



## Menu Tips and Recommendations

This document contains a series of ideas and suggestions for your breakfast program that will help you keep waste to a minimum, address any food management needs you might have and learn more about proper preparation and storage protocols.

You'll find a number of links to documents listed under the Nutrition heading of the [School Corner](#) section of our website, as well as some recipes that you can use to add variety to your meal plans.

Each of the menus prepared by Breakfast Club of Canada have been developed to comply with our [General Nutrition Guidelines](#), Canada's Food Guide and applicable school food policies.

**Every breakfast menu must contain a selection of healthy foods, with at least one serving from each of the three following categories:**

- Vegetables and fruits
- Whole grains
- Proteins

**Water is the beverage of choice and must be made available at every meal.**

**All cooking and preparation must be done on site at the school** in accordance with BCC's nutrition guidelines and **MAPAQ hygiene and sanitation standards**, both of which are posted to our [School Corner](#).

### FOOD DELIVERIES

**Food orders are generated automatically** based on the actual needs of each school, which are determined according to attendance and the type of menu served.

- Be sure to alert your BCC coordinator to any significant increases or decreases in your attendance numbers (10 or more).
- Keep a detailed inventory to identify any quantities to be reduced.
- Send any adjustments to your order to your coordinator by the established cutoff date.
- Keep enough supplies on hand for about two meals using unperishable items (e.g., cereal) so you can adjust when the unexpected occurs (increased enrolment, storm days, delivery issues, etc.).
- Before a longer holiday period (e.g., spring break), remember to notify your milk delivery service, if you have one, in order to change your order or suspend service until the breakfast program resumes.

- **Determine how much food to distribute to each classroom:**
  - Use the menu to note quantities and daily attendance.
  - Put a menu sheet in each classroom bin for teachers to write down what they need.
  - Ask teachers to write in the required quantities for their classroom using the [specially designed label](#) and stick on the bin.
- **Assess the amount of food to prepare each morning as accurately as possible to avoid waste:**
  - Use the [Single Serving Chart](#) to calculate the serving size for each age group and estimate the quantities required.
  - Begin serving with smaller portions and instruct children to come back for seconds as needed.
  - Any leftover prepared food that cannot be served another day (e.g., sliced apples, toasted English muffins) can be given to children at lunch/snack time or during daycare hours. Be sure to reduce the quantities of any surplus items in your subsequent menu planning.
  - Plan a “**leftover buffet**” when your unserved leftovers reach a certain point, while still ensuring that each breakfast covers all three food categories. We’ve developed a handy tool for you on [Manage your Food Inventory](#).

## FOOD STORAGE

Make sure food is properly rotated to respect food expiration dates. If you’re getting close to the best-before dates on your food labels or if something is starting to lose its freshness, here are a few clever workarounds:

### Vegetables and Fruits

Regularly check your produce for signs of ripening. Items with a shorter shelf life (e.g., pears) should be served first whenever possible.

Any pieces of fruit that are past their prime can be turned into compote, poured into a sealed container and frozen for longer storage.

Simple Applesauce (or Pear Sauce):

- 8 c. (2 L) apples and/or pears (peeled or unpeeled and thoroughly washed)
- ½ c. (125 mL) water and 1 tbsp. (15 mL) lemon juice
- ¼ tsp. (1.25 mL) ground cinnamon (*optional*)

Cook in a saucepan over medium heat for 15 to 20 minutes, then process in a blender until smooth.

For more ideas on how to extend the life of fresh produce, be sure to refer to our [8 Easy Tips to Help Make Your Fruits and Veggies Last Longer](#).

### Cheese

Cheese is a fantastic (and popular) choice for your breakfast dishes. You can use it such recipes as:

- Classic Grilled Cheese Sandwich



- [Cheese & Veggie Egg Cups](#)
- [Spinach and Cheese Strata](#)

Mozzarella and other types of cheese freeze very well. It's best to grate it or cut it up into individual servings before freezing.

