

Comparison of Nutrition Guidelines for Vending Machines

Nutrition Guidelines for Vending Machines

Increasing access to healthier foods and beverages in public places is a fast-growing movement across the country. This chart compares different sets of recommended nutrition criteria for vended beverages, packaged snacks, and entrée-type foods.



Guidelines Compared:

- ✓ American Heart Association (AHA) Healthy Workplace [Food and Beverage Toolkit](#) (page 19)
- ✓ National Alliance for Nutrition and Activity (NANA) [Model Nutrition Standards for “Grab-and-Go” Foods and Beverages](#)
- ✓ [Foodservice Guidelines for Federal Facilities](#) (page 13-14)
- ✓ U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) [Smart Snacks for Schools](#) (page 7)
- ✓ National Automatic Merchandising Association (NAMA) [FitPick](#) and [FitPick Select](#) (Note that FitPick Select meets the USDA’s Smart Snacks standards)

Additional Resource:

- ▶ [The Alliance for a Healthier Generation’s has an online store featuring products](#) that meet the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s Smart Snacks standards for school snacks and beverages. The Alliance also has a [product calculator](#), through which product nutrition information can be input to determine if they meet the Smart Snacks standards.

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Vended Beverages

	AHA	NANA	Food Service Guidelines for Federal Facilities	USDA Smart Snacks/NAMA FitPick Select	NAMA FitPick ¹
Percent covered	50%	100%	<p><u>Standard</u>: ≥50% of beverage options contain ≤40 calories/8 oz. (excluding 100% juice and unsweetened fat-free or low-fat [1%] milk)</p> <p><u>Innovative</u>: at least 75% of available beverage options meet criteria described above</p>	100%	No Standard
Water	Plain, sparkling, and flavored water with ≤10 calories per serving	Plain and carbonated water with no added caloric sweeteners	Provide free access to chilled, potable water	Plain, with or without carbonation	No Standard
Milk	Low-fat or fat-free milk and milk alternatives ² (≤130 calories per 8 oz.)	≤200 calories per container of fat-free dairy milk, 1% low-fat dairy milk, or calcium- and vitamin D-fortified plant-based milks that contain ≥6 g protein per 8 oz.	When milk and fortified-soy beverages are available, offer low-fat beverages with no added sugars	Unflavored and flavored 1% or fat-free milk, and permitted milk alternatives in ≤8 oz. containers for elementary schools and ≤12 oz. containers for middle and high schools	No Standard
Juice	100% fruit or vegetable juice with no added sweeteners or sugars and ≤120 calories per 8 oz. (preferred serving); ≤150 calories per 10 oz.; or ≤180 calories per 12 oz.	100% fruit/vegetable juice or juice combined with water (limited to a maximum of a 12 oz. container; no added caloric sweeteners; and ≤200 mg sodium per container)	When juice is available, offer 100% juice with no added sugars	100% juice or 100% juice with water, no caloric sweeteners, with or without carbonation, ≤8 oz. containers for elementary schools and ≤12 oz. for middle and high schools	No Standard

¹ NAMA FitPick standards do not include beverages.

² Milk alternatives include nondairy plant-based milks that are fortified with calcium and vitamin D and low in sugar.

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	AHA	NANA	Food Service Guidelines for Federal Facilities	USDA Smart Snacks/NAMA FitPick Select	NAMA FitPick ¹
Coffee and Tea	No Standard	No added caloric sweeteners (if condiments are provided, sugars and sugar substitutes and milk/creamer products that have less fat than cream may be provided)	No Standard	No caffeine in elementary and middle schools	No Standard
Other	Beverages not described should be ≤ 10 calories per label serving	Other beverages must be ≤ 40 calories per container	At least 50% of beverage options must contain ≤ 40 calories per 8 oz. (excluding 100% fruit juice and unsweetened fat-free or 1% milk).	In high schools, low-calorie (≤ 40 calories per 8 oz., with a maximum of 60 calories per 12 oz.) and no-calorie (< 5 calories per 8 oz., with a max of 10 calories per 20 oz.) beverages permitted	No standard

