

Summary of Smart Snacks Nutrition Standards for Competitive Foods in Schools

This document summarizes the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s (USDA) Smart Snacks nutrition standards for competitive foods in schools required by the USDA’s final rule, *National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program: Nutrition Standards for All Foods Sold in School as Required by the HHS/USDA of 2010* (Federal Register, Vol. 81, No. 146, July 29, 2016). The Smart Snacks nutrition standards apply to all competitive foods sold to students during the school day in all areas of the school campus and in all schools that participate in the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) and School Breakfast Program (SBP), including public schools, private schools, and residential child care institutions (RCCIs).

- “Competitive foods” are all foods and beverages available for sale to students on the school campus during the school day, other than meals served in the USDA’s school nutrition programs. This includes cafeterias, vending machines, school stores, fundraisers, and any other locations where foods and beverages are sold to students.
- “Sale” means the exchange of foods and beverages for a determined amount of money or its equivalent, such as tickets, coupons, tokens, and similar items. If students can redeem tickets, tokens, or similar items for foods and beverages, all foods and beverages must comply with Smart Snacks. Sales also include any activities that suggest a student donation in exchange for foods and beverages.
- The “school day” is the period from midnight before to 30 minutes after the end of the official school day.
- The “school campus” is all areas of the property under the jurisdiction of the school that are accessible to students during the school day.



The Smart Snacks standards include three categories: entrees sold only a la carte; snacks and side dishes; and beverages. The food standards are the same for all grades. They include general standards (refer to [table 1](#)) and specific nutrient standards for calories, fat, saturated fat, trans fat, sugar, sodium, and caffeine (refer to [table 2](#) for snacks and side dishes, and [table 3](#) for entrees sold only a la carte). The beverage standards include different categories and portion size limits for elementary, middle, and high schools (refer to [table 4](#)). To be allowed for sale to students:

- competitive foods must meet at least one general standard and all nutrient standards; and
- competitive beverages must meet the category requirements and portion size limits.

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Foods and beverages are evaluated for compliance with Smart Snacks based on the amount of the food/beverage item **as served**, including any added accompaniments such as butter, cream cheese, syrup, ketchup, mustard, and salad dressing. Some food categories have exemptions for specific nutrient-rich foods that are naturally higher in fat (such as reduced-fat cheese, seafood, nuts, seeds, and whole eggs) or sugars (such as dried fruit). If applicable, these are indicated in the “Exemptions” column for each standard. There are no exemptions for the beverage categories.

The CSDE’s guides for competitive foods (*Guide to Competitive Foods in Non-HFC Public Schools*; and *Guide to Competitive Foods in Private Schools and Residential Child Care Institutions*) provide detailed information on how the state and federal requirements apply to sales of foods and beverages. The CSDE’s [List of Acceptable Foods and Beverages](#) webpage identifies foods and beverages that comply with the federal and state requirements.

Requirements for Fundraisers

The Smart Snacks nutrition standards apply to all fundraisers selling foods and beverages to students on school campus during the school day. “Fundraisers” are any activities during which money or its equivalent (such as tickets, coupons, tokens, and similar items) is exchanged for the purchase of a product in support of the school or school-related activities. This includes any activities that suggest a student donation in exchange for foods and beverages, since funds may be raised as a result.

- Foods and beverages that comply with the Smart Snacks standards can be sold at fundraisers on school campus during school hours, provided they comply with the state competitive foods regulations and any additional state restrictions.
- Foods and beverages that do not comply with the Smart Snacks standards can only be sold at fundraisers on the school campus after the end of the school day, provided they comply with any additional state restrictions.
- The Smart Snacks standards do not apply to foods and beverages sold during non-school hours, weekends, or off-campus fundraising events. However, some additional state restrictions apply.

For more information on the state restrictions for competitive foods, refer to “[Additional State Requirements for Competitive Foods](#)” in this document. For detailed guidance on complying with the Smart Snacks fundraiser requirements, review the CSDE’s competitive foods guide for the

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appropriate type of school or institution: *Guide to Competitive Foods in Non-HFC Public Schools*; and *Guide to Competitive Foods in Private Schools and Residential Child Care Institutions*.

