



Saskatchewan School Food & Nutrition Guidelines

2025

Acknowledgments

The Saskatchewan Ministry of Health gratefully acknowledges the contributions of individuals and organizations in the renewal of this document.

The *Saskatchewan School Food & Nutrition Guidelines* were developed in collaboration with the Saskatchewan Health Authority Public Health Nutritionists and Dietitians Working with First Nations.

The Ministry of Health appreciates the support of the Ministry of Education and the education sector in ensuring nutrition is foundational to student success. This renewal was informed by dialogue and input from individuals across the province, including teachers, researchers, Comprehensive School Health Coordinators, school administrators, school nutrition workers, and school cooks.

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Finally, we thank the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador for permission to use excerpts of their document [Newfoundland and Labrador Provincial School Food Guidelines](#) in the development of this guide.



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Purpose of the Saskatchewan School Food & Nutrition Guidelines

The Saskatchewan School Food & Nutrition Guidelines are voluntary and intended to support schools to identify the most nutritious food and drink options to offer or sell. The guidelines support the Saskatchewan Ministry of Education's [*Nourishing Minds: Eat Well – Learn Well – Live Well*](#), which encourages school divisions to develop and/or renew school food policies, which align with provincial nutrition and food guidelines.

Schools are encouraged to use the guidelines to move towards providing nutritious choices and to reduce the availability of highly processed foods whenever foods and drinks are offered or sold.

School staff and volunteers can use the guidelines to support decisions and policies related to foods and drinks offered and sold in the school environment. This may include:

- breakfasts, lunches, and snacks;
- cafeterias, vending machines, and canteens;
- fundraisers and sporting events;
- school and classroom celebrations; and
- other special school community events.



[*Canada's Food Guide*](#) is the foundation for healthy eating and was considered in the development of the Saskatchewan School Food and Nutrition Guidelines. The provincial food and nutrition guidelines were developed in consultation with individuals and organizations who work with and in schools.

The guidelines do not address special diet needs of some students. For more information go to the [*Food Allergies and Other Life-Threatening Medical Conditions*](#) section.

Saskatchewan is home to people from different backgrounds, cultures, belief systems, and traditions. Schools are encouraged to consider these needs when applying the guidelines.

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The guidelines do not apply to foods and drinks students bring from home or outside of the school. They should not be used to evaluate what students are eating or to inform students, parents, and caregivers about snacks or meals from home.

This is important as the guidelines were not developed to be used as an educational tool for parents or students. There are many factors that influence food choices such as medical conditions, culture, food skills, access, and income. Evaluating foods and drinks students bring from home or from outside of the school can result in shame and stigma as the food that a student brings to school may be all that is available to them at the time.

How to Support Lifelong Healthy Eating

Schools can create a positive environment where nutritious foods and drinks can be enjoyed by everyone. This supports a positive relationship with food and the development of healthy eating practices for life.

Offering nutritious foods and drinks supports a [Comprehensive School Community Health](#) approach which encompasses four integrated components that invite the school, family and community to work together to enhance the health and well-being of all students.



Exposure to nutritious foods:

Offering children and youth a variety of nutritious foods and drinks in schools builds a foundation for life-long healthy eating, improves overall health, and can support learning outcomes. Policies and practices that ensure nutritious foods and drinks are available, whenever offered or sold in schools, can help students succeed.

Implementing the guidelines can help create a healthy school environment. In all cases where food is offered or sold in schools, student nutrition should be considered. When schools promote nutritious food and drink choices, including during celebration days or fundraisers, it supports the development of positive attitudes toward all foods and drinks.

How we offer foods:

Healthy eating is more than just the foods we eat. Respect students' decisions about how much to eat, including eating foods in whatever order they choose. Refrain from commenting and directing which foods, or how much, students should eat or not eat, as this interferes with their ability to self-regulate.

Visit the [National Indigenous Diabetes Association](#) to access traditional food and nutrition resources and recipe books.

