

# A La Carte

## Nutrition Standards

A la carte items, also known as “competitive foods”, have the potential to enhance your overall foodservice operation. While the USDA is still preparing nutrition policies for items sold outside of federal school meal programs, requiring that your a la carte products meet minimum nutrition standards right now can reinforce your school’s health and wellness goals and impact the overall health of students.

Some states and individual school districts have established nutrient standards for their a la carte offerings that mirror the standards issued by the Healthy US School Challenge (HUSC) and the Institute of Medicine. Items on their a la carte lines must have less than or equal to 35% of calories as fat, less than 10% of calories as saturated fat, less than .5 grams of trans fat per serving, and equal to or less than 35% sugar by weight. A la carte entrée items must also additionally be National School Lunch Program (NSLP) menu items and have a sodium content of 480 mg or less. Non-entrée items must be less than 200 calories and contain 200 mg or less of sodium per serving.

The items sold in vending machines, school stores, and cafeteria a la carte lines are often called “competitive foods” because they compete with school meals for students’ spending.

## Making it Successful

Consider supplementing your a la carte offerings with excess from the meal being served to allow students to purchase second helpings as needed. Also, utilize taste tests to discover students’ healthy favorites, or include side dishes that have already proven themselves well-liked.

Many school districts have not seen revenue losses even when providing healthier a la carte foods and eliminating less healthy ones. In fact, it has been shown that many schools may be losing money from their food services departments when students buy snack foods instead of healthier breakfasts or lunches. School districts in states with nutrition standards for snack and a la carte foods and beverages saw total food-service revenues generally increase after the guidelines were put in place. This is largely because more children will purchase school meals if there are fewer items competing for their lunch money.

To help ensure that the healthy a la carte selection is successful, some districts have employed a competitive pricing strategy with the healthier items priced lower than the less healthy ones. Also, reducing or eliminating more of the less healthy items will provide students with more healthy choices and limit their ability to purchase less healthy items. Placing healthier items at the beginning of the line, and less healthy ones near the end may also entice students to purchase the healthier ones. In addition, schools have also enlisted the help of students to promote healthier products more effectively.

When determining if new items qualify for your a la carte program, utilize the formulas on the following page.

# Formulas for Calculations



## **Total Fat (Percent of Calories from Fat)**

Total grams of fat in the food: \_\_\_\_ Multiply times 9 = \_\_\_\_ (calories from fat)

Total calories in the food (from label): \_\_\_\_

Divide calories from fat by total calories = \_\_\_\_

To convert to a %, move the decimal point two places to the right, or multiply by 100

HUSSC total fat criteria: must be at or below 35% of calories per serving.

---

## **Saturated Fat (Percent of Calories from Saturated Fat)**

Total grams of saturated fat in the food: \_\_\_\_ Multiply times 9 = \_\_\_\_ (calories from saturated fat)

Total calories in the food (from label): \_\_\_\_

Divide calories from saturated fat by total calories = \_\_\_\_

To convert to a %, move the decimal point two places to the right, or multiply by 100

HUSSC saturated fat criteria: must be below 10% of calories.

---

## **Trans Fat**

Amount of *trans* fat in a serving of the food (Nutrition Facts label): \_\_\_\_ gm.

HUSSC *trans* fat criteria: must be less than 0.5 gm per serving.

---

## **Sugar (Percent of Sugar by Weight)**

Total grams of sugar in the food (A): \_\_\_\_

Gram weight of the food (B): \_\_\_\_

Divide A by B = \_\_\_\_

To convert to a %, move the decimal point two places to the right, or multiply by 100

HUSSC sugar criteria: must be at or below 35% by weight.

---

## **Sodium**

If the serving size is the same as what is listed on the food label:

Milligrams (mg) of sodium in one serving (Nutrition Facts label): \_\_\_\_ mg (A)

If using a serving size greater or less than what is listed on the Nutrition Facts label:

Multiply the mg of sodium in one serving (A) by the amount (factor) of increase or

decrease (2 times, ½, etc.) to determine the mg of sodium in the new serving size

\_\_\_\_ mg.

