

# Smart Snacks in School Rules

Info Sheet - [www.SmartSnacksInSchool.com](http://www.SmartSnacksInSchool.com)



As part of the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010, the USDA has finalized its national school nutrition standards for “competitive foods,” which are all foods and beverages sold to students on campus during the school day, typically through vending machines, a la carte lunch lines and in student stores, other than those meals reimbursable under federal meal programs. The full text of the rule is available at [this link](#).

HUMAN Healthy Vending provides a trusted service that helps schools provide popular foods and beverages that meet the USDA's guidelines and increase vending commissions.



**Schools must be in compliance with the new standards by July 1, 2014**

## Summary of the New Standards:

- Have no more than 200 calories for snacks and side dishes; and no more than 350 calories for entrees that are not part of the school-meal program.
- Have no more than 35 percent sugar by weight. Some exclusions apply for fruit items.
- Have no more than 230mg sodium for snacks, though this will lower to 200mg after July 1, 2016
- Meet requirements for fat, i.e. 35 percent or less of total calories can come from fat per item as packaged or served; foods may contain no more than 10 percent of total calories from saturated fat per item as packaged or served; and they must have 0 g of trans fat per item as packaged or served. Some exceptions on the fat limits will be allowed for foods such as reduced-fat cheese and nuts.
- Be either a fruit, a vegetable, a dairy product, a protein-rich food, a whole-grain-rich (at least 50% whole grains) product or a combination food that contains at least one quarter cup of fruit or vegetable. For the first two years after the standards go into effect, foods can qualify as a competitive food if they contain at least 10% of a nutrient that's been designated as public health concern for children such as calcium, potassium, vitamin D or fiber.
- All schools may sell water or carbonated water; unflavored low-fat milk; flavored or unflavored fat-free milk and soy alternatives; 100% fruit or vegetable juice. Portion sizes of juice and milk vary by the grade of students. There are additional beverage options for high school students including lower or calorie-free beverages, however, schools cannot sell regular-calorie sports drinks.



[Watch the Video Summary at SmartSnacksInSchool.com](#)

## A Brief History:

- **1979** - The USDA passes competitive food rules for the first time. Regulations only limit the sale of foods of minimal nutritional value (FMNV). FMNV are defined in federal regulations as having less than 5 percent of the RDA per serving for eight key nutrients and include soft drinks, water ices, chewing gum and certain sugar-based candies (such as jelly beans). FMNV cannot be sold in foodservice areas during meal periods but may be sold anywhere else in a school at any time.
- **2010** - The Healthy Hunger Free Kids Act requires the USDA to establish national nutrition standards for all food sold and served in schools at any time during the school day. It allows for exemptions for school-sponsored fundraisers if the fundraisers are approved by the school and are infrequent.
- **2013** - USDA proposes new competitive food rules and opens them to public comment for 60 days. After public comment and revision, the new standards, called "Smart Snacks in School," are published with a deadline date for school compliance of July 1, 2014.



"Since 2003, I have had the pleasure to work with thousands of schools across the country to improve competitive foods before there was a policy to do so and have personally seen the beneficial transformative effect that occurs when a school goes from junk-food vending to healthy vending. And contrary to popular belief, we've proved that this effect is positive for both student health and the school's financial health - it's a no-brainer."

- Sean Kelly, CEO and Co-Founder of HUMAN Healthy Vending

## Quick Facts on Competitive Foods:

- High school students in CA reported less in-school intake of fat, sugar, and total calories compared to students in states that do not regulate competitive food nutritional content.  
(Source: Taber, Chriqui, and Chaloupka, Arch Ped and Adol Med, 2012)
- About \$2.3 billion worth of snack foods and beverages are sold annually in schools nationwide.  
(Source: The National Academy of Sciences)
- Children consume 19-50% of their daily food intake at school.  
(Source: The U.S. Department of Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Service)
- 80% percent of American voters favored national standards that would limit calories, fat, and sodium in snack and à la carte foods sold in U.S. schools and encourage the consumption of fruits, vegetables and low fat dairy items.  
(Source: Kids' Safe and Healthful Foods Project, 2012)
- 82% of all schools - and 92% of middle and high schools - offered a la carte foods at lunch  
(Source: Gordon, et al., 2007; SNDA-III, Volume 1, pp 102-114)
- Vending machines were available in 52% of all schools and 26% of elementary schools, 87% of middle schools and 98% of high schools (Source: Gordon, et al., 2007; SNDA-III, Volume 1, pp 102-114)
- The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recently issued a report that analyzed state policies for food and beverages served outside the school lunch line, which noted that 39 states already have a state law, regulation or policy in place related to the sale or availability of snack foods and beverages in schools. In many cases, local level (district and school) policies and practices exceeded state requirements or recommendations. The USDA's new rules establish minimum standards which schools can choose to exceed.