

## **Food and Beverage Guidelines for Recreation Facilities**

As part of the Recreation Food and Beverage Action Plan, these guidelines aim to improve access to and discernibility of nutritious foods that support good health and optimal participation in recreational settings. The nutrient criteria and categories described below are based on *Eating Well with Canada's Food Guide*, national nutrient criteria recommendations, and latest evidence.

### **Nutrition Criteria**

Categorization of foods and beverages will be informed by the nutrient criteria for schools established by the Federal, Provincial, Territorial Group on Nutrition and the closely aligned standards from Healthier Choices in Vending Machine in BC Public Buildings. As implementation of the Action Plan progresses, adjustments to the criteria may be necessary to align with the latest nutrition recommendations and support compliance within the Recreation setting; any adjustments will be tracked along with the rationale for change.

### **Categories**

A traffic light nomenclature will be used to describe the three categories of food and beverages — Green, Yellow, and Red. This approach may facilitate tracking of progress towards selling more Green Category items and less Red Category items and may help to nudge patrons towards healthier food options, when paired with education, marketing, and pricing strategies.

### **Green Category**

Green category items are the most nutritious options. Foods and beverages in this category are characterized by the following:

- Whole ingredients that are minimally processed;
- High in essential nutrients;
- Low in saturated fats;
- No artificially produced trans fats;
- Little or no added fat, sugar, and sodium;
- No sugar substitutes.

Example items in this category: Tap water; fruit smoothies made with fruit and lower-fat, unsweetened milk or yogurt; chili with extra-lean ground beef and lots of beans and vegetables

### **Guidelines for Selling Green Category Items**

- Offer more variety from this category
- Stock sufficient volumes to meet demand
- Offer at a lower price than comparable Red category items
- Provide courtesy cups to facilitate free access to municipal tap water
- Rearrange displays to make green items more visible
- Allow consumers to sample new green items
- Use bright signs, packaging and colours for green items

- Make green category items the default choice in combo meals
- Use verbal prompts (eg. “Would you like fruit with that?”)

### **Yellow Category**

Yellow category items provide less nutritional benefit and may have slightly higher amounts of sodium, sugar, or fat than those in the Green category. Food and beverages in this category are characterized by the following:

- Contain essential nutrients;
- Moderate amounts of added fat, sodium, and/or sugar;
- Minimal processing;
- May contain sugar-substitutes.

Example items in this category: Chocolate milk, dried fruit, some yogurts and granola bars, tuna or salmon and cracker snack packs.

### **Guidelines for Selling Yellow Category Items**

- Reduce the amount and variety of yellow foods and drinks offered
- Provide yellow items in smaller serving sizes
- Provide healthier choices within the yellow category
- Do not promote or advertise yellow items at the expense of green items
- Do not let yellow items dominate the menu or choices displayed

### **Red Category**

Red category items are those with little or no nutritional benefits and should be limited to support health and wellbeing. Food and beverages in this category are characterized by the following:

- Little to no nutritional value;
- High amounts of saturated fat;
- High amounts of added fat, sodium, and/or sugar;
- Lack of whole ingredients;
- High levels of processing;
- May contain sugar-substitutes.

Example items in this category: Sugary drinks, chocolate bars, chips, hot dogs, and confectionary.

### **Guidelines for Selling Red Category Items**

- Stock less variety and less quantity from this category
- Limit the portion size of these items to packages that provides on average no more than 100 kcal/individual serving, where possible
- Restrict placement to make less prominent
- Charge more for these items than Green category items

**References:**

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