DETAILED NUTRITION GUIDELINES

INTRODUCTION

Breakfast Club of Canada's Detailed Nutrition Guidelines have been developed to support school and community partners in creating healthy school food environments. The purpose of these guidelines is to help partners make informed decisions regarding food choices in their breakfast programs to promote healthy eating habits.

In developing these guidelines, we relied on evidence-based research from the World Health Organization (WHO), Dietitians of Canada and Health Canada. We also conducted a literature review on provincial and state school nutrition policies across North America. These guidelines therefore reflect best practices in school nutrition.

It is important to note that there is much variability when it comes to nutrition recommendations for different age groups and genders. For simplicity, these guidelines reflect basic recommendations for primary school–aged children and can be adapted to suit the nutritional needs of older age groups as needed.

These guidelines are also aimed at supporting each school's unique needs and circumstances while working toward promoting a healthy school food environment. For example, WHO recommends no more than 5% to 10% of daily energy intake from free sugars (added sugars, and sugar from honey, maple syrup and juice). These guidelines will likely not reach this recommendation, as we have taken into consideration other factors such as product availability, culture and budget.

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GUIDELINES

Breakfast programs should attempt to serve a variety of options from all three food categories on a daily basis and promote water as the drink of choice.

SUSTAINABLE EATING

Eating sustainably means making food choices that promote healthy eating habits while also respecting the environment.

We want to encourage products that are:

- Minimally or not processed
- Local
- From the circular economy
- Unpackaged or minimally packaged
- Organic
- In season

INGREDIENTS

Ideally, look for products with a short list of simple ingredients, no sweeteners and few artificial colours, flavours and other additives. Note that ingredients are always listed in descending order by weight.

NUTRITION FACTS

Balance is key for a nutritious breakfast. Consider these target amounts when planning which foods to serve together for breakfast:

- Sodium: Aim for 240 mg to 300 mg for a whole breakfast, while making sure not to exceed 440 mg.
- Protein: Aim for 4 g to 7 g for a whole breakfast.
  Note that, while protein mainly comes from protein-rich foods, small amounts are also found in vegetables and fruits and in whole grains.
- Sugar: Choose products with little or no added sugar.

Opt more often for products lower in fat, sugar and sodium. Refer to the Nutrition Facts table on the product to help you make this decision. Based on an adult diet, 5% or less of the daily value (DV) indicated in the table is considered "a little" and 15% or more is considered "a lot." For school-aged children, try to aim for closer to 5%, and always take the serving size into consideration.

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WHOLE-GRAIN FOODS



INGREDIENTS:

- Opt for whole-wheat flour or whole grains.
- If the use of all-purpose flour is essential, the overall fibre content should be at least 2.5 g per serving.

SODIUM:

- There is no need to limit sodium for this food category but must be reasonable (maximum 15% DV).

SUGAR:

- Choose options that contain little or no added sugar.
- Try to stay under 8 g of sugar per serving. Note that baked items, such as pancakes and muffins that contain fruits and vegetables, may have up to 12 g.

SATURATED FAT:

Choose options that contain little or no saturated fat. Some store-bought items contain saturated fat, especially muffins and cookies. Try to stay under 2 g per serving.

ADDED VALUE:

- Higher fibre content
- Protein

PROTEIN FOODS



PROTEIN:

- Aim for an ideal range of 3 g to 5 g per serving.

SODIUM:

- Choose options that contain less than 15% DV sodium.
- Note that cheese is often higher in sodium.

SUGAR:

- Opt for foods that contain little or no added sugar.
- Note that dairy items like yogurt and milk contain naturally occurring sugars. Ideally, choose plain versions of these foods.

SATURATED FAT:

- Choose lower-fat milk and yogurt (2%).
- Select cheeses with less than 6 g of saturated fat per serving.

ADDED VALUE:

- Plant-based proteins
- Fibre
- Calcium

BEST TO AVOID:

- Processed meat (bacon, sausage, ham, etc.)

VEGETABLES AND FRUITS



SODIUM:

- Prepared with little or no salt.

SUGAR:

- No added sugar.

BEST TO AVOID:

- Frying
- Juice

OTHER FOODS

Spreads and condiments (cream cheese, cheese spread, jam): May be served in small quantities as a breakfast accompaniment. Select items that are lower in sugar, sodium and saturated fat.

**Note that chocolate should be served only on special occasions.*