

Competitive Foods Guidelines for K-12 Schools



introduction

The following table summarizes the criteria a competitive snack food or side item must meet in order to qualify under the Alliance for a Healthier Generation’s Competitive Foods Guidelines. The Guidelines utilize information included on a product’s Nutrition Facts panel. The rows of the table provide examples of snack foods and side dishes. The columns are the criteria these foods must meet. Entries of “n/a” indicate that a criterion is not applicable to that type of food.

(For additional information, please see the notes on the next page.)

	examples	35-10-35	Og trans fat	sodium	minimum # of required nutrients	Calorie or Portion Limits			
						elementary school	middle school	high school	
FRUITS & VEGETABLES ¹	fresh fruits & vegetables	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	no limit	no limit	no limit	
	dried fruit with no added sugar	see notes	n/a	n/a	n/a	150 calories	180 cal.	200 cal.	
	fruit in own juice	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	150 calories	180 cal.	200 cal.	
	fruit in light syrup	✓	✓	230 mg	1	150 calories	180 cal.	200 cal.	
	fruit in heavy syrup	✓	✓	230 mg	1	150 calories	180 cal.	200 cal.	
	vegetables with sauce	or	✓	✓	480 mg	1	100 calories	100 cal.	100 cal.
		or	✓	✓	480 mg	2	150 calories	150 cal.	150 cal.
	fried vegetables	✓	✓	230 mg	1	150 calories	180 cal.	200 cal.	
100% frozen fruit bar	✓	✓	230 mg	1	150 calories	180 cal.	200 cal.		
DAIRY & EGGS ²	yogurt, drinkable yogurt, yogurt smoothie, cottage cheese, etc.	✓	✓	480 mg	1	150 calories	180 cal.	200 cal.	
	cheese	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	1.5 oz	1.5 oz	1.5 oz	
	frozen yogurt ice cream	✓	✓	480 mg	1	150 calories	180 cal.	200 cal.	
	egg	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	1 egg	1 egg	1 egg	
SNACKS ³	baked goods, bars, candy, chips, crackers	✓	✓	230 mg	1	150 calories	180 cal.	200 cal.	
	nuts & seeds	see notes	✓	230 mg	1	150 calories	180 cal.	200 cal.	
SOUPS	all soups	or	✓	480 mg	1	100 calories	100 cal.	100 cal.	
		or	✓	480 mg	2	150 calories	150 cal.	150 cal.	

notes

FRUITS AND VEGETABLES¹

- Dried fruit must contain 0g fat as labeled

DAIRY²

- Cheese must be reduced fat or part skim. All other dairy products must be non-fat or low fat

SNACKS³

- **Nuts & Seeds** - No total or saturated fat limit, but 35% sugar by weight limit required

Column Details

- **35-10-35** - Foods with a “✓” in the “35-10-35” column must provide no more than 35% of calories from total fat, no more than 10% of calories from saturated fat, and be no more than 35% sugar by weight. Foods can have up to 1 gram of saturated fat even if calories from saturated fat exceed the limit of 10% of total calories.
- **0g trans fat** - Foods with a “✓” in the “0g trans fat” column must have 0 grams trans fat.
- **Sodium** - Entries in the “sodium” column are the maximum amount of sodium permitted.
- **Minimum # of required nutrients** - The “1” or “2” in the “minimum # of required nutrients” column refers to how many nutrients from the following list are required:
 - ≥ 2g fiber; or ≥ 5g protein; or ≥ 10% DV of Vitamin A, C, E, folate, calcium, magnesium, potassium or iron; or 1/2 serving (1/4 cup) of fruit or vegetables.
- **Calorie or Portion Limits All Schools** - Calories are limited to 100 calorie portions for foods other than vegetables with sauce and soups that meet the 35-10-35, 0g trans fat, and sodium criteria but fail to meet the minimum number of required nutrients criteria. Cheese and egg are limited to portion size.