

# Healthy Eating in Recreation and Sport Settings Guidelines

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## Introduction

In 2011, under the leadership of the Nova Scotia Department of Health and Wellness (DHW), the Healthy Eating in Recreation and Sport Provincial Steering Committee<sup>1</sup> initiated the development of a three year strategic action plan for healthy eating in recreation and sport settings (HERSS).

A key action of this plan is the development of provincial guidelines that support HERSS.

In June 2012, the Province of Nova Scotia released *Thrive! A plan for a healthier Nova Scotia*<sup>2</sup>. This strategy is a policy and environmental approach to healthy eating and physical activity. *Thrive!* outlines priority actions to create environments that support Nova Scotians to make healthier choices. One of the four directions in the strategy speaks to creating more opportunities to eat well and be active. A key action to achieving and building on related work already underway in the province is the development of healthy eating policies in places where people play, learn, work and grow. One such place is recreation and sport settings.

The term “recreation and sport settings” encompasses an expansive list of facilities, clubs, organizations and spaces where people go to be active, socialize, celebrate, volunteer, spectate and connect with their community. While these settings are supportive of active living, the foods and beverages served and sold are often not supportive of health.

**The purpose of the following guidelines is to enable those who work, participate and support activities in recreation and sport settings to make changes to the food environment to make it supportive of eating well.**

These policy guidelines have five main objectives:

1. Support a cultural shift towards healthy foods and beverages
2. Increase access to, consumption of, and promotion of healthy foods and beverages
3. Decrease access to, consumption of, and promotion of unhealthy foods and beverages
4. Create an environment that promotes overall health, with a focus on healthy eating
5. Support other sectors’ efforts in healthy eating policy development and implementation (e.g. public schools, regulated childcare, healthcare, post-secondary education, governments and food and beverage suppliers)

### *Why recreation and sport settings?*

Nova Scotia is a leader in Canada with a strong history of developing comprehensive healthy eating policies that support the health of our communities. In 2006, implementation of the *Food and Nutrition*

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<sup>1</sup> The Healthy Eating in Recreation and Sport Provincial Steering Committee consists of representatives from the following organizations: Recreation Facilities Association of Nova Scotia, Sport Nova Scotia, Recreation Nova Scotia, Community Links, Alliance for Healthy Eating and Physical Activity, Halifax Regional Municipality Community Recreation Department, Town of Stellarton Recreation Department, DHW, then District Health Authorities, Department of Agriculture, Healthy Eating Nova Scotia and Public Health Agency of Canada

<sup>2</sup> Government of Nova Scotia. *Thrive! A Plan for a Healthier Nova Scotia*. 2012 p. 74.

*Policy for Nova Scotia Public Schools* began and, in 2011, the *Food and Nutrition Standards for Regulated Child Care Settings* were implemented. These policies and standards are guided by the evidence that healthy eating is influenced by more than individual choice and the environment in which we play, work and live greatly impacts what decisions we make regarding foods and beverages. In addition, healthy eating policy work is emerging in other publicly funded institutions across Nova Scotia with healthcare, post-secondary education and provincial and municipal governments.

Nova Scotia is not alone in this area. Almost all provinces and territories have been engaged in creating healthy food environments in recreation and sport settings. These initiatives have been voluntary in nature and have been met with mixed success.<sup>3,4,5</sup> These examples, however, provide key learnings used to build these guidelines. Moving towards offering healthy foods and beverages is becoming more common in recreation and sport settings. For example, Canada Games 2013 served only healthy foods to their cafeterias and served no pop, deep fried foods, or candy among other foods<sup>6</sup>.

### ***What is currently taking place in recreation and sport settings?***

Recreation and sport settings are often the cornerstones of many communities and play a vital role in keeping Nova Scotians healthy by providing public space for physical activity, recreation and sport. Much of the foods and beverages served and sold in recreation and sport settings are inconsistent with the promotion of healthy eating. Foods and beverages high in fat, sugar and sodium have been strongly linked to many negative health outcomes as well as overweight and obesity and some studies have found them to be the majority of the foods and beverages sold at recreation and sport settings<sup>7</sup>. A 2013 assessment in rink facilities in the Annapolis Valley found that the majority of foods and beverages sold were those higher in fat, sugar and sodium and very little, if any, healthy options.

### ***Current perceptions of Nova Scotians on foods and beverages in recreation and sport settings***

In late fall 2013 DHW commissioned a public opinion poll on current perceptions of Nova Scotians on foods and beverages in recreation and sport settings. When asked about the amount of healthy food choices available at recreation and sport settings, of those surveyed most stated there were “some” or “few” healthy foods and beverage options available to them.

Sixty-six percent of those surveyed stated that recreation and sport settings should provide more healthy foods and beverage options. When asked 55% of those surveyed strongly or somewhat favoured the reduction of cakes, pastries and donuts at recreation and sport settings and 50% favoured a

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<sup>3, 7</sup> Naylor P-J, Bridgewater L, Purcell M, Ostry A, Wekken S Vander. Publically funded recreation facilities: obesogenic environments for children and families? *Int J Environ Res Public Health* [Internet]. 2010 May

<sup>4</sup> Olstad DL, Raine KD, McCargar LJ. Adopting and implementing nutrition guidelines in recreational facilities: public and private sector roles. A multiple case study. *BMC Public Health* [Internet]. BMC Public Health; 2012 Jan

<sup>5</sup> Olstad DL, Lieffers JRL, Raine KD, McCargar LJ. Implementing the Alberta Nutrition Guidelines for Children and Youth in a Recreational Facility. *Can J Diet Pract Res* [Internet]. 2011 Dec 1

<sup>6</sup> CBC News. Fried, processed foods banned from Canada Games. CBC News Online.

reduction in the supply of energy drinks, candy and chocolate bars. The most support, 40% of respondents, was in favour of a reduction in energy drinks.

## *How to use these guidelines*

The intent of these guidelines is to support those who work and support activities in recreation and sport settings to create environments that promote overall health, with a focus on healthy foods and beverages. The guidelines outlined are based on best and promising practices and are proven to be supportive of increasing access to, consumption of and promotion of healthy foods and beverages. These guidelines take a comprehensive approach, encompassing the environment and behaviours, as well as the actual foods and beverages served and sold. These guidelines share similarities with those applicable in other settings.

Because of their comprehensive nature, some of the guidelines may not be applicable to a specific recreation and sport setting or situation. Implementing those that are applicable to particular situations is an important step in supporting the cultural shift towards healthy foods and beverages.

The guidelines will be revised as evidence and best practice emerges.

## *Scope of these guidelines*

Recreation and sport settings encompass a wide variety of settings where people may be active physically, socially, and culturally. Examples of recreation and sport settings for these guidelines include but are not limited to:

- Parks and playgrounds
- Indoor and outdoor ice surfaces
- Trails
- Supervised beaches
- Recreation and sport complexes
- Places of faith
- Ski hills
- Seasonal recreation and sport camps
- Public campgrounds
- Sport fields
- Aquatic facilities
- Community performing arts centres
- Golf courses
- Tennis facilities
- Community centres and club houses
- Schools – after educational hours and weekends

Types of organizations that are engaged in public recreation and sport as funders, program providers and facility operators include but are not limited to the following:

- Municipal government
- Provincial government
- Federal government
- Boards that own and manage facilities
- Faith communities that run recreation and sport activities
- Provincial, community based not for profit organizations and agencies that promote and deliver physical activity, recreation and sport

- Colleges and universities where community recreation and sport programs and facility access exist
- School boards<sup>8</sup>

## *Application of these guidelines*

### *Applicable*

These guidelines apply to wherever foods and beverages are served and sold within a recreation or sport setting. These may include but are not limited to:

- Vending machines
- Canteens
- Concession stands
- Food carts
- Catering
- Cafe/restaurant
- Dining halls
- Tournaments
- Sporting events
- Hospitality suites
- Special events
- Meetings and/or training
- Programming - all ages

The HERSS Guidelines also apply to:

- All activities paid for, sponsored by or hosted by one of the defined HERSS settings including but not limited to:
  - Sponsorship
  - Fundraising
  - Purchasing Gifts

### *Not Applicable*

The HERSS Guidelines do not apply to foods or beverages brought into an HERSS setting from home or purchased outside the setting by an individual for his/her own consumption.

