



WORKPLACE
Healthy Food and Beverage Guide



healthy eating
starts here

Developed by:



Public Health, Central Zone
June 2016



Introduction

Good nutrition is essential for health and well-being. The environments, in which we live, learn, work and play have a large influence on what we eat. Workplaces have an important role to play in supporting healthy eating. They can help to make the healthy choice, the easy choice.

This document is designed to help guide you in creating and sustaining a healthy eating environment in your workplace. Depending on the readiness of your organization, you could use all of the guidelines, some of the guidelines or simply use this document as a starting point for conversations about changing the food environment within your workplace.

Promote the use of these guidelines when using organizational funds to purchase food and beverages for meetings, conferences, coffee chats, staff socials, and other workplace functions.

These guidelines do not include food and beverages brought from home. There are many different factors that determine what someone brings in from home such as income, cultural and personal preferences, therefore it is important not to judge food or beverages brought from home by colleagues. However, some people may find these guidelines useful to consider when bringing foods from home to share at team meetings, coffee chats, potlucks, and special occasions.



We would appreciate hearing your feedback on this resource!

Please visit <https://survey.nshealth.ca/healthyeatingstartshere> to answer a few short questions on how you have been using it and whether it has been helpful in improving the food environment in your workplace.

This document is based on Public Health's (Nova Scotia Health Authority, Central Zone) Healthy Food and Beverages Standard Operating Procedure, which was adapted from the [*Nova Scotia Standards for Food and Nutrition in Regulated Child Care Settings.*](#)



Guidelines

1. PURCHASING HEALTHY FOOD AND BEVERAGE

- When using organizational funds to purchase food and beverages for meetings or workplace events, choose recommended foods from the 'Healthy Food and Beverage Chart' (*Appendix A*).
- If the event is being catered, request the caterer follow these guidelines.

2. DIETARY CONSIDERATIONS

- Consider dietary needs and restrictions of attendees.
- Provide a vegetarian meal option when requested and consider offering as part of the regular selection.

3. NOVA SCOTIA PRODUCE AND PRODUCTS

- When purchasing or placing orders for foods, try to emphasize seasonably available, and/or locally grown/produced foods (from Nova Scotia or Atlantic Canada). For a list of what is in season, please visit <http://www.selectnovascotia.ca/seasonal-availability>

4. FOOD SAFETY

- Adhere to safe food handling procedures whenever food is served.
- Follow: <http://HealthyCanadians.gc.ca/foodsafety>
- Perishable foods should be refrigerated as soon as possible (at least within 2 hours) to reduce food waste and spoilage.

5. FOOD PACKAGING AND ENVIRONMENTAL CONSCIOUSNESS

- Compost and recycle whenever possible to minimize waste from food, food packaging, and disposable dishes.
- Safe drinking water is accessible. Whenever possible at meetings and workplace events, provide pitchers of tap water instead of bottled water.

6. FUNDRAISING WITH FOOD AND BEVERAGE

- When visibly fundraising (electronically/physically) within the workplace setting (e.g. kitchens, at the front desk, in a newsletter), or if the fundraising activity is supported by the workplace, try using non-food items, or recommended foods from the 'Healthy Food and Beverage Chart' (*Appendix A*).