Food practices are also an expression of culture, beliefs, and traditions. Enjoying food, sharing culture and food traditions, and eating meals with others are important aspects. Schools are strongly encouraged to work with families to support students with cultural food needs. For example, when selecting food, consider the diversity of students in the school and account for various ethnic and cultural food related practices.

[Comprehensive School Community Health](#) is a collaborative approach that invites the school, family and community to work together to enhance the health and well-being of all students.

Better Health = Better Learners

Guiding Principles

The guiding principles are designed to support school administration, staff, and volunteers in offering nutritious foods and drinks at school.

- 1. Foods and drinks that may be offered or sold in schools should fit within the following categories:**
 - Vegetables and Fruit
 - Grain Foods
 - Protein Foods
 - Mixed Dishes
 - Drinks
- 2. A meal is made up of at least:**
 - one vegetable or fruit; **plus**
 - one protein food; **plus**
 - one grain food.
- 3. A snack is made up of at least:**
 - one vegetable or fruit; **plus**
 - one protein **or** one grain food.
- 4. Offer cow's milk or fortified soy beverage once per day as these drinks contain calcium and vitamin D which are important for child growth and development.**
- 5. Meals and snacks emphasize minimally processed foods. This means offering or selling fewer pre-packaged, ready-to-eat foods when possible.**
- 6. Safe drinking water is always free and available.**
- 7. Safe food handling practices are used when handling, storing, and preparing food.**
- 8. Cultural and traditional foods are offered regularly and should reflect the student population. They are encouraged regardless of how they are listed in the food lists.**
- 9. Schools can support students in feeling good about food and eating by giving them the opportunity to eat, in whatever order and amount they choose, without pressure, judgement, or comments.**



For more information, visit [Cultural Practices and Foods and First Nations and Métis Traditional Practices and Foods.](#)

How to Use the Guidelines When Choosing Food and Drinks

Follow the step-by-step process when choosing which foods and drinks to offer or sell in schools.

Step 1 – Ingredients

Most packaged foods and drinks have an ingredient list as part of the food label. Look at the first ingredient in the list to determine which category the food fits into:

- [Vegetables and Fruit](#)
- [Grain Foods](#)
- [Protein Foods](#)
- [Mixed Dishes](#)

If the food does not have a food label such as fresh vegetables and fruit, go step 2. If the item does not fit into one of these main categories, then it may be listed in the sections on [Drinks](#) or [Other Considerations](#).

Step 2 – Food Lists

Look for the item on the food lists provided in each category to determine if it may be offered. The food lists were developed based on nutrient content, ingredients, amount of processing, and food availability.

Foods that may be offered have more nutrition, less processing, or little to no saturated fat, sugar, and sodium.

Foods that are not recommended have less nutrition, more processing, or higher levels of saturated fat, sugar, and sodium.

What to do if a food is not found on either of the lists?

If the food in question is not found on either the May be Offered or Not Recommended to Offer lists, use the specific criteria for saturated and trans fats, sugars, and sodium provided for each category. Use the nutrition facts table on the package to determine if a food or drink meets the nutrient criteria. See the section on [Reading Food Labels](#) for more details.

- If a food **meets all three** criteria it would be considered a May be Offered food. If the food or drink does **not meet all three criteria**, it is not recommended to be offered or sold in schools.
- If a food or drink is on the Not Recommended to Offer list, even if it fits the nutrient criteria, it is still not recommended to be offered or sold in schools.

Reading Food Labels

Most packaged foods in Canada will have food labels. Food labels include an ingredient list and a nutrition facts table.

Ingredient List

The ingredient list shows all the ingredients found in a packaged food. Ingredients are listed in order of weight, from most to least. The first few ingredients will help to determine the category a food fits into such as Vegetables and Fruit, Grain Foods, or Protein Foods.

Nutrition Facts Table

The nutrition facts table can be used to:

- learn about a food's nutritional value;
- see if a food contains a little or a lot of a nutrient; and
- compare two foods to make healthier choices.