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<sup>8</sup> School boards must follow the Food and Nutrition Policy for Nova Scotia Public Schools

## Definitions

**Branding:** a marketing feature that provides a name or symbol that legally identifies a company or its product and serves as a differentiation in the marketplace. The purpose of branding is to promote product sales by identifying a product with a lifestyle to which consumers aspire.<sup>9</sup>

**Formula restaurant:** a retail food establishment devoted to the preparation and offering of food and beverage for sale to the public for consumption either on or off the premises and which is required by contractual or other arrangement to offer any of the following: standardized menus, ingredients, food preparation, decor, uniforms, architecture, or similar standardized features<sup>10</sup>

**Fundraising:** an activity that's purpose is to solicit funds for an organization, group or non-profit

**Marketing:** the process that companies use to influence consumer spending decisions and build brand awareness and brand loyalty. Marketing includes, but is not limited to, advertising, corporate branding, promotion, product packaging, corporate sponsorships, naming rights, the use of brand mascots, coupons and product giveaways. Advertising is a visible form of marketing

**Special functions:** events that occur throughout the year and are not used to generate funds but rather to celebrate a special day or event (e.g. Canada Day, awards ceremony)

**Sponsorship:** to support through the provisions of resources such as money, or in-kind gifts or services

**Recreation and sport setting:** includes formal organizations and agencies that operate at the local, provincial level, and informal groups that support community based events and clubs. Together they make up a sector that offers recreation and sport programs, services and opportunities, and /or places and spaces to recreate and be physically active

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<sup>9</sup> (Roberts, 2004, cited in Institute of Medicine of the National Academies (2006). Food Marketing to Children and Youth: Threat or Opportunity? Washington: The National Academies Press, p. 120, 136).

<sup>10</sup> Source: Calistoga Formula Restaurant Ban (1996)  
<http://eatbettermovemore.org/sa/policies/pdf/text/Calistoga%20Formula%20Restaurant%20Ban.pdf>

## *Healthy Eating in Recreation and Sport Settings Guidelines*

The following guidelines are based on best and promising practices for healthy eating policies. While there is no order of importance for these guidelines, many of them are interconnected and together create comprehensive healthy eating guidelines.

### *1.0 Foods and Beverages Served and Sold*

Access to and consumption of healthy foods and beverages is essential for good health and optimal participation in recreation and sport settings. Consistent nutrient criteria within the settings where we grow, play and work will support the cultural shift towards healthy foods and beverages as the norm. The nutrient criteria are based on the Nova Scotia Nutrient Criteria for Publicly Funded Institutions which were developed based on national nutrient criteria recommendations. Adoption of the nutrient criteria in recreation and sport settings will support consistent messages across a variety of settings in Nova Scotia.

Foods and beverages served or sold will:

- 1.1 Be consistent with the nutrient criteria definitions for categories of foods and beverages (maximum/moderate/minimum/not to be served or sold). It is recommended that if using a step-wise implementation plan by year 4:
  - 1.1.1 At least 50% of foods and beverages sold and served will comprise of foods and beverages that meet the maximum nutrient criteria.
  - 1.1.2 No more than 10% of foods and beverages sold and served will be from the minimum nutrient criteria group.
  - 1.1.3 The remainder of the foods and beverages sold and served will meet the moderate nutrient criteria.
- 1.2 Be informed by the stated percentage of maximum/moderate/minimum for each type of service (e.g. vending, canteen, programming, etc.) not per setting (e.g. facility, camp, and provincial organization)
- 1.3 When program activities are off site every effort will be made to choose foods and beverages that fit within the maximum and moderate nutrient criteria.
- 1.4 Priority placement will be given to those foods and beverages that meet the maximum and moderate nutrient criteria.

\*Tea and coffee are permitted

### *2.0 Promotion, Marketing and Advertising and Sponsorship*

Marketing has a strong influence on the foods and beverages that we purchase and consume. Evidence is growing regarding the negative impacts that the marketing and advertising of unhealthy food and drinks has on children<sup>11</sup>. While children are not the only users of recreation and sport settings, consideration for the impact on this population segment should be a priority due to the potential

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<sup>11</sup> Cairns, B. G., Angus, K., & Hastings, G. (2009). The Extent , Nature And Effects Of Food Promotion To Children : A Review Of The Evidence To Prepared For The World Health Organization, (December).

greater negative influence. Unhealthy food and beverage promotion through sponsorship and advertisement has been found to be prevalent at sporting events<sup>12</sup>. While sponsorship may be an important and necessary funding support for recreation and sport activities, some forms of sponsorship may be in direct conflict with the health promoting benefits of taking part in these activities.

- 2.1. Partnerships between recreation and sport and businesses must always be designed to meet the health and educational needs of the participants, rather than serve commercial motives.
- 2.2. Marketing of any foods or beverages in the “Minimum Nutrition” and “Food and Beverages Not to be Served or Sold” categories should not be allowed in recreation and sport settings.
- 2.3. Branding for food and beverage products in the “Minimum Nutrition” and “Food and Beverages Not to be Served or Sold” categories or from formula restaurants should not be allowed in recreation and sport settings<sup>13</sup>.

### 3.0 Fundraising

People participating in recreation and sport settings often fundraise for a variety of reasons including supporting clubs, players or to purchase materials and equipment that will enhance the programs they offer. Fundraising with non-food items, or healthy foods and beverages, provides an opportunity for recreation and sport settings to promote positive nutrition messages that reflect these guidelines and contributes to consistent messages with healthy eating.

- 3.1. Non-food and non-beverage items are preferred and will be emphasized for fundraising.
- 3.2. If foods, beverages and associated items are used for fundraising, only foods and beverages that meet the maximum and moderate nutrient criteria will be used.

### 4.0 Special Functions

Food is a major part of our culture and is front and centre when we come together to celebrate. While healthy foods and beverages should be promoted, it is recognized that there needs to be flexibility in what is offered during these times of celebration. Special functions within the recreation and sport setting are defined as events that occur infrequently throughout the year (e.g. Canada Day celebration, awards ceremony, holiday event) and are not used to generate funds but rather to celebrate a special day or event.

- 4.1. Foods and beverages that meet the maximum and moderate nutrient criteria will be provided and emphasized at special functions.
- 4.2. External groups renting/using facilities are encouraged to follow guideline 4.1.

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<sup>12</sup> Kelly, B., Baur, L. a, Bauman, A. E., King, L., Chapman, K., & Smith, B. J. (2011). Food and drink sponsorship of children’s sport in Australia: who pays? *Health Promotion International*, 26(2), 188–95.  
doi:10.1093/heapro/daq061

<sup>13</sup> This includes signage, donations and promotional items provided as a token of appreciation, recognition or participation.

## 5.0 Nutrition Education

Nutrition education refers to formal and informal messages given by staff, volunteers and coaches, to those participating in activities in recreation and sport settings. Nutrition education should be aligned with the foods and beverages that meet the maximum and moderate nutrient criteria.

- 5.1 If nutrition education and programs (for staff, volunteers, coaches, children, youth, adults, seniors) are offered through sessions, newsletters, learning events, summer camps, etc. they will be based on Health Canada's key nutrition/healthy eating messages and directional statements for that population, found in *Eating Well with Canada's Food Guide*.  
<http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/fn-an/food-guide-aliment/index-eng.php>

## 6.0 Food Safety

Nova Scotians must receive food that is safe and healthy to eat. Safe food helps prevent the development and spread of infectious diseases, such as gastroenteritis.

- 6.1. All not for profit organizations within recreation and sport settings are to serve or sell food under the requirements outlined in Nova Scotia Department of Agriculture's Position Paper "*Home Preparation of Potentially Hazardous Foods by Not-for-Profit Organizations*".  
(<http://novascotia.ca/agri/documents/food-safety/home-preparation-NFP.pdf>)
- 6.2. Food establishments within recreation and sport settings which hold a food establishment permit from the Nova Scotia Department of Agriculture are to prepare and serve foods in accordance with *Nova Scotia Food Safety Regulations*.  
<http://www.novascotia.ca/JUST/regulations/regs/hpafdsaf.htm>

## 7.0 Breastfeeding

Nova Scotia along with the World Health Organization, Health Canada and the Canadian Pediatric Society promote breastfeeding as the best way to feed infants and young children for optimal growth and development. Nova Scotia has Provincial Breastfeeding Policy that promote, protect and supports breastfeeding. The Nova Scotia *Human Rights Act* gives women the right to breastfeed in all public areas. By creating supportive spaces in communities, including recreation and sport settings, barriers are being removed that may influence a woman's decision to begin and/or continue to breastfeed her child(ren).

