



Vermont Worksite Wellness Resource

Worksite Healthy Eating Guidelines

WORKSITE HEALTHY EATING GUIDELINES

Why Offer Healthy Foods at Meetings, Conferences, and Seminars?

The physical and social environment of the workplace influences health-related behaviors. Work is where many people spend most of their time; therefore, food available at a person's workplace frequently determines what they eat throughout the day. Workplace gatherings can promote healthier food choices by following the recommendations put forth by the 2005 Dietary Guidelines for Americans:

Offer...

- ◆ More fruits and vegetables
- ◆ Non- or low-fat milk products
- ◆ Whole grains
- ◆ Foods low in saturated and trans fats
- ◆ Smaller portion sizes (see Appendix A for examples of proper portion sizes)

General Guidelines:

- ◆ Emphasize fruits, vegetables, whole grains, low-fat dairy and lean protein sources.
Whole Grains Tip: When buying whole-grain products, the first or second ingredient must list "whole" before the grain (e.g., whole wheat, whole oats, whole corn meal, whole rye). Wheat, rye, pumpernickel, 12-grain, and multi-grain breads are not necessarily whole grains.
- ◆ Offer low-fat and low-calorie foods.
- ◆ Serve smaller portions of higher calorie foods (e.g., mini, halved, or quartered bagels, muffins or cookies).
- ◆ Include a vegetarian option with meals and snacks.
- ◆ Offer seasonal and local foods when possible (see page 8).
- ◆ Use lower fat versions of condiments (e.g., dressings, mayo, cream cheese, sour cream, dips).
- ◆ For mid-morning and mid-afternoon meetings, consider serving only beverages. Whenever food is served, include healthy options.
- ◆ Serve only 100% juice, and use glasses or containers that are 12 oz or less in size.
- ◆ Serve low-fat or skim milk with coffee and tea.
- ◆ Offer water with meals and snacks.
- ◆ If registration forms are used, provide space to indicate food allergies or dietary restrictions.

MENU IDEAS FOR MEETINGS AND CONFERENCES

Employers can make it easier for people to make healthy food choices by providing healthy food at meetings and other events they sponsor. Here are sample menus that offer healthy foods.

BREAKFAST

Fruit pieces (offer seasonal, local fruit whenever possible)

Low- or non-fat yogurt

Small muffins, 2–3 oz, or large muffins cut in half (look for whole-grain muffins)

100% whole-grain bread and/or whole-grain English muffins

Whole-grain cereals (serve with skim or 1% milk)

Mini whole-grain bagels or larger bagels cut in half

Spreads to Offer:

Single servings of peanut butter, jam, jelly, low-fat cream cheese, trans fat-free spread

Beverages:

Bottled water

Skim or 1% milk

Coffee and tea (offer skim and 1% milk)

100% juice in containers that are 12 oz or less in size

MID-MORNING MEETINGS

Consider only serving beverages (see beverage list on page 6)

If food is offered, serve smaller portions of breakfast items

LUNCH

Low-sodium, meat-based broth or low-sodium, vegetable-based soup

Green or vegetable salad (offer light vinaigrettes or low-fat dressings on the side)

Pasta or rice salad (made with light vinaigrettes or low-fat dressings)

Potato salad (use combination of low-fat mayo and yogurt, and dress lightly)

Whole-grain rolls with trans fat-free spread (if offering butter, use single-serving packets)

Pizza (choose vegetable topping and avoid pepperoni, sausage, and extra cheese)

Sandwich Ideas:

Whole-grain breads, rolls, wraps

Lean roast beef, lean poultry without skin, ham, tuna fish with low-fat mayo, hummus

(always offer a vegetarian choice)

1-oz slices of reduced-fat cheese

Vegetable toppings

Packets of mustard and low-fat mayo

(cut sandwiches in half for smaller portions)

Beverages:

Bottled water

Unsweetened iced tea

Flavored water (no sugar)

Skim or 1% milk

Coffee and tea (offer skim and 1% milk)

Consider not offering soda and juice (if offered, provide diet soda and 100% juice in containers that are 12 oz or less in size)

MID AFTERNOON MEETINGS

Consider only serving beverages

Snack Ideas:

