



Lunch Break

HELP FOR TODAY • HOPE FOR TOMORROW

• • • • • NUTRITION INITIATIVE • • • • •

LUNCH BREAK

Nutrition Policy for Food Procurement and Programming
Passed by the Board of Trustees on December 15, 2021

1. Statement of Purpose

Lunch Break is committed to providing access to nutrient-dense and minimally processed whole food options so that we may not just feed but also nourish our clients, our community, and our planet.

We feel it is our responsibility to empower our clients to live healthier lives by increasing their access to nutritious food. This nutrition policy communicates to clients, local partner programs and agencies, donors, and the broader community that we are committed to creating a food environment conducive to optimal health.

This policy will improve the health of our community by allowing us to enhance our existing programming, inspire our clients and provide them agency over their health and the health of their families, reflecting the culinary cultures of our diverse community and creating generational habits of good nutrition.

2. Policy Rationale and Benefits

Lunch Break has become increasingly aware of the rise in rates of obesity, diabetes, cardiovascular disease, and other diet-related conditions and diseases in the community we serve and beyond. Food insecurity and, more accurately, nutrition insecurity is linked to poor health outcomes. That link has become even more pronounced with the Covid-19 pandemic. According to Lunch Break's Executive Director, Gwendolyn Love:

“In this last year I have become even more aware of how important good nutrition is to our community. It is not only our mission to provide food to our clients, but it is our responsibility to facilitate dialogue about the importance of good nutrition and to make healthy food options accessible and desirable to all.”

Therefore, our efforts will continue to focus on providing access to procuring products that contribute greater nutritional value and those that are clearly more difficult to access, emphasizing foods that promote and protect healthy living while decreasing diet related diseases.

The development of this Nutrition Policy provides Lunch Break with a strong and intentional commitment to client health and wellbeing. It is a streamlined guide to aid staff in clear and consistent decision-making regarding food and beverage procurement, and an official communication document to share with food donors, partner programs, and the broader community. The policy also serves as a tool for management and accountability as Lunch Break moves toward the provision of more nutrient-dense foods.

3. Food Inventory Sources Covered by This Policy

This policy applies to all foods acquired by Lunch Break including:

- Foods and beverages donated by food manufacturers, distributors, retailers, organizations, producers/growers, and community members
- Foods and beverages obtained from government programs
- Foods and beverages purchased by the food bank

4. Healthful Foods Lunch Break aims to Increase and Encourage with this Policy (see items listed in green in the chart below)

This policy is based on dietary guidelines created by Lunch Break's Nutrition Policy working group in consultation with Jessica Hardy, ND, Lori Hager, MS, RD, Dr. David Leopold, MD, DABFM, DABOIM, Marissa Winters MA, RDN, NBC-HWC, Mary Brighton, MS, RDN, and Dr. Carol Penn, DO, MA, ABOM, FACOFP, and research about client-food preferences. This policy aims to actively seek, procure, and distribute foods closest to their natural state; including the following foods listed in green when appropriate and possible:

Examples Include:

- Apple with skin rather than applesauce
- An orange rather than orange juice
- Whole fresh veggies as opposed to supplements
- Baked potato rather than French fries

Procurement Guidelines

FRUIT	INCLUDE	LIMIT	AVOID	ENCOURAGED ITEMS
Inclusion Criteria: Sodium: ≤ 230 mg Total Sugar: ≤ 12 g Saturated Fat: ≤ 2 g Trans Fat: 0 g	Fresh or frozen	Preserves	Fruit packaged in syrup	Fresh or frozen fruit
	Unsweetened	Jam	Sweetened dried fruit	Canned fruit
	Packaged in water		Products containing high-fructose corn syrup	Fruit purees
	Packaged in 100% juice		Jelly	Unsweetened dried fruit

