



Rethink the Sweet: Navigating Foods with Less Sugar

Leia Weston, MS, RD, LDN
Extension Outreach Associate



Illinois Extension
UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS URBANA-CHAMPAIGN





COURSE OBJECTIVES

- List product-based added sugar limits for school nutrition programs
- Select menu options that meet product-based added sugar limits
- Use fruit products with less added sugar to maximize acceptability on the menu



COURSE OBJECTIVES

- Calculate added sugar limits based on calorie averages over the week
- Check a menu to see if it meets weekly added sugar limits
- Compare nutrition for pre-made products and house-made options
- Adjust a recipe to be lower in added sugars



COURSE OBJECTIVES

- Name strategies to promote water and lower-sugar options in the cafeteria
- Give examples of wellness policies that will support lower-sugar initiatives



[This Photo](#) by Unknown Author is licensed under [CC BY-NC-ND](#)




[This Photo](#) by Unknown Author is licensed under [CC BY](#)

Added sugars have been limited in Child Nutrition Programs:

- **Smart Snacks**
 - 35% by weight or less in snacks/entrees
 - Low-calorie beverages limited to 60 kcal/12 fl oz, only for high school




Added Sugar Limits in SBP/NSLP



Added Sugars

Limit using a phased approach:

- **Phase 1:** Limits on specific high-sugar products (cereals, yogurt, flavored milk)
- **Phase 2:** Overall weekly limits



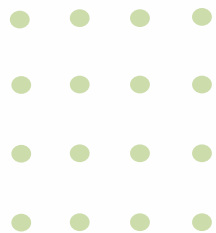
Source: <https://www.fns.usda.gov/cn/school-nutrition-standards-updates/added-sugars>

PHASE 1: Product-based limits

SY25-26

PHASE 2: Weekly menu limits

SY27-28



Product-Based Added Sugar Limits





The product-based limits apply to the **leading contributors to added sugars in school meals, items that are popular with children, and foods for which added sugars can be reduced while maintaining palatability.**

... the limits on added sugars finalized in this rulemaking will align school meals more closely with the Dietary Guidelines. USDA considered product availability when developing this rule, as well as the implementation timeframes. For example, before proposing the added sugars limits, USDA collected data for breakfast cereals and yogurts to ensure adequate products would be available for schools.

-USDA

<https://www.fns.usda.gov/cn/school-nutrition-standards-updates/added-sugars>

Product-Based Limits



Breakfast Cereals: ≤ 6 grams added sugars per dry oz



Yogurt: ≤ 12 grams of added sugars per 6 oz (max 2 grams/oz)



Flavored milk: ≤ 10 grams added sugars per 8 fl oz (max 1.25 grams/fl oz)



What is the added sugar limit for a serving of this cereal?

Nutrition Facts	
15 servings per container	
Serving size	3/4 cup (30g)
Amount Per Serving	
Calories	100
% Daily Value*	
Total Fat 0.5g	1%
Saturated Fat 0g	0%
Trans Fat 0g	
Cholesterol 0mg	0%
Sodium 140mg	6%
Total Carbohydrate 22g	8%
Dietary Fiber 3g	11%
Total Sugars 5g	
Includes 4g Added Sugars	8%
Protein 3g	
Not a significant source of vitamin D, calcium, iron, and potassium	
*The % Daily Value (DV) tells you how much a nutrient in a serving of food contributes to a daily diet. 2,000 calories a day is used for general nutrition advice.	

Serving Size (g)	Max Added Sugars (g)
12-16 g (~1/2 dry oz)	3 g
26-30 g (~1 dry oz)	6 g
31-35 g	7 g
36-40 g	8 g
45-49 g	10 g
55-58 g (~2 dry oz)	12 g
59-63 g	13 g
74-77 g	16 g

≤ 6 grams added sugars per dry oz



**Can this cereal
be served?**

Nutrition Facts	
8 servings per container	
Serving size	2/3 cup (55g)
Amount Per Serving	
Calories	230
% Daily Value*	
Total Fat 8g	10%
Saturated Fat 1g	5%
Trans Fat 0g	
Cholesterol 0mg	0%
Sodium 160mg	7%
Total Carbohydrate 37g	13%
Dietary Fiber 4g	14%
Total Sugars 12g	
Includes 10g Added Sugars	20%
Protein 3g	
Not a significant source of vitamin D, calcium, iron, and potassium	
*The % Daily Value (DV) tells you how much a nutrient in a serving of food contributes to a daily diet. 2,000 calories a day is used for general nutrition advice.	