Additional State Requirements for Competitive Foods

Some stricter provisions of Connecticut statutes and regulations supersede Smart Snacks and require additional restrictions for foods and beverages sold to students in schools.

- **Public schools** that choose the healthy food option of Connecticut’s Healthy Food Certification (HFC) under [Section 10-215f](#) of the Connecticut General Statutes (C.G.S.) must comply with the Connecticut Nutrition Standards (CNS), which exceeds Smart Snacks. HFC public schools must also comply with the Smart Snacks beverage standards and the stricter provisions of state statutes and regulations, including the state beverage statute (C.G.S. [Section 10-221q](#)), the state statute requiring healthy food choices (C.G.S. [Section 10-221p](#)), and the [state competitive foods regulations](#) (Sections 10-215b-1 and 10-215b-23 of the Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies). For more information, review the CSDE’s resources, *Allowable Beverages in Connecticut Public Schools*, *Overview of Connecticut Competitive Foods Regulations*, and *Requirements for Competitive Foods in HFC Public Schools*.
- **Non-HFC public schools** must comply with the Smart Snacks standards for foods and beverages and the stricter provisions of state statutes and regulations, including C.G.S. [Section 10-221q](#), C.G.S. [Section 10-221p](#), and the [state competitive foods regulations](#). For more information, review the CSDE’s resources, *Allowable Beverages in Connecticut Public Schools*, *Overview of Connecticut Competitive Foods Regulations*, and *Requirements for Competitive Foods in Non-HFC Public Schools*.
- **Private schools and RCCIs** must comply with the Smart Snacks standards for foods and beverages and the stricter provisions of the state competitive foods regulations. For more information, review the CSDE’s resources, *Overview of Connecticut Competitive Foods Regulations* and *Requirements for Competitive Foods in Private Schools and RCCIs*.

For more information, visit the CSDE’s [HFC](#), [CNS](#), and [Beverage Requirements](#) webpages. The CSDE’s guides for competitive foods provide detailed guidance on complying with the state and federal requirements for competitive foods for each type of school or institution guides (refer to “[Resources](#)” in this document).

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General Standards for Foods

The general standards in table 1 apply to all competitive foods in the categories of entrees sold only a la carte and side dishes. Entree items offered as part of the NSLP or SBP are exempt from all competitive food standards if they are sold as a competitive food on the day of service or the day after service in the lunch or breakfast program, and are offered in the same or smaller portion sizes as the NSLP and SBP, and with the same accompaniments. For information on the nutrient standards for entrees, refer to [table 3](#).

Table 1. General standards for competitive foods	
Standard	Exemptions
<p>To be allowable, a competitive food item must meet all of the competitive food nutrient standards (refer to table 2 and table 3) AND:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. be a grain product that contains 50 percent or more whole grains by weight or has whole grains as the first ingredient*; OR 2. have as the first ingredient* one of the non-grain main food groups: fruits, vegetables, dairy, or protein foods (meat, beans, poultry, seafood, eggs, nuts, seeds, etc.); OR 3. be a combination food that contains at least ¼ cup fruit and/or vegetable. <p>* If water is the first ingredient, the second ingredient must be one of the above.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fresh fruits and vegetables with no added ingredients except water are exempt from all nutrient standards. • Canned and frozen fruits with no added ingredients except water, or that are packed in 100 percent juice, extra light syrup, or light syrup, are exempt from all nutrient standards. • Low sodium/no salt added canned vegetables with no added fats are exempt from all nutrient standards.

Public schools that choose to implement the healthy food option of HFC under C.G.S. [Section 10-215f](#) must comply with the CNS instead of the USDA Smart Snacks standards. For more information, visit the CSDE's [CNS](#) and [HFC](#) webpages.

