

# Food and Beverage Standards

September 2022

Approved by the Advisory Council for the Procurement of food for Schools Regulations during school hours in accordance with Chapter 550 *HEALTHY LIFESTYLE PROMOTION AND CARE OF NON-COMMUNICABLE AND CARE OF NON-COMMUNICABLE DISEASES ACT*.

List of Permissible Foods.....	Document 1
List of Permissible Drinks.....	Document 2
List of Prohibited Foods.....	Document 3
List of Prohibited Drinks.....	Document 4
Nutrient Based Guidelines for Food and Drink Providers.....	Document 5

These criteria apply to food and beverages offered for sale or sold in any manner by School Administrators during school hours.

## Document 1

The following food and beverages items listed hereunder are always subject to the nutrient levels as established within the parameters set in the Nutrient Based Guidelines for Food and Drink Providers.

### FOOD AND BEVERAGE STANDARDS

List of Permissible Foods
<b>Savoury Items</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Soups, made with fresh or frozen ingredients low in added fat and salt. Soups should include a selection of vegetables and pulses.</li> <li>• Fresh or toasted, sliced sandwiched bread, rolls, baguettes, ftira, a selection of buns, ciabatta, pittas with healthy fillings<sup>1</sup> preferably using wholegrain<sup>2</sup> breads.</li> <li>• Ħobż Malti - Maltese bread, preferably wholegrain, filled with tuna, tomatoes, onions, lettuce, beans, capers, olives and fresh herbs.</li> <li>• A selection of pizzas with healthy toppings<sup>3</sup>, preferably using a wholegrain<sup>2</sup> dough base.</li> <li>• Hot dishes, such as baked rice, pasta and vegetable lasagna.</li> <li>• Couscous, bulgur wheat and pasta dishes.</li> <li>• Quiches and pies with a healthy filling<sup>4</sup> and a thin layer of short crust pastry.</li> <li>• Baked potatoes/jacket potatoes with healthy fillings such as low fat irkotta, tuna or any other cheeses less than 30% fat. (Refer to table of cheeses on page 8).</li> <li>• 100% grilled or baked chicken/turkey/fish fillet.</li> <li>• Grilled/baked, not fried patties made with healthy ingredients such as tuna, salmon, vegetables, beans and potatoes.</li> <li>• Boiled/poached egg.</li> </ul>
<b>Salads and Dips</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pasta or vegetable salads and vinaigrette (using olive oil, balsamic vinegar, lemon juice) or mustard.</li> <li>• A selection of low fat/low salt dips - vegetables, tuna, irkotta, bean, bigilla and hummus.</li> </ul>

<sup>1</sup> Healthy fillings or toppings can include one or more of the following: a variety of fresh or frozen vegetables, fresh or canned fish, sardines, mackerel, salmon; chicken, turkey, lean meat, irkotta, baked omelettes and patties, mozzarella, less than 30% fat cheese, hard boiled eggs, traditional Maltese bigilla, beans and lentils, low-fat spread, low fat and low salt dressings.

<sup>2</sup> Wholegrain products include those made with wholegrain flour, whole-wheat flour, cracked or bulgur wheat, wholegrain corn flour or corn meal, porridge oats, whole rye, spelt, quinoa, brown rice. The terms 'multigrain', 'stone ground' and 'pumpernickel' do not necessarily mean that the product is wholegrain.

<sup>3</sup> Healthy toppings include tuna, sardines, mackerel, salmon, chicken, hard boiled eggs, fresh/frozen vegetables, less than 30% cheese.

<sup>4</sup> Healthy filling includes irkotta, chicken, vegetables, beans, lentils and peas.

