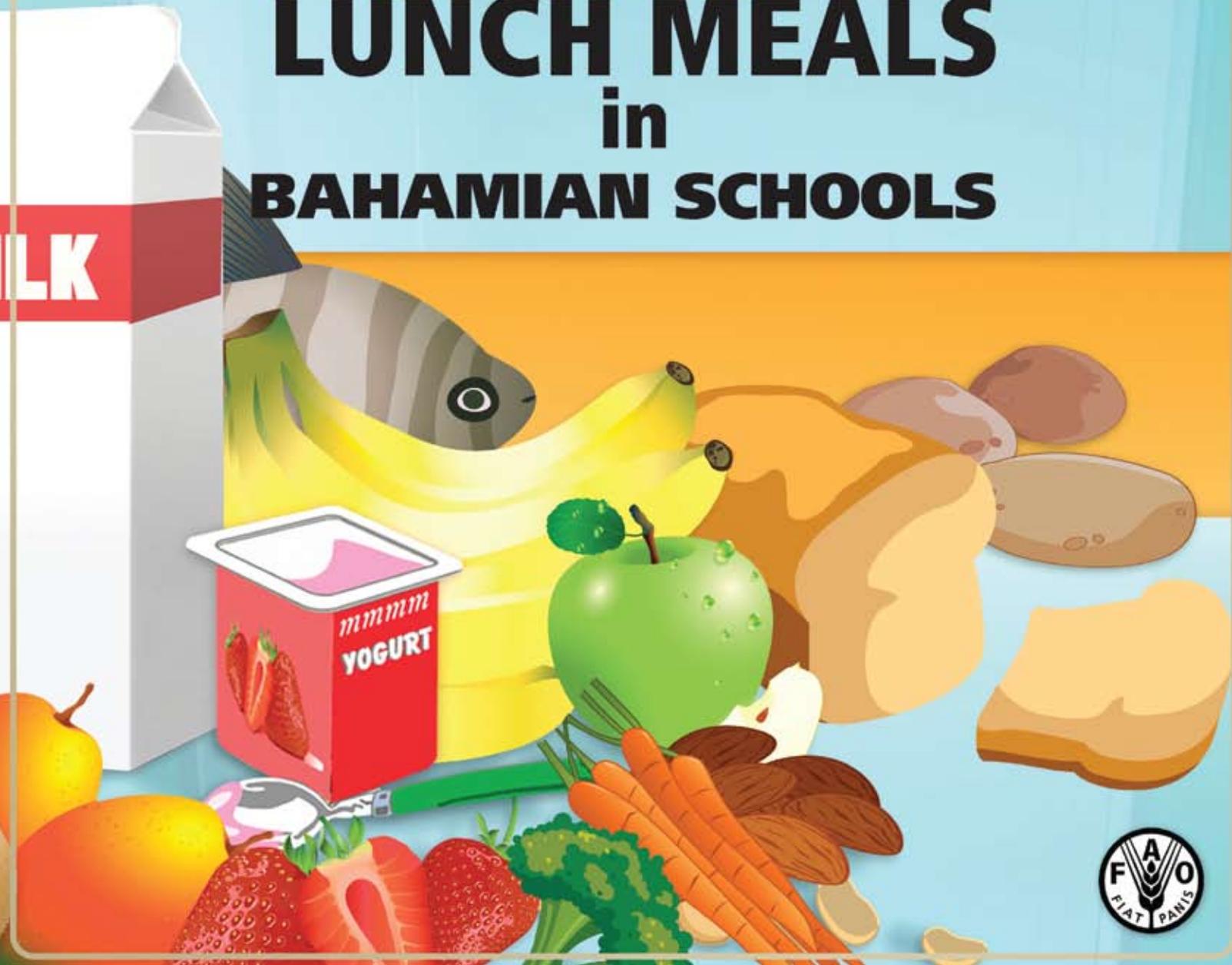




Compulsory Standards for **HEALTHY LUNCH MEALS** in **BAHAMIAN SCHOOLS**



**Compulsory
Standards for
HEALTHY LUNCH
MEALS
in
BAHAMIAN SCHOOLS**

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Nassau, Bahamas



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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This publication, ***Compulsory Standards for Healthy Lunch Meals in Bahamian Schools***, details the nutritional standards for school lunch meals, which all lunch vendors operating under the Ministry of Education must adhere to. It has been substantially written and compiled by the Nutrition Unit of the Ministry of Health / Department of Public Health.

The Nutrition Unit acknowledges that the success of this publication would not have been possible without the collaborative work of the Ministry of Health, Ministry of Education, School Lunch Vendors Association and the Food and Agriculture organization (FAO).

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INTRODUCTION

Compulsory Standards for Healthy Lunch Meals in Bahamian Schools was reviewed and updated under the Healthy Schools Initiative Program, which is a joint venture of the Ministry of Health, Ministry of Education..

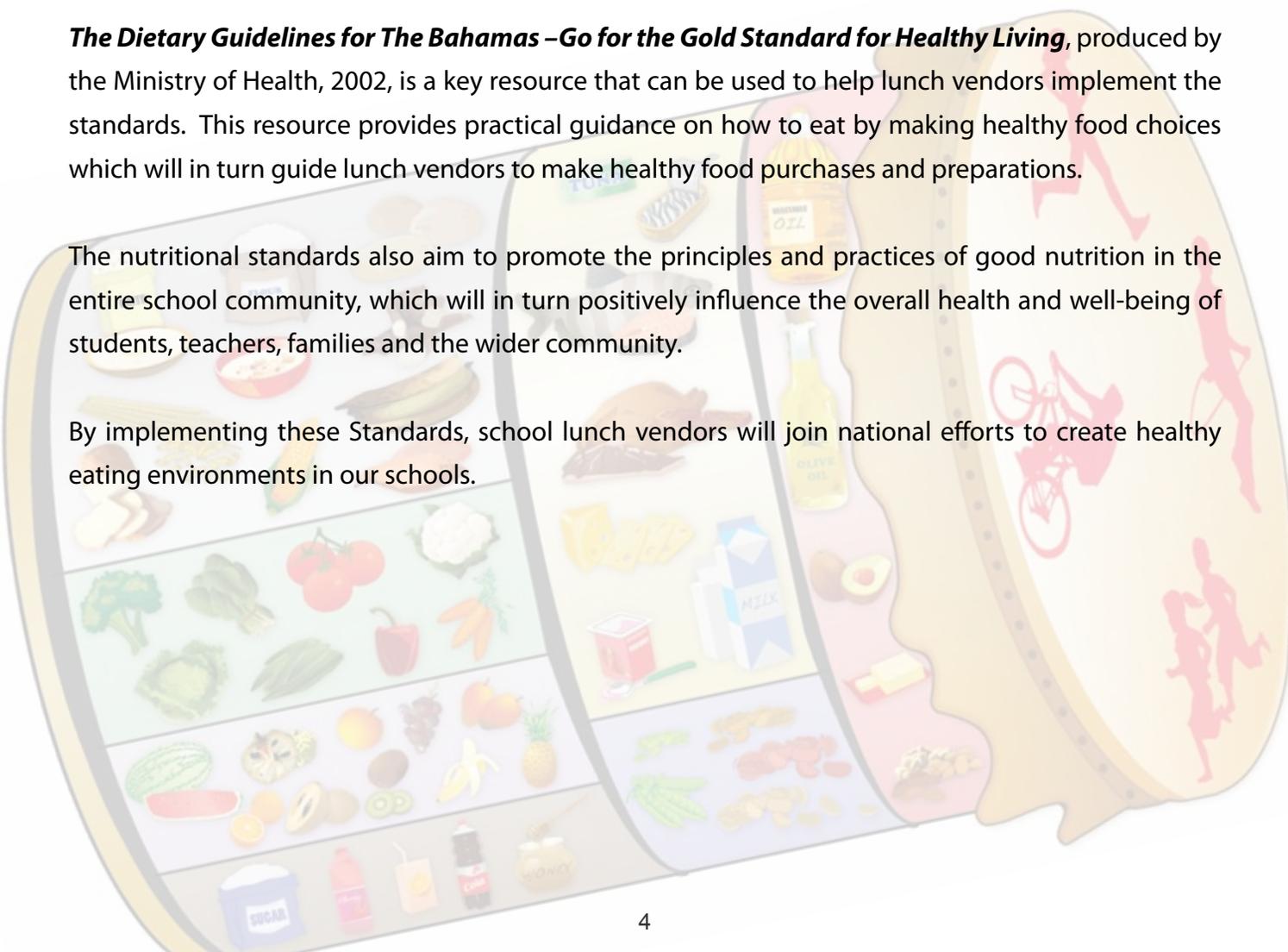
The program recognizes the important role schools play in influencing childhood nutrition and the development of the knowledge and skills necessary to make healthier food choices. **Good nutrition supports good grades.** Therefore, it is very important that school lunch vendors along with the entire school body provide food choices that promote good nutrition and a healthy environment.