### **Compare results with sodium criteria below:**

**Side dish/non-entrée** Total milligrams (mg) of sodium in the food: \_\_\_\_

Does this meet the Bronze/Silver/Gold award level (at or below 480 mg)? \_\_\_\_

Does this meet the Gold with Distinction level (at or below 200 mg)? \_\_\_\_

**Main dish/entrée** Total milligrams (mg) of sodium in the food: \_\_\_\_

Does this meet the Bronze/Silver/Gold award level (at or below 600 mg)? \_\_\_\_

Does this meet the Gold with Distinction level (at or below 480)? \_\_\_\_

*If a simple factor is not easy to determine:*

*Divide the gm weight of the adjusted serving size to be served/consumed \_\_\_\_ gm (B) by the gm weight of one serving \_\_\_\_ gm (C) to determine the adjustment factor \_\_\_\_ (D).*

*Multiply the mg of sodium in one serving (A) times the adjustment factor (D) \_\_\_\_ to determine the mg of sodium in the adjusted serving size \_\_\_\_ mg.*

## **Grains, Nuts, and Seeds**

- Animal Crackers
- Bagels
- Baked/Popped Chips
- Cereal or Granola Bars
- Cheese and Crackers
- Chex mix
- Grilled or baked cheese and veggie quesadilla
- Lite Popcorn/Kettle Corn
- Muffins
- Pop Tarts
- Pretzels, sticks or soft
- Sandwiches
  - PB&J
  - Fresh deli sandwiches and subs
  - Wraps
- Soft Pretzel
- Trail Mix

## **Fruits**

- 100% applesauce/fruit blend cups, no sugar added
- Frozen 100% fruit or fruit juice bar or cup, no sugar added
- Fruit and low-fat yogurt parfaits
- Fruit salad
- 100% juice
- Packaged dry fruit
- Seasonal fresh fruit, whole or sliced

## **Dairy Products/ Alternatives**

- Low-fat cheese and bean burrito
- Low-fat cottage cheese
- Low-fat flavored yogurt
- Milk, Low-fat and fat-free
- Part-skim string cheese
- Soy milk

## **Vegetables**



Chef Salad Shaker

- Baked beans
- Baked potato
- Raw veggies with low-fat dressing, yogurt, or hummus dip
  - Baby carrots, jicama or celery sticks, cucumber slices, red or green pepper strips
- Salad Shakers\*
  - Greek, Chicken Caesar, Caesar, Oriental Chicken, Southwest Chicken
- Salad-to-Go \*
  - Chef, Spinach, Chicken Taco, Chicken Topper, Tuna Topper, Turkey
- Sweet Potato Fries with Chipotle Cinnamon Seasoning
- Vegetable Soup

\*From USDA's *Fruits and Veggies Galore* ([http://www.fns.usda.gov/tn/resources/tricks\\_trade.pdf](http://www.fns.usda.gov/tn/resources/tricks_trade.pdf))

**CWD Products:** Use this list of Cash-Wa products to help stock a healthy a la carte line that meets your nutrition standards. *As always, check with your Cash-Wa representative for additional products and seasonal items!*

CWD #	Description	% Calories from Fat	% Calories from Saturated Fat	% Calories from Trans Fat	% Weight from Sugar	mg Sodium
-------	-------------	---------------------	-------------------------------	---------------------------	---------------------	-----------

**Fruits**

Juice

44787	Juice Very Berry 100% Aseptic	0	0	0	21 g	15
44788	Juice Mixed Berry Fruitables Aseptic	0	0	0	12 g	5
44791	Juice Straw Kiwi Fruitables Aseptic	0	0	0	13 g	5
44810	Orange Juice Ind Can	0	0	0	19 g	10
44830	Tomato Juice Campbell's	0	0	0	5 g	470
44835	Tomato Juice Sacramento	0	0	0	4 g	410
44850	V8 Vegetable Juice	0	0	0	5 g	290
44852	Spicy Hot V8 Vegetable Juice	0	0	0	10 g	1070
44853	V8 Juice Low Sodium	0	0	0	5 g	95
45060	V8 Vegetable Juice	0	0	0	5 g	450
45835	Orange Juice 10 oz	0	0	0	30 g	10
45836	Grapefruit Juice - 10 oz	0	0	0	29 g	10
45837	Apple Juice 10 oz	0	0	0	35 g	10
45838	Grape Juice - 10 oz	0	0	0	49 g	15