Baked chips with salsa

Fruit pieces or fruit salad

Low- or non-fat yogurt

Raw veggies with low-fat dip, hummus and/or bean dip

Whole-grain pita bread with hummus and/or bean dip

Whole-grain crackers with cheese (1-oz portions of cheese)

Dried fruit with and without nuts

Pretzels and plain popcorn

Beverages:

Bottled water

Unsweetened iced tea

Flavored water (no sugar)

Skim or 1% milk

Coffee and tea (offer skim and 1% milk)

Consider not offering soda and juice (if offered, provide diet soda and 100% juice in containers that are 12 oz or less in size)

DINNER

Work with the conference center or caterer to select entrées that have less than 15 gm fat per serving and always include a vegetarian option

Green or vegetable salad (with light vinaigrettes or low-fat dressings on the side)

Whole-grain rolls with trans fat-free spread (if offering butter, use single-serving packets)

Pasta with marinara sauce

Lean meats, skinless poultry, fish or tofu that is grilled, broiled, roasted or baked

Serve at least two vegetables with meals (e.g., steamed vegetables, salad)

Request seasonal and local vegetables (avoid butter and cream sauces)

Beverages:

Bottled water

Unsweetened iced tea

Skim or 1% milk

Coffee and tea (offer skim and 1% milk)

DESSERTS

Fresh fruit pieces or fruit salad (with low-fat yogurt dip)

Angel food cake with fruit topping

Low-fat ice cream or frozen yogurt, sherbet or sorbet

If cookies are offered, consider whole-grain cookies such as oatmeal or offer lower-fat varieties and smaller sizes (2–3 oz)

If cake is offered, cut into 2" squares

MAKING HEALTHIER FOOD CHOICES

Conference centers and caterers should be willing to work with you or your planning committee to develop a healthy menu. Use the list below as a guide when talking to the chef or caterer. These guidelines are appropriate for meetings off-site or in the office. See “*Recipes for Conferences*” booklet for healthy recipe ideas that can be given to the chef prior to the event.

	BEST	GOOD	LIMIT/AVOID
BEVERAGES	Skim or 1% milk, fat-free half & half, soy milk, tea, coffee, water, sugar-free flavored water, unsweetened iced tea, 100% fruit or vegetable juice in 8-oz containers, diet soda	2% milk, fruit juice	Regular soda, whole milk and cream, sweetened tea, lemonade, sweetened fruit drinks, sports drinks
FRUIT	Fresh, frozen, canned in own juice	Canned in light syrup, dried	Canned in heavy syrup, sweetened canned fruit
VEGETABLES	All fresh or frozen without added fat and sauces, low-sodium vegetable-based broth or soup, soups made with vegetable puree or skim milk	Canned, stir-fried but not battered, oven-baked potatoes, vegetable-based broth or soup	Fried, battered, served with cheese or butter sauce, cream-based soups (such as cream of broccoli)
MILK & MILK PRODUCTS	Skim milk, non-fat cream, non-fat yogurt, low-fat and part skim cheese, fat-free cream cheese, fat-free or low-fat cottage cheese	1% milk, low-fat or whipped cream cheese, low-fat yogurt, low-fat cheese	Whole milk and cream, full fat cheese and cream cheese, processed cheese spread
BREADS, CEREALS, & PASTAS	Whole-grain or whole wheat: rolls, bread, English muffins, or bagels. Low-fat granola and granola bars, whole-grain cereal, oatmeal, whole-grain pasta, brown rice	White: rolls, bread, English muffins, or bagels. Mini-muffins, unsweetened cereals, grits, pancakes, French toast, white pasta and rice, corn bread	Danishes, croissants, doughnuts, sweet rolls, large muffins, pastries, sweetened cereals, pasta with cheese, meat, or Alfredo sauce, pasta salad made with mayonnaise or creamy dressing, crackers made with trans fat (see Appendix B)