The ***Standards*** provides details on the nutritional standards for all foods served by lunch vendors, based on the ***Dietary Guidelines for The Bahamas***. It also explains the reason why nutritional standards have been introduced and offers practical advice on how to put the standards into practice.

The Dietary Guidelines for The Bahamas –Go for the Gold Standard for Healthy Living, produced by the Ministry of Health, 2002, is a key resource that can be used to help lunch vendors implement the standards. This resource provides practical guidance on how to eat by making healthy food choices which will in turn guide lunch vendors to make healthy food purchases and preparations.

The nutritional standards also aim to promote the principles and practices of good nutrition in the entire school community, which will in turn positively influence the overall health and well-being of students, teachers, families and the wider community.

By implementing these Standards, school lunch vendors will join national efforts to create healthy eating environments in our schools.



DEFINITION OF TERMS

“Boils”: A common dish of vegetables prepared by boiling a variety of mostly starchy vegetables such as cassava, sweet potato, pumpkin, and plantain. Non-starchy vegetables such as cabbage and carrots are sometimes added to this pot of “boils” as well.

Competitive Foods: Less nutritious foods and beverages offered at schools that compete with nutritious foods. These foods are usually low in nutrients and high in fat, added sugars, salt and calories and are linked to many health problems.

Cross-contamination: Transferring harmful bacteria from one food to another. This may be done directly, or via chopping board, utensils, hands etc.

Fillings: Sweet creams, jams, etc. spread between baked layers in cakes, rolls or shaped into yeast-raised items.

Food Danger Zone: Food temperatures between 41°F and 140°F. (Room temperature) Bacteria will grow very quickly on your food at room temperature.

Foods of Minimal Nutritional Value (FMNV): A Category of competitive foods restricted by the *Compulsory Standards for Healthy School Lunch Meals*. These foods include, but are not limited to, sodas, fruit drinks, Kool-Aid baggies and cups, popsicles made with fruit drinks, chewing gum, candy and chocolate bars, chips, pastries, etc.

Fried Foods: Foods that are cooked by “deep fat frying”. This definition does not include foods that are stir-fried or sautéed.

Fruit or Vegetable Drink: Any beverage containing less than 100% fruit or vegetable juice. E.g. orange drinks, grape drinks, cranberry drinks, fruit drinks that contain 10% fruit juice etc.

Fruit or Vegetable Juice: Beverages containing 100% fruit or vegetable juice with no sugar added.

Meat Alternatives: Foods that have many of the same nutrients found in meat. E.g. eggs, cheese, fish, dried beans, nuts and a vegetable and grain-based food with a meat-like texture that can be used to replace meat.

DEFINITION OF TERMS cont'd

Red Meats: Meat which is red-colored when raw. E.g. beef, mutton, lamb

Safe Foods: Foods that are not spoiled and are free from bacteria or other harmful organisms that can cause a person to become sick.

Sanitize: Use of heat or chemicals to kill germs. E.g. boiling water or using bleach and other disinfectants to clean.

Starchy Foods: Carbohydrate foods such as rice, grits, pasta/macaroni/noodles, bread, flour.

Starchy Vegetables: Carbohydrate foods such as pumpkin, corn, potato, cassava, sweet potato, dried beans and peas, green bananas

Trans Fats: A kind of fat that increases the risk for heart disease. It is made by changing liquid fat into solid fat. Trans Fats are usually found in foods such as margarine, shortening, commercially baked goods (doughnuts, twists, cookies, chips etc.) French Fries and many other processed foods.

NUTRITIONAL STANDARDS FOR HEALTHY SCHOOL LUNCH MEALS

WHERE THE STANDARDS APPLY

The Standards are compulsory in all Ministry of Education schools, i.e. preschool, kindergarten, primary and secondary schools and apply to all free and paid lunches.

It is mandatory that all school lunch vendors and all other relevant parties adhere to the Standards at all times.

The Standards do not apply to special one-off functions such as “Fun Day” and other fundraising events that take place twice a year. However the standards will apply to the third and all subsequent fundraising events that may occur.

WHY NUTRITIONAL STANDARDS ARE BEING INTRODUCED

Diet is important to health, and what children eat has an important influence on their health, now and in the future. Poor eating habits in children and adolescents are linked to learning and behavioral problems, overweight and obesity. The Bahamas Living Condition Survey (BLCS) 2001 showed that 14% of children ages 2-10 years and 9% of the adolescent and young adult population ages 11-20 years are overweight. Overweight and obesity is an established risk factor for the development of chronic non-communicable diseases (CNCD) such as diabetes, hypertension, heart disease and even some cancers, later in life.

Good nutrition in childhood can help protect against obesity and CNCDs. In addition, it is well known that achievements in academics and sports are often used to grade a school for high performance. According to the World Health Organization (WHO), good health and nutrition are needed to achieve one’s full academic potential because nutrition affects intellectual development as it relates to the ability concentrate and focus as well as overall learning ability. Poor nutrition on a continuous basis affects motivation and emotional expression.

Good nutrition can “help make the grade” and boost academic and athletic success. Students who eat healthy meals are better able to concentrate during their lessons and are more likely to achieve good grades and behave well in school.

NUTRITIONAL STANDARDS FOR HEALTHY SCHOOL LUNCHTIME MEALS CONT'D

On an average, children and adolescents spend approximately 9 to 10 months of the year and more than 7 seven hours out of the day in school. Furthermore, lunch provides about one third of a child's nutritional needs. Needless to say schools have the opportunity to provide the ideal environment to promote good nutrition and influence the food choices and eating practices of their students.

There are other important reasons for implementing nutritional standards in school lunches:

- In keeping with the recommendations set out in the Dietary Guidelines for The Bahamas, the objectives of School Lunch Guidelines are as follows:
 - ✓ to achieve energy balance;
 - ✓ to increase consumption of fruits and vegetables;
 - ✓ to limit intake of fat, sugar and salt;
 - ✓ to maintain proper growth and development;
 - ✓ to achieve and maintain good health.
- In accordance with the declaration made by the Heads of Government of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM), in the Port of Spain Declaration (2007):

“we will mandate the re-introduction of physical education in our schools where necessary, provide incentives and resources to effect this policy and ensure that our education sectors promote programs aimed at providing healthy school meals and promote healthy eating.”

THE USERS OF THE NUTRITIONAL STANDARDS AND THEIR RESPONSIBILITIES

The Nutritional Standards provide the foundation for school meals. They serve as a reference for the Ministry of Education's schools, lunch vendors, administrators, teachers, parents, and students. School lunch vendors are the target users of the standards. However, all stakeholders play a key role in helping to create the healthiest possible school environment.

SCHOOL LUNCH VENDORS

School lunch vendors play a much bigger role than providing lunch to students. Each food item provided has the potential to positively or negatively affect students' health. School lunch vendors also have the challenging role of offering low-cost nutritious lunch and dessert items, while operating at a reasonable profit. The types of foods sold by the lunch vendor must be in compliance with the ***Dietary Guidelines for The Bahamas*** and nutrition education taught in the classroom. The ***Compulsory Standards for Healthy Lunch Meals in Bahamian Schools*** will help school lunch vendors better comply to the Standards.

Lunch and desserts offered by the school lunch vendor should encourage students to:

- ✓ Make healthy food choices the number one choice for consumption during lunch time.
- ✓ sample new healthy foods
- ✓ put into practice what they have learned in the classroom

School lunch vendors can best use the Nutritional Standards to help them:

- ✓ know the types of food that should be sold to children and adolescents
- ✓ know how often to sell various types of food;
- ✓ plan menus;
- ✓ purchase healthy foods; and
- ✓ prepare healthy food selections for school lunch.

THE USERS OF THE NUTRITIONAL STANDARDS AND THEIR RESPONSIBILITIES CONT'D

STUDENTS AND TEACHERS

All schools should ensure that nutrition and healthy lifestyle choices, including garden-based principles are taught throughout the curriculum to students. Students of all ages will then have the knowledge to make informed healthy food and beverage choices. It is much easier for students to make healthy food choices and develop healthy eating habits when they are surrounded by a healthy environment.

