

A fresh nutrient criteria for WA schools

The Western Australian Department of Health has developed a WA School Food and Drink Criteria for WA schools to classify food and drinks according to a traffic light system. This system classifies food and drink as **GREEN**, **AMBER** and **RED** as required by the Department of Education's Student Health in Public Schools procedures, Appendix B. Healthy Food and Drink.

The WA School Food and Drink Criteria, has been developed based on the nutritional requirements of growing school aged children and teenagers. This criteria aligns with current scientific evidence, Australian Dietary Guidelines, nutrient criteria in other jurisdictions and the Australian School Curriculum to ensure all food and drink supplied in the school setting is supportive of a healthy school environment.

The nutrient criteria will come into effect on the 31st January 2024. While changes to the classification of menu items does not need to be implemented immediately, schools should plan for any required changes as part of their regular canteen menu review process. FreshSNAP will be providing support to schools during this time with a range of resources, support and training including the introduction of FoodChecker, an online product and menu assessment tool.



What does this mean for school canteens?

- Some items have been reclassified as **GREEN**. Most notably: full fat dairy, all canned vegetables, legumes and fish (no reduced salt required).
- Some items have been reclassified as **RED**. Most notably: all pastry items, processed red meat including ham, hot chips, all cakes and biscuits, chips and savory biscuits, fruit juice slushies and dairy desserts with confectionary.
- Many **AMBER** meat products and meals must include or be served with a least 1/4 cup cooked or 1/2 a cup of raw salad or vegetables to remain **AMBER**. For example: crumbed meat or commercial readymade hot meals such as pasta or curry.
- New allowances have been introduced for common **AMBER** and **RED** ingredients, such as condiments, sauces and spreads, which when used in small amounts will not change the traffic light classification of the recipe.
- Nutrient criteria classification of snack products is now based on per 100g instead of per serve.
- The addition or removal of maximum serve sizes for some products.

A fresh nutrient criteria What has changed?

Items reclassified as **GREEN**:

- All full fat milk, yoghurt and cheese.
- Plain pizza bases.
- All canned vegetables, legumes, and fish (reduced salt requirement removed).
- All vegetarian protein products (e.g., vegetable and legume patties, falafel, tofu, tempeh) if served with at least 1/4 cup cooked or 1/2 a cup of raw salad or vegetables.
- Cheese and crackers (snack packs).
- Plain popcorn.

Items reclassified as **RED**:

- All processed red meat, including ham.
- Hot potato and other vegetable products.
- Ice cream, frozen yoghurt with confectionary.
- Carbonated fruit juice drinks.
- Popcorn (with added salt, sugar, confectionary) and legume snacks.
- Sugar.
- Commercial savoury pastry foods.
- Chips and savoury biscuits.
- Commercial sweet biscuits and cookies.
- Commercial sweet cakes, sweet pastries and other desserts.

Half a serve of vegetables must be added to some food items:

- **AMBER** red meat, poultry, fish and seafood products must be served 1/4 cup cooked or 1/2 a cup of raw salad or vegetables.
- All crumbed or coated red meat, poultry, fish or seafood must be served with 1/4 cup cooked or 1/2 a cup of raw salad or vegetables.
- All burger patties, sausages, rissoles, meatballs and fish cakes must be served 1/4 cup cooked or 1/2 a cup of raw salad or vegetables.
- Commercial plant-based meat alternatives must be served with 1/4 cup cooked or 1/2 a cup of raw salad or vegetables.
- Processed poultry meat must be served with 1/4 cup cooked or 1/2 a cup of raw salad or vegetables.
- Vegetable and legume patties, falafels, tofu and tempeh must be served with 1/4 cup cooked or 1/2 a cup of raw salad or vegetables as **GREEN**, otherwise classified as **AMBER**.
- Commercial ready-to-eat hot meals must include or be served 1/4 cup cooked or 1/2 a cup of raw salad or vegetables.

A fresh nutrient criteria What has changed?

Allowances - some RED and AMBER products have an allowance (meaning they can be added to GREEN items without changing the classification of the recipe):

- Mustards, relish, pickles, salsa and chutney.
- Pastes (commercial or made on site).
- Soy sauce, fish sauce, Worcestershire sauce.
- Unsaturated fat oils and spreads.
- Mayonnaise, aioli.
- Naturally sweet spread or syrup (no added sugar).
- Drink powder (no intense sweeteners).