Additional Resources

- Examples of Snack and Lunch Items (Appendix B)
- Examples of Sample Menus for Meetings (Appendix C)
- *Eating Well with Canada's Food Guide* – myfoodguide.ca
- *Strive for Five at School! A Guide to Promoting Fruit and Vegetables* – Takes healthy eating in the school system a step further, focusing on promoting and preparing in-season local fruits and vegetables. This resource provides a month-by-month promotional calendar, large and small quantity recipes, information and tips for promoting fruits and vegetables in school. Although tailored for the school setting, this resource is a great resource for any setting. nshps.ca/downloads/striveforfive
- For more detailed resources see:
 - *Creating a Healthy Workplace Nutrition Environment* – Ontario Society of Nutrition Professionals in Public Health has created an online toolkit that includes checklists, factsheets, planning tools, etc. to help support positive changes around food, nutrition and health in the workplace. www.osnpph.on.ca/workplace-nutrition-advisory-group
- Nova Scotia Food and Nutrition guidelines/policies/standards:
 - *Nova Scotia Standards for Food and Nutrition in Regulated Child Care Settings.* www.novascotia.ca/coms/families/provider/documents/Manual-Food_and_Nutrition.pdf
 - *Food & Nutrition Policy for Nova Scotia Public Schools* www.ednet.ns.ca/documents/policy/food-and-nutrition-policy-nova-scotia-public-schools
 - *Healthy Eating in Recreation and Sport Settings Guidelines* <http://novascotia.ca/dhw/pasr/documents/HealthyEatingGuidelines.pdf>

Appendices

Appendix A: Healthy Food and Beverage Chart

Appendix C: Examples of Sample Menus for Meetings

Appendix B: Examples of Snack and Lunch Items

Appendix D: Whole Grains and % Daily Value



APPENDIX A

Healthy Food & Beverages Chart

Group	Foods Recommended	Foods Not Recommended
 VEGETABLES & FRUIT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Fresh, frozen, and canned fruits and vegetables ■ Unsweetened dried fruit ■ 100% fruit or vegetable juice 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Prepackaged fruits and vegetables prepared with sauces high in fat and sodium ■ Battered and fried vegetables ■ Sweetened juices & fruits
 GRAIN PRODUCTS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Whole grain* breads, tortillas, rolls and buns ■ Whole grain* crackers low** in saturated and trans fats, and salt ■ Unsweetened hot and cold cereal high** in fibre ■ All types of pasta and rice (with an emphasis on whole wheat pasta and brown rice) ■ Barley, bulgar, quinoa, couscous and other whole grains* ■ Healthy homemade cookies, muffins, loaves, and pancakes (e.g. whole grain*, low** in saturated and trans fats, low in added sugar) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Hard Taco Shells ■ Baked goods containing candy and chocolate chips ■ Baked goods made with hard margarine, lard, and shortening
 MILK & ALTERNATIVES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Skim, 1%, or 2% milk ■ Plain fortified soy beverage ■ Yogurt ■ Hard and soft cheese, cottage cheese 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Ice cream and frozen desserts ■ Processed cheese spread and slices
 MEAT & ALTERNATIVES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Lean meat & poultry ■ Dry or canned legumes (e.g. beans, lentils) ■ Tofu ■ Fresh and canned fish ■ Hummus and bean dips ■ Eggs ■ Nuts, seeds and their butters 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Processed meats (e.g. ham, deli meats, hot dogs, salami, pepperoni)
 EXTRAS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Water ■ Condiments which are used sparingly ■ Vegetable oils (e.g. canola, olive and soybean) ■ Soft margarines low in saturated and trans fat & butter 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Pop, diet pop, energy drinks ■ Pickles (high in sodium) ■ Candy and chocolate ■ Marshmallows ■ Potato & other chips ■ Hard margarine, lard and shortening

* See Appendix D



APPENDIX B

Examples of Snack and Lunch Items

Beverages

- Water
- Skim, 1% or 2% milk or plain fortified soy beverage
- Coffee & tea

Lunches

- Sandwiches/wraps/pitas using whole grain* / whole wheat breads (e.g. egg, tuna, vegetable, and non-processed meat)
- Vegetable salads and/or cooked vegetables
- Whole grain* or whole wheat dishes (e.g. hot or cold quinoa, pastas, couscous, rice, noodles, tabouleh, etc.)
- Bean or lentil salads
- Homemade vegetable based soups and chowders
- Fajitas with whole grain* wraps
- Skewers/kebabs of chicken, beef, etc. served with rice and grilled vegetables
- Homemade mixed dishes such as lasagna, casserole, stews, etc.

