

POLICY IMPLEMENTATION GUIDE

Rationale

The South Dakota Department of Health developed the Healthy Vending and Snack Bar Policy Implementation Guide to provide businesses with guidelines for incorporating healthier food and drink options in vending machines and snack bars at their workplaces. This guide serves two purposes:

1. Inform employees about what they are eating and which choices are healthier.⁽¹⁾
2. Increase choice, not restrict choice. The policy is designed to make healthy choices more accessible, more appealing, and more affordable. It is not designed to restrict choices.⁽¹⁾

Employers all across the country are working to create healthy work environments. Worksites have the opportunity to encourage healthy eating habits and help prevent health problems such as diabetes, depression, and heart disease.^(1,11) The consequences of poor nutrition and obesity in the United States not only lowers the quality of life for individuals, but also reduces productivity and increases the cost of doing business.⁽⁸⁾

The federal government has set an outstanding example by making healthy food and drink choices a priority in federal facilities. The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) worked collaboratively with the General Service Administration (GSA) to create *The Health and Sustainability Guidelines for Federal Concessions and Vending Operations*.⁽⁴⁾ The South Dakota Healthy Vending and Snack Bar Policy Implementation Guide was developed primarily from the HHS GSA guidelines, South Dakota Healthy Concessions Policy, and the Nutritional Environment Measures Survey for Vending.^(4, 5, 9)

Guidelines

This guide encourages the adoption of a color coded approach to choosing healthier items to offer in vending machines and snack bars at your worksite. Rather than an 'all or nothing' approach, these guidelines categorize food and drinks as **GREEN**, **YELLOW**, or **RED**.

GREEN foods/drinks are the healthiest option and can be enjoyed often.

YELLOW foods/drinks may have added sodium and calories and should be eaten occasionally.

RED foods/drinks are the highest in sodium, sugar, fat, and calories and the least healthy. These foods should be eaten sparingly.

The guidelines have three main priorities: ^(2, 3, 4, 5, 9, 13)

1. Establish clear guidelines for what constitutes **GREEN**, **YELLOW**, and **RED** foods based on trans-fat, sodium, calories, calories from saturated fat, and sugar.
2. Establish clear guidelines for **GREEN**, **YELLOW**, and **RED** drinks based on calories per serving, fat content, addition of caloric sweeteners, and sodium content.
3. Align with FDA (Food and Drug Administration) regulation to make the calorie content of ALL items visible at the point of purchase. This includes both food and drinks. A sign must be provided next to each item or in a visible location in close proximity to each food or drink disclosing the calorie content. If the package contains more than one serving the workplace has the choice to disclose the calories per serving including the number of total servings per package or calories per item.

FOOD STANDARDS

GREEN FOOD STANDARDS

Foods must meet **ONE** of the core criteria:

- 2%, 1%, or fat-free dairy
- Whole, frozen, or dried fruits (including unsweetened applesauce and fruit cups packed in 100% juice or water)
- Whole or frozen vegetables
- Whole grain products (first ingredient is a whole grain)
- Plain nuts or seeds (can be flavored)

Foods must **ALSO** meet **ALL** of the following:

- 200 calories or less per item*
- 230 mg of sodium or less per serving
- Zero trans fat (0.5 grams or less per serving)
- Total calories from saturated fat: 10% or less*
- Calories from sugar: 35% or less of total weight **

YELLOW FOOD STANDARDS

Foods do **NOT** need to meet one of the core criteria, but must meet **ALL** of the following:

- 250 calories or less per item*
- 480 mg of sodium or less per serving
- Zero trans fat (0.5 grams or less per serving)
- Total calories from saturated fat: 10% or less*
- Calories from sugar: 35% or less of total weight**

RED FOOD STANDARDS

- Do not meet green or yellow standards

**excluding nuts and seeds without added fats or oils*

***excluding fruits or vegetables without added caloric sweeteners*

Goal to meet Federal Food Vending Standards (HHS/GSA Standards):

At least 25% of all foods must meet the green and yellow standards and 100% of foods must meet the trans fat and sodium requirements:

- Zero trans fat (less than or equal to 0.5 grams per serving)
- Snack items contain 230 mg of sodium or less per serving

DRINK STANDARDS

GREEN DRINK STANDARDS

- Water without flavoring, additives, or carbonation
- 2%, 1%, or fat-free unflavored milk, including lactose-free and soy drinks
- 12 oz. or less of 100% fruit or vegetable juice with no added caloric sweeteners and 230 mg of sodium or less per serving
- Decaffeinated and unsweetened coffee and tea (including herbal tea)

YELLOW DRINK STANDARDS

- More than 12 oz. of 100% fruit or vegetable juice
- 2%, 1%, or fat-free flavored milk
- Diet soda
- Any other sweetened drink with 40 calories or less per 8 oz. (i.e. sports drinks, flavored water, sweetened tea, etc.)

RED DRINK STANDARDS

- Regular soda and sports drinks
- Whole milk
- Fruit/juice drinks that are not 100% juice
- Any other drinks that do not meet the green or yellow standards

Goal to meet Federal Beverage Vending Standards (HHS/GSA Standards):

At least 50% of all drinks must be low calorie drinks (40 calories or less per serving), excluding 100% juice and unsweetened milk.