List of Permissible Foods	
<b>Savoury Snacks</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Galletti, water crackers, crackers and rice.</li> <li>• Cakes and crispbreads, preferably wholegrain, low fat and low salt varieties.</li> <li>• Nuts and seeds, not fried, without added salt or added sugars<sup>5</sup>.</li> <li>• Roasted/dried beans and roasted chickpeas, without added salt or added sugars.</li> <li>• Plain air-popped popcorn without added butter, salt or sugar.</li> </ul>	
<b>Sweet Snacks<sup>6</sup></b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fresh, frozen fruit yoghurts (with not more than 2.5% total fat, 1.5% saturated fat and not more than 10% sugar).</li> <li>• Breakfast cereals<sup>7</sup>.</li> <li>• Plain qagħaq tal-ħmira.</li> <li>• Individually packed biskuttelli.</li> <li>• Traditional bread pudding.</li> </ul>	
<b>Fruit Snacks</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Individual fresh fruit and fresh fruit salads.</li> <li>• Stewed fruit with no added sugar.</li> <li>• Baked fruit without pastry and no added sugar.</li> <li>• Fresh fruit milkshake with milk or and fresh fruit without added sugar or fruit concentrates.</li> </ul>	

<sup>5</sup>Added sugars include white sugar, brown sugar, raw sugar, sucrose (referred to also as table sugar), glucose, glucose syrup, agave syrup, corn syrup, high-fructose corn syrup, corn-syrup solids, malt syrup, maple syrup, pancake syrup, fructose sweetener, liquid fructose, honey, molasses, invert sugar, anhydrous dextrose, crystal dextrose, hydrolyzed starch. The higher up in the list these ingredients occur, the higher in 'added sugars' the product is.

<sup>6</sup>Industrially produced trans fat in sweet snacks should be in line with the Commission Regulation (EU) 2019/649.

<sup>7</sup>Breakfast cereals as **per nutrient-based standards (Document 5). Wholegrain varieties are good sources of fibre.**

**Note:** Allergies to certain foods such as peanuts and peanut products, other nuts, seeds and their derivatives and shellfish can be acute. People suffering from a severe food allergy or other conditions and diseases such as coeliac, need to know the exact ingredients in their food since even a small amount of the food allergen could harm them. **Whole nuts should not be distributed among children under 5 years of age.**

## Document 2

### FOOD AND BEVERAGE STANDARDS

#### List of Permissible Drinks

- Still water.
- Fresh white milk, preferably local. For Primary and Secondary School pupils it should contain no more than 2.5% total fats.
- Soya, almond, oat and rice drinks (unsweetened, fortified). They should contain no more than 3.5% total fats, 0.75% saturated fat and 3.5% total sugars.
- Hot tea with no added sugar and served in an insulated cup with lid.

## Document 3

## FOOD AND BEVERAGE STANDARDS

## List of Prohibited Foods

- Fried foods.
- Potato chips.
- Salami, bacon, luncheon meat, mortadella and corned beef.
- Cheese containing more than 30% fat. (Refer to page 8)
- Highly processed foods, including all sausages, burgers, chicken nuggets, spring rolls, wontons, samosas, fish cakes/fingers and other battered, crumb-coated products.
- Pizzas with high fat/salt toppings, such as sausages, salami, pepperoni and cheese with 30% or more fat.
- Pastizzi, qassatat, sausage rolls and hot dogs.
- Salted or sweetened nuts.
- Doughnuts, cream and jam cakes, iced cakes and sweet pastries<sup>8</sup>.
- Chocolate, sweets and confectionery<sup>8</sup>.
- Yoghurts and desserts<sup>9</sup>.
- Fruit purees and fruit pouches.
- Breakfast cereals<sup>10</sup> and cereal bars.
- Bagged savoury snacks including salted/sweetened pulses and seeds.
- Products manufactured and marked with the intention of being used as part of a weight loss diet.
- Ready-made dips, salads, dressings and sauces<sup>10</sup>.

<sup>8</sup> Includes: milk and plain chocolate, white chocolate bars; chocolate flakes; chocolate buttons; chocolate eggs; filled chocolate, chocolate coated confectionery bars or biscuits; boiled, chewy, gum, liquorice, mint and other sweets; sherbet; dried fruit; fudge; toffee; marshmallows; nougat; Turkish delight; cereal chewy bars; cereal crunchy bars; processed fruit bars; processed nut bars; chewing gum; croissants, cookies, sponge cakes, wafers; marzipan, nut and seed spreads not made from 100% nuts and/or seeds, spreadable chocolate and other sweet sandwich toppings; jelly caramels, iced lollies, sorbets, ice cream.