Condiments reclassified as GREEN or AMBER

- Nut and seed paste/butter.
- Dips, mayonnaise, aioli, tartar sauce (refer to allowances).
- Cooking and condiment sauces.
- Pasta, simmer and noodle or stir fry and curry sauces.

Maximum serve sizes have changed or been introduced for the following items:

- Banana bread, sweet muffins and scones, savoury muffins and scones.
- Commercial coffee drinks, commercial flavoured milks.
- Dried fruit, nut packets and trail mixes.

*Individual serve sizes will impact classification

Maximum serve sizes have been removed from the following items:

- Commercial hot meals (served with half a serve of salad or vegetables).
- Commercial pizza (served with half a serve of salad or vegetables).
- Commercial salads.
- Commercial plant-based meat alternatives.

Nutrient criteria classification has changed from per serve to per 100g for the following items:

- Snack packs, snack bars, energy and protein bars/products, bliss balls.
- Dairy desserts, ice cream and frozen yoghurt.

Criteria for reduced salt and fat and high fibre products has been removed:

- The reduced salt criteria for canned legumes and vegetables have been removed.
- The reduced salt criteria for cooking sauces and condiments as been removed.
- The reduced fat criteria for all dairy products have been removed.
- Fibre requirement for commercial breakfast cereal has been removed.

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A fresh nutrient criteria What has changed?

Previously, a compliant canteen menu consisted of:

- A minimum of 60% **GREEN** food and drinks.
- A maximum of 40% **AMBER** food and drinks.
- Only offer **AMBER** savoury commercial products a maximum of twice per week.
- No **RED** items on the menu.

This requirement remains the same with the following additions:

- Where an **AMBER** item has been reclassified as a **RED** item it may be included on the menu and included in your **AMBER** count. These items are referred to as 'selected **RED** items'. These items may only be offered on the same two days a week as other **AMBER** savoury commercial products.
- This cannot be applied retrospectively. Once a **RED** item has been removed from a menu, it cannot be re-introduced.

For example:

If your canteen sells **AMBER** chicken nuggets on Tuesday and Thursday you can also sell hash browns (selected **RED** item) on those two days. The hash browns will contribute to your 40% **AMBER** allocation of your total menu. You cannot sell hash browns on any other day.

For more information, refer to the ['What are selected RED items?'](#) factsheet.

A fresh nutrient criteria What has stayed the same?

Some food and drinks will maintain their classification and do not have to be reassessed against the nutrient criteria.

These foods and drinks remain GREEN, and should fill the menu:

- All fruit, fresh, frozen, or canned.
- All vegetables, excluding hot potato and other processed vegetable products.
- Grains and rice.
- Lean red meat, poultry, fish and seafood.
- Pasta and noodles.
- Breads, wraps and rolls.
- Raisin bread, fruit breads, pikelets and pancakes, fruit buns, hot cross buns (with no added confectionery or icing).
- Commercial soups (depending on nutrition information panel).
- Eggs.
- Nuts and seeds.
- Water.

These foods and drinks remain AMBER, and should be selected carefully:

- Savoury breads, scrolls, cheese, garlic and herb breads (depending on nutrition information panel).
- Commercial Savoury Products.
- Unprocessed red meat and poultry with visible fat or skin not removed prior to cooking (if served with 1/4 cup cooked or 1/2 a cup of raw salad or vegetables).
- Crumbed or coated red meat, poultry, fish or seafood (if served with 1/4 cup cooked or 1/2 a cup of raw salad or vegetables).
- Burger patties, sausages, rissoles, meatballs and fish cakes (if served with half a serve of salad or vegetables).
- Processed poultry meat (if served with half a serve of salad or vegetables).
- Commercial hot meals (if served with half a serve of salad or vegetables).
- Unsaturated fat oils and spreads.
- Naturally sweet spreads.
- Salad dressing (depending on nutrition information panel).

These food and drinks remain RED, and should be off the menu:

- Cream.
- Saturated fat oils and spreads.
- Sweet commercial spread and syrups.
- Commercial iced coffee, without milk.
- Energy drinks.
- Fermented drinks.
- Sugar sweetened beverages.
- Intensely sweetened beverages.