Serving Size

Information on the nutrition facts table is based on an amount of food called the serving size. Many foods will list only a portion of the package as the serving size. **The serving size is not a suggested amount of food to eat. It is meant to be used to compare similar foods.**

Ingredients: Skim milk, Cream, Active bacterial cultures.

Nutrition Facts Valeur nutritive

Per 1 cup (175 g)
Pour 1 tasse (175 g)

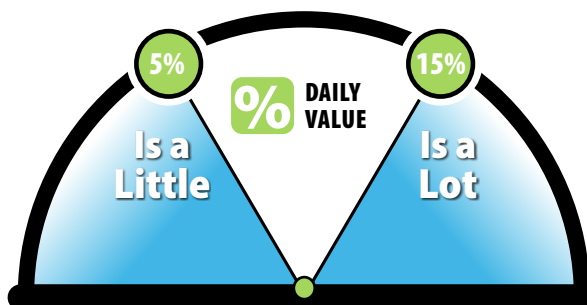
Calories 120	% Daily Value* % valeur quotidienne*
Fat / Lipides 3.5 g	5%
Saturated / saturés 2.5 g	
+ Trans / trans 0.1 g	13%
Carbohydrate / Glucides 7 g	
Fibre / Fibres 0 g	0%
+ Trans / trans 0.1 g	5%
Protein / Protéines 16 g	
Cholesterol / Cholestérol 20 mg	
Sodium 50 mg	5%
Potassium 225 mg	5%
Calcium 175 mg	13%
Iron / Fer 0 mg	0%

% Daily Value (DV)

The % DV can be used to determine if the food has **a little** (5% DV or less) or **a lot** (15% DV or more) of a nutrient. It can also be used to compare two different foods to make a healthier choice.

When reading the nutrition facts table, it is important to consider both the serving size and the % DV. For more information on food labels, go to the [Government of Canada](https://www.canada.ca/government) website.

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Food and Drink Categories

Vegetables and Fruit

Vegetables and fruit contain fibre, vitamins, and minerals. It is recommended they be offered as part of every meal and snack when possible.

Step 1 – Ingredients

Look at the ingredient list. The food belongs in the Vegetables and Fruit category if:

- the first ingredient is a vegetable or fruit; or
- the first ingredient is water, and the second ingredient must be a vegetable or fruit.

For vegetable and fruit juices, refer to the [Drinks category](#).

Offer dark green and orange vegetables and fruit as often as possible. They are important for growth and development.

Dark green vegetables such as spinach, broccoli, and edamame, provide calcium and folate.

Orange vegetables and fruit such as carrots, oranges, and sweet potato, provide vitamin A.

Dried fruit can stick to teeth and cause cavities. If dried fruit is offered, serve it with meals.



Step 2 – Food List

Find the food you are considering on the lists provided below. If the food you are considering is **not** on the lists, use the Nutrient Criteria Chart.

Vegetables & Fruits	May be Offered	Not Recommended to Offer
Vegetables	- Fresh vegetables - Frozen vegetables - Potatoes, boiled, baked, or mashed - Canned vegetables	- Battered and deep-fried vegetables - Frozen French fries, wedges or hash browns - Chips, even if they are baked, such as potato chips, corn chips, tortilla chips, and veggie chips - Vegetable juice or cocktail
Fruit	- Fresh fruit - Frozen fruit - Canned fruit packed in juice or light syrup - Fruit sauces - Uncoated and unsweetened dried fruit, offer with meals only - Low sodium canned tomato-based sauces	- Canned fruit packed in heavy syrup - Fruit in gelatin, jam, or jelly - Sweetened dried fruit such as cranberries - Coated dried fruit such as yogurt or chocolate covered raisins - Prepared pie filling - Processed fruit snacks such as fruit leathers, fruit bars or gummies, including those made with 100% fruit juice or fruit puree concentrate - Frozen fruit bars, popsicles or fruit-based freezies - Fruit that contains sugar substitutes such as canned fruit sweetened with sucralose and canned fruit in water - Fruit chips such as apple, banana, or plantain - Canned tomato-based sauces 100% fruit juice

Nutrient Criteria Chart

Apply the criteria below to vegetable or fruit foods **not** found on one of the lists above. Use the nutrition facts table on the package and compare it to the criteria for saturated and trans fat, sugars, and sodium.