MINISTRY OF EDUCATION/DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION/ ADMINISTRATORS

In collaboration with the Ministry of Health, the Ministry of Education determines and promotes appropriate nutritional standards in all schools. Ensuring that school lunch vendors offer healthy lunch choices on school campuses is just one of many ways that the Ministry of Education can help to improve children's and adolescents' diet and overall health.

MONITORING AND EVALUATION

The Ministry of Education will be responsible for ensuring that the lunch vendors are in compliance with the ***Compulsory Standards for Healthy Lunch Meals in Bahamian Schools*** based on an established Monitoring and Evaluation plan. The schools will observe and gauge the progress with a monitoring for compliance check list for every lunch item sold by the lunch vendor, at least once a term or as deemed necessary.

MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND OTHER COLLABORAING AGENCIES

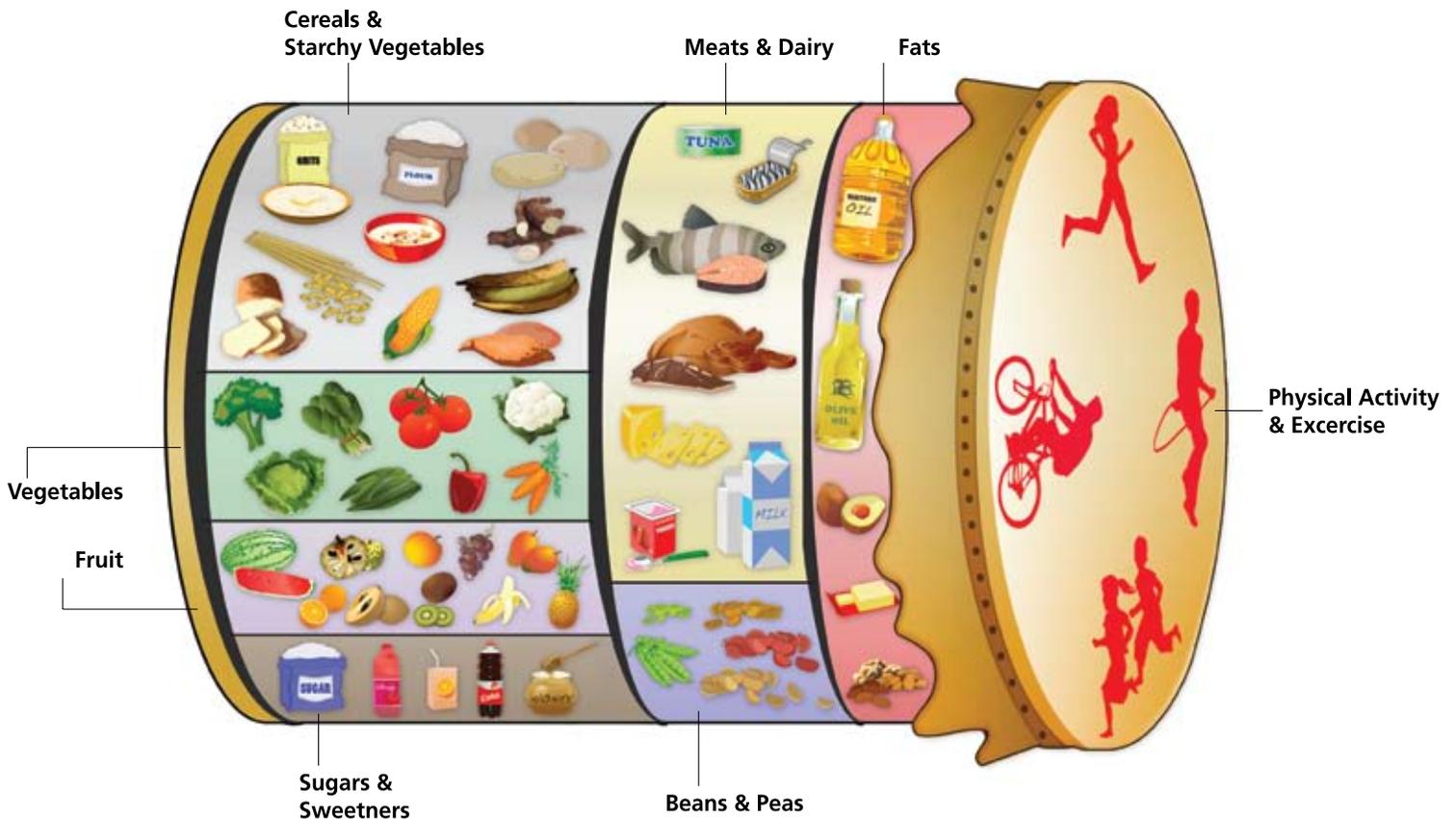
The Ministry of Health/Deparment of Public Health will provide technical support in the on going training of school lunch vendors to enhance knowledge and skills needed to translate the Standards into real food options and menu choices.

THESE GENERAL COMPULSORY STANDARDS MUST BE ADHERED TO AT ALL TIMES

- Lunch vendors can only sell food items approved in the Standards.
- School lunch vendors **are not allowed to sell Foods of Minimal Nutritional Value (FMNV)** (see Definition of Terms) at any time on the school campus.
- All one-dish meals must represent a “balanced plate”. A balanced plate should include starchy foods, protein (meat or meat alternative) and vegetables.
- Do not sell foods high in fat and sugar.
- **All school lunch vendors and their assistants must have a valid Food Handler’s Health Certificate.**
- Prepare and serve foods in a clean, attractive and sanitized environment in accordance with the Food Handler’s Programme offered by the Ministry of Health.
- Keep foods at the safe temperature zone (see Definition of Terms), at all times.
- Store and serve all foods from separate containers or receptacles with tightly fitted covers, to reduce cross-contamination (see Definition of Terms) and food poisoning.
- Serve all foods in sanitary receptacles (e.g. wax paper, napkins, plastic ware or foil).
- Serve all food by using individual utensils.
- • • ***Foods high in fat, sugar and salt contribute to the problem of childhood obesity and other nutrition-related conditions. Additionally, foods high in sugar contribute to dental caries.***

THE BASIS OF THE NUTRITIONAL STANDARDS

The Nutritional Standards are based on the food groups represented in the Food Guide Drum. The **Food Guide Drum** provides a visual representation of the types and proportions of foods people need for a healthy and balanced diet.



- 1 Use our drum to help you choose a variety of foods daily,
- 2 Limit the amount of high fat & greasy foods you eat.
- 3 Make starchy vegetables, peas & beans a part of your diet.
- 4 Choose foods with less sugar & less salt.
- 5 Choose a variety of fruits & vegetables everyday.
- 6 Drink plenty of water everyday.
- 7 It is advisable not to drink alcohol, but if you drink, do so in moderation.
- 8 Make physical activity & exercise a part of your lifestyle.
- 9 Choose foods for their medicinal value, not for the 'name brand' or cost.
- 10 Breast milk is the best choice for infants to start a healthy life.

EATING OUT OF THE FOOD GUIDE DRUM

The following examples show the kinds of foods that can be found in each of the food groups found on the Food Guide Drum. The following foods listed are only examples; there are many more foods that can be found in each group.

Cereals and Starchy Vegetables – grits, rice, oats, wheat bread, cassava, pumpkin, plantain, sweet potato, corn, macaroni, and noodles

Beans and Peas - pigeon peas, pinto beans, lima beans, red beans, white beans and lentils
*** Include foods from this group as often as possible.**

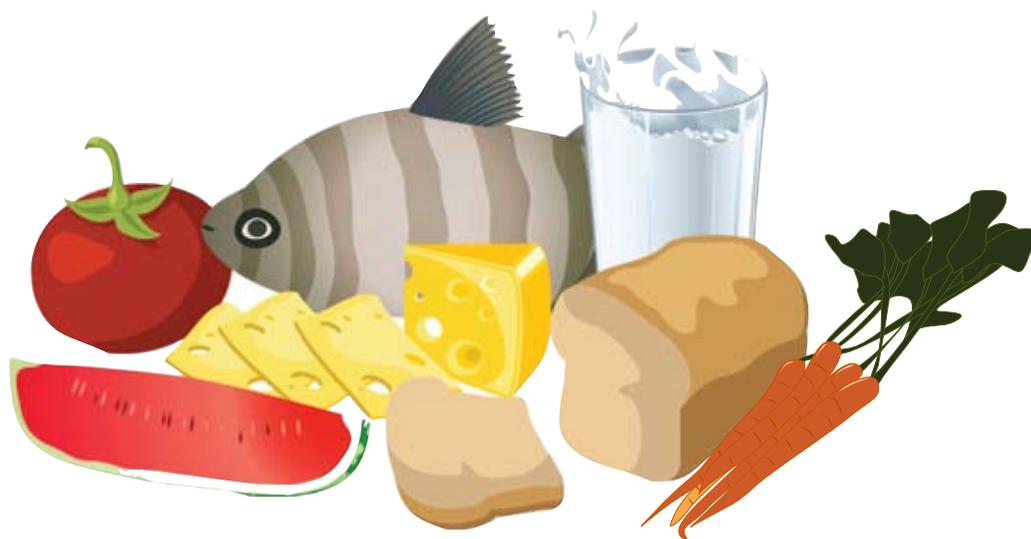
Vegetables - lettuce, tomatoes, broccoli, cauliflower, carrots, spinach, sweet peas, string green beans and cabbage *** Eat foods from this group every day.**