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Nutrient Standards for Foods

The nutrient standards in table 2 apply to all competitive foods in the category of snacks and side dishes. This category includes all foods that do not meet the definition of entree items. Examples include, but are not limited to:

- fruits and vegetables (fresh, frozen, canned, and dried);
- pasta, rice, and cooked cereal grains, e.g., quinoa, bulgur, and bulgur;
- snack foods such as chips, crackers, popcorn, rice cakes, hard pretzels, pita chips, snack mix, and trail mix;
- breakfast cereals, e.g., cold ready-to-eat (RTE) cereals and cooked hot cereals such as oatmeal;
- nuts and seeds;
- peanut butter and other nut butters, e.g., almond butter and sunflower seed butter;
- dried meat snacks, e.g., beef jerky and meat sticks;
- bakery items, e.g., pastries, toaster pastries, muffins, waffles, pancakes, French toast, soft pretzels, rolls, and buns;
- desserts, e.g., cookies, brownies, cake, pie, and pudding;
- frozen desserts, e.g., frozen fruit bars, ice cream, and ice cream novelties;
- cereal bars and granola bars;
- cheese, e.g., low fat cheese sticks and low-fat cheese cubes;
- yogurt and soy yogurt; and
- school-made fruit/vegetable smoothies. **Note:** Smoothies that also contain a meat/meat alternate such as yogurt or peanut butter meet the entree definition (refer to [table 3](#)).

Exemption for sugar-free chewing gum

Sugar-free chewing gum is exempt from all Smart Snacks standards, provided the sales comply with the state competitive foods regulations. Section 10-215b-23 of the Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies requires that the income from any foods and beverages sold to students anywhere on school premises from 30 minutes before up through 30 minutes after any of the USDA's school nutrition programs must accrue to the nonprofit food service account. For more information, review the CSDE's resource, [Overview of Connecticut Competitive Foods Regulations](#), the CSDE's guides for competitive foods (refer to "Resources" in this document), and [CSDE Operational Memorandum No. 1-18: Accrual of Income from Sales of Competitive Foods in Schools](#).

Public schools that choose to implement the healthy food option of HFC under C.G.S. [Section 10-215f](#) must comply with the CNS instead of the USDA Smart Snacks standards. For more information, visit the CSDE's [CNS](#) and [HFC](#) webpages.

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Table 2. Nutrient standards for snacks and side dishes

Snacks and side dishes are evaluated for compliance with the Smart Snacks nutrient standards based on the amount of the food item **as served**, including any added accompaniments such as butter, margarine, oil, cream cheese, jam, jelly, syrup, sugar, salt, ketchup, mustard, relish, salad dressing, barbeque sauce, gravy, dipping sauce, sour cream, and whipped cream.

Standard	Exemptions
<p>Calories: No more than 200 calories per item as served, including any added accompaniments such as butter, cream cheese, and salad dressing.</p>	<p>Entree items served as a NSLP or SBP entree are exempt on the day of or day after service in the program meal.</p>
<p>Total fat: No more than 35 percent of calories from total fat as served, including any added accompaniments.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduced fat cheese (including part-skim mozzarella) is exempt from the total fat standard. • Nuts and seeds and nut/seed butters are exempt from the total fat standard. • Products consisting of only dried fruit with nuts and/or seeds with no added nutritive sweeteners or fats are exempt from the total fat standard. • Seafood with no added fat is exempt from the total fat standard. • Whole eggs without added fat are exempt from the total fat standard. <p><i>Combination products other than paired exempt foods are not exempt and must meet all the nutrient standards.</i></p>

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Table 2. Nutrient standards for standards for snacks and side dishes, *continued*