Serving Size (g)	Max Added Sugars (g)
12-16 g (~1/2 dry oz)	3 g
26-30 g (~1 dry oz)	6 g
31-35 g	7 g
36-40 g	8 g
45-49 g	10 g
55-58 g (~2 dry oz)	12 g
59-63 g	13 g
74-77 g	16 g

**≤ 6 grams added sugars
per dry oz**



**What is the
added sugar limit
for a serving of
this yogurt?**

Nutrition Facts	
7 servings per container	
Serving size	6 oz (170g)
Amount Per Serving	
Calories	130
% Daily Value*	
Total Fat 0g	0%
Saturated Fat 0g	0%
Trans Fat 0g	
Cholesterol 10mg	3%
Sodium 65mg	3%
Total Carbohydrate 17g	6%
Dietary Fiber 0g	0%
Total Sugars 14g	
Includes 10g Added Sugars	20%
Protein 14g	
Not a significant source of vitamin D, calcium, iron, and potassium	
*The % Daily Value (DV) tells you how much a nutrient in a serving of food contributes to a daily diet. 2,000 calories a day is used for general nutrition advice.	

Serving Size (oz/g)	Max Added Sugars (g)
2 oz / 57 g	4 g
3 oz / 85 g	6 g
4 oz / 113 g	8 g
5.3 oz / 150 g	10 g
6 oz / 170 g	12 g
8 oz / 227 g	16 g

**≤ 12 grams of added
sugars per 6 oz (max 2
grams/oz)**



Can this yogurt be served? Use the Nutrition Facts label and the table to the right.

Nutrition Facts	
1 servings per container	
Serving size	3/4 cup (170g)
Amount Per Serving	
Calories	200
% Daily Value*	
Total Fat 8g	10%
Saturated Fat 5g	25%
Trans Fat 0g	
Cholesterol 30mg	10%
Sodium 105mg	5%
Total Carbohydrate 25g	9%
Dietary Fiber 0g	0%
Total Sugars 23g	
Includes 15g Added Sugars	30%
Protein 7g	
Not a significant source of vitamin D, calcium, iron, and potassium	
*The % Daily Value (DV) tells you how much a nutrient in a serving of food contributes to a daily diet. 2,000 calories a day is used for general nutrition advice.	

Serving Size (oz/g)	Max Added Sugars (g)
2 oz / 57 g	4 g
3 oz / 85 g	6 g
4 oz / 113 g	8 g
5.3 oz / 150 g	10 g
6 oz / 170 g	12 g
8 oz / 227 g	16 g

≤ 12 grams of added sugars per 6 oz (max 2 grams/oz)



Can this low-fat chocolate milk be served?

Nutrition Facts	
1 servings per container	
Serving size	8 fl oz (240ml)
Amount Per Serving	
Calories	150
% Daily Value*	
Total Fat 2.5g	3%
Saturated Fat 1.5g	8%
Trans Fat 0g	
Cholesterol 10mg	3%
Sodium 220mg	10%
Total Carbohydrate 24g	9%
Dietary Fiber 0g	0%
Total Sugars 22g	
Includes 9g Added Sugars	18%
Protein 8g	
Not a significant source of vitamin D, calcium, iron, and potassium	
*The % Daily Value (DV) tells you how much a nutrient in a serving of food contributes to a daily diet. 2,000 calories a day is used for general nutrition advice.	

Serving Size (fl oz)	Max Added Sugars (g)
8 fl oz	10 g
12 fl oz	15 g

≤ 10 grams of added sugars per 8 fl oz (max 1.25 grams/fl oz)



Nutrition Facts	
3.5 servings per container	
Serving size 1/2 cup (123g)	
Amount per serving	
Calories	100
% Daily Value*	
Total Fat 0g	0%
Saturated Fat 0g	0%
Trans Fat 0g	
Cholesterol 0mg	0%
Sodium 0mg	0%
Total Carbohydrate 24g	9%
Dietary Fiber 1g	4%
Total Sugars 20g	
Includes 15g Added Sugars	30%
Protein less than 1g	
Vitamin D 0mcg	0%
Calcium 30mg	2%
Iron 0mg	0%
Potassium 120mg	2%
Vitamin C 7mg	8%
* The % Daily Value (DV) tells you how much a nutrient in a serving of food contributes to a daily diet. 2,000 calories a day is used for general nutrition advice.	

Canned Fruit

- Canned fruits must be packed in water, 100% juice, light syrup, or extra light syrup
- One 1/2 cup serving of diced peaches in light syrup still has 15 grams of added sugars
- Use fruit canned in water or 100% juice



Acceptability

- High temperatures used for canning cooks the fruit -- texture is softer
- May be more enjoyable in recipes (smoothies, baked goods, parfaits)
- Serve warm and spiced with cinnamon and vanilla



Frozen Fruit

- Frozen fruits sometimes include sugar for texture and taste
- Smoothie blends may also be pre-sweetened
- Look for frozen fruit options with no added sugars



Dried Fruit

- Some dried fruits have sugar added to keep pieces separated, and to make them less tart
- Remember to look at added sugars when considering dried fruits for your menus

[This Photo](#) by Unknown Author is licensed under [CC BY](#)