VEGETABLES	INCLUDE	LIMIT	AVOID	ENCOURAGED ITEMS
Inclusion Criteria: Sodium: ≤ 230 mg Saturated Fat: ≤ 2 g Trans Fat: 0 g	Fresh or frozen	Packaged in a sauce	Products containing high added sodium	Fresh vegetables
	Packaged in water		Products that have been fried	Canned vegetables
	Low sodium or no salt added			Low sodium vegetable stock, broth, soup, and purees
				Frozen vegetables and vegetable medleys

PROTEIN	INCLUDE	LIMIT	AVOID	ENCOURAGED ITEMS
<p>Inclusion Criteria:</p> <p>Sodium: ≤ 480 mg Total Sugar: ≤ 5 g Saturated Fat: ≤ 2 g Trans Fat: 0 g</p>	<p>Fresh or frozen</p> <hr/> <p>Minimally processed</p> <hr/> <p>Dried (beans and pulses)</p> <hr/> <p>Canned or packaged in water</p> <hr/> <p>Low sodium or no salt added</p> <hr/> <p>Nitrate and additive free</p>	<p>Dried meats/jerky</p>	<p>Products containing added sugar</p> <hr/> <p>Products containing added sodium</p> <hr/> <p>Processed products containing partially hydrogenated oils, nitrates, and preservatives</p>	<p>Plant protein</p> <hr/> <p>Lean animal protein</p> <hr/> <p>Beans, peas, and lentils</p> <hr/> <p>Eggs</p> <hr/> <p>Canned tuna and salmon</p> <hr/> <p>Nitrate-free cold cuts</p> <hr/> <p>Protein powder</p>

WHOLE GRAINS	INCLUDE	LIMIT	AVOID	ENCOURAGED ITEMS
<p>*Whole grain should be listed as the first ingredient on the nutrition label</p> <p>Inclusion Criteria:</p> <p>Sodium: ≤ 230 mg Total Sugar: • Bread/Pasta: ≤ 0 g • Cereal: ≤ 12 g Saturated Fat: ≤ 2 g Trans Fat: 0 g</p>	<p>100% Whole grain</p>	<p>Refined grains and flours</p> <hr/> <p>Boxed mixes with sodium added</p>	<p>Bleached grains and flours</p> <hr/> <p>Products containing hydrogenated fats</p> <hr/> <p>Products containing high-fructose corn syrup</p>	<p>Dried whole grains</p> <hr/> <p>Whole grain flour</p> <hr/> <p>Whole grain pasta</p> <hr/> <p>Whole grain bread</p> <hr/> <p>Whole grain cereal</p> <hr/> <p>Low-sugar granola</p> <hr/> <p>Flour, pasta, bread, and cereal made with lentil or chickpea flour</p>

FATS	INCLUDE	LIMIT	AVOID	ENCOURAGED ITEMS
Inclusion Criteria: Sodium: ≤ 230 mg Total Sugar: ≤ 4 g per 2T/1 oz Trans Fat: 0 g	Minimally refined	Canola oil	Artificial trans-fats	Olive oil
	Cold Pressed	Vegetable oil	Trans fatty acids	Avocado oil
	Virgin and extra virgin	Butter	Partially hydrogenated oil	Nut butter
		Coconut oil	Shortening	Flax oil
		Plant-based butter with coconut oil as first ingredient	Palm oil	Sunflower oil
			Corn oil	Safflower oil
			Soybean oil	Nuts and seeds
			Peanut oil	Fatty fish

DAIRY	INCLUDE	LIMIT	AVOID	ENCOURAGED ITEMS
Inclusion Criteria: Sodium: ≤ 200 mg Total Sugar: -Milk: ≤ 12 g -Yogurt: ≤ 15 g Saturated Fat: ≤ 3.5 g Trans Fat: 0 g	Organic + grass-fed	Butter	Products containing added sugar, fruit syrup, candy/ cookies, or high-fructose corn syrup	Yogurt
	Unsweetened	Cream	Processed cheese products	Cheese
	Unprocessed			Milk
				Half and half