Standard	Exemptions
<p>Saturated fat: Less than 10 percent of calories from saturated fat as served, including any added accompaniments.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduced fat cheese (including part-skim mozzarella) is exempt from the saturated fat standard. • Nuts and seeds and nut/seed butters are exempt from the saturated fat standard. • Products consisting of only dried fruit with nuts and/or seeds with no added nutritive sweeteners or fats are exempt from the saturated fat standard. • Whole eggs without added fat are exempt from the saturated fat standard. <p style="color: red;"><i>Combination products other than paired exempt foods are not exempt and must meet all the nutrient standards.</i></p>
<p>Trans fat: Zero grams of trans fat as served (no more than 0.5 gram per portion), including any added accompaniments.</p>	<p>None</p>
<p>Sugar: No more than 35 percent of weight from total sugar, as served.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dried whole fruits or vegetables; dried whole fruit or vegetable pieces; and dehydrated fruits or vegetables with no added nutritive sweeteners are exempt from the sugar standard. • Dried whole fruits or pieces, with nutritive sweeteners that are required for processing and/or palatability purposes (i.e., dried cranberries, tart cherries, or blueberries) are exempt from the sugar standard. • Products consisting of only exempt dried fruit with nuts and/or seeds with no added nutritive sweeteners or fats are exempt from the sugar standard.

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Table 2. Nutrient standards for standards for snacks and side dishes, *continued*

Standard	Exemptions
<p>Sodium: No more than 200 milligrams of sodium per item as served, including any added accompaniments.</p>	None
<p>Accompaniments: Use of accompaniments is limited when competitive food is sold to students in school. The accompaniment must be included in the nutrient profile as part of the food item served and meet all proposed standards. Examples of accompaniments include butter, margarine, oil, cream cheese, jam, jelly, syrup, sugar, salt, ketchup, mustard, relish, salad dressing, barbeque sauce, gravy, dipping sauce, sour cream, and whipped cream.</p>	None
<p>Caffeine</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Elementary and Middle Schools: Foods and beverages must be caffeine-free with the exception of trace amounts of naturally occurring caffeine substances. • High School: Foods and beverages may contain caffeine. * <p>* Public schools: <i>The stricter caffeine standards of C.G.S. Section 10-221q supersede the Smart Snacks beverage standards.</i> The state beverage statute prohibits sales of caffeinated beverages (such as tea and coffee) to students in public schools at all times, unless the beverages meet specific exemption criteria. For more information, refer to “Additional state beverage requirements for public schools” in this document and visit the CSDE’s Beverage Requirements webpage.</p>	None

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Table 3. Nutrient standards for entrees sold only a la carte

Any entree item offered as part of the NSLP or SBP is exempt from all competitive food standards if it is sold as a competitive food on the day of service or the day after service in the lunch or breakfast program. Exempt entrees that are sold as competitive foods must be offered in the same or smaller portion sizes as the NSLP and SBP, and with the same accompaniments. Entrees are evaluated for compliance with the Smart Snacks nutrient standards based on the amount of the food item **as served**, including any added accompaniments such as butter, margarine, oil, cream cheese, jam, jelly, syrup, sugar, salt, ketchup, mustard, relish, salad dressing, barbeque sauce, gravy, dipping sauce, sour cream, and whipped cream.

An “entree item” is a main dish food from one of following three categories:

- a combination food of meat/meat alternate and whole grain-rich food;
- a combination food of vegetable/fruit and meat/meat alternate; or
- a meat/meat alternate alone, with the exception of yogurt, low-fat or reduced fat cheese, nuts, seeds, nut and seed butters and meat snacks.

School-made fruit/vegetable smoothies that also contain a meat/meat alternate such as yogurt or peanut butter meet the entree definition.

Grain-only items at breakfast: At **breakfast only**, the entree definition also includes whole grain-rich grain-only items, such as bagels, muffins, and waffles. Schools can determine which grain-only items are defined as entree items for breakfasts offered as part of the SBP.

Standard	Exemptions
Calories: No more than 350 calories per item as served including any added accompaniments.	Entree items served as a NSLP or SBP entree are exempt on the day of or day after service in the program meal.
Total fat: No more than 35 percent of calories from total fat as served including any added accompaniments.	Seafood with no added fat is exempt from the total fat standard.
Saturated fat: Less than 10 percent of calories from saturated fat as served including any added accompaniments.	None

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Table 3. Nutrient standards for entrees sold only a la carte, *continued*