## **Yogurt**

**Yogurt can be frozen prior to the best-before date.**

Thaw in the fridge before serving. Place in a large bowl and mix vigorously (for a smoother texture). Then serve in a bowl or glass (rather than in the original packaging to avoid confusion around the best-before date).

You can also make a tried-and-true favourite: frozen yogurt pops. Simply place a craft stick into the centre of a yogurt cup before putting it in the freezer. Unmould, serve and wait for them to clamour for more!

## **Eggs**

**Hard-boiled eggs** (not safe to freeze). Check out fact sheet on [Creative Ideas for Using Hard-Boiled Eggs](#) for some clever twists on this classic ingredient.

**Fresh eggs (can be frozen uncooked if prepared as follows):**

- Crack the eggs and whisk the yolk and white together. Pour into freezer-safe containers, cover and freeze.
- Label the contents, indicating the number of eggs and the date of freezing.

Important:

- **Let thaw in the refrigerator overnight** or run under cold water prior to using.
- **Make sure thawed eggs are completely cooked through.**

Some *egg-cellent* recipe ideas:

- [Breakfast Quesadillas](#)
- [Broccoli Omelette Bites](#)

## **Whole-Grain Baked Goods**

Store bread and other bakery items in the freezer to keep them fresh and extend their shelf life. Thaw at room temperature to revive their original taste and texture. You can refreeze thawed bread as needed, although this may dry it out.

Looking for a way to breathe new life into dried-out bread slices and ends of the loaf? Try our [French Toast Bake with Berries](#).

## **Milk (Regular and UHT)**

**UNOPENED milk in its original packaging can be kept for up to six weeks** in the freezer without substantially affecting its nutritional value or flavour. Thaw in the refrigerator and whisk if separated. Noted that thawed milk is best suited for cooking rather than drinking.

## **FOOD PREPARATION**

### **Eggs**

**Scrambled Egg Omelette:** About 10 eggs mixed with 1 c. (250 mL) of milk. Yields 8 to 9 servings.

- **Electric skillet:** You can prepare the egg mixture the day before and refrigerate in an airtight container. Cook over medium heat to avoid overcooking. Keep warm in the skillet (on the “warm” setting) or a chafing dish.
- **Oven:** Pour the egg mixture into an oven-ready dish (for example a 4” (10 cm) chafing tray) and place in a 350°F/180°C oven until cooked through.

**IMPORTANT:** Never heat up leftover eggs in a chafing dish. Always use a microwave or stove. Warm through at least 3 minutes before serving.

**Hard-boiled eggs:** Place eggs in a saucepan and cover them with cold water. Cover and bring water to a boil. Remove from heat immediately to stop the water from boiling and let stand for 12 minutes. Drain and run under cold water immediately or leave in the saucepan to let cool. (Incidentally, young hands are a big help in peeling them!)

For more ideas, go to the **[Fédération des producteurs d’œufs du Québec website](#)**.

### **Baked Goods**

Bread can be served as is, toasted or heated up.

**Pro tip:** The “heels” (the ends of the loaf) that some children turn their nose up at are perfectly good for a sandwich, especially if you turn the crusts in.

### **French Toast**

Whisk together 10 eggs with 2 c. (500 mL) of milk, adding more milk as needed if too thick. Dip slices of bread in the mixture, and place on a preheated skillet to cook on both sides. Drizzle with fruit coulis or maple syrup. French toast can be prepared the day before and stored in the refrigerator overnight covered in plastic wrap. Yields 20 servings.

## Cereal or Muesli Cups

- **Cereal:** Can be poured into a fully opened milk carton or served in a washable bowl. Cereal can also be eaten dry, without milk, or with yogurt.
- **Muesli Cups:** Granola-type cereal is generally paired with yogurt. Children can sprinkle the granola directly into their yogurt. If served in a transparent bowl or glass, layer the two and garnish with a few pieces of fresh fruit for extra pizzazz.

## Breakfast Burritos

Place the equivalent of one omelette-style scrambled egg into the centre of a tortilla, add a slice of mozzarella cheese or a third of a slice of cheddar, wrap the sides of the tortilla around the egg and then fold down the ends, one at a time. Warm in a chafing dish, letting the cheese melt.