NON-DAIRY	INCLUDE	LIMIT	AVOID	ENCOURAGED ITEMS
Inclusion Criteria: Sodium: ≤ 200 mg Total Sugar: -Milk: ≤ 12 g -Yogurt: ≤ 15 g Saturated Fat: ≤ 3.5 g Trans Fat: 0 g	Unsweetened	Products sweetened with honey, maple syrup, or agave	Products containing added sugar, fruit syrup, candy/ cookies, or high-fructose corn syrup	Soy milk
		Lightly salted or using sea salt	Products containing partially hydrogenated oils	Rice milk
			High sodium	Oat milk
				Nut milk
				Dairy-free yogurt, cheese, and creamer

BEVERAGES	INCLUDE	LIMIT	AVOID	ENCOURAGED ITEMS
Inclusion Criteria: Sodium: ≤ 50 mg Total Sugar: 0 g -100% Juice: ≤ 25 g	Water	100% juice without pulp	Sweetened beverages	Plain or mineral water
	Unsweetened		Sweet tea	Seltzer
	100% juice with pulp		Energy drinks	Coffee
			Soda/pop	Tea

PACKAGED SNACK FOODS	INCLUDE	LIMIT	AVOID	ENCOURAGED ITEMS
<p>Inclusion Criteria:</p> <p>Sodium: ≤ 150 mg Total Sugar: 10 g Saturated Fat: ≤ 2 g Trans Fat: 0 g</p>	<p>Low sodium or no salt added</p> <hr/> <p>Unsweetened</p> <hr/> <p>Baked/dehydrated/air-popped</p> <hr/>	<p>Lightly salted, salted with sea salt</p> <hr/> <p>Sweetened with fruit juice, honey, maple, or agave</p> <hr/>	<p>High sodium</p> <hr/> <p>Sugar-added</p> <hr/> <p>Products made with refined white flour</p> <hr/> <p>Products including high-fructose corn syrup</p> <hr/> <p>Products including trans fats</p> <hr/> <p>Fried foods</p> <hr/>	<p>Nut and seed singles, mixes, or individual nut butter packets</p> <hr/> <p>Unsweetened dried fruit</p> <hr/> <p>Low sodium popcorn</p> <hr/> <p>Dehydrated or baked beans/legumes</p> <hr/> <p>Dehydrated or baked vegetable chips</p> <hr/> <p>Low sodium + sugar-free jerky</p> <hr/> <p>Low sugar protein bars</p> <hr/> <p>Individual serving size hummus, bean dips, or guacamole</p> <hr/> <p>Individual serving size string cheese</p> <hr/>

Quantitative Criteria for Procurement

	INCLUDE	LIMIT	AVOID
ADDED SUGAR	< 8 g per serving	8-15 g per serving	>15 g per serving
SODIUM	< 250 mg per serving	250-500 mg/serving	>500 mg per serving
SATURATED FAT	< 2 g per serving	2-10 g/serving	>10 g per serving

5. Healthful Foods to Prioritize in This Policy

Food pantry research clearly indicates that the people served prefer receiving healthful foods—particularly fresh fruits and vegetables. Although our policy aims to increase all of the “Inclusion” and “encourage” foods outlined above, we will put considerable effort and emphasis initially on procuring more fresh and frozen fruits and vegetables, particularly those that are more colorful, nutrient-dense varieties. Additionally, efforts will be made to source foods locally whenever possible in order to support responsible and sustainable farming.

6. Foods to Deprioritize at Lunch Break

The foods and beverages that contribute mainly saturated fat, sodium, and added sugar. Such foods tend to be high in calories and low in nutrients. Lunch Break has committed to eliminating foods that are high in calories and low in nutrient density from our donated food stream. Specifically, candy, soda, and energy drinks have been targeted for their exceptionally high refined sugar content and their role in displacing nutrient-dense food. In particular, soda and candy contribute no substantive nutrition and do not promote the nature of our work, which is to feed those who are hungry. In addition, over consumption of these particular items may contribute to diet-related health complications.