Standard	Exemptions
Trans fat: Zero grams of trans fat as served (no more than 0.5 gram per portion) including any added accompaniments.	None
Sugar: No more than 35 percent of weight from total sugar as served.	None
Sodium: No more than 480 milligrams of sodium per item as served including any added accompaniments.	None
<p>Caffeine Elementary and middle school: Foods and beverages must be caffeine-free with the exception of trace amounts of naturally occurring caffeine substances. *</p> <p>* Public schools: <i>The stricter caffeine standards of C.G.S. Section 10-221q supersede the Smart Snacks beverage standards.</i> The state beverage statute prohibits sales of caffeinated beverages (such as tea and coffee) to students in public schools at all times, unless the beverages meet criteria. For more information, refer to “Additional state beverage requirements for public schools” in this document and visit the CSDE’s Beverage Requirements webpage.</p>	None

Nutrient Standards for Beverages

The Smart Snacks nutrition standards define five categories of beverages that may be sold to elementary and middle students, and seven categories of beverages that may be sold to high school students. There are no exemptions to these beverage categories.

For **high schools only**, no calorie or low-calorie beverages in the category of “flavored and/or carbonated beverages” are evaluated for compliance with the Smarts Snacks nutrition standards based on the amount of the beverage item **as served**, including any added accompaniments, e.g., coffee with milk, cream and sugar, tea with milk, cream and honey, and hot chocolate with milk and marshmallows.

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Private schools and RCCIs must comply with the Smart Snacks beverage standards. Public schools (HFC and non-HFC) must comply with the Smart Snacks beverage standards and the stricter provisions of the additional state beverage requirements indicated below.

Additional state beverage requirements for public schools

In addition to complying with Smart Snacks, all Connecticut public school districts must comply with the state beverage requirements of C.G.S. [Section 10-221q](#). Some stricter provisions of the state beverage statute supersede the Smart Snacks beverage standards. **Beverages that do not comply with C.G.S. Section 10-221q cannot be sold to students in public schools even if they meet the Smart Snacks standards.** This statute does not apply to private schools or RCCIs.

The Smart Snacks beverage standards apply only to beverages sold to students separately from school meals during the **school day**, in schools and institutions that participate in the USDA's school nutrition programs. The state beverage statute applies to **all public schools**, regardless of whether they participate in the USDA's school nutrition programs, and to all beverages sold to students **at all times**, either as part of school meals or separately from school meals.

Beverages that do not meet the requirements of state statute can only be sold to students in public schools if the local board of education or school governing authority votes to allow exemptions, and the beverages are sold at the location of an event that occurs after the school day or on the weekend, provided they are not sold from a vending machine or school store. An "event" is an occurrence that involves more than just a regularly scheduled practice, meeting, or extracurricular activity, e.g., soccer games, school plays, and school debates are events but soccer practices, play rehearsals, and debate team meetings are not. For more information on beverage exemptions, review the CSDE's resource, [Exemptions for Foods and Beverages in Public Schools](#).

For more information on the state beverage requirements for public schools, review the CSDE's resources, [Allowable Beverages in Connecticut Schools](#) and [Beverage Requirements for Connecticut Public Schools](#) (presentation). The CSDE's guides for competitive foods (refer to "[Resources](#)" in this document) provide detailed guidance on complying with the state and federal requirements for beverages in schools.

Beverages that comply with federal and state requirements are included on the CSDE's [List of Acceptable Foods and Beverages](#) webpage.

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Table 4. Standards and portion size limits for beverages