Frozen

58077	Shape Ups (Orange) 2.25 oz	0	0	0	19.4	10
58087	Juice Orange Pineapple 100% Cup	0	0	0	12 g	20
58088	Juice Orange 100% Cup	0	0	0	11 g	15
58095	Shape Ups (Cherry) 2.25 oz	0	0	0	19.4	10
58099	Shape Ups (Strawberry) 2.25 oz	0	0	0	19.4	10
58105	Juice Apple 100% Cup	0	0	0	13 g	15
58176	Juice Grape 100% Cup	0	0	0	18 g	15

Smoothies

45873	Main Street Smoothie Strawberry	6.7	5	0	48 g	130
45874	Main Street Smoothie Mixed Berry	6.9	5.1	0	43 g	130
45875	Main Street Smoothie Peach	7.2	5.4	0	45 g	130

**Grains, Nuts, and Seeds**

**Bagels**

55048	Bagel White Whl Grain IW	7.5	0	0	5.3	170
55743	Pretzel Baked 2.5 oz	5	0	0	1.4	150
58696	Bagel Cinnamon Raisin	2.6	0	0	11.9	340
58803	Bagel Mini Sliced	4.5	0	0	10.8	140

**Baked Chips**

25339	Chips Rachel's Carmel Whole Grain	30	0	0	14.3	60
25583	Sun chip Harvest Cheddar	42.9	6.4	0	11	200
26204	Baked Lays Original	16.7	0	0	7.1	135
26205	Sun chip Harvest Cheddar	38.6	6.4	0	7.1	200
26207	Baked Lays BBQ Chip	22.5	3.8	0	10.7	210
26209	Baked Lays Sour Cream & Onion	22.5	3.8	0	10.7	210
26217	Baked Doritos Nacho Cheese	26.3	3.8	0	3.6	230
26218	Baked Cheetos Crunchy Cheese Snacks	34.6	6.9	0	<3.6	150
26219	Baked Cheetos Flaming Hot Cheese Snacks	37.5	7.5	0	<3.6	360
26222	Sun chips Garden Salsa	38.6	6.4	0	7.1	140

**Cereal**

42381	Cereal Bowl Honey Nut Cheerios	12.3	0	0	32.1	160
42382	Cereal Bowl Cheerios	12.9	0	0	<5	110
42384	Cereal Bowl Golden Grahams	8.1	0	0	32.1	220
42385	Cereal Bowl Cinn Toast Crunch	24.5	4.1	0	32.1	200
42386	Cereal Bowl Kix	7.5	0	0	11.8	100
42395	Cereal Bowl Trix Less Sugar	11.3	0	0	23.8	110
42396	Cereal Bowl Cinn Toast Crunch Less Sugar	24.5	4.1	0	21.4	200
42401	Cereal Bowl Cinnamon Toasters	26.3	3.8	0	32.1	130
42402	Cereal Bowl Toasty O's	16.9	0	0	<5	90
42403	Cereal Bowl Special K	0	0	0	11.1	130
42404	Cereal Cup Cheerios	16.1	3.2	0	5.1	220
42421	Cereal Ind Cheerios	15	0	0	<6	95
42443	Cereal Bowl Fruit Loops Less Sugar	12.9	0	0	31.6	105
42444	Cereal Frosted Flakes Less Sugar	0	0	0	25	160
42449	Cereal Bowl Corn Flakes	0	0	0	9.5	150
42451	Cereal Bowl Rice Krispies	0	0	0	11.1	100

42453	Cereal Bowl Raisin Bran	4.5	0	0	28.6	125
42464	Cereal Ind Box Rice Krispies	0	0	0	12	140
42466	Cereal Ind Box Special K	0	0	0	13	160
42473	Cereal Bowl Bite Size Frosted Mini Wheats	0	0	0	21.4	0
42491	Cereal Honey Nut Cheerios Ind	12.3	0	0	32.1	160
42552	Cereal Bowl Little Bites Chocolate Frosted Mini Wheats	9	0	0	21.4	105
42564	Cereal Ind Granola	23.3	0.03	0	22.9	75