<sup>9</sup> Contain more than 2.5% total fat, 1.5% saturated fat and 10% total sugars.

<sup>10</sup> Not in line with the nutrient based guidelines (Document 5).

## Document 4

## FOOD AND BEVERAGE STANDARDS

**List of Prohibited Drinks**

- Carbonated and flavoured water.
- Soft drinks.
- Iced teas.
- Energy/sports drinks.
- Coffees and hot chocolates.
- Fruit juices.
- Coconut milk.
- Milk containing more than 2.5% fat and/or milk which contains artificial additives.
- All sweetened, unfortified non-milk drinks with:
  - more than 3.5% total fat, 0.75% saturated fat and
  - more than 3.5% total sugars.
- Drinks, other than milk and alternative milk drinks, containing more than 2.5% total sugars and/or 1.5% fat and/or 0.75% saturated fat.

## Document 5

### Nutrient Based Standards for Food and Drink Providers

- It is advisable that tuck-shop operators are to keep to the minimum nutrient levels as per table below.
- Flavours and colourings should be avoided while enhancers e.g. monosodium glutamate (MSG) are not allowed.
- Foods and drinks should be free from all sugar replacers<sup>11</sup> and all intense sweeteners<sup>12</sup>.

Nutrient	Nutrient level per 100g of food	Nutrient level per 100mls of drink
Fats <sup>13</sup>	Not more than 20g	Not more than 1.5g
Saturated Fats	Not more than 5g	Not more than 0.75g
Total Sugars	Not more than 10g <sup>14</sup>	Not more than 2.5g
Salt	Not more than 1.5g	
Sodium	Not more than 0.6g	

Adapted from: Food Standards Agency Guidelines, UK 2010 and TASNE Report (2006)

Revised in 2022 by the Home Economics Seminar Centre, MEYR and the Health Promotion and Disease Prevention Directorate, MFH.

<sup>11</sup>Sugar replacers such as isomalt, xylitol, mannitol, maltitol and sorbitol.

<sup>12</sup>Intense sweeteners such as aspartame, saccharin, sucralose, neotame, cyclamate, acesulfame K and advantame.

<sup>13</sup>Trans fat in food should comply with the Commission Regulation (EU) 2019/649 of 24 April 2019.

<sup>14</sup>With the exception of breakfast cereals for which total sugars should not be more than 15g per 100g.

## Food Based Guidelines

<b>Classification of Cheeses</b>		
<b>Fat content – 10% or less</b>	<b>Fat content – between 10% and 30%</b>	<b>Fat content – 30% or more</b>
Quark	Irkotta (local)	Red Windsor
Reduced fat cottage cheese	Reduced fat Gouda	Gouda
Low fat ricotta	Reduced fat Emmenthal	White Stilton
Cottage cheese	Reduced fat Cheddar cheese	Cheshire
Reduced fat Edam	Cheeselets (pasteurised)	Wensleydale
	Mozzarella	Roquefort
	Camembert	Derby
	Feta	Cheddar
	Edam	Gruyere
	Goats' cheese	Leicester
	Soya cheese	Double Gloucester
	Romano	Vegetarian Cheddar Cheese
	Brie	Mascarpone
	Emmenthal	Full fat cream cheese
	Parmesan	Caerphilly



### Fat Spreads

- Margarine and low-fat spreads should be plant-based.
- Low fat/light spreads (less than 41% fat) are only permissible.
- They should not exceed 2g trans fat per 100g of product.

### Traditionally Prepared Sweets – Special Occasions\*

- Wholemeal flour to be used whenever possible.
- The least possible amount of sugar should be used.
- Sugar should be replaced with fresh fruit or vegetables such as apples, pears, carrots, zucchini and beetroots wherever possible.

\*Special Occasions – One day per term before school holidays