Fruits - mango, sapodilla, oranges, watermelon, sour sop, sugar apple, cantaloupe, red and green apples, plums, and peaches *** Eat foods from this group every day.**

Meats and Dairy - fish, tuna, sardines, mackerel, chicken, beef, turkey, cheese, milk, cream, yogurt, pudding, and custard

Fats - butter, margarine, mayonnaise, cooking oils, oily salad dressing, cream, and chicken skin and other meat fats, chips and french fries *** Eat very small amounts from this group.**

Sugars and Sweeteners - sweet milk, juice drinks, sodas, kool-aid, sugar pastry, candy, chocolates, cookies, biscuits, doughnuts, twists *** This group represent “sometimes” foods. Eat very small amounts from this group.**



A HEALTHY DIET FOR CHILDREN

For children aged five and over, a healthy diet generally means:

- A balanced diet with plenty of variety and enough calories for growth and development;
- Plenty of fruits and vegetables;
- Enough starchy (carbohydrate) foods such as bread, rice, grits, cassava, pumpkin and sweet potato;
- Enough meat and meat alternative foods such as fish, tuna, chicken, beans and peas;
- Enough water;
- Enough milk and milk products;
- Very small amount of fats and fatty foods; and
- Very small amounts of sugar and sugary foods.

The important “take-home” message from the Dietary Guidelines is that **children and adolescents should limit the amount of foods and beverages high in fat, salt and/or sugar.**

One way the school can ensure that children and adolescents eat small amounts of fatty and sugary foods is by offering a large selection of low fat and low sugar foods and beverages.



Part I

NUTRITIONAL STANDARDS for *MEAL PLANNING*

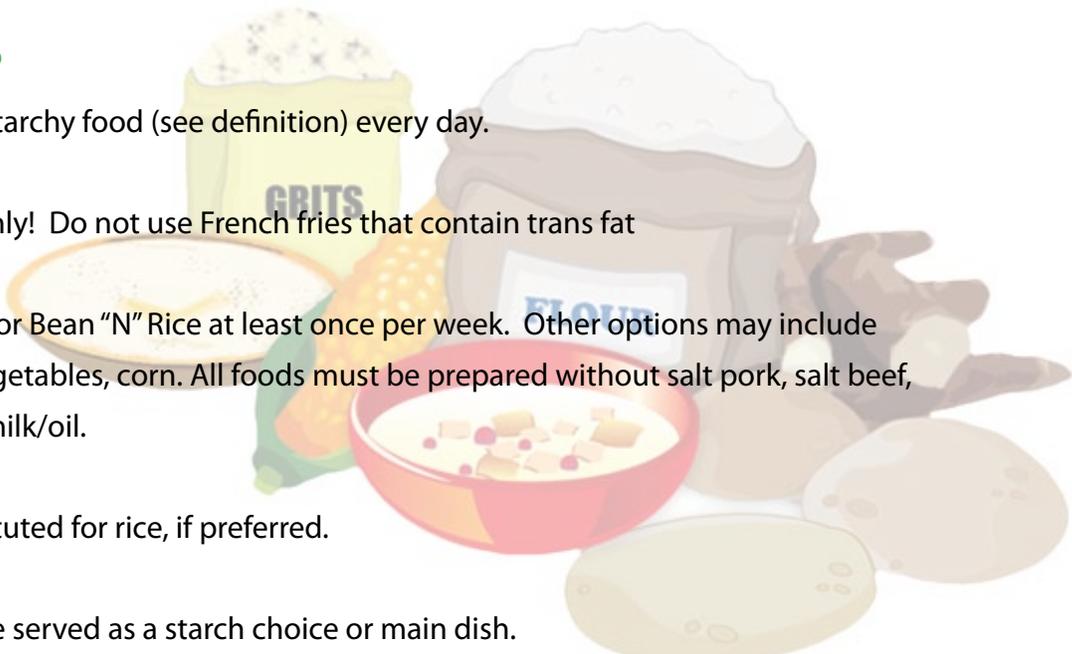
This section of the standards specifies the quality of food items to be served and how often they are to be served. The main aim is to prevent students from consuming too much fat, sugar and salt. It covers the following areas:

- *Good eating practices to be adopted;*
 - *Food items to be encouraged;*
 - *Food items that should be limited;*
 - *Rationale for school lunch standards.*
- 

CEREALS AND STARCHY VEGETABLES

Foods in this group come from grains like wheat, oats, rice, rye and corn. **Dietary Guideline #3** advises: **“Make starchy vegetables, peas and beans part of your diet.”**

THE STANDARDS

- 
- ✓ Serve at least one starchy food (see definition) every day.
 - ✓ Bake French fries only! Do not use French fries that contain trans fat
 - ✓ Serve Peas “N” Rice or Bean “N” Rice at least once per week. Other options may include pumpkin, okras, vegetables, corn. All foods must be prepared without salt pork, salt beef, bacon or coconut milk/oil.
 - ✓ Grits may be substituted for rice, if preferred.
 - ✓ Pasta dishes may be served as a starch choice or main dish.
 - ✓ Do not add butter or margarine in the preparation of macaroni and cheese and this dish can be served once per week.
 - ✓ Do not use or add the fatty part of meat when preparing or cooking starchy foods.
E.g. peas –n- rice
 - ✓ Root vegetables such as potato, cassava, yam and pumpkin, plantain and other boils may be served as a starch choice.
 - ✓ Potato preparation method options include boiling, broiling, grilling, mashing or using in salads.

RATIONALE

Starchy foods are usually inexpensive and provide energy, fiber, vitamins, and minerals. Starchy foods that are cooked by deep fat frying, or using the fatty part of the meat, are high in calories, fat and cholesterol. Use very little fat or none at all. to help reduce the amount of calories, fat and cholesterol in children’s meals.

FRUITS

Fruits come from the flowers and contain the seeds of the plant. Fruits are sweet because of the natural sugar they contain. 100%, no sugar added fruit juices belong to this group but have much lower fiber content than fresh fruit. **Dietary Guideline #5** advises: **“Choose a variety of fruit and vegetables every day.”**

THE STANDARDS

- ✓ Serve at least one serving of fresh fruit every day.
- ✓ As often as possible, include all available native Bahamian fruit in the selection of fresh fruits served.
- ✓ Canned fruits, in light syrup, in their own juice or in other fruit juice, may be served as alternatives to fresh fruits.
- ✓ Do not use fruit products with added sugars in the ingredient list.
- ✓ Dried fruits like raisins may also be served.



RATIONALE

Fruits provide vitamins, minerals, and fibre. Children should eat at least two to three servings of fruit every day. Fruits are also a tasty alternative to sugary, high calorie desserts. Include locally grown foods on the menu because this encourages the consumption and appreciation of local produce.

What is a serving of fruit?

For Primary, Junior and Senior High Schools

One Serving =

Medium size piece of fruit - 1 fruit

Fruit salad, fruit canned in juice – 2 to 3 tablespoons or about ¼ cup

Fruit juice- 2/3 cups or about 5 ounces

Dried fruit – 1 to 2 tablespoons

VEGETABLES

Vegetables come from many different parts of the plant, including the leaves, roots, tubers, flowers, stems, seeds and shoots. **Dietary Guideline # 5** advises: **“Choose a variety of fruit and vegetables every day.”**

THE STANDARDS:

- 
- ✓ Provide at least one serving of fresh or frozen vegetables every day.
 - ✓ Always serve another vegetable (non starchy) when corn is served.
Corn is a starchy vegetable.
 - ✓ Soups and other main course dishes must contain a minimum of one serving (½ cup non leafy, 1 cup leafy) of vegetables.
 - ✓ **DO NOT** prepare or cook vegetable soups with bacon, ham, or leftover fat.
 - ✓ **DO NOT** use vegetable products with hydrogenated fats (Trans Fats) or partially hydrogenated fats in the ingredients list.