Beverage category	Elementary	Middle	High
Low-fat (1%) milk, unflavored ¹	8 fluid ounces (fl oz)	12 fl oz	12 fl oz
Nonfat milk, flavored or unflavored ¹ including nutritionally equivalent milk alternatives permitted by the school meal requirements ²	8 fl oz	12 fl oz	12 fl oz
100% fruit/vegetable juice ³	8 fl oz	12 fl oz	12 fl oz
100% fruit/vegetable juice diluted with water and no added sweeteners (with or without carbonation) ⁴	8 fl oz	12 fl oz	12 fl oz
Plain water (with or without carbonation) ⁵	Unlimited	Unlimited	Unlimited
Calorie-free, flavored water (with or without carbonation)	Not permitted	Not permitted	20 fl oz *
Flavored and/or carbonated beverages ⁶ <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Less than 5 calories per 8 fluid ounces * or • No more than 10 calories per 20 fluid ounces * 	Not permitted	Not permitted	12 fl oz *
Flavored and/or carbonated beverages ⁶ <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No more than 40 calories per 8 fluid ounces * or • No more than 60 calories per 12 fluid ounces * 	Not permitted	Not permitted	12 fl oz *
* These beverage categories are evaluated for compliance with Smarts Snacks based on the amount of the beverage item as served , including any added accompaniments, e.g., coffee with milk or cream and sugar; tea with milk or cream and honey; and hot chocolate with milk and marshmallows.			

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Table 4. Standards and portion size limits for beverages, *continued*

Additional state requirements for public schools

The state beverage statute applies to all beverages sold to students in Connecticut public schools (HFC and non-HFC) as part of school meals and separately from school meals, regardless of whether the public school participates in the USDA's school nutrition programs. In addition to Smart Snacks, public schools must meet the stricter beverage requirements of C.G.S. Section 10-221q below.

- ¹ **Milk** must contain no more than 4 grams of sugar per ounce and no artificial sweeteners.
- ² **Nondairy milk alternatives** such as soy milk must contain no artificial sweeteners, no more than 4 grams of sugar per ounce, no more than 35 percent of calories from fat per portion, and no more than 10 percent of calories from saturated fat per portion. For more information on allowable products, review the CSDE's resource, *Allowable Milk Substitutions for Children without Disabilities in School Nutrition Programs*.
- ³ **100% fruit/vegetable juice** cannot contain added sugars, sweeteners, or artificial sweeteners.
- ⁴ **100% fruit/vegetable juice diluted with water** must contain no added sugars, sweeteners, or artificial sweeteners, and must also meet the requirements specified in the CSDE's handout, *Requirements for Beverages Containing Water and Juice*.
- ⁵ **Water** cannot contain added sugars, sweeteners, artificial sweeteners, or caffeine.
- ⁶ **Flavored and/or carbonated beverages** such as soda, sports drinks, coffee, tea, and caffeinated beverages do not comply with C.G.S. Section 10-221q. ***The stricter provisions of the state beverage statute supersede the Smart Snacks beverage standards for high schools.*** The state beverage statute prohibits sales of all sweetened and caffeinated beverages (such as tea and coffee) at all times to students in public schools, unless they meet specific exemption criteria. For more information, "[Additional state beverage requirements for public schools](#)" in this document.

Consult the CSDE's [List of Acceptable Foods and Beverages](#) webpage for beverages that meet state and federal requirements. For more information, visit the CSDE's [Beverage Requirements](#) webpage.

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Table 5. Definitions

a la carte sales: Foods and beverages sold separately from reimbursable meals in the USDA’s school nutrition programs. Also known as “competitive foods.”

artificial sweeteners: Ingredients without calories used as sugar substitutes to sweeten foods and beverages. Common artificial sweeteners include acesulfame potassium (Acesulfame-K), aspartame (NutraSweet, Equal), neotame, saccharin, sucralose (Splenda), and tagatose. These nonnutritive sweeteners are calorie-free except for aspartame, which is very low in calories.

combination foods: Products that contain two or more components representing two or more of the recommended food groups (fruit, vegetable, dairy, protein, or grains). Examples include yogurt and fruit parfait, hummus with vegetables, and cheese and crackers. Many combination foods, such as pizza, lasagna, and hamburger on a whole-grain bun, also meet the definition for “entree items.”

competitive foods: Any foods and beverages available for sale to students on the school campus during the school day, other than meals served through the USDA’s school meal programs. Competitive food sales include, but are not limited to, cafeteria a la carte sales, vending machines, school stores, and fundraisers. Sales also include any activity during which currency, tokens, tickets, or similar items are exchanged for foods or beverages.