For the fruit or vegetable to be offered, it would need to meet all three criteria below.

Saturated and Trans Fat	Sugars	Sodium
Less than 15 % DV	Less than 15 % DV	Less than 15 % DV

Grain Foods

Whole grain foods are high in fibre. Offer whole grain foods as often as possible.

If whole grain foods are not available, choose whole wheat foods instead of refined options.

Step 1 – Ingredient

Look at the ingredient list. The food belongs in the Grain Foods category if:

- the first ingredient is a whole grain, whole wheat, enriched wheat flour (white flour), wheat flour, or rice; or
- the first ingredient is water, and the second ingredient must be a whole grain, whole wheat, enriched wheat flour, wheat flour or rice.

White flour is often listed in the ingredients as enriched wheat flour or wheat flour.



Step 2 – Food List

Find the food you are considering on the lists provided below. If the food you are considering is not on the lists, use the Nutrient Criteria Chart.

Grains	May be Offered	Not Recommended to Offer
Bread Products and Cereals	- Bread, buns, or bagels - Tortilla wraps, pitas, naan, or other flatbreads - English muffins - Bannock or biscuits - Whole grain or whole wheat pancakes or waffles, made in house - Whole wheat pizza crust - Oatmeal, including instant	- Pancakes or waffles, frozen or dried mix - Pizza crust or dough made with enriched wheat flour or wheat flour, including frozen or pre-made - Hot or cold cereals with chocolate, candies, or marshmallows, even if they are whole grain - Hot or cold cereals sweetened with sugar substitutes - Hot or cold cereals that are not whole grain
Baked Goods	Muffins or loaves, made in-house with at least some whole grain or whole wheat flour	- Muffin and loaves made without whole grain or whole wheat flour - Toaster pastries - Muffins, loaves, or cookies sweetened with sugar substitutes - Baking packaged or made in-house such as cookies, brownies, pastries, croissants, cakes, cupcakes, cake pops, pies, tarts, donuts, or cinnamon buns
Grain-Based Snacks	- Whole grain or whole wheat crackers - Air popped popcorn, plain or lightly buttered	- Salty snacks, even if they are baked, such as pretzels, puffs, twists, crisps, and straws - Theatre-style popcorn - Granola or snack bars that are coated or contain chocolate, candies, or marshmallows - Protein or meal replacement bars
Noodles, Rice, and Other Grain Products	- Brown, wild, or white rice - Whole wheat or white pasta - Whole grains such as barley, rye, whole oats or unsweetened oatmeal, bulgur, quinoa, buckwheat, amaranth, and millet	- Pre-seasoned packaged pasta, noodles, or rice (or includes a seasoning pouch) - Instant noodle soup

Nutrient Criteria Chart

Apply the criteria below to grain foods **not** found on one of the lists above such as whole grain cereal and uncoated granola bars. Use the nutrition facts table on the package and compare it to the criteria for saturated and trans fat, sugars, and sodium. For the grain food to be offered, it would need to meet all three criteria.

Saturated and Trans Fat	Sugars	Sodium
Less than 15 % DV	Less than 15 % DV	Less than 15 % DV

Protein Foods

Offer protein foods that come from plants more often. Plant-based options may provide more fibre and less saturated fat than other types of protein foods, which can be beneficial for heart health.

Step 1 – Ingredients

Look at the ingredient list. The food belongs in the Protein Foods category if:

- the first ingredient is a:
 - lentil, chickpea, bean, soybean, nut, or seed;
 - meat, poultry, fish, or egg;
 - milk, modified milk ingredients, kefir, yogurt, or cheese; or
 - water.
- the first ingredient is water, and the second ingredient must be a lentil, chickpea, bean, soybean, nut, seed, meat, fish, poultry, egg, milk, modified milk ingredient, kefir, yogurt, or cheese.