RATIONALE

Vegetables are a good source of:

- Vitamins and Minerals (which help to fight infections);
- Carbohydrates (which supply energy); and
- Fibre (which helps to prevent constipation and helps to lower blood cholesterol levels).

Children should try to eat least three servings of vegetables every day to promote good health and well-being.

What is a serving of vegetables?

For Primary, Junior and Senior High Schools

One Serving =

Cooked vegetables – 2 to 3 tablespoons or about ¼ cup

Salad vegetables – about ½ to 1 cup

MEATS & DAIRY

In this group, you will find poultry (chicken, turkey, etc), fish and other seafood, beef, mutton, pork, eggs, milk and other dairy products. Foods in the Meat and Dairy group can also be high in calories, fat and cholesterol. **Dietary Guideline #2** advises: **“Limit the amount of high fat and greasy foods you eat.”**

THE STANDARDS:

- ✓ Provide at least one serving from this group every day.
- ✓ Bake, roast, grill, broil, or boil all meats and poultry. No fried meats are allowed, except for fish.
- ✓ Serve fish at least once per week. DO NOT serve fish with bones in the primary schools.
- ✓ Red meat can only be served two times per week.
- ✓ Only gravy formed from the meats during cooking can be served. No additional fat must be added to the gravy.
- ✓ Do not serve fatty meats such as sausage, salami and bologna at any time.
- ✓ Serve only low fat dairy foods such as 2% milk or fat free cheese.
- ✓ Cheese may be offered as a substitute for meat, poultry or fish.

RATIONALE

Meat, poultry and fish are excellent sources of iron and calcium. Both iron and calcium are very important nutrients for children and adolescents' growth and development. Iron helps to keep them well and helps them to learn better. Calcium helps them to have strong bones and teeth.

BEANS AND PEAS

There are many types of beans and peas – e.g., pigeon peas, red beans, lima beans, pinto beans, kidney beans, **lentils**, green beans, and soybeans. Beans and peas can be prepared in many different ways. In addition to traditional dishes such as peas soup –n- dough, they can be added to salads, soups, grits, rice, or served as a separate dish. They can also be mashed and made into patties or meatballs.” Dietary **Guideline # 3** advises, *“Make starchy vegetables, peas and beans a part of your diet.”*

THE STANDARDS:

- ✓ Offer at least one serving from this food group every day.
- ✓ Cheese may be offered as a substitute for meat in the fish / poultry / meat / meat alternative group.

HOW TO ADD BEANS AND PEAS TO MEALS:

- **Main Dishes** – Peas soup and dough, chili beans, bean burritos or bean wraps, bean burgers, bean casseroles, beans and rice, etc.
- **Side Dishes** – Baked beans, for example
- **Bean salads** – Beans are great in salads. Open a can of black or kidney beans, for example, rinse them and add to a green salad, or make a bean salad.
- **Bean Soups** – Add beans to homemade soups like okra. Use either canned (drained), frozen or fresh beans.
- **Beans with Pasta** - Toss with cooked pasta and canned pasta sauce with herbs; top with a sprinkle of Parmesan or Romano cheese. Alternatively, sprinkle throughout cooked pasta or pasta salad and then top with a sprinkle of Parmesan or Romano cheese.

RATIONALE

Dried beans and peas are a major source of protein, vitamins and minerals, including iron. Dried beans and peas add variety to the diets of vegetarians, as they can be used as meat substitutes. They are also an excellent source of fiber and are great for lowering cholesterol levels.

FATS AND OILS

Fats such as butter, lard and bacon, come from animal sources while oils such as canola, olive and vegetable oils come from plant sources. Fats and oils can be directly added to foods or they can sneak up on you in foods such as French fries, sausage (including salty sausage and bologna), potato chips, and macaroni and cheese. **The Dietary Guideline # 2** advises: ***“As often as possible limit the amount of high fat and greasy foods you eat.”***

THE STANDARDS:

- Do not use leftover fats or drippings to prepare foods, especially when frying.
- If oil is needed in the preparation of foods, use small amounts of vegetable oil.
- As far as possible, use low fat salad dressing and mayonnaise.
- Choose oils, dressings and spreads containing monounsaturated or polyunsaturated fats (found in olive, peanut, canola and sunflower oil).
- Do not use products that list saturated fats, trans fats, hydrogenated or partially hydrogenated fats at the beginning of the list of ingredients.
- To prevent food infections and food poisoning, salads such as coleslaw and tossed salad must not be prepared with mayonnaise. Instead, the mayonnaise/salad dressing must be packaged or placed in a small container for the students to add to the salad themselves. Cheese may be offered as a substitute for meat, poultry or fish.



RATIONALE

While the diet must contain some fat because it is an essential nutrient, fats must not be in excess. Total fat intake can be lowered by baking, boiling, broiling or grilling food. It is especially important to avoid saturated fats and trans fats in food preparation, as they can increase the risk of heart disease. Saturated fats are found in butter and some vegetable oils. Trans fats are found in margarine, shortening, commercially baked goods (doughnuts, twists, cookies, chips, etc.) frozen French fries and many other processed foods.

SWEETS, SUGARS AND SALT

Sugars and salt can be added to food, drinks or desserts, or, like fat, they can sneak up on you in foods such as doughnuts, pastry tarts, candy, juice drinks, chips, canned soups and salty sausage. **Dietary Guideline #4** states: *“As often as possible, choose food with less sugar and less salt.”*

THE STANDARDS:

- ✓ Cake (no frosting, icing or sticky, sugary fillings) can be served.
- ✓ Cookies (no icings, frosting or chocolate chips)
- ✓ Pastries (no icing, frosting, or sticky, sugary filling)
- ✓ Fruit-based or low-fat desserts are permitted twice per week.
- ✓ ABSOLUTELY NO candy, chewing gum, toffee, chocolate, sodas, potato chips, cheese curls, and cheese doodles!



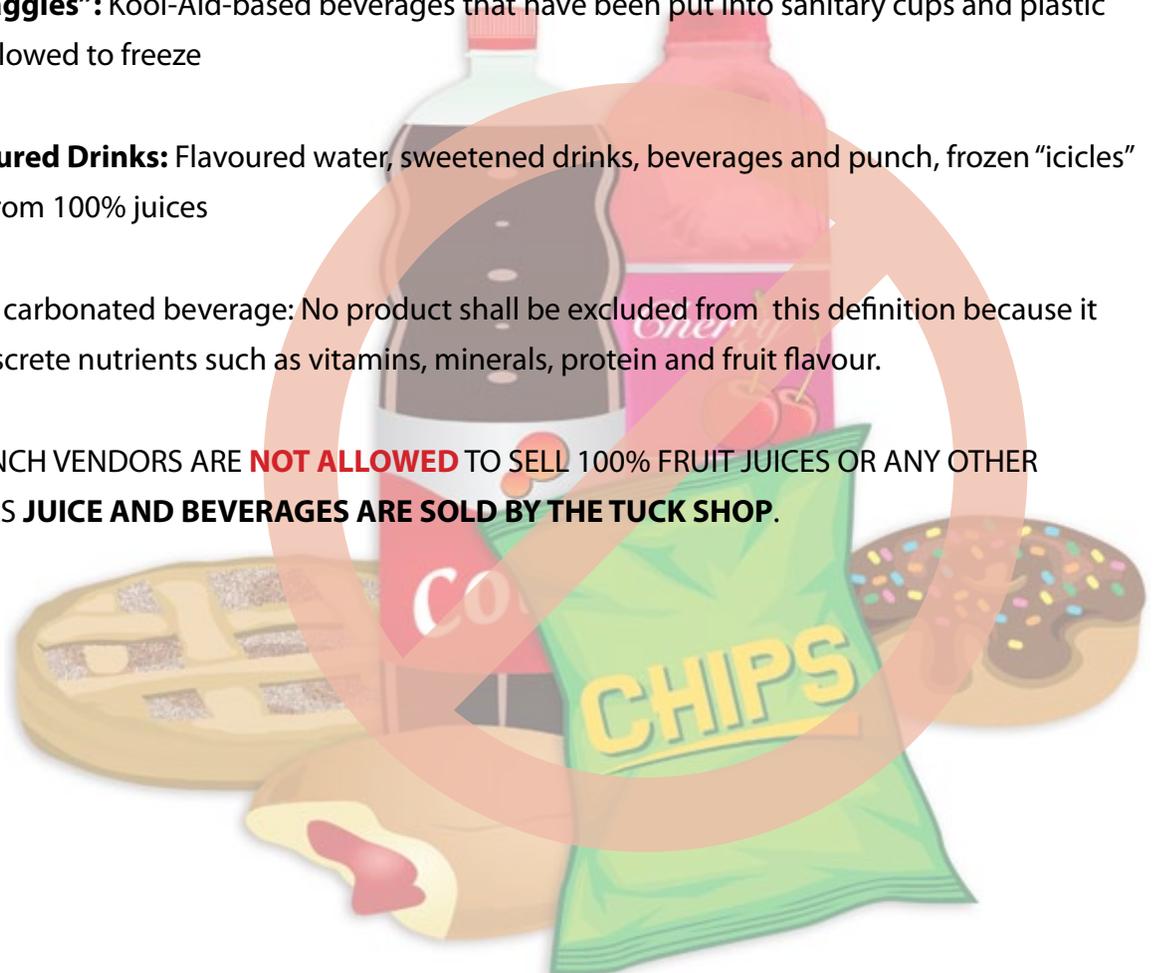
FOODS OF MINIMAL NUTRITIONAL VALUE

Foods on the restricted list are Foods of Minimal Nutritional Value (FMNV). Such foods are either high fat, high salt or high sugar and would not meet the Nutritional Standards needed for children to grow and develop properly.