Guide for Calculating Nutrition Standards

Percent calories from saturated fat:

1. Multiply the grams of saturated fat by 9
(there are 9 calories per gram of fat)

$$\begin{array}{r} 1 \text{ gram saturated fat} \\ \times 9 \text{ calories per gram} \\ \hline 9 \text{ calories from saturated fat} \end{array}$$
2. Divide the # of calories from saturated fat by the # of total calories

$$\begin{array}{r} 9 \text{ calories from saturated fat} \\ \div 230 \text{ total calories} \\ \hline 0.039 \end{array}$$
3. Multiply by 100 to equal the % calories from saturated fat

$$0.039 \times 100 = 3.9\% \text{ calories from saturated fat}$$

Percent sugar by weight:

1. Divide the # of grams of sugar by the total grams
(total grams is listed in parenthesis after the serving size)

$$1 \div 55 = 0.018$$
2. Multiply by 100 to equal the % sugar by weight

$$0.018 \times 100 = 1.81\% \text{ sugar by weight}$$

Nutrition Facts	
Serving Size 2/3 cup (55g)	
Servings Per Container About 8	
Amount Per Serving	As Served
Calories 230	Calories from Fat 40
% Daily Value*	
Total Fat 8g	12%
Saturated Fat 1g	5%
Trans Fat 0g	
Cholesterol 0mg	0%
Sodium 160mg	7%
Total Carbohydrate 37g	12%
Dietary Fiber 4g	16%
Sugars 1g	
Protein 3g	

IMPLEMENTATION

Businesses may face certain barriers that affect their ability to offer healthier food and drink items, such as difficulty negotiating with vendors to include healthy items or limited sales of healthy items. Consider the following strategies to overcome these barriers:

- Negotiating with vendors: ⁽⁹⁾
 - Vocalize the desire for healthy food and drink options to be added to the vending machine and snack bar at the worksite.
 - Provide the vendors with a copy of this guide to show the nutrition standards for **GREEN**, **YELLOW**, and **RED** food and drink items.
 - State the number of **GREEN**, **YELLOW**, and **RED** items that are to be made available in each site. Sales may start out slow for healthier options, but will increase over time.
 - Discuss ways to label the items as **GREEN**, **YELLOW**, or **RED**.
 - Discuss ways to make the calorie content of ALL items visible at the point of purchase.
 - Discuss product placement and prices. Suggest reducing the cost of healthy food options and discuss any profitability concerns the vendor may have.
- Enhancing sales of healthier items: ⁽⁶⁾
 - **Pricing:** Pricing strategies can be used to promote healthier foods and drinks. Have a meeting with the vendors to talk about ways to keep prices for healthier items such as bottled water and fruit equal to or less than the price of soda or candy.
 - **Point of Purchase Information:** Identify healthier options versus less healthy items through signage and promotional materials. Develop signs to be placed near the vending machine, hang posters throughout the building, or place table tents in your cafeteria or break room.
 - **Product Placement and Attractiveness:** Place your **GREEN** and **YELLOW** items at eye level and along the right hand column of the vending machine.⁽⁷⁾
 - **Taste Testing:** Have the worksite wellness committee conduct a taste test of some of the **GREEN** and **YELLOW** food and drink options that could be purchased through your vendor. This will help to determine which items have the best sales potential.

COMPLIANCE

There are many interpretations when classifying food and drinks as healthy or less healthy. This tool is a **guide** to assist businesses in implementing a policy that will fit their business and benefit their employees. A worksite wellness committee may be the perfect group to ensure these guidelines will remain a priority.

CONCLUSION

A first great step in creating a healthy nutrition environment for all employees is to utilize the implementation guide in its entirety or choose to adapt the guidelines to meet the needs of the worksite.

DEFINITION OF TERMS

- **Calories:** A unit of measurement representing the amount of energy food and drinks provide when eaten to fuel our body
- **Packaged Food Choices:** Includes any processed, pre-packaged foods
- **Whole Grain:** Contains 100% of the original kernel. All of the bran, germ, and endosperm must be present to qualify as a whole grain. Tip: Look for the word “whole”. Examples: ⁽¹²⁾
 - Whole wheat
 - Whole corn
 - Whole oats
 - Whole grain [name of grain]
 - Brown Rice
 - Wild Rice
 - Wheatberries
 - Amaranth
 - Barley
 - Buckwheat
 - Millet
 - Quinoa
 - Rye
 - Sorghum (also called milo)
 - Teff
 - Triticale
- **Fat-Free Milk (Skim):** Non-fat milk with 0-0.5% fat by weight
- **1% Milk:** Low-fat milk with 1% fat by weight
- **2% Milk:** Reduced-fat milk with 2% fat by weight
- **Whole Milk:** 3.5% fat by weight
- **Caloric Sweeteners:** Provide energy (calories) in the form of carbohydrates. Also known as nutritive sweeteners or sugar. *Note: caloric sweeteners are not the same as artificial sweeteners such as aspartame, saccharin, stevia, and sucralose.* ⁽¹⁰⁾

RESOURCES

1. *Concessions and Cafeterias: Healthy Food in the Federal Workplace.* US General Services Administration. 2014. <http://www.gsa.gov/portal/content/104429>
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