- 7.1 A welcoming atmosphere will be provided to breastfeeding mothers to breastfeed anywhere, anytime in the setting as desired.
- 7.2 If/when requested, facilities, organizations etc. will work with breastfeeding mothers to provide a comfortable private space for mothers to breastfeed her child(ren).
- 7.3 As employers, recreation and sport settings will support employees who return to work after maternity leave to continue to breastfeed their child by providing space and allowing breaks to breastfeed and/or pump breast milk.

## 8.0 Food as Reinforcement

Using food to reinforce desired behaviors or achievements teaches people to eat when they are not hungry and to associate food with behaviour rather than nourishment. Finding alternatives to food to reinforce behaviours is an important part of providing a healthy food environment.

- 8.1 Foods and beverages (healthy or unhealthy) are not used to reinforce positive behaviours (e.g. pizza party prize, treat day, etc).
- 8.2 Foods and beverages (healthy or unhealthy) are not used as a reward (e.g. player of the game receiving a gift certificate for a local restaurant).
- 8.3 Foods and beverages (healthy or unhealthy) are not withheld as a consequence for inappropriate behaviour.

## 9.0 Nova Scotia Produce and Products

Nova Scotia produces and harvests an abundance of produce and food. Locally grown is defined as Nova Scotia first, or Atlantic Canada.

- 9.1 When possible, recreation and sport settings serve local, seasonal foods and beverages that are harvested, produced or manufactured in Nova Scotia or Atlantic Canada.

## 10.0 Portion Sizes

Portion sizes should reflect those outlined in *Eating Well with Canada's Food Guide*. It is important to provide the right portion size to meet, and not exceed, nutrient and energy needs (not too large and not too small of a portion size).

- 10.1 Portion sizes of food and beverages available in recreation and sport settings are to be consistent with recommendations in *Eating Well with Canada's Food Guide*.

## 11.0 Dietary Considerations

Medical conditions, allergies or special dietary requirements require some people to follow certain dietary guidelines. These need to be taken into consideration when planning food to be served and sold in recreation and sport settings to be inclusive of all those who may be participating or supporting activities.

- 11.1 Considerations based on cultural, faith, medical, and/or dietary requirements will be taken into account when developing menus, ordering catered food etc.
- 11.2 Vegetarian options are provided as part of regular selection.
- 11.3 For programs (e.g. day camps involving children) allergy/anaphylaxis policies are developed and followed.

## *12.0 Clean Drinking Water*

Water is an essential nutrient. Even mild dehydration can have negative effects on brain function, alertness, and energy levels.

- 12.1 Ensure access to safe, potable water in all settings wherever possible.
- 12.2 Use tap water, if the water source is deemed safe.
- 12.3 Ensure adequate testing of water source, for well water. If water is not potable, bottled water is to be used/available.
- 12.4 Use reusable water pitchers, glasses and bottles whenever possible.
- 12.5 Promote consumption of water during recreation and sport activities.

## *13.0 Food Packaging and Environmental Consciousness*

Nova Scotians are committed to taking steps to ensure their province is as clean as possible. Those serving or selling foods and beverages within recreation and sport settings are encouraged to continue to find new ways to reduce waste and support recycling and composting options.

- 13.1 Green bins and recycle bins are available within recreation and sport settings when applicable.
- 13.2 Recreation and sport settings will actively work to reduce waste from food, food and beverage packaging and disposable dishes.
- 13.3 Bulk service, instead of individual portions, will be used when possible (e.g. for catering- provide a 2L of lowfat milk as the beverage instead of individual portion sizes of milk).
- 13.4 Water pitchers, glasses, dishes, and cutlery (all free from advertising) is provided and used whenever possible.
- 13.5 If reusable pitchers, glasses, dishes and cutlery are not available, recyclable or biodegradable materials are to be used.
- 13.6 Energy saving practices are to be used including purchase of equipment (e.g. EnerGuide appliances).
- 13.7 Partnerships should be developed for bulk purchasing, wherever possible.

## *Recommended Implementation of Nutrient Criteria*

Healthy eating policy work in other settings has shown value in implementing nutrient criteria over a number of years to assist in implementation. The following is a proposed implementation schedule although groups may choose to implement at a pace that meets their own needs.

### **Year 1**

- Develop healthy eating policy for your setting/ organization
- Removal of deep fat fryers and/or removal of energy drinks and relaxation drinks

### **Year 2 and 3**

- Increase offerings of foods and beverages that fall into the maximum and moderate nutrient criteria and decrease foods and beverages that fall into the minimum nutrient criteria.

### **Year 4**

- At least 50% of foods and beverages sold and served will be composed of foods and beverages that meet the maximum nutrient criteria.
- No more than 10% of foods and beverages sold and served will be from the minimum nutrient criteria group.
- The remainder of the foods and beverages sold and served will meet the moderate nutrient criteria.

The nutrient criteria are provided in the following definitions:

#### **Maximum Nutrition Foods and Beverages**

Food and beverages rated as Maximum are part of the four food groups of *Eating Well with Canada's Food Guide*. Food and beverages in this category are considered to be the healthiest options, and generally have higher levels of essential nutrients and lower amounts of fat, sugar, and/or sodium, and are higher in naturally occurring fiber. Therefore, foods and beverages in this category **should be chosen most often**. They are characterized by the following:

- Have high levels of essential nutrients
- Are low in saturated and artificial trans fats
- Contain little or no added fat, sugar and sodium.
- Have higher levels of naturally occurring fibre
- Are minimally processed
- Do not contain sugar substitutes

#### **Example Maximum Pizza**

Whole wheat crust, low fat mozzarella cheese, vegetables and roasted chicken

#### **Other examples**

Fresh fruit, vegetables and humus, 1% milk, some yogurts.

## **Moderate Nutrition Foods and Beverages**

Food and beverages rated as Moderate are part of the four food groups of *Eating Well with Canada's Food Guide*, but provide less nutritional benefits than Maximum foods and may have high levels of fat, sodium and/or sugar and lower amounts of naturally occurring fiber. Therefore, foods and beverages in this category should be chosen less often than Maximum foods and beverages. They are characterized by the following:

- Contain essential nutrients
- Contain added fat, sugar and/or sodium
- Have lower levels of naturally occurring fibre
- May be more highly processed
- Do not contain sugar substitutes

### **Example Moderate Pizza**

White pizza crust, regular mozzarella cheese, vegetables and lean hamburger meat

### **Other examples**

Some yogurts, some granola bars and muffins

## **Minimum Nutrition Foods and Beverages**

*Eating Well with Canada's Food Guide* states that the intake of food and beverages with little or no nutritional benefits should be limited. Therefore, if a food or beverage does not fit Maximum or Moderate nutrient criteria and is not on the "Not Permitted" list, (see below) then it is considered to be a Minimum choice.

<http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/fn-an/food-guide-aliment/maintain-adopt/limit-eng.php>

Minimum foods and beverages:

- Offer little to no nutritional value
- Contain very high added fat, sugar, and/or sodium,
- Contain sugar substitutes, caffeine and/or processing
- Tend to replace nutritious foods when available as meals or snacks

### **Example Minimum Pizza**

White crust, mozzarella cheese, pepperoni

## **Food and Beverages Not Recommended to be Sold or Served**

Foods and beverages that are known to be harmful or whose long term effects are uncertain. **Foods and beverages identified as not recommended to be sold or served**

- Energy drinks and shots – all brands
- Relaxation beverages\* – all brands
- Any foods that have been deep fat fried during food preparation.

\*Relaxation beverages are marketed as a way to help people relax and unwind without the use of alcohol. They have ingredients such as melatonin (a hormone that helps with sleep), GABA (gamma aminobutyric acid), Threanine, Tryptophan, Valerian root, chamomile, and passion flower. These are known for promoting relaxation and calm, along with drowsiness and reduced alertness. Many of these products are not regulated by Health Canada or the Food and Drug Administration of the United States and are not tested for effectiveness. The amount of these ingredients is unknown, so there may be too much or too little to have the desired calming effect. Most of these products are labeled as not to be taken by children, pregnant or breastfeeding women and not to be consumed if operating a vehicle.