MEAT, POULTRY, FISH, EGGS, BEANS, & NUTS	Extra lean ground meat, trimmed beef and pork, skinless chicken and turkey, tuna canned in water, grilled, broiled, roasted, or baked fish and shellfish, beans, split peas, lentils, tofu, egg whites, egg substitute	Lean ground beef, meat stir-fried in olive oil, low-sodium and low-fat lunch meats, broiled hamburgers, Canadian bacon, low-fat hot dogs, tuna canned in oil, nuts, whole eggs cooked without added fat	Fried meat or fish, untrimmed beef and pork, bacon, sausage, pepperoni, ribs, hot dogs, chicken and turkey with skin, lunch meats, whole eggs cooked with fat
CONDIMENTS	Catsup, mustard, vinegar, Tabasco, non-fat or low-fat dressings, non-fat cream cheese, 100% fruit jam, trans fat-free margarine	Whipped margarine and butter, jelly, low-fat mayonnaise, oil-based dressings, peanut butter, low-fat sour cream	Stick margarine and butter, mayonnaise, cream cheese, creamy dressings, sour cream, gravy, tartar sauce, cream sauce, cheese sauce
DESSERTS	Frozen fruit juice bars, ice milk bars, low-fat frozen yogurt and ice cream, sherbet, sorbet, fig bars, ginger snaps, fresh fruit pieces or fruit salad with low-fat yogurt dip, angel food cake with fruit topping, whole-grain cookies such as oatmeal (or lower fat varieties)	Dark chocolate, cocoa, cakes and pies cut into 2-inch squares, 2–3-oz cookies	Cookies and cakes, pies, cheese cake, ice cream, milk or white chocolate, candy

OFFERING SEASONAL AND LOCAL FOODS AT CONFERENCES AND MEETINGS

Why use seasonal and local foods?

- ◆ It supports our local community, economy, and agriculture, and it protects Vermont's farmland.
- ◆ It is better for the environment. Seasonal and local foods do not need artificial heat and light to create year-round growing conditions. Traditional systems of local farming do not need as many pesticides, herbicides, and artificial fertilizers as commercial farming does. Additionally, fewer fossil fuels are burned on foods that travel short distances from farm to table.
- ◆ Food tastes better in season.
- ◆ Food in season is less expensive.
- ◆ Local foods require less travel time; they'll be fresher and taste better.
- ◆ Local producers and processors usually do not add preservatives or other artificial ingredients.

Remember to ask the chef to use local foods. Most hotels and conference centers will accommodate when asked. The following are vendors that offer deliveries of a variety of local foods. Black River Produce and Squash Valley Produce offer daily deliveries.

Local Food Distributors

Black River Produce

P.O. Box 489
North Springfield, VT 05150
www.blackriverproduce.com
ph# (800) 228-5481
ph# (802) 886-6200

Squash Valley Produce

2597 Waterbury-Stowe Rd
Waterbury, VT 05671
ph# (802) 244-1290

Burlington Foodservice Company

784 Hercules Drive – P.O. Box 31
Colchester, VT 05446-0031
www.bfcfoods.com
ph# (800) 272-5302
ph# (802) 655-7595
fax# (802) 655-5655

Vending Machine Guidelines

Vending choices and pricing can promote healthy purchases over high fat or low fiber choices. If you are not a key decision maker, it is important to get support in your organization for any changes you would like to implement. Identify the person in your organization who handles vending contracts, and work with that person to make healthier choices available in vending machines.

Recommendations for Beverages Include:	
Fruit/Vegetable Juice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Beverages that contain at least 50% fruit or vegetable juice • Package size no larger than 12 oz
Bottled Water	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Water without any added ingredients, sparkling water, flavored water containing less than 20 calories per serving (with or without artificial sweeteners)
Dairy Products	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low-fat or non-fat milk, flavored milk or drinkable yogurt (with or without artificial sweeteners) • Package size no larger than 16 oz and less than 340 total calories
Other Beverages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low-calorie diet soda, low-calorie iced tea, low-calorie sports drinks (with or without artificial sweeteners) • “Low-calorie” \leq 40 calories per serving
Recommendations for Snacks Include:	
Cheese	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regular cheese: Serving size: 1.5 oz or smaller • Reduced-fat cheese: Serving size: 2 oz or smaller
Yogurt	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low-fat or non-fat yogurt: No larger than 8-oz package (with or without artificial sweeteners) • 8 oz should have \leq 200 calories per serving • 6 oz should have \leq 150 calories per serving • 4 oz should have \leq 100 calories per serving
Non-Dairy Snack Foods	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fat: Limit to less than 5 grams of total fat per 1-oz serving (nuts and seeds are exempt from the fat restriction) • Saturated/trans fat: Limit to less than 2 grams of saturated or trans fat per 1-oz serving • Total carbohydrates: Limit to less than 30 grams of total carbohydrates per 1-oz serving (fresh, dried, and canned fruits are exempt from the carbohydrate restrictions) • Sodium: Limit to 360 mg or less per serving (for an individual food) • For a meal-type product (large enough to be considered a meal [6 oz]), limit to 480 mg or less • Snack portion size: Serving size for snacks should be 2 oz or less (smaller portions are preferred)

