

Vermont Food Standards

The State of Vermont is committed to helping its employees achieve optimal health and wellbeing. Supporting nutritious choices at work is an important part of our commitment as leaders in health promotion and is now required by 29 V.S.A. § 160c.

To meet our responsibilities, we have established the following standards to be used whenever food is offered at cafeterias and cafes on state property or at state funded meetings, conferences, and events that are paid for with state or federal dollars (in accordance with the Department of Finance and Management Policy 4.0 Department Provided Food and Refreshments). These standards do not apply where state and federal funds are not used, such as food purchases for personal consumption.

Cafes and Cafeterias:

Food Requirements:

All food service venues are required to implement the following criteria:

- All foods should be low in sodium.
 - Snacks and side dishes should have no more than 230 mg of sodium.
 - Entrees should have no more than 480 mg of sodium per serving.
- All meal items are free of artificial trans-fat or partially hydrogenated oils and low in saturated fats (less than 10% per serving).
- When using oils, use varieties high in unsaturated fats, such as olive, canola, corn or other fats that are liquid at room temperature.
- Entrees should have enough vegetables that half the plate can be covered in vegetables. Entrée choices should include a low-fat vegetarian dish and lean meat, poultry or fish.
- Preference should be given to locally grown or produced foods. Many Vermont organizations define local as within 250 miles of the purchaser.
- Limit deep-fried options to no more than one choice per day. This should not be promoted as the daily special.
- Include options that provide an alternative for those with food allergies. Such allergies may include milk, eggs, fish, shellfish, tree nuts, peanuts, wheat and soybeans.
- Offer daily:
 - Two whole grain-rich options
 - At least one raw, salad-type vegetable
 - At least one steamed, baked or grilled vegetable without saturated fat added
 - At least two different whole or sliced fruits daily



Beverage Requirements:

- Have free water available and advertise its availability.
- At least 50% of available beverage choices (other than 100% juice and unsweetened milk) must contain ≤ 40 calories/serving. For beverages with more than 40 calories/serving, only offer servings of 12 oz or less (excluding unsweetened milk).
- If milk is offered, include 1% and non-fat milk dairy-type products.

- Offer the choice of a non-dairy, calcium-fortified beverage (such as soy or almond beverage) with no added sugar. These beverages must not provide more natural sugars than milk (12 g/8 oz serving or less), provide the same amount or more of protein (at least 6 g/8 oz), calcium (250 mg/8 oz), and provide less than 5 g total fat (equivalent to 2% milk).
- If juice is offered, offer at least one 100% juice with no added caloric sweeteners.
- Vegetable juice must contain ≤ 230 mg sodium per serving.

Source: https://www.cdc.gov/obesity/downloads/guidelines_for_federal_concessions_and_vending_operations-2012.pdf

Snacks:

- In cafes and cafeterias, there should be an assortment of healthier food choices with a focus on fruits, vegetables and whole grains. At least 50 percent of the snack items must meet all of the following criteria:
- No more than 200 calories per item
- No more than 35% calories from fat, with the exception of:
 - Packages that contain 100% nuts or seeds
 - 100% nut and fruit mixes where the fruit has not been processed with added sweeteners and fats
 - 100% nut and yogurt mixes where the yogurt has no more than 30 grams of total sugar per 8 ounce or smaller container
- No more than 10% calories from saturated fat with the exception of packages that contain 100% nuts or seeds
- 0 grams trans-fat
- No more than 35% of calories from total sugars, with the exception of:
 - Fruits and vegetables that have not been processed with added sweeteners and fats
 - Yogurt with no more than 30 grams of total sugar per 8 ounce or smaller container
- No more than 230 milligrams of sodium per package

Labeling and Promotion:

- If possible, list nutritional facts for all items, including serving size, calories, protein, carbohydrates, fat and sodium. If this can't be calculated, list all ingredients in the dish.
- Promotion of healthy items is encouraged.