## Appendix A – Nutrient Criteria

### Background to Nutrient Criteria

Nutrient criteria are provided in the following categories:

#### **Maximum Nutrition Foods and Beverages**

Food and beverages rated as Maximum are part of the four food groups of *Eating Well with Canada's Food Guide*. Food and beverages in this category are considered to be the healthiest options, and generally have higher levels of essential nutrients and lower amounts of fat, sugar, and/or sodium. Therefore, foods and beverages in this category **should be chosen most often**. They are characterized by the following:

- Have high levels of essential nutrients
- Are low in saturated and artificial trans fats
- Contain little or no added fat, sugar and sodium
- Have higher levels of naturally occurring fibre
- Are minimally processed
- Do not contain sugar substitutes

#### **Moderate Nutrition Foods and Beverages**

Food and beverages rated as Moderate are part of the four food groups of *Eating Well with Canada's Food Guide*, but provide less nutritional benefits than Maximum nutrition foods and beverages. They may have high levels of fat, sodium and/or sugar. Foods and beverages in this category should be chosen less often than Maximum nutrition foods and beverages. They are characterized by the following:

- Contain essential nutrients
- Contain added fat, sugar and/or sodium
- Have lower levels of naturally occurring fibre
- May be more highly processed
- Do not contain sugar substitutes

#### **Minimum Nutrition Foods and Beverages**

*Eating Well with Canada's Food Guide* states that the intake of food and beverages with little or no nutritional benefits should be limited. If a food or beverage does not fit the nutrient criteria for Maximum or Moderate nutrition foods and beverages then it is considered to be a Minimum nutrition food or beverage.

<http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/fn-an/food-guide-aliment/maintain-adopt/limit-eng.php>

Minimum nutrition foods and beverages:

- Offer little to no nutritional value
- Contain very high added fat, sugar, and/or sodium
- Contain sugar substitutes, caffeine and/or processing
- Tend to replace nutritious foods when available as meals or snacks

## Nutrient Criteria Reference Quantity

The nutrient criteria were developed using the serving sizes defined in *Eating Well with Canada's Food Guide*. The serving size identified for each different food within one food group is approximately equal (in the nutrients that are key to that food group) to every other food in that group. When no reference was available from *Eating Well with Canada's Food Guide*, the serving sizes referenced in *Nutrient Value of Some Common foods* were utilized.

Often the Nutrition Facts Table for a food or beverage utilizes a serving size that is different than the reference quantity used in *Eating Well with Canada's Food Guide* and in this document. When this occurs, the nutrient content of the product must be calculated in proportion to the reference quantity, in order to determine if it can be categorized as a Maximum, Moderate or Minimum food or beverage.

## Rationale for Nutrient Criteria Chosen

The nutrient criteria were selected with consideration of the following (listed in the table below):

Nutrient	Rationale for choosing this nutrient
<b>Total Fat</b>	<b>The nutrient criteria are designed to discourage excess intake.</b>
<b>Saturated Fat</b>	<b>The nutrient criteria are designed to limit intake.</b>  Saturated fat is found in many foods - animal foods (like beef, chicken, lamb, pork and veal), dairy products (like butter, cheese and whole milk), lard and shortening as well as processed foods.
<b>Trans Fat</b>	<b>The nutrient criteria are designed to limit intake.</b>  A small amount of trans fat occurs naturally in animal products – meat and dairy food choices. However, most of the trans fat in Canadian diets comes from margarines (particularly hard margarines), commercially fried foods and bakery goods made with shortening, margarines or oils containing partially hydrogenated oils and fat (cakes, cookies, crackers, croissants, doughnuts, pastries and other snack foods).
<b>Sodium</b>	<b>The nutrient criteria are designed to discourage excess intake.</b>  While some sodium occurs naturally in our food, approximately 75 - 80% of our current sodium intake comes from processed foods. Convenience foods like packaged and ready-to-eat foods, and salty snacks are often very high in sodium.
<b>Sugar</b>	<b>The nutrient criteria are designed to reduce intake of added sugars.</b>  A healthy, well-balanced diet contains naturally occurring sugars, because monosaccharides such as fructose, and disaccharides such as sucrose and lactose are integral components of fruit, vegetables, dairy products, and many grains. <i>Added sugars</i> (defined as sugars and syrups, including fruit juice, fruit juice concentrates and concentrated fruit purees, that are added to foods during processing, preparation, or at the table) have contributed greatly to increased sugar consumption by North Americans in recent years.

<b>Fibre</b>	<p><b>The nutrient criteria are designed to encourage adequate intake of dietary fibre.</b></p> <p>Fibre is found in foods such as vegetables, fruit, legumes (peas, beans, lentils) and whole grains and cereals.</p>
<b>Protein</b>	<p><b>The nutrient criteria are designed to ensure high quality protein content.</b></p> <p>Protein is found in all foods made from meat, poultry, seafood, beans and peas, eggs, processed soy products, nuts, and seeds.</p>
<b>Calcium</b>	<p><b>The nutrient criteria are designed to ensure adequate calcium intake.</b></p> <p>Milk, yogurt, and cheese are rich natural sources of calcium. Many foods are now fortified with calcium and Vitamin D.</p>
<b>Sugar Substitutes</b>	<p><b>The nutrient criteria are designed to limit intake.</b></p> <p>Sugar substitutes include: aspartame, saccharine, sucralose, stevia, acesulfame-potassium, polydextrose, isomalt, lactitol, maltitol, manitol, sorbitol, xylitol and thaumatin. It is recommended to use a cautious approach with sugar substitutes.</p>

## **Food and Beverage Nutrient Criteria for Nova Scotia**

### **Vegetables and Fruit**

- Maximum vegetables and fruit have undergone very little, if any processing (other than preparation for canning, freezing or packaging) and do not have added sodium, sugar, sugar substitutes or fat. Concentrated fruit puree and concentrated fruit juice are considered to be added sugars and should not be on the ingredient list.
- Moderate fruits and vegetables have some added sugar, salt, fat and/or processing, but no sugar substitutes.

### **Maximum Nutrition Criteria**

#### **Natural Vegetables and Fruit - 100% fresh, frozen or canned**

**Serving Size** – 1 small to medium or 125ml/½cup of most fruit and vegetables, 250ml/1 cup for a leafy salad and 125ml/½ cup of a cooked leafy vegetable, 125ml/½ cup of unsweetened fruit sauce (e.g. applesauce made with no sugar)

**Fat** – None added, naturally occurring only

**Trans Fat** – 0 g

**Sodium** - None added, naturally occurring

**Sugar** – None added, naturally occurring only and no sugar substitutes

**Fibre** – None added, naturally occurring

#### **Examples of Foods that Fit (if they meet all Maximum nutrient criteria)**

- Fresh, frozen or canned fruit and vegetables (no added salt or sugar; packed in juice)
- Unsweetened fruit sauces (e.g. applesauce and applesauce-fruit blends)
- Vegetable soups (e.g. squash, carrot)
- Baked potato

## Moderate Nutrition Criteria

### **Processed Vegetables and Fruit cooked, baked, dried or processed with some added sugar, sodium and/or fat**

**Serving Size** – 125ml/½ cup 100% juice, 30ml/1/8 cup dried fruit, 125 ml/½ cup fruit sauce, 50g vegetable/fruit baked crisps/chips, 14g 100% fruit leather

**Fat** – ≤5 g

**Saturated Fat** – ≤2 g

**Trans Fat** – 0 g

**Sodium** - ≤200 mg

**Sugar** - ≤16 g sugar, no sugar substitutes

**Fibre** – None added, naturally occurring only

#### **Examples of Minimum Vegetable and Fruit Choices include:**

Sweetened fruit juice, candied apples, highly sweetened fruit sauces, fruit and vegetable bars

#### **Examples of Foods that Fit (if they meet all Moderate nutrient criteria)**

- 100% fruit and vegetable juices
- Canned vegetables with added salt
- Canned fruit with added sugar
- Frozen 100% unsweetened juice bars
- Dried fruits (e.g. raisins, craisins)
- 100% fruit leather
- Fruit sauces with sugar added (e.g. applesauce and applesauce-fruit blends)
- Vegetable soups, tinned or commercially prepared

## Grain Products

- The first ingredient of a Maximum whole grain food must be a whole grain, whole grain flour, whole bran or 100% whole wheat including the germ; will contain no sugar substitute; and have little or no added sodium, sugar and/or fat.
- The first ingredient of a Moderate grain food must be a grain product (grain, grain flour or bran) and will likely contain some added sugar, salt, fat and/or processing, but not contain sugar substitutes.