The following items are prohibited from being sold on the school campus at all times.

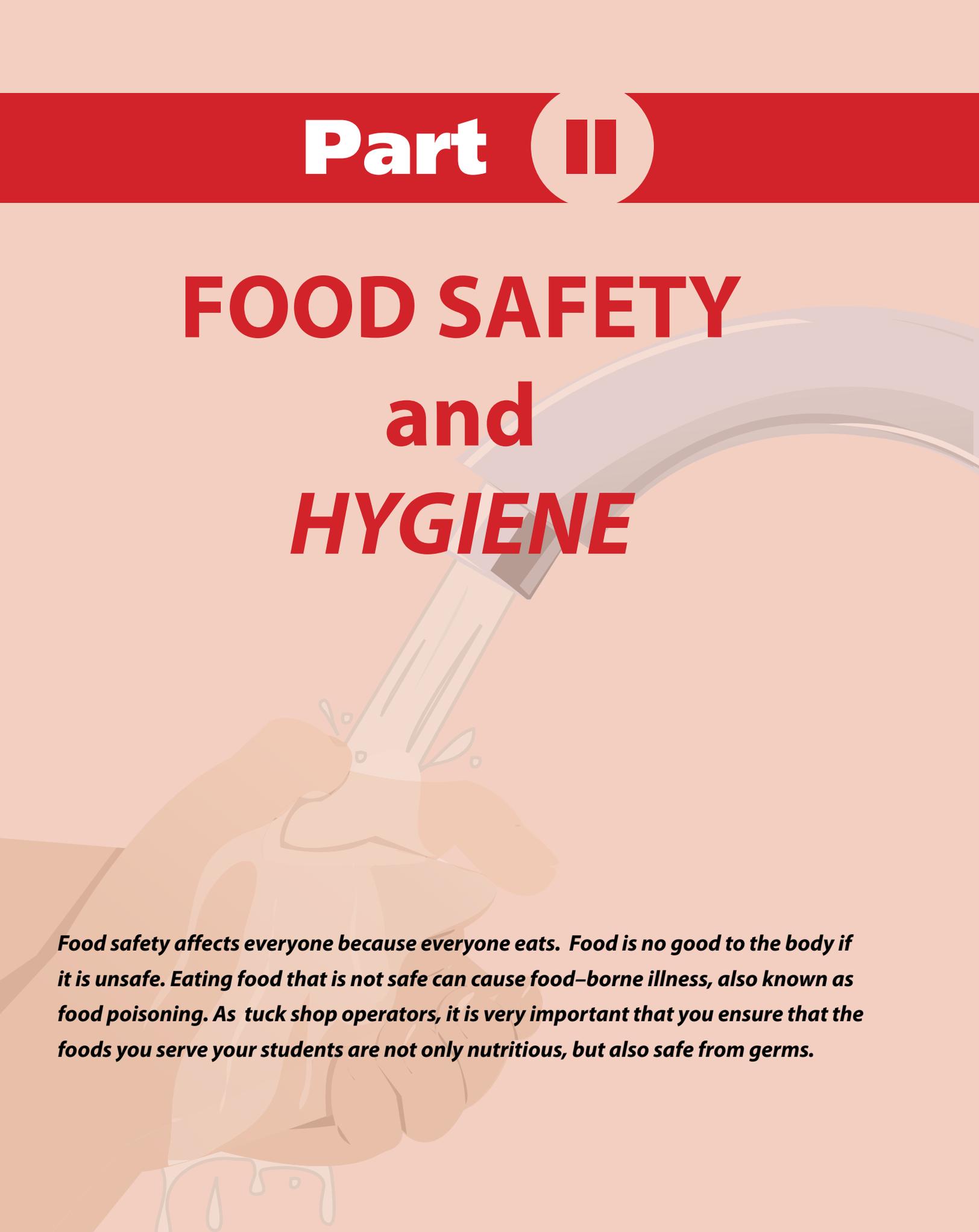
- **Candies:** All types
- **Cheese Doodles or Curls:** All types
- **Chewing Gum:** All types are restricted.
- **Chips:** All chips
- **Chocolate Bars:** Chocolate bars, including those with fruit and nuts and cereal bars covered with chocolate.
- **“Cups”/“Baggies”:** Kool-Aid-based beverages that have been put into sanitary cups and plastic bags and allowed to freeze
- **Fruit Flavoured Drinks:** Flavoured water, sweetened drinks, beverages and punch, frozen “icicles” not made from 100% juices
- **Sodas:** Any carbonated beverage: No product shall be excluded from this definition because it contains discrete nutrients such as vitamins, minerals, protein and fruit flavour.

NOTE: LUNCH VENDORS ARE **NOT ALLOWED** TO SELL 100% FRUIT JUICES OR ANY OTHER BEVERAGES, AS **JUICE AND BEVERAGES ARE SOLD BY THE TUCK SHOP.**



Part II

FOOD SAFETY and *HYGIENE*

A stylized illustration of hands being washed under a running faucet. The water is depicted as a stream of droplets falling from the faucet. The hands are shown in a light skin tone, and the faucet is a simple, modern design. The background is a soft, light orange color.

Food safety affects everyone because everyone eats. Food is no good to the body if it is unsafe. Eating food that is not safe can cause food-borne illness, also known as food poisoning. As tuck shop operators, it is very important that you ensure that the foods you serve your students are not only nutritious, but also safe from germs.

FOOD SAFETY

Food safety affects everyone because everyone eats. Food is no good to the body if it is unsafe. Eating food that is not safe can cause food-borne illness, also known as food poisoning. As tuck shop operators, it is very important that you ensure that the foods you serve your students are not only nutritious, but also safe from germs. There are four major things you can do to prevent food poisoning:

- 1 Cook**
- 2 Separate**
- 3 Chill**
- 4 Clean**

THE STANDARDS

1 - COOK:

- ✓ Cook meat “well-done” (145–165°F), poultry (165°F), and eggs (145°F).
- ✓ Use a thermometer to measure internal temperature of meat.
- ✓ Cooked food should be reheated to 165°F.
- ✓ Hot foods should be kept hot at 135°F or above.
- ✓ Cook food immediately after defrosting.

2 - SEPARATE: (PREVENT CROSS-CONTAMINATION)

- ✓ Wash hands after they have been in contact with raw meat or poultry and before they touch another food.
- ✓ Wash utensils and cutting boards after they have been in contact with raw meat or poultry and before they touch another food.

FOOD SAFETY cont'd

- ✓ Use different dishes and utensils for raw and cooked foods.
- ✓ Use separate areas and separate chopping boards for raw and cooked foods.
- ✓ If you cannot have separate areas, make sure that you wash the counter with hot, soapy water containing a sanitizing agent like bleach, after preparing raw foods(e.g. vegetables, fruit) and before preparing cooked foods (e.g. baked chicken, steamed tuna fish).
- ✓ Use one cloth for cleaning when preparing raw food and another for cleaning when preparing cooked foods. **Do not use the same cleaning cloth when preparing raw and cooked foods.**
- ✓ Before cooking, wipe area (counter tops) and other equipment with hot soapy water and rinse.
- ✓ Put cooked meat on a clean platter.
- ✓ Keep all foods covered with plastic wrap or in airtight plastic containers.

3 - CHILL:

- ✓ Refrigerate leftovers promptly.
- ✓ Set refrigerator temperature at 40°F.
- ✓ Set freezer temperature at 0°F.
- ✓ Separate large volumes of food so they will cool more quickly.
- ✓ Cold foods should be kept at a temperature of 41°F or below.
- ✓ Keep purchased food chilled until you get home from the store.