Wild meats that are locally available from natural resources have cultural significance for Indigenous Peoples in Canada. These are nutrient dense options that require special handling considerations and may require an exemption use. For more information, contact the local Public Health Inspector or Environmental Health Officer.

Deli meats are highly processed and not recommended, however, this can limit options for sandwiches. If offered, do so on an infrequent basis, and choose deli meats lower in saturated fat such as ham, turkey, chicken, and roast beef.



Food List

Find the food you are considering on the lists provided below. If the food you are considering is **not** on the lists, use the Nutrient Criteria Chart.

Proteins	May be Offered	Not Recommended to Offer
Beans, Lentils, and Tofu	- Dried, canned, or roasted lentils, chickpeas, beans - Hummus or other bean spreads - Unsweetened tofu	- Canned baked beans, in tomato sauce, with pork, molasses or maple syrup - Plant-based hotdogs, sausages, or bacon - Dessert tofu
Nuts, Seeds, and Legumes	- Nut, legume, seed, or soy butters - Unsweetened and unsalted nuts or seeds	- Nut, legume, seed, or soy butters that have added sugar such as chocolate, chocolate hazelnut, honey, and berry - Salted or coated nuts or seeds - Protein or meal replacement bars
Fish	Fresh, frozen, or canned fish	Pre-packaged battered or breaded fish
Meats, Poultry, and Eggs	- Fresh, frozen, or canned chicken or turkey - Fresh or frozen lean beef or pork - Wild meat such as moose, elk, deer, bison, goose, and duck - Eggs	- Deli meats such as ham, turkey, roast beef, chicken, bologna, pepperoni, or salami - Hot dogs, wieners, or pepperoni sticks - Bacon - Sausage, pork breakfast links - Corned beef - Beef jerky - Pre-packaged battered or breaded meat, such as chicken or pork
Milk and Milk Alternatives	- Unsweetened skim, 1%, or 2% cow's milk - Unsweetened, fortified soy beverages - Buttermilk	- Sweetened cow's milk such as strawberry, chocolate, and chocolate bar flavoured - Unpasteurized cow's milk - Sweetened soy beverages - Milkshakes - Hot chocolate 3.25% cow's milk, cream, or non-dairy whipped cream - Ice cream, frozen yogurt or frozen desserts - Milk-based pudding
Yogurts	Yogurt or kefir, 0 – 2%, with less than 15% DV sugar per serving	Yogurt or kefir, sweetened with sugar substitutes
Cheeses	- Block or string cheese - Cottage cheese, 0-2%	Processed cheese spreads, slices, or sauces

For more information on cow's milk and fortified soy beverages, refer to the [Drinks](#) category.

Nutrient Criteria Chart

Apply the criteria below to protein foods **not** found on one of the lists above. Use the nutrition facts table on the package and compare it to the criteria for saturated and trans fat, sugars, and sodium. In order for the protein food to be offered, it would need to meet all three criteria.

Saturated and Trans Fat	Sugars	Sodium
Less than 15 % DV	Less than 15 % DV	Less than 15 % DV

Mixed Dishes

Use this category for dishes that are either homemade or packaged that include foods from more than one food category (Vegetables and Fruits, Grain Foods, and Protein Foods).

Homemade Mixed Dishes

Homemade mixed dishes include dishes that contain foods from more than one food category and are made in-house. Some examples include:

- Macaroni and cheese
- Spaghetti and meat sauce
- Soft tacos or burritos
- Meat and vegetable meals
- Fish and rice bowls
- Soups or stews

Nutrient Criteria:

The main ingredients in homemade dishes should come from the foods on the **May be Offered** lists or meet the nutrient criteria in any of the previous food categories.