entree items: A main dish food item that belongs to one of the following three categories: 1) a combination food of meat/meat alternate and whole grain-rich food; 2) a combination food of vegetable/fruit and meat/meat alternate; and 3) a meat/meat alternate alone, with the exception of yogurt, low-fat or reduced fat cheese, nuts, seeds, nut and seed butters, and meat snacks. At breakfast only, the entree definition also includes whole grain-rich grain-only items, such as bagels, muffins, and waffles.

nutritive sweeteners: Sweeteners that provide energy (calories) such as sugars and syrups, e.g., brown sugar, corn sweetener, corn syrup, dextrose, fructose, fruit juice concentrates, glucose, high-fructose corn syrup, honey, invert sugar, lactose, malt syrup, maltose, molasses, raw sugar, sucrose, sugar, and syrup.

nonnutritive sweeteners: Ingredients without calories used as sugar substitutes to sweeten foods and beverages. Nonnutritive sweeteners include artificial sweeteners such as acesulfame-potassium, neotame, saccharin, and sucralose, and “natural” sweeteners such as stevia, e.g., Rebiana, Truvia, PureVia, and SweetLeaf.

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Table 5. Definitions, *continued*

paired exempt foods: Foods that when packaged together and sold with other products (without added ingredients) retain their individually designated exemption for total fat, saturated fat, and sugar. For example, peanut butter is exempt from the total fat and saturated fat requirements. When it is paired with a vegetable or fruit, such as celery or apples, the paired snack retains the total fat and saturated fat exemptions and may be served if the calorie and sodium limits are met. For more information, review [CSDE Operational Memorandum No. 59-14: *Smart Snacks Standards for Exempt Foods when Paired Together*](#).

portion size: The amount of the item as packaged or served. The individual serving size or package cannot exceed 480 calories for entrees or 200 calories for all other foods.

reimbursable school meal: A meal that meets the requirements of the USDA's National School Lunch Program (NSLP) or School Breakfast Program (SBP).

school day: The period from midnight before to 30 minutes after the end of the official school day.

school campus: All areas of the property under the jurisdiction of the school that are accessible to students during the school day.

total sugars: All sources of sugars including the naturally occurring sugars in foods such as fruits, vegetables and milk, and sugars added to foods, e.g., brown sugar, corn sweetener, corn syrup, dextrose, fructose, glucose, high fructose corn syrup, honey, invert sugar, lactose, malt syrup, maltose, molasses, raw sugar, sucrose, sugar, and syrup.

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Resources

A Guide to Smart Snacks in Schools (USDA):

<https://www.fns.usda.gov/tn/guide-smart-snacks-schools>

Allowable Beverages in Connecticut Public Schools (CSDE):

https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/CompFoods/Allowable_Beverages_Public_Schools.pdf

Beverage Requirements (CSDE webpage):

<https://portal.ct.gov/SDE/Nutrition/Beverage-Requirements>

Comparison of the Connecticut Nutrition Standards and the USDA's Smart Snacks Nutrition Standards (CSDE):

https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/CompFoods/Comparison_Chart_Connecticut_Nutrition_Standards_and_Smart_Snacks.pdf

CSDE Operational Memorandum No. 1-18: Accrual of Income from Sales of Competitive Foods in Schools:

<https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/NSLP/Memos/OM2018/OM01-18.pdf>

CSDE Operational Memorandum No. 29-14: Federal and State Requirements for Grain-Only Entrees: Smart Snacks versus Connecticut Nutrition Standards:

<https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/NSLP/Memos/OM2014/OM29-14.pdf>

CSDE Operational Memorandum No. 31-14: Federal and State Requirements for Culinary Education Programs: Smart Snacks versus Connecticut Nutrition Standards:

<https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/NSLP/Memos/OM2014/OM31-14.pdf>

CSDE Operational Memorandum No. 59-14: Smart Snacks Standards for Exempt Foods when Paired Together: <https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/NSLP/Memos/OM2014/OM59-14.pdf>

Final Rule: National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program: Nutrition Standards for All Foods Sold in School as Required by the HHS of 2010 (Federal Register, Vol. 81, No. 146, July 29, 2016):