FOOD SAFETY cont'd

4 - CLEAN:

- ✓ Wash produce under running water.
- ✓ Remove and discard outer leaves from lettuce or cabbage.
- ✓ Wash hands before preparing food, between preparation of different types of food, and after preparation. Clean and disinfect the refrigerator and freezer regularly.
- ✓ Clean and disinfect countertops regularly.

The single, most important method of preventing food poisoning is to wash your hands. Root vegetables such as potato, cassava, yam and pumpkin, plantain and other boils may be served as a starch choice.

MORE ON CROSS-CONTAMINATION

Store cooked foods and raw foods separately to prevent cross contamination. Cross contamination occurs when germs, which are naturally found on raw food, come into contact with cooked food.

Cross-contamination usually happens when:

- Blood and juice from meats touch cooked food.
- Preparation areas are not cleaned after preparing raw food and before cooked foods are placed on the same surface.
- The same cloth is used for cleaning up after preparing raw foods and cooked foods.

Careful cleaning of surfaces and utensils helps to prevent germs from spreading, by removing food particles that could have germs on them.

EVEN MORE WAYS TO PREVENT CROSS-CONTAMINATION

- ✓ Wear a clean apron or coverall **AT ALL TIMES**.
- ✓ After cooking, wash the area and equipment in hot soapy water and a sanitizing agent (e.g. bleach) and allow to air dry
- ✓ Store pans and containers upside-down in cupboards.
- ✓ Place garbage in a garbage bin and empty it daily.
- ✓ Clean the floors and walls regularly.
- ✓ Have a regular cleaning roster / routine.

FOOD POISONING

Eating foods that are contaminated by bacteria, other harmful organisms and foreign particles can cause food poisoning. Symptoms of food poisoning may include one or more of the following:

- Vomiting
- Feeling weak
- Stomach pains
- Fever or chills
- Diarrhoea

Food poisoning is caused by germs that have multiplied on the food as a result of improper food handling.

FOOD CAN BECOME CONTAMINATED THROUGH:

- People working with food;
- Dirty equipment and counter tops;
- Other food that is already contaminated;
- Animals and insects near, on or in food.

In serious cases, especially with small children, the elderly and people who are ill, **food poisoning can lead to death**. This is why it is **very important** to handle food properly. Listed on the next page are some ways to stop the spread of germs and bacteria in food preparation and serving areas.

SOME WAYS TO PREVENT FOOD POISONING:

- If you have a cut on your hand, cover it with a waterproof dressing before touching food.
- If you are sick, get medical advice before working, or avoid spreading diseases to others.
- Keep hair tied back or covered so that it does not fall in the food.
- Keep fingernails be clean and clipped short at all times. Do not wear fingernail polish!
- **Do not smoke when preparing food!**
- Persons collecting money must not serve food.



N.B.

Serve hot foods **hot**, that is **140° F** or higher. Bacteria or other germs need time, food and moisture (or wetness) to grow. A temperature of **41° F or colder** slows the growth of bacteria.

Keep cold foods in a storage container or cooler at a temperature of **41° F or colder** to allow them to remain cold during the entire time that lunch is being served.



FOOD HYGIENE

- Pack foods carefully so that the package will not be damaged.
- Do not use swollen cans or damaged food packets, as the food inside may be spoiled.
- Store food so that the older products get used first.
- Cover foods stored in the refrigerator with plastic wrap or foil to prevent food spillage or contamination.
- Do not overload your refrigerator or freezer because, if you do, the cold air won't get to all foods.
- Check that the food looks and smells fresh before using it – if in doubt, throw it out!
- Wash fruit and vegetables carefully before using them, to remove dirt and germs.

Part

III

PERSONAL HYGIENE

and

DRESS CODE



PERSONAL HYGIENE

HAND-WASHING

Always wash your hands:

- ✓ before touching food;
- ✓ after using the toilet;
- ✓ after blowing your nose or sneezing into your hand;
- ✓ after touching your hair;
- ✓ after touching animals; and
- ✓ after handling money.

Washing and drying hands must be observed during the entire process of food preparation and service.

DRESS CODE

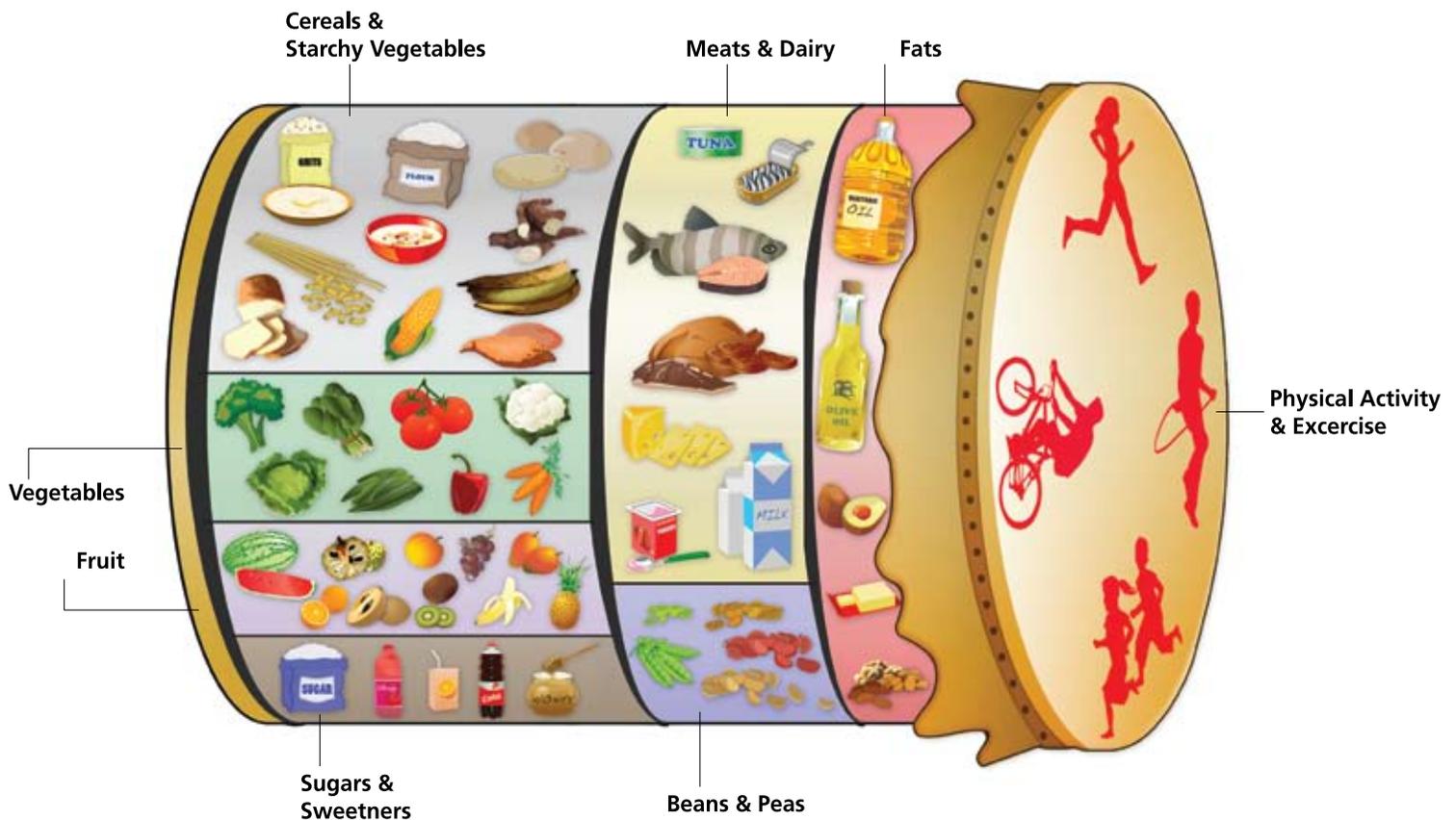
School Vendors and their assistants must:

- ✓ Be neat in their appearance and dressed in clean freshly laundered uniforms.
- ✓ Wear hair nets at all times when preparing and serving foods.
- ✓ Wear blouses or shirts with sleeves.
- ✓ Wear closed-in shoes.

RATIONALE

School lunch vendors, you and your assistants are very important members of the school body and learning environment. Therefore, you should set good examples for students, by dressing in a neat and attractive manner.