Common Ingredients Used in Homemade Mixed Dishes

Some common recipe ingredients do not fit within any food list or criteria, however, are necessary for the quality of the food and can be used. These additional ingredients have not been included in previous food lists. The following are examples of ingredients that can be used to prepare recipes:

- Oils and soft tub margarines;
- Sugar, maple syrup, table syrup, corn syrup, honey, and molasses;
- Herbs, spices, salt, flavourings such as vanilla, onion powder, and garlic powder;
- Ketchup, mustard, relish, and barbeque sauce;
- Salad dressing, mayonnaise, and vinegar;
- Low sodium condensed soup, broth, and bouillon; and
- Baking powder, baking soda, cream of tartar, corn starch, and cocoa powder.

Prepare homemade mixed dishes whenever possible to support healthy eating and to reduce offering of highly processed food.

Packaged Mixed Dishes

Packaged mixed dishes include pre-packaged meals, frozen meals. Examples include:

- Pre-packaged burritos
- Frozen lasagna
- Low sodium canned soup
- Canned vegetable chili
- Tuna and cracker kits
- Hummus and cracker kits

Nutrient Criteria Chart

Use the nutrition facts table on the **package** and compare it to the criteria for saturated and trans fat, sugars, and sodium. For the packaged mixed dish to be offered, it would need to meet all three criteria.

How product is offered, served, or sold	Saturated + Trans Fat	Sugars	Sodium
As an entrée/main meal	Less than 30%	Less than 30%	Less than 30%
As a side dish or snack	Less than 15%	Less than 15%	Less than 15%

Drinks

Drinks can affect nutrition and health. [Water is the drink of choice](#) to quench thirst and should always be available. Offering cow's milk and fortified soy beverages at school is important to meet student's daily intake of protein, calcium, and vitamin D, which are important for growth and development.

Sugary drinks (including ones sweetened with sugar substitutes) should not be offered or sold in schools as they undermine healthy eating. These drinks can contribute to dental cavities and poor health.

Ensure students
have easy access to
safe, clean drinking
water at all times
throughout the day.

Step 2 – Food List

May be Offered	Not Recommended to Offer
• Water • Unsweetened skim, 1%, or 2% cow's milk • Unsweetened, fortified soy beverages	• Flavoured water or water enhancers with added sugar or sugar substitutes • Vitamin water • Plant-based drinks such as almond, oat, coconut, or rice milk • Pop, lemonade, or iced tea • Fruit juice, including unsweetened 100% fruit juice and from concentrate • Vegetable juice or cocktail • Powdered drink mix • Fruit-flavoured drinks, cocktails, or punch • Sport drinks • Hot chocolate • Slushy drinks • Drinks that contain caffeine or other stimulants such as energy or coffee drinks • Drinks containing sugar substitutes such as diet, zero, or no sugar added pop • Sweetened milk such as strawberry, chocolate, and chocolate bar flavoured • Unpasteurized cow's milk • Sweetened soy beverages • 3.25% cow's milk • Sweetened kefir • Milkshakes • Protein or meal replacement drinks

Other Considerations

Confectionery Foods

These include foods like candy, chocolate bars, fudge, popsicles, freezies, and whipped dessert topping. Confectionery foods should not be offered or sold as they undermine healthy eating, and they can replace healthier foods and drinks that are important for growth and development.

Condiments

Condiments are used to enhance the flavour of foods and drinks. They can be high in sodium, sugar, and saturated fat. When possible, try to use low sodium and low saturated fat varieties.

Sugar Substitutes

Sugar substitutes such as acesulfame potassium or sucralose, are used to lower the sugar content of foods and drinks but are not needed for healthy eating. Foods and drinks made with sugar substitutes may replace other more nutritious foods. They are generally not recommended for children and youth and should not be offered or sold in schools. Foods and drinks such as some yogurts, canned fruit, diet pop, vitamin waters, and some candy may contain sugar substitutes.

Visit [Sugar Substitutes and Healthy Eating](#) for more information.