## Maximum Nutrition Criteria

In order to encourage fibre intake and the benefit of whole grains, the first ingredient of a Maximum whole grain food must be a whole grain, a whole grain flour or 100% whole wheat including the germ (e.g. whole grain whole wheat flour, cracked wheat, whole oats, whole rye, whole grain corn, brown rice, wild rice, oat bran, barley, bulgur, quinoa).

### **1. Whole Grains, Whole Grain Cereals and Pastas**

**Serving Size** – 30g cold cereal, 185ml/¾ cup cooked hot cereal, 125ml/½ cup cooked or 25g uncooked brown or wild rice, 125ml/½ cup cooked or 85g uncooked pasta, 2 cups popped corn

**Fat** - ≤3 grams

**Saturated Fat** - ≤1 gram

**Trans Fat** – 0 grams

**Sodium** - ≤140 mg

**Sugar** - ≤6 grams and no sugar substitutes

**Fibre** – Naturally occurring

#### **Examples of Foods that Fit (if they meet all Maximum nutrient criteria)**

- Minimally sweetened, whole grain ready-to-eat cold and hot cereals (e.g. shredded wheat squares, oat o's, bran flakes, oatmeal)
- Whole grain pasta, noodles, spaghetti and macaroni
- Popped corn (air popped without oil)

## 2. Whole Grain Bread and Baked Foods

**Serving Size** – 1 slice/35 g bread, ½ or 45g bagel, 35g muffin or quick bread (e.g. banana bread), 30 - 38g granola type cereal/granola bar/cookie, 30 – 38g baked goods, 35 g pancake or waffle, ½ of a 17in diameter = 35g Naan, roti, pita or wrap, 35 g pizza crust, 2 medium rice cakes, 20-25g crackers

**Fat** - ≤5 grams (≤7 grams if nuts or seeds are added)

**Saturated Fat** - ≤2 grams

**Trans Fat** – 0 grams

**Sodium** - ≤200 mg

**Sugar** - ≤10 grams and no sugar substitutes

**Fibre** – Naturally occurring

### Examples of Foods that Fit (if they meet all Maximum nutrient criteria)

- Whole grain breads, buns, rolls, bagels, English muffins, pita bread, tortillas, pancakes, waffles, bannock, chapattis, rolls, naan, pizza dough
- Whole grain crackers, breadsticks and flatbreads
- Muffins and quick breads made with whole grains and preferably containing fruits or vegetables (e.g. banana, apple, blueberry, zucchini, pumpkin)
- Plain granola bars made with whole grains, that are not dipped in chocolate or yogurt and do not contain chocolate chips, marshmallows or candy

## Moderate Nutrition Criteria

The first ingredient of a Moderate Grain food is to be a grain product (grain, grain flour or bran).

## 1. Grains, Cereals and Pastas

**Serving Size** – 30g cold cereal, 185ml/¾ cup cooked hot cereal, 125ml/½cup cooked or 25g uncooked rice, 125ml/½ cup cooked or 85g uncooked pasta, 2 cups popped corn

**Fat** - ≤5 grams

**Saturated Fat** - ≤2 gram

**Trans Fat** – 0 grams

**Sodium** - ≤180 mg

**Sugar** - ≤10 grams and no sugar substitutes

**Fibre** – Naturally occurring

### Examples of Foods that Fit (if they meet all Moderate nutrient criteria)

- Ready-to-eat cold and hot cereals that contain whole grains but higher amounts of sugar and sodium than Maximum nutrition cereals (e.g. some flavoured instant hot oatmeal, honey oats cereal. oatmeal squares, frosted mini wheat squares)
- White or flavoured (e.g. spinach, tomato) enriched pasta
- White rice or rice noodles
- Couscous
- Noodle or rice soups, preferably with vegetables
- Low fat micro-wave popcorn

## 2. Bread and Baked Grain Foods

**Serving Size** – 1 slice/35 g bread, ½ bagel=45g, 35g muffin or quick bread (e.g. banana bread), ½ of a 17in diameter/35g Naan, roti, pita or wrap, 30 – 38g granola type cereal/granola bar/cookie, 35 g pizza crust, 35 g pancake or waffle, 2 medium rice cakes, 20-25g crackers

**Fat** - ≤7 grams (≤9 grams if nuts or seeds are added)

**Saturated Fat** - ≤3 grams

**Trans Fat** – 0 grams

**Sodium** - ≤200 mg

**Sugar** - ≤16 grams and no sugar substitutes

**Fibre** – Naturally occurring

### Examples of Foods that Fit (if they meet all Moderate nutrient criteria)

- 60% whole grain or enriched white breads, buns, rolls, bagels, English muffins, pita bread, tortillas, pancakes, waffles, bannock, chapattis, rolls, naan, pizza dough
- Muffins and quick breads
- Biscuits and scones
- Cereal bars/Granola bars/cookies
- Melba toast and white bread sticks
- Corn bread
- Bread stuffing
- Crackers
- Crisp rice cereal squares
- Plain or flavoured rice cakes, corn cakes and rice crackers

### Examples of Minimum Grain Products include:

Cakes and cupcakes; pastries, turnovers, cinnamon rolls with icing; danishes and croissants; cookies with sweet fillings, icing and/or chocolate; pie and tarts; squares such as brownies; doughnuts; granola bars dipped in yogurt or with chocolate chips or marshmallow; popcorn popped in hydrogenated oil, sweetened, candied or with excess butter; sesame snaps; ready-to-eat cereals that are high in sugar such as fruit flavoured o's.

### What are Grain Products?

Grains are the seeds of certain plants. The seed, or kernel, is made up of three parts: the bran (source of fibre), the endosperm and the germ – all of which contain valuable nutrients that play an important role in our diet. In order to be considered a whole grain, all three parts of the grain kernel must be present.

There are many types of grains, including wheat, rice, oats, barley, corn, wild rice, rye, quinoa and buckwheat. Grains can be either whole or processed (refined). Refined grains are whole grains that have had the germ and the bran removed (examples include white rice, white flour, grits and cream of wheat). This results in a loss of fibre, vitamins and minerals. In Canada, white flour has some of the nutrients returned (not the bran) and is known as “enriched”. The health benefits of eating predominately whole grain foods are well established, including lower risk of cardiovascular disease, weight gain, and Type 2 Diabetes.

<http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/fn-an/nutrition/whole-grain-entiers-eng.php>

## Trans Fat in Grain Products

Small amounts of trans fat occur naturally in foods from animal sources (i.e. milk and meat), but trans fat can often be found in baked grain products. This is because margarines and shortenings are often ingredients used in baked goods and these are higher in trans fats. Evidence has shown that saturated and trans fats can increase our risk of developing heart disease. In 2007, Health Canada, on the recommendation of the *Trans Fat Task Force*, asked Canada's food industry to:

- Limit trans fat from vegetable oils and soft, spreadable margarines to 2 percent of total fat content
- Limit the trans fat for all other foods to 5 percent of total fat content

These trans fat guidelines have helped the food industry make positive change in many products, but there is still further progress that needs to be made, as most Canadians exceed the recommended limits of trans fat intake. Utilizing this evidence, trans fat levels for grain products has been set at zero.

<http://www.dietitians.ca/Dietitians-Views/Food-Regulation-and-Labeling/Trans-Fats.aspx>

## Milk and Alternatives

- **Maximum milk and alternatives (yogurt, soy products, cheese) are lower in fat, have little or no added sodium or sugar, and do not contain sugar substitutes.**
- **Moderate milk and alternatives (flavoured milk, yogurt, soy products, cheese, frozen yogurt and milk puddings) are higher in fat, contain some added sugar and salt, but do not contain sugar substitutes.**

### Maximum Nutrition Criteria

#### **1. Unsweetened fluid milks 2%, 1%, Skim and Evaporated Fluid Milk, Powdered Dry Milk**

**Serving Size** – 250 ml 2%, 1% or skim, 125 ml undiluted evaporated, 75ml/25 grams powdered dry milk

**Sugar** – ≤ 13grams and no sugar substitutes

#### **2. Fortified (added calcium and Vitamin D) Beverages, Yogurt, Kefir and Soygurt**

**Serving Size** – 250 ml 2%, 1% or skim fluid fortified milk alternative, 175ml yogurt, soygurt and kefir, 200ml drinkable yogurt

**Fat** - ≤5 grams

**Saturated Fat** - ≤3 grams

**Trans Fat** - ≤0.3 grams

**Sodium** - ≤120 mg

**Sugar** - ≤13 grams and no sugar substitutes

#### **Examples of Foods that Fit (if they meet all Maximum nutrient criteria)**

- Lower fat unflavoured milk
- Lower fat unflavoured fortified milk alternative beverages
- Lower fat, low sugar yogurt, soygurt and kefir, including drinkable versions) with no sugar substitutes

