

Food-Based Menu Planning for Lunch

Amount of Food^a Per Week (Minimum Per Day)

Meal Pattern	Grades K–5	Grades K–8	Grades 6–8	Grades 9–12
Fruits (cups) ^b	2½ (½)	2½ (½)	2½ (½)	5 (1)
Vegetables (cups) ^b	3¾ (¾)	3¾ (¾)	3¾ (¾)	5 (1)
Dark Green ^c	½	½	½	½
Red/Orange ^c	¾	¾	¾	1¼
Beans and Peas (legumes) ^c	½	½	½	½
Starchy ^c	½	½	½	½
Other ^{c,d}	½	½	½	¾
Additional Veg to Reach Total ^e	1 ^e	1 ^e	1 ^e	1½ ^e
Grain Minimums (oz eq) ^f	8–9 (1)*	8–9 (1)*	8–10 (1)*	10–12 (2)*
Meats/Meat Alternate Minimums (oz eq)	8–10 (1)*	9–10 (1)*	9–10 (1)*	10–12 (2)*
Fluid Milk (Cups) ^g	5 (1)	5 (1)	5 (1)	5 (1)

Other Specifications: Daily Amount Based on the Average for a 5-Day Week

Meal Pattern	Grades K–5	Grades K–8	Grades 6–8	Grades 9–12
Min-max calories (kcal) ^h	550–650	600–650	600–700	750–850
Saturated fat (% of calories) ^h	< 10	< 10	< 10	< 10
Sodium Target 1 (mg) ^{h,i, 2014–15 SY}	≤ 1,230	≤ 1,230	≤ 1,360	≤ 1,420
Reference Only Sodium Target 2 (mg) ^{h,i, 2017–18 SY}	≤ 935	≤ 935	≤ 1,035	≤ 1,080
Trans Fat ^h	Nutrition label or manufacturer specifications must indicate zero grams of trans fat (< 0.5 grams) per serving - No averaging.			

*U.S. Department of Agriculture has lifted the **weekly maximums** for grain and meat/meat alternates. The maximums are used as a guide for menu planning purposes only. The **daily and weekly minimums** for grains and meat/meat alternates and the **weekly calorie ranges** still apply.

Lunch Meal Pattern

- a. Food items included in each group and subgroup and amount equivalents. Minimum creditable serving is $\frac{1}{8}$ cup.
- b. One quarter-cup of dried fruit counts as $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of fruit; 1 cup of leafy greens counts as $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of vegetables. No more than half of the fruit or vegetable offerings may be in the form of juice. All juice must be 100% full-strength.
- c. Larger amounts of these vegetables may be served.
- d. This category consists of “Other vegetables” as defined in §210.10(c)(2)(iii)(E) . For the purposes of the National School Lunch Program, the “Other vegetables” requirement may be met with any additional amounts from the dark green, red/orange, and beans/peas (legumes) vegetable subgroups as defined in §210.10(c)(2)(iii).
- e. Any vegetable subgroup may be offered to meet the total weekly vegetable requirement.
- f. All grains must be whole grain-rich.
- g. All fluid milk must be low-fat (1 percent or less, unflavored) or fat-free (unflavored or flavored).
- h. Discretionary sources of calories (solid fats and added sugars) may be added to the meal pattern if within the specifications for calories, saturated fat, trans fat, and sodium. Foods of minimal nutritional value and fluid milk with fat content greater than 1 percent are not allowed.
- i. Final sodium targets must be met no later than July 1, 2022 (2022–23 SY). The first intermediate target must be met no later than SY 2014–15 and the second intermediate target must be met no later than 2017–18 SY. See required intermediate specifications in § 210.10(f)(3).