Food Allergies and Other Life-Threatening Medical Conditions

Some students may have life-threatening medical conditions, such as food allergies or diabetes, that require ongoing management. Schools have a duty to promote well-being and accommodate the health and safety needs of students living with potentially life-threatening medical condition(s).

Check with the school and school division to learn more about policies or administrative procedures that support students living with potentially life-threatening medical conditions.

For more information on *Supporting Students with Potentially Life-Threatening Medical Conditions*, go to the [Government of Saskatchewan](#).

Most prepackaged foods in Canada include a list of ingredients, which is important to review when offering food and beverages at school.

The ingredient list can help identify ingredients that should be avoided by people with food allergies or intolerances.

For more information, visit [Nutrition Labelling: List of Ingredients](#).

Food Safety in Schools

Follow safe food practices to ensure those eating the food do not get sick. At least one person who has successfully completed an [approved safe food handling course](#) should be present when food is being prepared and served. Foods served, provided, or sold in schools must follow The Public Health Act, 1994. Additionally, schools that have a public eating establishment (food facility), must follow [The Food Safety Regulations](#) and the [Public Eating Establishment Standards](#). It is recommended that all schools use the Public Eating Establishment Standards as guidance for food safety measures.

Food Sources

- Food source requirements for each school should be discussed with a local public health inspector or environmental health officer. Talk with a [local public health inspector](#) or environmental health officer if you have any questions about whether a food or food source is acceptable.
- Foods, especially potentially hazardous foods that have a high risk of causing food borne illness such as meat and dairy products, must come from an approved location such as a grocery store, food supplier, licensed restaurant, or regulated food processor.
- In some cases, the local health authority will have to provide a food source exemption for foods from an approved source to be served. For additional information contact the local public health inspector.
 - Schools offering traditional Indigenous foods sourced from the environment, such as hunting, fishing, or foraging, should contact a local public health inspector or environmental health officer for guidance on safe food handling of wild foods.
 - Fresh whole fruits and vegetables may be received from any source and do not require an exemption (e.g., from local producers or by donation).
- The following foods must never be used in a school meal service program:
 - home canned goods;
 - raw or home pasteurized milk or milk products;
 - farm slaughtered animals or poultry;
 - home processed meat, poultry, fish, eggs, or dairy products (e.g., milk, cheese);
 - dented, rusted, or bulging canned goods;
 - food with an expired 'expiry date'; and
 - left-over food or drinks from events such as meetings, banquets and parties.



Temperature Control

- Keep hot foods hot at 60°C (140°F) or higher.
- Keep cold foods cold at 4°C (40°F) or lower.
- Keep frozen foods frozen below 0°C (32°F). It is recommended that frozen foods be stored at -18°C (0°F) or lower.
- Use accurate thermometers to monitor food and refrigerator temperatures.
- Cook food to safe internal temperatures as per Health Canada's [Safe Cooking Temperatures Chart](#).
- Food shall be cooked in one continuous process. Food must never be partially cooked, cooled and then reheated to complete the cooking process.
- Thaw foods at 4°C (40°F) or lower using safe thawing methods, for example, in the refrigerator.
- Leftovers should be reheated to an internal temperature of 74°C (165°F) as rapidly as possible. Slow cookers should not be used to reheat foods. Leftovers should be reheated no more than once.
- Potentially hazardous foods, such as dishes containing meat, alternative proteins, eggs, fish, or dairy, should not be kept out at room temperature for more than 2 hours. These foods should be discarded after this time.