Morning or Afternoon Snacks

- Fresh fruit served whole or as a tray/skewers (may be served with yogurt dip)
- Vegetable tray with hummus, or alternative lentil or bean based dips/spreads
- Homemade whole grain* baked goods including healthy muffins, oat cakes, tea biscuits/scones, or granola bars
- Yogurt (can be provided in individual serving sizes)
- Yogurt parfaits (fruit and yogurt topped with granola)
- Consider providing nut butters (e.g. peanut, almond, cashew) as a protein source when serving crackers / whole wheat pita, etc., where appropriate
- Cheese and whole grain* crackers
- Hard boiled eggs/deviled eggs
- 100% fruit sauce or fruit cups in water/light syrup
- Unsweetened dried fruit and nuts
- Soft or baked whole wheat pita chips with hummus, guacamole, or alternative dips/spreads that are bean or lentil based
- Naan with chutney
- Quesadilla made with whole grain* wrap (try filling them with vegetables, lean meat & alternatives and cheese)
- Pinwheel wraps (whole grain* wraps with hummus, nut butter or vegetables with tzatziki or bean dip)
- Egg/tuna/salmon salad with whole wheat pita wedges or crackers
- Sushi



APPENDIX C

Sample Menus for Meetings

Short Meeting (Any Time of Day)

MENU 1

Water and ice in a pitcher (can add in lemon, lime, melon, cucumber slices, or some berries for flavour)

Whole grain* baked goods such as scones, muffins or tea biscuits. Request muffins with local vegetables or fruit added (zucchini, carrot, cranberry, blueberry, etc.)

Apples, pears, peaches, melon, berries (all can be locally sourced depending on the season-apples year round)

OR

MENU 2

Water and ice in a pitcher (can add in lemon, lime, melon, cucumber slices, or some berries for flavour)

Cheese (this can be a locally sourced product – Farmers, Flying Dutchman, ADL)

Rice crackers or rice thins

Carrot sticks, mini tomatoes, cucumber, celery (all can be sourced locally)

For a morning meeting you may wish to add in coffee, tea or herbal teas

All-Day Meeting

MENU 1

Water and ice in a pitcher (can add in lemon, lime, melon, cucumber slices, or some berries for flavour)

Milk and soy beverages

Vegetable based soup such as Minestrone, Vegetable barley/pasta/rice, Squash, Tomato rice/pasta, etc.

Sandwiches/wraps/pitas using whole grain* or whole wheat breads (e.g. egg, tuna, vegetable, and non-processed meat)

OR

MENU 2

Water and ice in a pitcher (can add in lemon, lime, melon, cucumber slices, or some berries for flavour)

Milk and soy beverages

Pasta or rice casserole or lasagna made with chicken, lean beef, beans or vegetables

Garden, Spinach, or Greek salad



APPENDIX D

Whole Grains and % Daily Value

*Whole Grain

Grain products are considered whole grain if:

- the ingredient list of prepackaged grains includes whole grains as the first ingredients; or
- your recipe includes whole grains (e.g. whole grain flour, oats, cornmeal, cracked wheat, quinoa)

Example of Whole Grains:

- Oats, corn, rice, wheat berries, flax seeds, wheat germ, rye, light rye, stone ground whole wheat, kamut, amaranth, quinoa, pumpkinseed, barley, cracked wheat, bulgar, sprouted grain, flax, wheat germ

** % Daily Value

Determining if a packaged food is low or high in certain nutrients (i.e. saturated and trans fats, sodium and fibre):

- Read the Nutrient Facts table on the side of the side of the package.
- Consider if the serving size on the Nutrition Facts (i.e. by volume or weight) is about an average serving size.
- Read the % Daily Value (DV) to see if this food (in this serving size) has a little or a lot of a nutrient.
 - 5% DV or less is **a little**
 - 15% or more is **a lot**
- Choose products:
 - lower in saturated and trans fats and sodium
 - higher in fibre



Adapted from Health Canada's *Using the Nutrition Facts Table: % Daily Value*

http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/fn-an/alt_formats/pdf/label-etiquet/nutrition/cons/fact-fiche-eng.pdf