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Vended Packaged Snacks

	AHA	NANA	Federal Food Service Guidelines	USDA Smart Snacks/NAMA FitPick Select	NAMA FitPick
Percent covered	100%	100%	100% must meet the sodium and trans fat criteria and at least 75% must meet other nutrition standards	100%	No Standard
Calories	≤200 calories per label serving	≤200 calories per package	≤200 calories per package	≤200 calories per package	≤250 calories per package
Total Fat	Eliminate regular chips and fried snacks	No standard	No standard	≤35% calories from fat, excluding whole eggs or seafood with no added fat, reduced-fat cheeses, nuts, seeds, nut/seed butters, and products consisting of only dried fruit with nuts and/or seeds	≤10g fat per package
Saturated Fat	≤1g sat fat per serving	<10% calories from sat fat (maximum of 2 g for a 200-calorie item), excluding packages containing 100% nuts and seeds	<10% of calories from sat fat, excluding reduced-fat cheeses; nuts, seeds, and nut/seed butters; and dried fruit with nuts/seeds with no added fats or caloric sweeteners	<10% calories from sat fat, excluding whole eggs with no added fat, reduced fat cheeses, nuts, seeds, nut/seed butters, and products consisting of only dried fruit with nuts and/or seeds	≤3g sat fat per package
Trans Fat	0 g per package	No standard ³	0 g per package	0 g per package	0 g per package
Sodium	≤240 mg per package (Preferably ≤140 mg)	≤200 mg per package	≤200 mg per package	≤200 mg per package	≤230 mg per package

³ Since the Food and Drug Administration ruled in 2015 that partially hydrogenated oils are no longer generally recognized as safe, trans fats have been virtually eliminated from the food supply.

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Vended Packaged Snacks

	AHA	NANA	Federal Food Service Guidelines	USDA Smart Snacks/NAMA FitPick Select	NAMA FitPick
Sugars	Candy or items with any form of sugar as the first -listed ingredient are not permitted and desserts and sweet baked items should be eliminated or reduced	≤10% of calories from added sugars (maximum of 5 g added sugars for a 200 calorie item), excluding yogurts that contain ≤10 g added sugars per 5.3 oz container	≤35% of weight from total sugars in foods, excluding dried whole fruits and vegetables with no added nutritive sweeteners; dried fruit with nuts and/or seeds with no added fats or caloric sweeteners	≤35% of weight from total sugars, excluding dried fruits or vegetables with no added caloric sweeteners and products consisting of only dried fruit with nuts and/or seeds	≤20 g sugar per package
Positive Nutritional Value	Plain nuts and nut/fruit mixes are exempt from the above standards but must have a serving size of ≤1.5 oz. (preferably 1 oz.) and contain ≤140 mg per serving	One of the following must be listed as the first ingredient (or second ingredient after water): fruit or non-fried vegetable; fat-free/low-fat dairy or calcium- and vitamin D-fortified plant-based alternative; legumes, nuts or seeds; or non-fried whole grain	Packaged snacks must be a whole grain-rich product; contain a fruit, vegetable, dairy product, or protein food as the first ingredient; or be a combination food that contains ≥¼ cup of fruit and/or vegetable	Grain products must be ≥50% whole grains by weight or have a whole grain as the first ingredient; other snack foods must contain a fruit, vegetable, dairy product, or protein food as the first ingredient; or be a combination food that contains ≥¼ cup of fruit and/or vegetable	No Standard

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Vended Entrée-Type Foods⁴

	NANA	USDA Smart Snacks
Percent covered	100%	100%
Calories	≤400 calories per package/item	≤350 calories per package/item
Total Fat	No standard	≤35% calories from fat (maximum of 13g for a 350-calorie item)
Saturated Fat	≤10% calories from sat fat (maximum of 4.5 g for a 400-calorie item)	≤10% calories from sat fat (maximum of 3.5 g for a 350-calorie item)
Trans Fat	No standard ⁵	0 g per package/item
Sodium	≤480 mg per package/item	≤480 mg per package/item
Sugars	≤10% of calories from added sugars (maximum of 10 g added sugars for a 400-calorie item)	≤35% of weight from total sugars
Positive Nutritional Value	One of the following must be listed as the first ingredient (or second ingredient after water): fruit or non-fried vegetable; fat-free/low-fat dairy or calcium- and vitamin D-fortified plant-based alternative; lean protein food (e.g. fish, legumes, poultry); or non-fried whole grain	Grain products must be ≥50% whole grains by weight or have a whole grain as the first ingredient; other snack foods must contain a fruit, vegetable, dairy product, or protein food as the first ingredient; or be a combination food that contains ≥¼ cup of fruit and/or vegetable

⁴ Other sets of guidelines were omitted because they do not have standards for entrée-type vended foods.

⁵ Since the Food and Drug Administration ruled in 2015 that partially hydrogenated oils are no longer generally recognized as safe, trans fats have been virtually eliminated from the food supply.