Appendix A

Visualize a Portion Size

When cutting food to serve at meetings or when discussing menus with chefs, visualize these portion sizes to help your co-workers keep their servings in check.

- ◆ 3 ounces of meat: size of a deck of cards or bar of soap
- ◆ 3 ounces of fish: size of a checkbook
- ◆ 1 ounce of cheese: size of four dice or one tube of lipstick
- ◆ 1 medium potato: size of a computer mouse
- ◆ 2 tablespoons of peanut butter: size of a ping pong ball
- ◆ 1 teaspoon of butter or margarine: size of the tip of your thumb
- ◆ 1 cup of pasta: size of a tennis ball
- ◆ 1 cup of mashed potatoes or broccoli: size of your fist
- ◆ 1 average bagel: size of a hockey puck
- ◆ 1 ounce of nuts or dried fruit: size of a golf ball

Appendix B

How to Identify Foods with Trans Fats

As of January, 2006 all food labels are required to identify trans fats. However, food labels can still be confusing and the ingredient list can be just as important:

- ◆ Watch out for the words “hydrogenated” or “partially hydrogenated” that precede soybean, canola, cottonseed or other oils.
- ◆ Look to see if the hydrogenated oil is in the first three or four ingredients. If it is, this generally means there is a lot of it in the product, and you will want to avoid it.
- ◆ One current "trick" food manufacturers use is to break up the components of the food, such as the coating and the filling, by giving a full description of each component. They can take up half of the ingredient list by stating all of the ingredients in the first component, such as the inside filling of the food item. This tactic "hides" the second ingredient, often hydrogenated fat, by forcing it to appear later in the product listing.
- ◆ Vegetable oil can be liquid or hydrogenated oil. Even the phrase, "No cholesterol: contains all vegetable oil" can be misleading, as vegetable oil can raise your body's blood cholesterol levels if it has been hydrogenated or partly hydrogenated.

Example of food label with trans fats:

Nutrition Facts		
Serving Size 1/12 package (44g, about 1/4 cup dry mix)		
Servings Per Container 12		
Amount Per Serving	Mix	Baked
Calories	190	280
Calories from Fat	45	140
% Daily Value**		
Total Fat 5g*	8%	24%
Saturated Fat 2g	10%	13%
Trans Fat 1g		
Cholesterol 0mg	0%	23%
Sodium 300mg	13%	13%
Total Carbohydrate 34g	11%	11%
Dietary Fiber 0g	0%	0%
Sugars 18g		
Protein 2g		
Vitamin A	0%	0%
Vitamin C	0%	0%
Calcium	6%	8%
Iron	2%	4%
* Amount in Mix		
** Percent Daily Values are based on a 2,000 calorie diet. Your Daily Values may be higher or lower depending on your calorie needs:		
	Calories:	2,000 2,500
Total Fat	Less than	65g 80g
Sat Fat	Less than	20g 25g
Cholesterol	Less than	300mg 300mg
Sodium	Less than	2,400mg 2,400mg
Total Carbohydrate		300g 375g
Dietary Fiber		25g 30g

References

1. U.S. Department of Health and Human Services & U.S. Department of Agriculture (2005). *Dietary Guidelines for Americans 2005*. Available at:
<http://www.healthierus.gov/dietaryguidelines/>
2. University of Minnesota School of Public Health (2004). *Guidelines for Offering Healthy Foods at Meetings, Seminars and Catered Events*. Available at:
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3. New York State Department of Health Center for Community Health (2004). *Guidelines for Healthy Meetings*. Available at:
<http://www.health.state.ny.us/nysdoh/prevent/guidelines.htm>