☐ Observation of water fountain in seating area; or ☐ Observation of signage stating that water is available free of charge in cafeteria and availability of free water cups			
23. All beverages offered must contain no more than 24 calories per 8 ounces and no added sugar.	☐ Observation of all beverages, including calorie information – includes fountain beverages, coolers, beverage dispensers, and so on			

24. All juice offered must be 100% fruit juice and served in a 12-ounce or smaller container.	☐ Observation of all fruit juices, including cups			
Placement, promotion, and pricing				
25. Only the following foods and beverages may be stocked at cash registers: • Prepackaged snacks that contain only nuts, nut butter, seeds, or dried fruit or vegetables (may also contain seasoning or flavoring) • Fresh fruit or vegetables • Water, seltzer, or beverages that contain no more than 24 calories per 8 oz and no added sugar	☐ In-person observation of 6-foot radius of cash register			
26. Advertisements and promotional materials (including promotions that are part of value meals) must be of healthy foods, water, or unflavored seltzer only.	☐ Observation of all advertising or promotional material ☐ Nutrition analysis required for menu items featured in advertisements			

Cafeteria Standard	Information needed to assess implementation	Implemented? (Y/N)	Action steps	Time frame (indicate short-, medium- or long-term) Short-term: Implement within 3 months; Medium-term: Implement within 6 months; Long-term: Implement in 9 months or more
27. Calorie information must be posted for items that do not have a Nutrition Facts label.	☐ Observation of calorie information posted on all items that do not include a Nutrition Facts label (such as on a menu, a salad bar, or fountain beverages)			
28. At least one value meal, if value meals are offered, must: • Feature a whole or minimally processed plant-based protein and include fresh fruit or nonstarchy vegetable and water • Contain no more than 700 calories, no more than 600 milligrams of sodium, less than 10% of calories from saturated fat, and less than 10% of calories from added sugar • Be priced lower than other value meals	<u>Only if value meals are offered:</u> ☐ Nutrition analysis for healthy value meal ☐ Pricing information for all value meals			

29. Half-size sandwiches must be offered at no more than half the price of full-size sandwiches.	☐ Observation of signage showing price of half and whole sandwiches; or ☐ Observation of grab-and-go half sandwiches priced at half the cost of a full sandwich			
30. Customer feedback regarding cultural preferences, taste, and food quality must be solicited annually. Results must be considered when planning menus.	☐ Documentation of customer feedback ☐ Survey responses			
Total number of standards marked "Y" in implemented column: []				

Example Progress Tracker

Standards 1 to 3 are completed below to show how this tool can be used to track implementation progress with the Cafeteria Standards.

Cafeteria Standard	Information needed to assess implementation	Implemented? (Y/N)	Action steps	Time frame (indicate short-, medium- or long-term) Short-term: Implement within 3 months Medium-term: Implement within 6 months Long-term: Implement in 9 months or more
Fruits and vegetables				
1. At least four different types of fresh fruit must be offered daily.	✓ Observation of four fruit options	N	Three fruits are currently available (apples, bananas, pears). Purchase oranges to add to the checkout counter fruit bowl. Make sure fruit vendor is aware that four different fruit choices should be ordered weekly.	Short-term
2. Leafy green salads and at least one vinegar-based salad dressing that contains 290 milligrams of sodium or less per serving must be offered daily.	✓ Observation of leafy green salad and vinegar-based salad dressing	Y	N/A	N/A
3. At least one seasonal, regional, or local produce item must be offered daily.	✓ Full cycle menu ✓ Purchase record of seasonally available regional or local produce showing origin ✓ Observation of signage or promotion of the produce	N	Set up meeting with head chef and produce distributor to discuss ways to purchase and incorporate into menu. Talk to the communications department about signage to promote these items.	Medium-term

