

Canada's Food Guide – School FAQ

Canada has a new food guide!

Canada's Food Guide is now an **online suite of resources** that support Canadians in making healthy food choices available at Canada.ca/FoodGuide. Visit the new [Healthy Eating at School](#) section of the food guide website.

The messages in the new Canada's Food Guide align in general with existing Alberta Health Services healthy eating information. Later in 2019, Health Canada will be releasing Phase II; Canada's Healthy Eating Pattern for Health Professionals and Policy Makers. Canada's Healthy Eating Pattern will provide more guidance on amounts and types of foods, as well as life stage guidance.

The Healthy eating recommendations of the new food guide are available at <https://food-guide.canada.ca/en/healthy-eating-recommendations>.



Q. What has changed with the new food guide?

- A. Overall healthy eating messages haven't changed; however the way messages are presented has changed. The new Canada's Food Guide:
- no longer has food groups
 - presents healthy food choices: vegetables and fruits, whole grains and protein foods
 - combines the former Milk and Alternatives and Meat and Alternatives as protein foods
 - encourages choosing plant-based proteins more often
 - focuses on proportions of healthy foods using the [Eat Well Plate](#) rather than number of servings
 - encourages replacing saturated fat with foods that contain mostly unsaturated fat, rather than placing a limit on total fats
 - place more emphasis on how you eat, not just what you eat

Q. What does this mean with regards to menu planning and foods offered in schools?

- A. As we wait for Canada's Healthy Eating Pattern, continue to use the previous (2007) food guide and the [Alberta Nutrition Guidelines for Children and Youth](#) (ANGCY) for guidance on serving sizes and the number of servings.

Q. Are there changes that could be made now to the foods offered in schools?

- A. Yes. You could add more [plant-based proteins](#) and whole grains to your menu.
- Plant-based protein ideas include hummus, beans added to chili, lentils added to meat sauce, lentil or split pea soup, and tofu stir-fry.
 - [Whole grains](#) can be incorporated by using whole grain breads, cereals and pasta.

To help create supportive environments for healthy eating, offer healthy foods and limit the availability of [highly processed foods](#) and beverages such as:

- sugary drinks
- bakery products
- deep fried foods
- chocolate and candies
- ice cream and frozen desserts

Q. What about milk, yogurt and cheese?

A. Milk, yogurt and cheese have not been removed from the new food guide. They are included as protein foods and continue to be recommended as a practical way to help build strong bones.

Q. What about eggs, fish, lean meat and poultry?

A. Eggs, fish, and lean meats and poultry are healthy protein choices along with plant-based protein foods. Limit highly processed meats like sausages, hot dogs, and deli meats. Offer baked or roasted meats, chicken, canned fish or boiled eggs.

Q. What about juice?

A. On the new food guide, 100% juice is identified as a sugary drink, not to be consumed regularly. Offer children whole [vegetables and fruit](#) most often. If you are offering 100% juice on your menu, follow the ANGCY guideline and limit to ½ cup (125 mL) per day.

Q. What new Canada’s Food Guide resources are available from Health Canada for educating students?

A. The [food guide website](#) has many pages including Food choices, Eating habits, Recipes, Tips and Resources. Browse the sections for their short videos.

The [tips](#) section of the website has healthy eating advice for a variety of settings including school, work, and home. In this section you will also find information on healthy snacks, cooking, grocery shopping, meal planning and more.

Some resources that can be printed include:

- [Food Guide Snapshot](#)
- [Healthy Eating Recommendations](#)
- [Educational Poster](#)

Copies of the Food Guide Snapshot can be ordered in English and French from the [Health Canada Ordering System](#).

Q. Where else can I find nutrition resources?

A. Alberta Health Services [Healthy Eating Starts Here](#) website has information on nutrition and healthy eating. Visit the [School Nutrition](#) page for resources such as:

- [Curriculum Based Lesson Plans](#)
- [School Breakfast Program toolkit](#)
- [Sports Nutrition For Youth: A Handbook for Coaches](#)
- [Sugar Shocker Education Kit](#)
- [Cooking Club Manual for Children and Youth](#)
- [Healthy Vending Toolkit](#)
- [Healthy Eating Poster Series](#)

Any more questions? We are here to help. Contact your local dietitian or email PublicHealth.Nutrition@albertahealthservices.ca

