



Smart Snacks in Schools

LiveWell Greenville is a coalition of more than 100 multi-sectorial representatives working to make the healthy choice the easy choice in Greenville County, South Carolina. With support from national funders and a strong commitment from local and state governments, business, health care, education, public health, parks and recreation, philanthropy and grassroots citizens, LiveWell Greenville has made strides in its mission to create and maintain a healthy community through the promotion and support of policies, systems and environments.

As in all eight emphasis areas of LiveWell Greenville, we are helping to make the healthy choice the easy choice in local schools. LiveWell Greenville is here to offer support in these wellness efforts and has designed this resource to assist schools in complying with the new guidelines

set forth by the USDA, while continuing food-related fundraisers.

USDA Smart Snacks in Schools

The USDA has recently changed the guidelines for foods that are allowed to be sold to students at school. These practical, science-based nutrition standards affect food sales from 12:00 midnight to 30 minutes after the school day ends. All foods sold from any school venue including the cafeteria, vending machines and school store must comply.

The “Smart Snacks in Schools” guidelines build upon recent trends in education, creating healthier environments for our students. Studies have proven that healthier students learn better and create healthier living habits for the future.

Following the Guidelines

To determine if a product qualifies under the Smart Snacks in Schools Guidelines, the ingredients and nutritional information from that product must be considered. Only labels found on the actual product should be used. Nutritional information found online could differ in size and thus alter its eligibility.

The Alliance for a Healthier Generation has created an on-line tool that determines if a food is compliant. The calculator will go through a series of questions about the ingredients as well as information found on the nutrition label. Snack, entrée and combination items are considered. This tool can be found at the Alliance for a Healthier Generation's website.

Compliance can also be determined manually. For step by step instructions, visit the USDA website and search for "All Foods Sold in Schools" Guidelines.

Helpful Tips

- Ingredients are listed in order of quantity with the most predominant ingredient is listed first.
- 'Wheat flour' and 'enriched wheat flour' are not whole grains.
- There are exceptions to the percentage of calories from fat for items that are good sources of protein, such as cheese, nuts and nut butters. Refer to the USDA website for complete list.
- The following items are exempt from the guidelines: fresh fruits and vegetables, frozen fruits and vegetables, fruits and vegetables that are canned in water, fruits that are packed in fruit juice or extra light syrup.
- The more processed the food is, the less likely it is that it will meet the guidelines. These foods are less healthy than the other, less-processed options.
- Package sizes and product flavors vary greatly among retailers. These changes may affect an item's eligibility. Before purchasing, check each item to be sure you are meeting the USDA regulations.

Check with the national vendors and local retailers for assistance.

- If the item is packaged in bulk (not individually packaged), be sure to sell that item in the correct serving size that meets the guidelines.

Online Resources

Alliance for a Healthier Generation Smart Snack Calculator is an interactive on-line tool that determines if a product meets the guidelines. https://www.healthiergeneration.org/take_action/schools/snacks_and_beverages/smart_snacks/alliance_product_calculator/

Alliance Smart Snacks Navigator is an extensive on-line list of products that meet the Smart Snack guidelines. https://www.healthiergeneration.org/live_healthier/eat_healthier/alliance_product_navigator/

The USDA has created a Summary Chart that further explains the guidelines. http://www.fns.usda.gov/sites/default/files/allfoods_summarychart.pdf

USDA FAQs is a document created by the USDA to address some frequently asked questions, give some clarification to combination foods, and offer other calculation tips. <http://www.fns.usda.gov/sites/default/files/SP23-2014os.pdf>

USDA Smart Snacks Guidelines Presentation is a helpful presentation created by the USDA. <http://www.fns.usda.gov/sites/default/files/SmartSnacks2014.pdf>

Where Can I Find Additional Information and Technical Assistance?

For additional information on these guidelines or resources on alternate fundraising and concession ideas, please contact a LiveWell Greenville's School Specialist by visiting our website at www.livewellgreenville.org.