Placement:

- Healthy foods and beverages must be placed in highly visible areas of the counter, at the front and grouped together. This includes snacks that meet the healthy standards above, fresh fruits and vegetables, low fat milk, beverages ≤ 40 calories and unsweetened water.
- A variety of healthy items are available daily.

Other Suggestions:

- Make healthier options more appealing by offering them at a reduced price compared to less healthy alternatives.

- Offer desserts that use less or no added sugars. For example, desserts prepared with fruits, vegetables, nuts, seeds, apple sauces and yogurts without added sugars.
- Make half or reduced size portions of sandwiches or entrées available.

Catered Meetings and Events:

Food Requirements

- All foods offered should be low in sodium.
 - Snacks and side dishes should have no more than 230 mg of sodium.
 - Entrees should have no more than 480 mg of sodium per serving.
- All meal items are free of artificial trans-fat or partially hydrogenated oils and low in saturated fats (less than 10% per serving).
- When using oils, use varieties high in unsaturated fats, such as olive, canola, corn or other fats that are liquid at room temperature.
- Entrees should have enough vegetables and low-fat vegetarian, lean meat, poultry or fish choices.
- Preference should be given to locally grown or produced foods.
- Include options that address food allergies.
- Include a fruit (if canned or frozen, with no added sweeteners) or vegetable choice. Fruit juice should not be substituted for fruit.
- Include whole grains whenever grains are served.
- Make half or reduced size portions of sandwiches or entrées available.
- If snacks are provided, choose baked, low-fat or low sodium (less than 230 mg sodium) items.
- If dessert is desired, provide a choice of whole fruit, fruit salad or applesauce with no added sugar or low- or non-fat, low-sugar yogurt.

Beverage Requirements

- Offer and promote free water
- Offer 100% juice, 1% or fat-free milk or beverages with ≤ 40 calories per serving.

Breakfast ideas

- Fruit pieces or whole fruit – offer seasonal, local fruit whenever possible. Do not serve juice
- Low- or non-fat yogurt
- Breakfast sandwiches with egg and low-fat cheese on a whole grain English muffin
- Breakfast burritos with egg, black beans and salsa on a whole wheat wrap
- Small muffins or large muffins cut in half (look for whole grain muffins)
- Whole grain bread or whole grain English muffins
- Whole grain cereals (serve with fat-free or 1% milk)
- Mini whole grain bagels or larger bagels cut in half
- Hard boiled eggs
- Low-fat granola or granola bars
- Low-fat or whipped cream cheese spread

- Unsweetened cereals (Cheerios, Shredded Wheat, Oatmeal)
- 1% or fat-free milk
- Coffee and tea
- Single servings spreads, such as peanut butter, jam, jelly, low-fat cream cheese or trans-fat free spread

Lunch ideas

- Broth-based, low sodium soups with vegetables
- Half-sandwiches or wraps
 - Whole grain bread with roasted or grilled tofu, lean meats, low-fat cheese or a variety of veggie toppings
 - Vegetable sandwiches or wraps (whole grain):
 - Southwestern bean and vegetable
 - Tomato and basil
 - Peanut butter and jelly
 - Roasted vegetables
 - Hummus
- Mixed green salad
- Hummus
- Hard-boiled eggs
- Whole or cut fruit
- Whole grain pasta or rice salad (made with light vinaigrette or low-fat dressing)
- Bean salad
- Protein salads with low-fat mayo:
 - Egg salad
 - Tuna salad
 - Chicken salad
- Low-salt or baked chips or air-popped popcorn
- If dessert is desired, provide a choice of whole fruit, fruit salad or applesauce with no sugar added, or low- or non-fat, low-sugar yogurt.

For technical assistance and support for menu planning, please contact Susan Kamp, MS, Physical Activity and Nutrition Program: 951-4006 or susan.kamp@vermont.gov or the Division of Health Promotion and Disease Prevention at 863-7330.