#### Cereal/Granola Bars

25809	Cereal Bar Special K Choc Drizzle	16.7	10	0	27.3	95
25820	Cereal Bar Special K Strawberry	16.7	10	0	34.8	85
25867	Nature Valley Bar Oats & Honey	28.4	2.4	0	28.6	160
25869	Nature Valley Bar Peanut Butter	33.2	4.7	0	26.2	180
25894	Nature Valley Trail Mix Bar Fruit & Nut	25.7	3.2	0	34.3	65
26004	Cliff Bar Chocolate Chip Energy	17.6	5.9	0	33.8	150
26021	Cliff Bar Carrot Cake Energy	16.9	5.6	0	36.8	160
26027	Cliff Bar Chocolate Brownie	17.6	5.9	0	33.8	160
26077	Cliff Bar Blueberry Crisp	18.8	1.9	0	32.4	190
26159	Fiber One Chewy Oats & Chocolate Bar	25.7	12.9	0	25	90
26539	Cocoa Krispies Chewy Cereal Bar Chocolate	24	6	0	32.1	135
28013	Nutri-Grain Yogurt Bar Strawberry	24.2	3.5	0	32.4	110
28020	Nutri-Grain Bar Apple Cinnamon 1.3 oz	22.5	3.8	0	32.4	110
28023	Granola Bar Kashi Trail Mix	32.1	3.2	0	17.1	95
28024	Granola Bar Kashi Chewy Honey Almond Flax	32.1	0	0	14.3	105
28025	Nutri-Grain Bar Blueberry	22.5	3.8	0	32.4	110
28030	Nutri-Grain Bar Strawberry 1.3 oz	22.5	3.8	0	29.7	125
28053	Nutri-Grain Bar Strawberry 1.55 oz	22.5	2.8	0	31.8	150
28175	Cereal Bar Golden Graham	19.3	3.2	0	24.3	135
28176	Cereal Bar Apple Cinnamon Cheerios	19.3	3.2	0	24.3	125

#### Chex Mix

25895	Chex Mix Trail Mix	30	9	0	22.9	95
25967	Simply Chex Cheddar Snack	22.5	6.4	0	14.3	260
26605	Simply Chex BBQ Snack	22.5	3.2	0	14.3	200

Crackers

43031	Individual Graham Crackers- Honey	25	0	0	21.4	60
43032	Individual Graham Crackers- WGR	30	5	0	19	100
43136	Graham Crackers- Cinnamon Bun	27.3	8.2	0	24	230
43137	Graham Crackers-French Toast	30	8.6	0	24	230
43151	Ind Bug Bite Grahams Crackers	29.2	7.5	0	28.6	115
43153	Graham Cracker Grips Cinnamon	27	9	0	11	80
43154	Cheez-It Scrabble Crackers	31.5	9	0	0	130

Muffins

58686	Banana Nut Mini Muffin	28	5	0	33	150
58689	Blueberry Mini Muffin	31	6	0	27	140

Pop Tarts

28074	Pop Tart Brown Sugar Cinn WGR	14	5	0	30	190
28079	Pop Tart Strawberry WGR	14	5	0	30	180
736736	Pop Tart Frosted Blueberry	22.5	6.8	0	30.8	170
736738	Pot Tart Frosted Brown Sugar Cinn	30	8.6	0	30	170
736740	Pop Tart Frosted Cherry	22.5	6.8	0	30.8	160
736744	Pop Tart Frosted S'mores	22.5	6.8	0	36.5	210
736750	Pop Tart Frosted Strawberry	22.5	6.8	0	30.8	170

Pretzels

55743	Pretzel Baked 2.5 oz	5	0	0	1.4	150
-------	----------------------	---	---	---	-----	-----

**Dairy**

---

Yogurt

66395	Yogurt Trix Strawberry Banana Bash	4.5	4.5	0	12.4	50
66398	Yogurt Red Raspberry/Harvest Peach	8.2	4.1	0	15	60
66408	Yogurt Yoplait Strawberry/Strawberry Banana	8.2	4.1	0	15.5	60

Soy Milk

41454	Milk Soy Vanilla Organic Pearl	29.6	4.8	0	16.9 g	183
-------	--------------------------------	------	-----	---	--------	-----