### 3. Cheese – Hard (e.g. Cheddar, Mozzarella), Soft (e.g. Ricotta) and Cottage Cheese

**Serving Size** – 50 grams hard or soft cheeses, 125ml/115g cottage cheese

**Fat** - ≤10 grams (≤5 grams for cottage cheese)

**Saturated Fat** - ≤6 grams (≤3 grams for cottage cheese)

**Trans Fat** - ≤0.5 grams

**Sodium** - ≤350 mg

**Sugar** – 0 grams (≤6 grams for cottage cheese)

#### Examples of Foods that Fit (if they meet all Maximum nutrient criteria)

- Lower fat hard cheese and cheese strings (e.g. partly skim mozzarella, cheddar, Brie, Swiss, Monterey Jack, Gouda)
- Lower fat and lower sodium cottage cheese

## Moderate Nutrition Criteria

### 1. Flavoured 2%, 1% and Skim Fluid Milk, Flavoured Fortified (added calcium and Vitamin D) Beverages, Yogurt, Kefir and Soygurt

**Serving Size** – 250 ml flavoured milk, 175 ml yogurt, kefir & soygurt, 200ml drinkable yogurt

**Fat** - ≤6 grams

**Saturated Fat** - ≤4 grams

**Trans Fat** - ≤0.3 grams

**Sodium** - ≤180 mg

**\*Sugar** - ≤21 grams and no sugar substitutes

#### Examples of Foods that Fit (if they meet all Moderate nutrient criteria)

- Lower fat flavoured milk
- Lower fat, sweetened yogurt, soygurt and kefir, including drinkable versions) with no sugar substitutes
- Hot chocolate made with lower fat milk
- Lower fat flavoured fortified milk alternative beverages such as soy, almond, rice, flax and potato

### 2. Cheese – Hard (e.g. Cheddar, Gouda), Soft (e.g. Ricotta, Goat) and Cottage Cheese

**Serving Size** – hard or soft cheeses = 50 grams, 125ml/115g cottage cheese

**Fat** - ≤20 grams (≤5 grams for cottage cheese)

**Saturated Fat** - ≤10 grams (≤3 grams for cottage cheese)

**Trans Fat** - ≤0.5 grams

**Sodium** - ≤450 mg

**Sugar** – 0 grams (≤6 grams for cottage cheese, ≤20 g when fruit added)

#### Examples of Foods that Fit (if they meet all Moderate nutrient criteria)

- Hard cheese and cheese strings
- Cottage cheese

### 3. Puddings and Custards

**Serving Size** – 125 ml

**First ingredient must be milk or plant-based beverage**

**Fat** - ≤3 grams

**Saturated Fat** - ≤2 grams

**Trans Fat** – 0.3 grams

**Sodium** - ≤200 mg

**Sugar** - ≤20 grams and no sugar substitutes

**Calcium** - ≥10% DV

**Examples of Foods that Fit (if they meet all Moderate nutrient criteria)**

- Milk based pudding and custard
- Dessert tofu

**Examples of Minimum Milk and Milk alternatives include:**

whipped cream, homogenized milk, Chocolate milk with > 21 g sugar, ice cream, sherbet, highly sweetened yogurt and yogurt drinks (exceed Moderate sugar criteria), frozen ice cream novelties, processed cheese spread and processed cheese slices.

#### **Non-Dairy Beverages**

Some people are not able to drink cow's milk because they have an allergy or have lactose intolerance. Some choose to follow a vegan diet that excludes dairy products. Fortified non-dairy or plant-based beverages such as soy, almond and rice are alternatives to cow's milk. **Fortified soy beverage is nutritionally the most similar to cow's milk.** Other fortified non-dairy beverages do not have the equivalent amount of protein as cow's milk, but they can still be a good source of calcium and vitamin D. If choosing a non-dairy beverage, make sure that it is "fortified" or "enriched", which means that calcium and vitamin D have been added. If it's not fortified, it is not as nutritious and will be mostly water, carbohydrates and sugar. <http://www.eatrightontario.ca/en/Articles/Calcium/Understanding-non-dairy-beverages.aspx>

#### **Nutrient Criteria for Puddings and Custards**

Milk puddings and frozen yogurt can be a Moderate nutrition food. However, many products that are on the market contain high amounts of sugar, fat and/or extra ingredients that diminish the amount of actual milk in the product and thereby the amount of calcium. Milk and alternatives are some of the best sources of calcium, which is crucial for the healthy development of strong bones and teeth. As well as criteria for fat, saturated fat, trans fat, sodium and sugar, additional criteria have been provided to help ensure that frozen yogurt and milk puddings choices are of good nutritional value. The first ingredient must be milk and the calcium content must be ≥10%DV. This means that per 125ml serving, the calcium content must be at least 10% of the recommended amount of calcium needed daily (DV). <http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/fn-an/food-guide-aliment/choose-choix/milk-lait/tips-trucs-eng.php>

## Meat and Alternatives

- **Maximum meat and alternatives (fish, poultry, meat, eggs, legumes, nuts and tofu) are lower in fat, have little or no added sodium, and do not contain sugar substitutes or added sugar.**
- **Moderate meat and alternatives are higher in fat, contain some added sugar and salt, but do not contain sugar substitutes.**

### Maximum Nutrition Criteria

- 1. Fresh/frozen fish, lean meat and poultry - baked, broiled, boiled, poached, roasted, or grilled (not to be altered or seasoned at time of purchase – no added salt, fat, sugar, preservatives/nitrates)**

**Serving Size** – 2.5oz/75g, 125ml ground cooked

**Fat** - ≤8 grams

**Saturated Fat** - ≤3 grams

**Trans Fat** - ≤0.5 grams

**Sodium** – None added, naturally occurring only.

#### **Examples of Foods that Fit (if they meet all Maximum nutrient criteria)**

- Chicken and turkey
- Fish and shellfish
- Lean cuts of beef, pork and lamb
- Extra lean ground beef
- Canned fish packed in water

- 2. Alternatives: Eggs, Legumes, Nuts, Seeds, Nut Butters and Tofu (Nuts, seeds and nut butters to contain no added sodium or sugar; nuts, seeds and nut butters contain more fat, but must be naturally occurring and not added)**

**Serving Size** – 2 eggs, 30ml/2tbsp nut butters, 175ml/3/4cup/150g tofu,

175ml/3/4cup cooked legumes, 60ml/1/4 cup nuts and seeds, 60ml/1/4cup hummus

**Fat** - ≤10 grams

**Saturated Fat** - ≤3 grams

**Trans Fat** - ≤0.5 grams

**Sodium** - ≤200 mg

**Sugar** – Naturally occurring and no sugar substitute

#### **Examples of Foods that Fit (if they meet all Maximum nutrient criteria)**

- Tofu (plain)
- Eggs (e.g. boiled, poached) or egg substitutes
- Plain nuts and seeds (where allergies permit), with no added salt or oil (e.g. almonds, peanuts, walnuts, pistachios)
- Nut and seed butters (where allergies permit), with no added salt, oil or sugar
- Legumes (e.g. dried peas, beans, lentils)
- Split pea and lentil soups
- Hummus
- Bean-based dips

## Moderate Nutrition Criteria

### 1. Fish, Lean Meat and Poultry that has been processed, with added salt, fat and/or breading, (Includes pre-made hamburger patties/meatballs)

**Serving Size** – 2.5oz/75g, 125ml ground cooked

**Fat** - ≤10 grams

**Saturated Fat** - ≤5 grams

**Trans Fat** - ≤0.5 grams

**Sodium** - ≤400 mg

#### Examples of Foods that Fit (if they meet all Moderate nutrient criteria)

- Lean ground beef
- Fish canned in oil and with added salt
- “Seasoned” chicken breasts

### 2. Alternatives: Eggs, Legumes, Nuts, Seeds, Nut Butters and Tofu (Nuts, seeds and nut butters may contain more fat\*, but added fat must be monounsaturated or polyunsaturated)

**Serving Size** – 2 eggs, 30ml nut butters, 175ml/3/4cup/150g tofu, 175ml/3/4cup cooked legumes, 60ml/1/4 cup nuts and seeds, 60ml/1/4cup hummus

**Fat** - ≤10 grams

**Saturated Fat** - ≤6 grams

**Trans Fat** - ≤0.5 grams

**Sodium** - ≤400 mg

**Sugar** – ≤4 grams and no sugar substitutes (8g for baked beans)

#### Examples of Foods that Fit (if they meet all Moderate nutrient criteria)

- Nuts and seeds (where allergies permit), salted, seasoned and/or roasted in oil
- Nut and seed butters (where allergies permit), with added salt, oil or sugar
- Seasoned tofu
- Pickled eggs
- Soy-based meat substitutes – e.g. ground, strips, slices and patties

### 3. Luncheon/Deli Meats

**Serving size** - 2oz/56g

**Fat** - ≤7.5 grams

**Saturated Fat** - ≤4.5 grams

**Trans Fat** - ≤0.5 grams

**Sodium** - ≤375 mg

**Protein** - ≥7 grams

#### Examples of Foods that Fit (if they meet all Moderate nutrient criteria)

- Lower fat and lower sodium deli meats
- Canned luncheon meats
- Sausages

**Examples of Minimum Meat and meat Alternatives include:** highly processed meat products with added amounts of fat, sodium and/or sugar that exceed Moderate criteria.