THE DIETARY GUIDELINES FOR THE BAHAMAS



1. Use our drum to help you choose a variety of foods daily.
2. As often as possible, limit the amount of high fat and greasy foods you eat.
3. Make starchy vegetables, peas and beans a part of your diet.
4. As often as possible, choose food with less sugar and less salt.
5. Choose a variety of fruits and vegetables every day.
6. Drink plenty of water.
7. It is advisable not to drink alcohol.
8. Make physical activity and exercise a part of your lifestyle.
9. Choose foods for their nutritional value, not for the name brand or cost.
10. Breast milk is the best choice for infants to start a healthy life.

APPENDIX

NEW DIETARY GUIDELINES FOR THE BAHAMAS

Go For The Gold Standard For Healthy Living
THE NEW DIETARY GUIDELINES FOR THE BAHAMAS

9 Choose foods for their nutritional value not for the 'name brand' or cost.
 Pay for food that will be nutritious and will cost less.

10 Breast milk is the best choice for infants to start a healthy life.
 It builds the body's ability to fight off disease, preventing illnesses and/or infections. In addition, breastfeeding saves time and money, and is the perfect food for infants from birth to six months.

Prepared by The Ministry of Health in collaboration with the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO), Caribbean Food and Nutrition Institute (CFNI), Institute of Nutrition for Central America and Panama (INCAP), Caribbean Programme of Coordination (CPC), The College of The Bahamas (COB)
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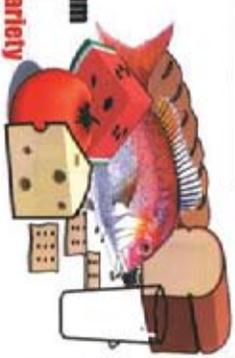
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Good health and wellbeing
Only one life to protect
Do not limit your intake of fat,
Initiate your intake of sugar and salt
Do not use the DRUM to help
 guide your food choices

NEW DIETARY GUIDELINES FOR THE BAHAMAS cont'd

Guidelines

- 1 Use our drum to help you choose a variety of foods daily.**



Eating healthy keeps you healthy. Choosing a variety of foods every day in moderation will balance your diet, and keep you feeling good.
- 2 As often as possible, limit the amount of high fat and greasy foods you eat every day.**



Trim off FAT
Remove SKIN

"Ease-up" off the greasy foods such as sausage, bacon, conch fritters, cracked conch, fries, fried chicken and regular ground beef. Eating too much of these foods daily are unhealthy and can cause heart problems and obesity. When preparing chicken and other meats, try to take off the skin and fat. "Go for" leaner cuts of meats and poultry. Where possible, prepare your foods by baking. It doesn't take that much time!
- 3 Make starchy vegetables, peas and beans a part of your diet.**



"Boils" such as cassava, sweet potato, eddie, plantain and pumpkin are high in fibre, which makes them heart-healthy foods.
- 4 As often as possible, choose foods with less sugar and less salt.**



Eating too much "high seasoned" and sweet foods increases your risk of developing heart disease, high blood pressure and Type II Diabetes or "Sugar". Sodas, fruit-flavoured drinks, and desserts like guava duff and tarts contain lots of sugar. High-seasoned foods include fast foods, sausage, salted meats, most canned foods and chips. Use fresh herbs and spices to season foods instead of salt.
- 5 Choose a variety of fruits and vegetables every day.**



For a healthy balanced diet, plan to include vegetables and fruits in your meals every day. Fresh fruits and dark green leafy and yellow vegetables are packed with vitamins A, B and C and have cancer-fighting powers.
- 6 Drink plenty of water every day.**



The body is basically made up of water and it must be replenished. Water regulates all the functions of the body. Aim to drink six to eight glasses daily.
- 7 It is advisable not to drink alcohol, but if you drink, do so in moderation.**

Too much alcohol is not good for your health. It can damage your liver.
- 8 Make physical activity and exercise a part of your lifestyle.**



It can be fun and beneficial to your body, mind and soul. Aim for enjoyable exercise at least four times each week.



DIETARY GUIDELINES FOR THE BAHAMAS...

Translating Nutrients Into Food

Cereal and Starchy Vegetables

These foods are an important source of energy. They also provide vitamins, minerals, and fiber.

Starchy foods are not fattening if you don't add butter, cheese, or cream sauces. But they can make you fat if your portion size is too large and you eat too much because your body stores the extra as fat. Select whole-grain products to maximize fiber and other nutrients.

Fruits

Fruits are rich sources of vitamins, mostly vitamin C. They are low in fat. Select fresh fruits or dried fruits. Avoid fruit processed with heavy syrups and sugar-sweetened juices.

Vegetables

Vegetables provide vitamins (especially A and C), are excellent sources of fiber, and are naturally low in fat. But when you fry potatoes as in French fries it becomes a high fat food. For maximum nutrients, select dark leafy greens, deep-yellow or orange vegetables.

Meat and Dairy

Animal foods are excellent sources of protein (which help us grow healthy) iron, zinc, and B vitamins. Dairy products are the richest sources of calcium. They also provide protein and vitamin B12. Choose low-fat varieties to keep your intake of cholesterol, and fat at a minimum.

Beans and Peas

Beans and Peas are also excellent sources of protein (which help us grow healthy), iron and B vitamins. Tofu (made from soybeans) and white beans also supply calcium. Some seeds, like almonds, are good sources of vitamin E.

Fats, Oils, and Sweets

These foods provide calories, but little else nutritionally. Use in very small amounts. They contribute to a lot of diet-related diseases such as overweight, obesity, dental caries, diabetes, heart diseases, some cancers etc. Always choose low-fat products and use vegetable fats.

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Prepared by the Nutrition Unit, Department of Public Health,
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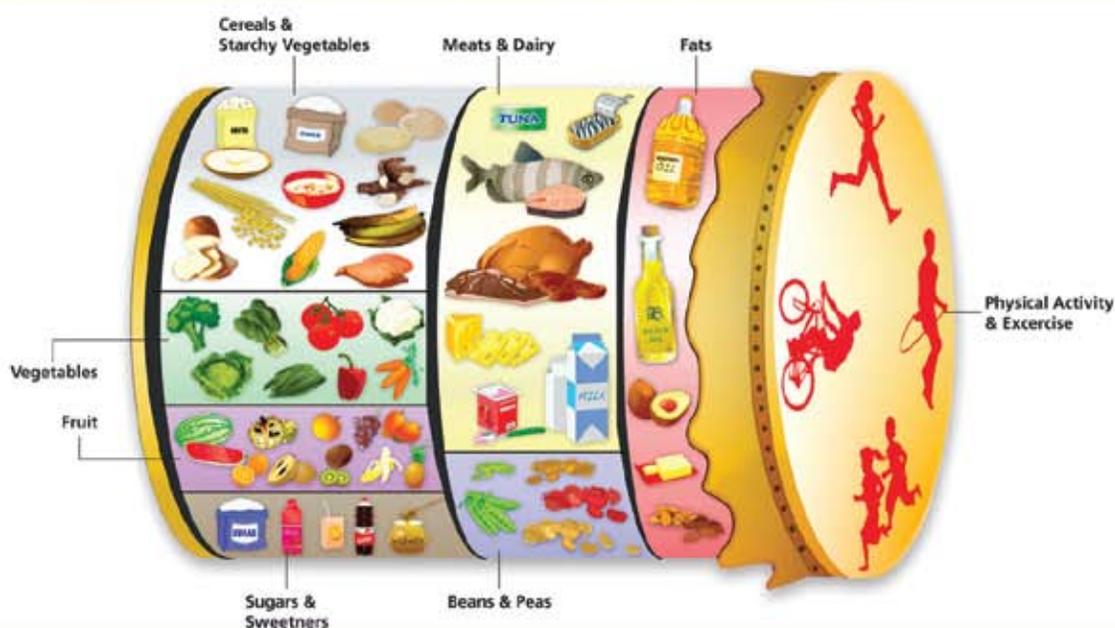
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GO for the GOLD Standard for Healthy Living

The New Dietary Guidelines for The Bahamas



- 1** Use our drum to help you choose a variety of foods daily,
- 2** Limit the amount of high fat & greasy foods you eat.
- 3** Make starchy vegetables, peas & beans a part of your diet.
- 4** Choose foods with less sugar & less salt.
- 5** Choose a variety of fruits & vegetables everyday.
- 6** Drink plenty of water everyday.
- 7** It is advisable not to drink alcohol, but if you drink, do so in moderation.
- 8** Make physical activity & exercise a part of your lifestyle.
- 9** Choose foods for their medicinal value, not for the 'name brand' or cost.
- 10** Breast milk is the best choice for infants to start a healthy life.