

So What Is a Smart Snack?

USDA recently published practical, science-based nutrition standards for snack foods and beverages sold to children at school during the school day. The standards, required by the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010, will allow schools to offer healthier snack foods to children, while limiting junk food.

The health of today's school environment continues to improve. Students across the country are now offered healthier school lunches with more fruits, vegetables and whole grains. The Smart Snacks in School standards will build on those healthy advancements and ensure that kids are only offered tasty and nutritious foods during the school day.

Smart Snacks in School USDA's "All Foods Sold in Schools" Standards	
Nutrition Standards for Foods	Nutrition Standards for Beverages
<p>Any food sold in schools must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be a "whole grain-rich" grain product; or • Have as the first ingredient a fruit, a vegetable, a dairy product, or a protein food; or • Be a combination food that contains at least ¼ cup of fruit and/or vegetable; or • Contain 10% of the Daily Value (DV) of one of the nutrients of public health concern in the 2010 Dietary Guidelines for Americans (calcium, potassium, vitamin D, or dietary fiber).* <p>Foods must also meet several nutrient requirements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Calorie limits: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Snack items: ≤ 200 calories ◦ Entrée items: ≤ 350 calories • Sodium limits: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Snack items: ≤ 230 mg** ◦ Entrée items: ≤ 480 mg • Fat limits: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Total fat: ≤ 35% of calories ◦ Saturated fat: < 10% of calories ◦ Trans fat: zero grams • Sugar limit: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ ≤ 35% of weight from total sugars in foods 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All schools may sell: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plain water (with or without carbonation) • Unflavored low fat milk • Unflavored or flavored fat free milk and milk alternatives permitted by NSLP/SBP • 100% fruit or vegetable juice and • 100% fruit or vegetable juice diluted with water (with or without carbonation), and no added sweeteners. • Elementary schools may sell up to 8-ounce portions, while middle schools and high schools may sell up to 12-ounce portions of milk and juice. There is no portion size limit for plain water. • Beyond this, the standards allow additional "no calorie" and "lower calorie" beverage options for high school students. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No more than 20-ounce portions of Calorie-free, flavored water (with or without carbonation); and • Other flavored and/or carbonated beverages that are labeled to contain < 5 calories per 8 fluid ounces or ≤ 10 calories per 20 fluid ounces. • No more than 12-ounce portions of Beverages with ≤ 40 calories per 8 fluid ounces, or ≤ 60 calories per 12 fluid ounces.
<p>*On July 1, 2016, foods may not qualify using the 10% DV criteria. **On July 1, 2016, snack items must contain ≤ 200 mg sodium per item</p>	

Is Your Snack a Smart Snack?

Take the guesswork out of nutrition guidelines with the new Alliance for a Healthier Generation Smart Snacks Product Calculator! Simply enter the product information, answer a few questions, and determine whether your snack, beverage, side, or entrée item meets the new USDA Smart Snacks in School Guidelines.

https://schools.healthiergeneration.org/focus_areas/snacks_and_beverages/smart_snacks/product_calculator/