#### Caution Regarding Nitrites/Nitrates and Consumption Of Processed Deli Meats

Deli meat is processed meat of any animal, including beef, veal, pork, lamb and poultry and preserved by smoking, curing, salting or adding preservatives. Ingredients often used in making deli products include binding agents, starch, flour, jellies, eggs, preservation agents like sodium nitrite and seasonings such as salt, herbs and spices. Processed meats are a less healthy choice than non-processed meats as they are higher in sodium, often higher in fat and because of the common use of preservatives, containing nitrites or nitrates. Nitrites and nitrates can react with compounds naturally present in meat during processing to form potentially carcinogenic compounds called nitrosamines, which have been linked to

stomach cancer. Because they can be hazardous to humans, the use of nitrites and nitrates is regulated in Canada.

[http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/ewh-semt/pubs/water-eau/nitrate\\_nitrite/index-eng.php](http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/ewh-semt/pubs/water-eau/nitrate_nitrite/index-eng.php)

<http://www.gov.mb.ca/agriculture/foodsafety/processor/cfs02s71.html>

In order to lessen the exposure of children and youth to these potentially harmful chemicals, processed **deli meat is considered a Moderate choice.**

[http://www.dietandcancerreport.org/expert\\_report/recommendations/recommendation\\_animal\\_foods.php](http://www.dietandcancerreport.org/expert_report/recommendations/recommendation_animal_foods.php)

The nutrient criteria for deli meat also includes protein in order to ensure a higher quality product with less filler. (look for products with at least 7 grams per 56 gram serving) However, a healthier choice is to roast meat or poultry, such as chicken or beef, and slice for sandwiches and wraps, rather than use meat products that have been processed. Reading the labels of packaged food products is always a wise practice and when purchasing, look for those with little or no added salt and fat, and few added ingredients – remember that less is usually better!

### **Minimum Foods**

**Foods which do not meet the Maximum or Moderate nutrient criteria of any of the four food groups, will generally fall into the Minimum nutrition foods and beverages.**

**Foods and beverages that fit in this category have minimal nutritional value. They are high in fat, sugar, sodium, sugar substitutes, caffeine and/or processing and when available, tend to replace nutritious foods as meals or snacks.**

Examples include but are not limited to:

#### **Baked Goods**

- Cakes or cupcakes
- Pastries, turnovers, danishes or croissants
- Cookies with sweet fillings, icing and/or chocolate
- Pie or tarts
- Squares – i.e. brownies
- Doughnuts
- Cinnamon buns with icing

#### **Frozen Novelties**

- Ice cream
- Novelty cakes – i.e. ice cream cakes
- Frozen novelties
- Sherbet

#### **Snack or Processed Foods**

- Foods made with chocolate (exception is chocolate milk which is a Moderate choice)
- Candy
- Granola bars dipped in yogurt or with chocolate chips or marshmallow
- Popcorn popped in hydrogenated oil, sweetened, candies or with excess butter
- Chocolate and other candy bars
- Ready-to-eat cereals that are high in sugar i.e. fruit flavoured o's

- Fruit and veggie bars
- Processed cheese spread
- Processed cheese slices
- Gum
- Caramel and butterscotch sauce

#### **Other**

- Fruit gels or jellied desserts
- Gravies
- Whipped cream
- Pizza with processed high fat and sodium meats and cheeses

## **Beverages**

### **Maximum Nutrition Beverages**

- Water, plain, unsweetened, unflavoured, with no additives (e.g. caffeine, herbals, sodium, vitamins, minerals or sugar substitutes)
- Milk, (250 ml serving size)
- Milk alternatives e.g. Non-Dairy beverages that are fortified with calcium and vitamin D (250 ml serving size)
- Smoothies made with all Maximum ingredients (e.g. milk and fruit), no added sugar or sugar substitutes (250 ml serving size)
- Plain carbonated/sparkling water, no added sugar, sodium or sugar substitutes

### **Moderate Nutrition Beverages**

- Limit to one 125 ml serving per day, from the following products made with 100% juice and no added sugar
  - 100% fruit and vegetable juice
  - Slushies made with real juice
  - Sparkling fruit juice beverage
- Hot chocolate made with milk, (250 ml serving size)
- Flavoured milk, (250 ml serving size) (needs to fit the criteria)
- Carbonated water with natural flavor – no added sodium, sugar or additives (e.g., caffeine, herbals, vitamins, minerals or sugar substitutes)

### **Minimum Nutrition Beverages**

- Sweetened fruit beverages (e.g. punches, cocktails, “ades” like lemonade that contain a portion of fruit juice, some chocolate milk) Sports drinks – all brands, pop, soda drinks

## **Mixed Foods**

A mixed food is one that combines two or more of the four food groups in *Eating Well with Canada's Food Guide* – vegetables and fruit, grain products, milk and alternatives, and meat and alternatives. Examples of mixed foods that can fit Maximum or Moderate nutrient criteria, depending on the choice of ingredients, are soups, sandwiches, casseroles, pizza, tacos, sushi, wraps, pasta dishes, chilli, Pad Thai, shepherd's pie, macaroni and cheese, burgers, smoothies made with milk and fruit, and apple crisp,

- **To be considered a Maximum mixed food, each of the individual food group components must meet the Maximum nutrient criteria and stipulations for that food group. e.g. for a mixed food with a grain product to be classified as Maximum, it must be a whole grain.**
- **Moderate mixed foods contain a mix of Maximum and Moderate ingredients or all Moderate ingredients, and are higher in fat, sugar and salt, but do not contain sugar substitutes.**

### **Maximum Mixed Dishes without a Nutrition Facts Table**

**(when the recipe used has not had a nutrient analysis done)**

**Major Ingredients:** All major ingredients (any product identified as one from the four food groups) are to be from the Maximum Nutrition category.

**Additional Ingredients:** Choose items that are “low or lower in fat”, “low in saturated fat”, “trans fat free”, “lower in salt”, “lower in sugar” or “source of fibre”. None of the additional items can be of Minimum Nutrition or on the Not Permitted list.

**Cooking Methods:** Food should always be prepared in a healthy way, using methods that require little or no added fat, sugar or sodium, such as baking, boiling, broiling, grilling, microwaving, poaching, roasting, steaming or stir-frying. For additional preparation information, go to “Tips for reducing fat salt and sugar”.

