

Classification of Food Items for School Lunch

Guidelines on Use

The catering committees or teachers responsible for students' catering are recommended to follow the steps described in this document when they conduct preview of school lunch menus submitted by lunch suppliers. Findings should then be communicated to the lunch suppliers to improve the menus and make students' lunches healthier.

Steps:

I. Remove 'Strongly Discouraged Food Items'

Exclude all 'Strongly Discouraged Food Items' from the lunch menu so that ALL meal choices do not contain these food items. For details of classification of these food items, please refer to pages 40-42 of *Nutritional Guidelines on Lunch for Students*.

'Strongly Discouraged Food Items' that are often overlooked include:

- Sauce or gravy (e.g. curry sauce or Portuguese style sauce made with coconut cream/milk, white sauce made with cream)
- Food items that have been deep-fried in the production process (e.g. fried fish curd, e-fu noodles and fried bean curd stick)
- Food items with trans fat (e.g. flaky bread)

II. Pay attention to the frequency of 'Limited Food Items' served in a week

Identify 'Limited Food Items' and make sure that these food items are served on not more than two school days in a week. For details of classification of these food items, please refer to pages 38-39 of *Nutritional Guidelines on Lunch for Students*.

III. Check the frequency of 'Encouraged Food Items' served

Depending on the serving of grains at school,

- **if more than one type of grains is served each day**, 'Encouraged Food Items' should be provided in at least one meal choice on all school days; or
- **if only one type of grains is served each day**, 'Encouraged Food Items' should be provided on at least two school days in a week. For details of classification of these food items, please refer to page 36 of *Nutritional Guidelines on Lunch for Students*.

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Category	Criterion	Examples
‘Encouraged Food Items’¹ ➤ If more than 1 type of grains is served each day, these food items should be provided in <u>at least 1 meal choice on all school days</u> ; or ➤ If only 1 type of grains is served each day, these food items should be provided on <u>at least 2 school days in a week (with 4 or 5 school days)</u> .	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Grains should contain at least 10% of whole grains or added vegetables, excluding potatoes, sweet potatoes, nuts and seeds (e.g. flaxseed and sesame) 	Red rice, brown rice, rice added with leafy vegetables/corn kernels/mushroom/carrot/pumpkin/barley, mixed grains rice, wholemeal bread, buckwheat noodles, spinach noodles, tri-colour fusilli, and quinoa
‘Limited Food Items’ ➤ To be served on <u>not more than 2 school days in a week with 4 or 5 school days</u> ; or ➤ These food items should <u>not be served on more than 1 school day in a week with only 2 or 3 school days</u> ; or ➤ These food items <u>should not be served in a week with only 1 school day</u> .	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Grains with added fat or oil Fatty cut of meat and poultry with skin Full-fat dairy products Processed or preserved meat, egg and vegetable products Sauce or gravy with high fat, salt or sugar content⁴ 	Fried rice ² , fried noodles ² , Yu-Mein noodles, and pizza (without using ‘Strongly Discouraged Food Items’ as ingredients) Beef belly, beef ribs, spare ribs, pork jowl, pork cartilage, and chicken, duck and goose with skin (e.g. chicken wings, chicken thigh, drumstick, except chicken feet ³) Full-fat milk, full-fat cheese, full-fat yoghurt, and all kinds of evaporated milk (including reduced-fat evaporated milk) Egg tofu, barbecued pork, bacon, smoked duck breast, ham, sausage, luncheon meat, beef ball, white fish ball, mushroom and pork ball, preserved mustard green, pickled cucumber, fermented black soybean, textured vegetable protein, crab stick, soybean curd slab cooked with spices, ready-to-eat dim sum (e.g. siu mai, bun with meat and vegetables, steamed beef ball and steamed dumpling in Chiuchow style), canned tuna in oil, canned soup, chikuwa, marinated egg, ready-made burger patty, and salt baked chicken Gravy or sauce: fermented black bean sauce, teriyaki sauce, Swiss sauce, ketchup, white sauce or carbonara sauce (made with full-fat milk or all kinds of evaporated milk), Portuguese style sauce or curry sauce (made with full-fat milk or all kinds of evaporated milk), Chinese marinade, red fermented soybean curd, fermented soybean curd, miso sauce, belachan, shrimp paste, chu hou sauce, soy sauce, preserved plum, miso, chili bean sauce, barbecued sauce, satay, sa cha sauce, sweet and sour sauce, and zhajiang sauce
‘Strongly Discouraged Food Items’ ➤ Not to be provided in <u>ALL</u> meal choices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Deep-fried food items Food items with animal fat or plant sources of saturated fat Food items with trans fat Food items with very high salt content Food items with caffeine or sweeteners⁵ Drinks in the category of ‘Snacks to Choose Less’^{5 6} 	Deep-fried pork chop, French fries, deep-fried chicken thigh, spring roll, samosa, fried tofu, fried fish ball, fried gluten, fried bean curd stick, fried fish fillet, fried fish curd, fried peanuts, e-fu noodles, food items containing fried fritter (e.g. glutinous rice roll with fried fritter), fried bean curd, and deep-fried chicken feet ³ Fat/oil: butter (including reduced-fat butter), lard, cream (including reduced-fat cream), palm oil, and coconut oil Food items: pineapple bun (with butter), pineapple bun, cocktail bun or loaf (bun with a filling made with sugar and shredded coconut), egg tart (short crust), egg tart, cookie, egg roll, sandwich biscuit, croissant, butter roll (with added butter), other food items made with coconut cream/milk, scone, and muffin Gravy: white sauce or carbonara sauce (made with cream), and Portuguese style sauce, curry sauce or satay sauce (made with coconut cream/milk) Food items added with the following oils: hydrogenated vegetable oil, margarine and shortening with trans fat Salted fish, salted egg, Chinese preserved sausage, Chinese preserved meat, food items containing preserved meat (e.g. sticky rice wrapped in lotus leaf, turnip cake, and taro cake), and Jinhua ham Food items made with coffee or tea (e.g. coffee- or tea-flavoured bakery products, boiled egg in tea), ready-made sauces with sweeteners Soft drinks, fruit-flavoured drinks, fruit juices with added sugar, yoghurt drinks, probiotic drinks, tetra-packed lemon tea, chrysanthemum tea or Chinese herbal tea, sports drinks, green tea, energy drinks and sugar-free soft drinks

- Since students have a high calcium need for their growth and development, lunch suppliers are encouraged to use calcium-rich ingredients more. However, suitable calcium-rich ingredients for preparing lunch boxes are limited, parents should therefore provide children with calcium-rich food in other main meals or as snacks.
- Rice and noodles added with more than 2 teaspoons of oil per serving per person during food preparation and cooking.
- Chicken feet (both non-fried and deep-fried) is categorised as “Strongly Discouraged Food Items” due to its high of fat content.

- It is recommended that sauce or gravy with high fat, salt or sugar content should be served sparingly and separately from grains.
- Food items and drinks containing caffeine or sweeteners are not recommended for primary school students.
- For drinks examples of ‘Snacks to Choose Less’, please refer to *Nutritional Guidelines on Snacks for Students*.