Lastly, Lunch Break is not implying that there is no room for limited use of these items in a well-balanced diet, rather that there seems to be no indication that there is a lack of access to these items by our client base. Therefore, our efforts will continue to focus on procuring products that contribute greater nutritional value and those that are clearly more difficult to access.

This nutrition policy aims to deprioritize the procurement and distribution by Lunch Break of the “limit” and “avoid” foods and beverages as outlined in the above guidelines. When appropriate and possible, we will not actively seek or procure foods in this category and will work toward reducing our inventory of these types of items:

Processed and/or Ultra Processed/packaged snacks, including, but not limited to:

- Chips (corn, potato, puffed cheese, tortilla; not including lower/reduced fat or baked)
- Crackers (not including lower/reduced fat or baked)
- French fries
- Onion rings
- Pork rinds
- Bars (including granola, cereal, energy, snack bars)

Desserts - including, but not limited to:

- Cakes
- Candy
- Chocolate
- Cookies
- Donuts
- Frozen desserts
- Ice cream
- Fruit snacks

- Muffins
- Pastries
- Pies
- Popsicles
- Pudding

Sugar-sweetened beverages, including but not limited to:

- Energy drinks: Examples are Full Throttle Energy Drink®, Monster Energy Drink®, Mountain Dew AMP Energy Drink®, Red Bull Energy Drinks, Rockstar Energy Drink®
- Fruit drinks: Examples are coconut water with caloric sweetener, fruit-flavored drink or water with caloric sweetener, fruit nectars, fruit punch, fruit smoothies with caloric sweetener
- Sodas: Examples are regular soft drinks (not including diet), sugar cane beverage, sugar-sweetened carbonated water
- Sports drinks: Examples are Gatorade Sports Drinks®, Powerade Sports Drink®
- Sweetened coffees: Examples are blended iced coffee drinks, café mocha, presweetened powdered coffee mix, pre-sweetened ready-to-drink coffee
- Sweetened teas: Examples are pre-sweetened ready-to-drink tea, pre-sweetened tea mix
- Sweetened shakes and smoothies: Examples are ready-to-drink milkshakes, eggnog
- Vitamin-enhanced waters: Example is Propel Fitness Water®

7. Foods Not Covered by this Policy

Though some of the foods received by the food bank, such as some types of shelf stable mixed dishes, are in the “limit” or “reduce” categories of our nutrition guidelines due to high levels of sodium and fat, they provide clients with the ability to prepare and serve quick and easy meals. Thus, they are not the focus of this nutrition policy. Condiments and cooking staples have not been ranked by our nutrition guidelines and are also not the focus of this policy, as they enable clients to prepare meals from the staple foods received from the food bank.

Foods Not Covered by this Policy

	INCLUDE	LIMIT	AVOID	EXAMPLES
<p>PREPARED MEALS</p> <hr/> <p>DRY GOODS/ BAKING SUPPLIES/ DESSERTS</p> <hr/> <p>CONDIMENTS</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Frozen and Fresh Canned/boxed Low sodium or no salt added Unsweetened Whole Grain 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sodium added products Refined grain products 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> High sodium products Products containing hydrogenated oils Sugar added products Fried foods Processed meat products 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Low sodium soups, chili, or stews Low sodium frozen meals: plant-based, vegan, vegetarian, or containing lean animal protein
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Whole grain flours Grain-free flour Unrefined sweeteners Baking supplies Herbs and spices 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Refined flours Refined sugars 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> High-fructose corn syrup Mixes containing hydrogenated oils Spices or mixes containing MSG 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Boxed mixes Baking soda baking powder Breadcrumbs Extract Spices Iodized salt Sea salt Honey Maple syrup Agave Sugar
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Low sodium Unsweetened Made with healthy fat 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sweetened products Products containing vegetable oils Salt added products 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Products containing high-fructose corn syrup Products containing hydrogenated oils Products containing MSG 	<p>Dessert Exemptions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Birthday cakes Holiday related treats <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mustard Mayonaise Sauces Dips Marinades Dressing Ketchup