Food Preparation Areas

- A dedicated sink for handwashing equipped with hot and cold running water, liquid hand soap, and paper towels must be in areas where food is prepared and easily accessible.
- Adequate ventilation shall be provided to prevent an accumulation of heat, condensation, smoke, dust, grease/oils and odours or other contaminants within the facility.
- Kitchen counters and tables must be durable, easy to clean, and in good condition.
- Adequate and appropriate lighting should be provided throughout the premises to facilitate cleaning.
- Surfaces must be cleaned and sanitized frequently using a food surface sanitizer, such as a 100ppm chlorine bleach solution. A 100ppm chlorine bleach solution can be prepared as follows:
 - Mix 5mL (1 tsp) unscented 5% household bleach to 1 litre (4 cups) of potable water.
 - Solution strength should be checked with test strips.
 - A new chlorine bleach solution should be prepared every two hours (in open buckets) or daily (in spray bottles)
 - Ensure the sanitizer bottle is clearly labelled.
 - After cleaning, sanitizing solution can be applied to cleaned surfaces by either keeping a cloth in a bucket of sanitizing solution, or through spraying sanitizing solution on to surface and wiping with a clean cloth to distribute. Wiping cloths should be replaced as they become soiled and when new solution is prepared.

Contamination and Food Handling

- Always keep raw meat, poultry, fish, meat alternative proteins, eggs, and seafood separate from cooked foods or foods that will be eaten raw like vegetables and fruit.
- Place raw meat, poultry, fish and seafood in sealed containers or plastic bags. To keep raw juices from dripping on other food, store these items on the bottom shelf of the refrigerator.
- Dedicate separate cutting boards and knives for different food types. Use one board for vegetables and fruit, one board for bread, and another board for raw meat, poultry, fish, and seafood.
- Store foods off the floor. Make sure that foods are not stored in the same area as cleaning products or other chemicals.
- Foods prepared in advance should be stored properly and used within 3-5 days.
- Raw fruit and vegetables shall be thoroughly washed to remove soil and other contaminants before being cut, combined with other ingredients, cooked, or served.
- Food or drink that has been previously served shall not be re-served unless it was:
 - on each previous occasion, served in a container designed to prevent contamination; or
 - individually packaged and has remained unopened, untampered, and stored within proper temperature control.

- Bulk or buffet style food service should be supplied with suitable utensils or effective dispensing means that protect the food from contamination.
- Ice shall be made from potable water and stored and handled in a sanitary manner.
- Single service utensils shall be handled and stored in a sanitary manner and shall not be used more than once.

Dishwashing

- Dishes, equipment, and multi-use utensils must be washed, rinsed, and sanitized then air dried in one of the following ways:
 - Manual dishwashing using a three-compartment sink following water temperatures and sanitizing concentrations from the [Public Eating Establishment Standards](#).
 - Mechanical dishwasher that conforms to National Sanitation Foundation International Standards (NSF/ANSI Standard 3 – Commercial Warewashing Equipment) or equivalent for the washing, rinsing, and sanitizing of all utensils and (non-stationary) equipment.
- Contact a public health inspector or environmental health officer for more information.
- Tableware, multi-use utensils, and equipment shall be air dried after being washed, rinsed, and sanitized; and handled and stored in a sanitary manner.



Food Handlers

At least one person who has successfully completed an approved food safe course should be present when food is being prepared and served.

Approved safe food handling courses are available in Saskatchewan.

Those who handle food must wash their hands with soap and water frequently. Hands shall be washed before commencing work, before serving foods, after using washroom facilities, after smoking, eating or at any other time hands may be soiled or contaminated.

Hand sanitizers are not an acceptable alternative for frequent and thorough hand washing.

Hands must be washed before putting on disposable gloves. Gloves need to be changed as soon as they become dirty, torn, or if there is a change in task. Hands should be washed when changing gloves.

- Food handlers must confine hair (including beards) by using hair nets or other suitable restraints, remove or suitably cover jewelry, and wear clean outer clothing when working.
- People must not prepare/serve food if they are sick.

Kitchen Facility

- Before construction, renovation, and operation of a school kitchen, contact a local Public Health Inspector to review the plans. This will also help to determine necessary inspections and requirements.

Questions regarding food safety should be directed to a local [Public Health Inspector](#) or Environmental Health Officer.

Recertification of the safe food handling course is encouraged a minimum of every five years.

To determine if the meal service program at your school needs to be inspected and have a food license under **The Food Safety Regulations**, or for more information on safe food handling and the **Public Eating Establishment Standards**, contact your local **Public Health Inspector**.