<https://www.fns.usda.gov/school-meals/fr-072916d>

Guide to Competitive Foods in Non-HFC Public Schools (CSDE):

https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/CompFoods/Competitive_Foods_Guide_NonHFC.pdf

Guide to Competitive Foods in Private Schools and Residential Child Care Institutions (CSDE):

https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/CompFoods/Competitive_Foods_Guide_Private_RCCI.pdf

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List of Acceptable Foods and Beverages (CSDE webpage):

<https://portal.ct.gov/SDE/Nutrition/List-of-Acceptable-Foods-and-Beverages>

Overview of Connecticut Competitive Foods Regulations (CSDE):

https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/CompFoods/Overview_CT_Competitive_Foods_Regulations.pdf

Overview of Federal and State Laws for Competitive Foods in Connecticut Public Schools, Private Schools, and Residential Child Care Institutions (CSDE):

https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/CompFoods/Overview_Federal_State_Laws_Competitive_Foods.pdf

Overview of Healthy Food Certification (CSDE):

<https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/HFC/HFCOverview.pdf>

Requirements for Competitive Foods in Non-HFC Public Schools (CSDE):

https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/HFC/Requirements_Competitive_Foods_NonHFC.pdf

Requirements for Competitive Foods in Private Schools and Residential Child Care Institutions (CSDE):

https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/HFC/Requirements_Competitive_Foods_Private_RCCI.pdf

Requirements for Food and Beverage Fundraisers in Non-HFC Public Schools (CSDE):

https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/HFC/Fundraiser_Requirements_NonHFC.pdf

Requirements for Food and Beverage Fundraisers in Private Schools and Residential Child Care Institutions (CSDE):

https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/HFC/Fundraiser_Requirements_Private_RCCI.pdf

Requirements for Foods and Beverages in Culinary Programs in Non-HFC Public Schools (CSDE):

https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/HFC/Culinary_Programs_Requirements_NonHFC.pdf

Requirements for Foods and Beverages in Culinary Programs in Private Schools and Residential Child Care Institutions (CSDE):

https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/HFC/Culinary_Programs_Requirements_Private_RCCI.pdf

Requirements for Foods and Beverages in School Stores in Non-HFC Public Schools (CSDE):

https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/HFC/School_Store_Requirements_NonHFC.pdf

Summary of Smart Snacks Nutrition Standards for Competitive Foods in Schools

Requirements for Foods and Beverages in School Stores in Private Schools and Residential Child Care Institutions (CSDE):

https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/HFC/School_Store_Requirements_Private_RCCI.pdf

Requirements for Foods and Beverages in Vending Machines in Non-HFC Public Schools (CSDE):

https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/HFC/Vending_Machine_Requirements_NonHFC.pdf

Requirements for Foods and Beverages in Vending Machines in Private Schools and Residential Child Care Institutions (CSDE):

https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/HFC/Vending_Machine_Requirements_Private_RCCI.pdf

Resources for Meeting the Federal and State Requirements for Competitive Foods in Schools (CSDE):

https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/HFC/Resources_Federal_State_Requirements_Competitive_Foods.pdf

Smart Snacks Nutrition Standards (CSDE webpage):

<https://portal.ct.gov/SDE/Nutrition/Smart-Snacks-Nutrition-Standards>

Tools for Schools: Focusing on Smart Snacks (USDA webpage):

<https://www.fns.usda.gov/school-meals/tools-schools-focusing-smart-snacks>

Summary of Smart Snacks Nutrition Standards for Competitive Foods in Schools



For more information, visit the CSDE's [Smart Snacks Nutrition Standards](#) and [Beverage Requirements](#) webpages or contact the [school nutrition programs staff](#) in the CSDE's Bureau of Health/Nutrition, Family Services and Adult Education, 450 Columbus Boulevard, Suite 504, Hartford, CT 06103-1841.

This document is available at https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/CompFoods/Summary_Smart_Snacks_Nutrition_Standards.pdf.

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