**Make it your way:** Serve with sliced cherry tomatoes for a burst of colour and extra nutritional value.

**Pro tip:** For easier handling, make sure the tortillas are fresh or completely thawed before assembly.

- **Prep option #1:** Cook up one batch of scrambled egg omelette (see above for instructions). Having this ready ahead of time makes assembly a snap and ensures you have just the right quantity of egg in each burrito.
- **Prep option #2:** Use freshly scrambled eggs instead. Avoid too much stirring while cooking to achieve an omelette-like consistency.

## ADDING VARIETY TO YOUR MENU

Here are a few ideas to inspire you!

- **Flavoured Water:** Pour water into a pitcher, add sliced fruit and ice cubes. It's a great way to encourage kids to make water their beverage of choice!
- **Smoothies:** Smoothies are super easy, super delicious and super versatile, which is why [a whole section](#) of our cookbook is devoted to them. This recipe for [Spinach Tofu Smoothie](#), combining banana, mango and pineapple, is also a wildly popular choice.
- **Yogurt on a Stick:** Place a craft stick into the centre of a yogurt cup and freeze. Keep frozen until serving.
- **Banana Boat:** Cut bananas lengthwise, spread with WowButter\* and sprinkle cereal on top. A lip-smacking breakfast treat!
- **Breakfast Pops:** In a blender, combine 1 banana, 1 tbsp. (15 mL) WowButter, 1 individual serving of yogurt (3.5 oz/100 g) and a splash of milk. Pour into popsicle moulds and freeze.
- See our [Creative Ideas for Using Soy Nut Butter](#) for more ways to incorporate WowButter into your breakfast menu.

\***WowButter** is a soy-based peanut butter alternative that can be used in a wide range of recipes.



### **Tortilla Roll-Ups**

- **Sweet:** Place apple slices and a slice of cheddar or other cheese into a tortilla and roll.
- **Savory:** Spread hummus onto a tortilla, roll and serve with carrot and/or pepper sticks.

**Bring on the veggies!:** Slice into bite-sized pieces and serve raw with a dip, or work them into a favourite baked good (carrot muffins, zucchini bread, etc.). Try a little sliced cucumber in the classic bagel and cream cheese combo. Let your imagination run wild!

See our article on [How to Incorporate More Vegetables Into Your Morning Routine](#) for more ideas.

- We've also compiled some [Creative Ideas for Using Baby Carrots](#) to tickle kids' taste buds.

**Bring on the fruit!:** Combine different shapes, textures and colours. Include some lesser-known fruit to help expand young palates. Add dried or thawed frozen fruit to yogurt, cereal and other dishes. And be sure to check out our fact sheets for additional inspiration:

- [Creative Ideas for Using Raisins](#)
- [Creative Ideas for Using Apples](#)

**Applesauce:** See [Creative Ideas for Using Applesauce](#) for some original ways to work applesauce or fruit compote into your breakfast dishes.

## **REDUCE YOUR ENVIRONMENTAL FOOTPRINT**

- **Opt for larger or bulk packaging** for items like breakfast cereal and milk to keep waste to a minimum.
- Provide **washable and reusable dishes and utensils.**
- Have children eat certain foods (fruit, cheese, bread, bagel, etc.) **directly from their placemat.**
- Keep bread and buns in their **original bag when placing in the bin for each classroom.** This will also reduce handling.

For more eco-friendly ideas, check out our [Top 5 Ways to a Greener Breakfast Program](#).

### **Here are a few more links you're sure to find interesting:**

- [Easy to serve Food Ideas](#)
- [Creative Recipes for a Nutritious Breakfast](#)
- [Tips on Introducing New Foods to Your Program](#)
- [Swap This... for That!](#)

Be sure to let us know about your own favourite tips and tricks on the [Facebook group for BCC volunteers](#). We may even share them with the rest of the Breakfast Club of Canada community!