**Examples of Mixed Dishes that Fit (if they meet all maximum nutrient criteria for each of the food groups used)**

- Whole grain pasta salad with vegetables
- Whole grain macaroni and cheese
- Whole grain pasta dishes and casseroles made with tomato sauce and/or vegetables (e.g. spaghetti)
- Cheese pizza with whole grain crust and low fat cheese
- Vegetarian pizza or panzarotti with whole grain crust and partly skim mozzarella cheese
- Vegetable sticks or fruit pieces served with lower fat dip (e.g. plain yogurt)
- Salad (e.g. any mix of: greens and/or vegetables and fruit; low fat cheese; lean meat, fish or poultry; nuts or seeds; and served with a lower fat dressing)
- Fruit smoothies (made with fruit and lower fat, unsweetened milk and/or yogurt)
- Frozen banana pops rolled in lower fat, unsweetened yogurt and lower fat granola
- Lower fat, unsweetened yogurt and fruit
- Yogurt parfaits with lower fat, unsweetened yogurt, fruit and lower fat granola

- Grilled cheese sandwich made with lower fat cheese and whole grain bread
- Vegetable tortilla or wrap on whole grain
- Stir fries with vegetables and lean poultry, fish or meat
- Cabbage rolls
- Vegetable based chowders made with milk (e.g. corn chowder)
- Fish based chowder made with milk
- Egg salad sandwich made with lower fat mayonnaise, and served on whole grain bread
- Chili with extra lean ground beef and lots of beans and vegetables
- Falafel (chickpea patties)
- Shepherd's pie made with extra lean ground beef
- Souvlaki, tzatziki (yogurt, cucumber and herb dip) and whole wheat pita
- Submarine/sandwiches with lean meats (turkey, roast beef), and fillings (egg, tuna salad, vegetables) with lower fat cheese on whole grain buns or bread
- Hamburgers made with extra lean ground beef on whole grain buns
- Baked burritos or soft tacos with extra lean meat or poultry, and/or beans on whole grain flour tortillas served with vegetable sticks or salad
- Fajitas served on whole wheat grain tortillas
- Sweet and sour meatballs using extra lean ground beef and served on brown rice

### **Moderate Mixed Dishes without a Nutrition Facts Table**

**(when the recipe used has not had a nutrient analysis done)**

**Major Ingredients:** One or more of the major ingredients (any product identified as one from the four major food groups) may be from the Moderate Nutrition category.

**Additional Ingredients:** Choose items that are "low or lower in fat", "low in saturated fat", "trans fat free", "lower in salt", "lower in sugar" or "source of fibre". None of the additional items can be of Minimum Nutrition or be on the Not Permitted list. (check list of Minimum Foods on page 30 and Foods and Beverages Not Permitted on page 31.)

**Cooking Methods:** Food should always be prepared in a healthy way, using methods that require little or no added fat, sugar or sodium, such as baking, boiling, broiling, grilling, microwaving, poaching, roasting, steaming or stir-frying. For additional preparation information, go to "Tips for reducing fat salt and sugar".

**Examples of Mixed Dishes that Fit (if they meet or exceed all Moderate nutrient criteria for each of the food groups used)**

- Enriched white macaroni and cheese
- Fruit crisps
- Sloppy joes
- Frozen pasta and sauces
- Lasagna made with enriched white noodles
- Canned soups
- Quiche
- Tuna/salmon and cracker snack packs

- Peanut butter and cracker snack packs (where allergies permit)
- Grilled cheese sandwich on white bread
- Sandwiches made with full fat mayonnaise on white bread

### **Maximum and Moderate Mixed Dishes with a Nutrition Facts Table**

When making a mixed dish using a recipe that has had a nutrient analysis done, or if using a premade, packaged and/or frozen entree, broth soup or meal style soup, that provides all of the nutrition and ingredient information, go to the table in Appendix 6 on page 37 that can be used to determine if the food is a Maximum or Moderate mixed dish.

#### **Examples of Minimum Mixed Dishes include:**

those that are known to contain ingredients that are of Minimum Nutrition such as pizza with processed high fat and sodium meats and cheeses; or are premade packaged products (with nutrient facts tables) that do not fit either the Maximum or Moderate nutrient criteria as stated in the mixed foods tables.

### **Condiments**

Condiments, dressings, sauces, dips and spreads are used to enhance the flavour of foods of Maximum and Moderate Nutrition. They can also be high in salt, sugar and/or fat, are not classified within the four food groups of *Eating Well with Canada's Food Guide* and should be served in small quantities, **e.g. 1 teaspoon/5 ml (t) servings, 1 tablespoon/15 ml (T) servings.**

It is recommended that these types of products contain less than or equal to 8 grams of sugar and that the % Daily Value (%DV) for both total fat and for sodium be less than or equal to 5% per tablespoon serving. (The %DV on product Nutrition Facts Tables can be used to make healthier choices – use the %DV to choose products lower in nutrients such as fat and sodium; 5%DV is considered a little and 15%DV is considered a lot.)

#### **Choose More Often:**

- Salsa T
- Bean dips T
- Yogurt-based fruit dips T
- Tomato-based sauces T
- Tzatziki (yogurt, cucumber, and herb dip) T
- Reduced fat spreads, dips, dressings, or mayonnaise T
- Dried fruit (e.g. raisins, apples) T
- Reduced sugar jam and jelly T
- Low sodium ketchup T
- Fat free or low fat sour cream T
- \*Reduced fat cream cheese T
- Vegetable oils (e.g. olive, canola) t
- Low sodium soy sauce t
- Mustard t
- Lime juice t
- Lemon juice t

**Choose Less Often:**

- Butter t
- Margarine (non-hydrogenated) t
- Regular salad dressings and dips T
- Mayonnaise T
- Regular ketchup T
- Relish T
- Pickles T
- Tartar sauce T
- Regular soy sauce t
- Hot sauces t
- Regular sour cream T
- Jam and jelly t
- Pancake syrup T
- Honey t
- \*Regular, flavoured cream cheese T

**\*NOTE: Cream cheese is not a source of calcium like other types of cheese and is mostly fat. For this reason it is considered to be a condiment**

## Maximum and Moderate Mixed Dishes with a Nutrition Facts Table

When using a recipe with a nutrient analysis or a premade, packaged and/or frozen entree, broth soup or meal style soup, that provides all of the nutrition and ingredient information, the table below can be used to determine if the food is a Maximum or Moderate mixed dish.

Criteria for: <b>MIXED ENTREES</b>		<b>Fat grams</b>	<b>Sat. Fat grams</b>	<b>Trans Fat grams</b>	<b>Sodium mg</b>	<b>Sugar grams</b>	<b>Protein for Meat Entrees grams</b>	<b>Protein for Vegetarian Entrees gms</b>
100 – 199cal	Maximum Moderate	≤4g ≤6g	≤1g ≤2g	≤0.2g ≤0.3g	≤350mg ≤500mg	No sugar substitutes	≥7g ≥5g	≥5g ≥4g
200 – 299cal	Maximum Moderate	≤7g ≤9g	≤2g ≤3g	≤0.3g ≤0.4g	≤500mg ≤750mg	No sugar substitutes	≥10g ≥8g	≥7g ≥6g
300 – 399cal	Maximum Moderate	≤10g ≤12g	≤3g ≤4g	≤0.5g ≤0.6g	≤700mg ≤900mg	No sugar substitutes	≥14g ≥11g	≥10g ≥7g
400 – 499cal	Maximum Moderate	≤13g ≤15g	≤4g ≤5g	≤0.6g ≤0.8g	≤700mg ≤900mg	No sugar substitutes	≥17g ≥14g	≥12g ≥9g
500 – 599cal	Maximum Moderate	≤16g ≤18g	≤5g ≤6g	≤0.8g ≤0.9g	≤700mg ≤900mg	No sugar substitutes	≥21g ≥17g	≥15g ≥11g

Criteria for: <b>BROTH SOUPS</b>		<b>Fat grams</b>	<b>Sat. Fat grams</b>	<b>Trans Fat grams</b>	<b>Sodium mg</b>
≤200 cal	Maximum Moderate	≤4g ≤5g	≤1g ≤2g	≤0.1g ≤0.2g	≤250mg ≤300mg
≤201 - 300 cal	Maximum Moderate	≤7g ≤8g	≤2g ≤3g	≤0.3g ≤0.4g	≤400mg ≤450mg

Criteria for: <b>MEAL STYLE SOUPS</b>		<b>Fat grams</b>	<b>Sat. Fat grams</b>	<b>Trans Fat grams</b>	<b>Sodium mg</b>	<b>Protein grams</b>
≤200 cal	Maximum Moderate	≤4g ≤6g	≤1g ≤2g	≤0.2g ≤0.3g	≤250mg ≤300mg	≥7g ≥6g
≤201 - 300 cal	Maximum Moderate	≤7g ≤10g	≤2g ≤3g	≤0.3g ≤0.5g	≤400mg ≤450mg	≥10g ≥9g

\*The above tables for mixed reflect the recommended percentage amount of total daily calories that should come from the listed nutrients. The mixed food table shows approximately what the nutrient breakdown should be for a range of portion sizes that are based on the number of calories in that portion.

**Fat = 25 - 35%**

**Saturated fat = 5.8 - 7.2%**

**Trans fat = 5% of total fat as per Health Canada recommendations**

**Protein = 10 - 30% calories for children should come from protein - average for children & youth is 14.7%**

**What is left is the carbohydrate component which falls within the caloric range of 55 - 60% for Canadians.**