Acceptability

- Texture can be chewy or more crunchy (e.g., banana chips)
- Offer naturally sweeter dried fruits like dates or dried plums (prunes)
- Put dried fruit without added sugars (raisins, apricots, etc.) on menu more often than those that are sweetened (e.g., cranberries, cherries)

[This Photo](#) by Unknown Author is licensed under [CC BY](#)



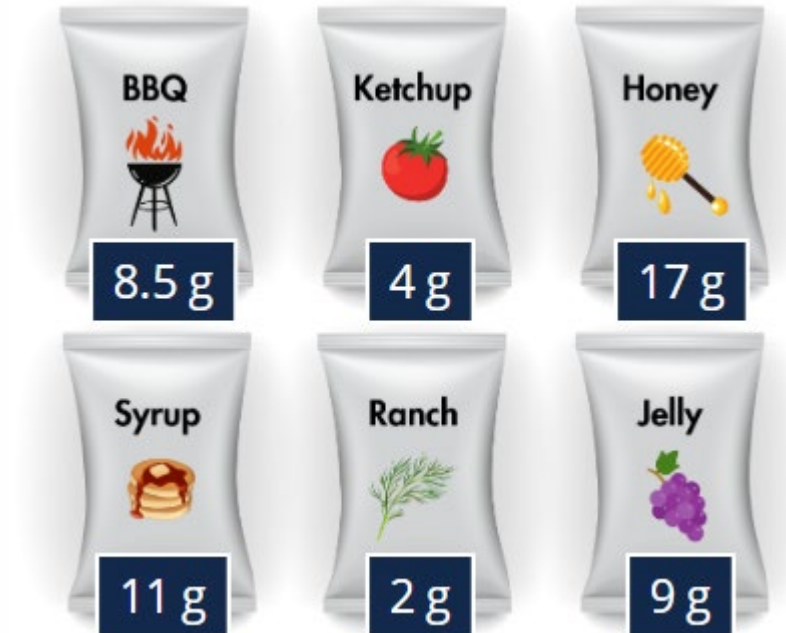
Condiments



How many added sugars are in a 1 tablespoon serving of each?



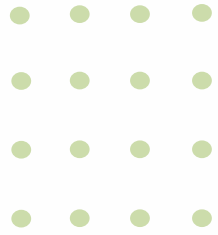
Condiments





Condiments

- Give packets or cups on serving line
- Incorporate as toppings
- Use as ingredients in recipes

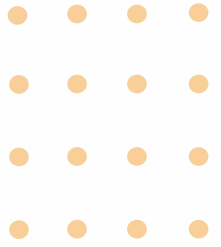


Weekly Menu Limits



[This Photo](#) by Unknown Author is licensed under [CC BY](#)





Weekly Limits

- Added sugars will be limited to 10% of calories across weekly menus
- SBP and NSLP
- Effective SY27-28



Added Sugar Limits in SBP/NSLP

Weekly calories (weekly average)	K-5	6-8	9-12
Breakfast	350-500	400-550	450-600
Lunch	550-650	600-700	750-850



Calories from Added Sugars

Weekly calories (weekly average)	K-5	6-8	9-12
Breakfast	350-500	400-550	450-600
Lunch	550-650	600-700	750-850



Calories from added sugars (weekly average)	K-5	6-8	9-12
Breakfast	35-50 kcal	40-55 kcal	45-60 kcal
Lunch	55-65 kcal	60-70 kcal	75-85 kcal

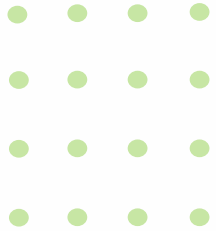


Calories from Added Sugars

Calories from added sugars (weekly average)	K-5	6-8	9-12
Breakfast	35-50 kcal	40-55 kcal	45-60 kcal
Lunch	55-65 kcal	60-70 kcal	75-85 kcal



Grams of added sugars (weekly average)	K-5	6-8	9-12
Breakfast	8.75-12.5 g	10-13.75 g	11.25-15 g
Lunch	13.75-16.25 g	15-17.5 g	18.75-21.25 g



Activity: Does the Menu Meet Weekly Limits?





Monday

Tuesday

Wednesday

Thursday

Friday

WGR English muffin w/ jelly (1 oz eq) Grapes (1/2 c) Apple juice (1/2 c) Choice of milk	WGR toast (1 oz eq) Peanut butter (1 oz eq) Banana (1/2 c) Orange juice (1/2 c) Choice of milk	Yogurt (2 oz eq) Granola (1 oz eq) Apple slices (1 c) Choice of milk	WGR donut (2 oz eq) Strawberry cup (1/2 c) Orange juice (1/2 c) Choice of milk	WGR French toast w/ SF syrup (1 oz eq) Orange slices (1/2 c) Apple juice (1/2 c) Choice of milk
---	--	---	---	--

400 calories

475 calories

375 calories

490 calories

520 calories

400



475



375



490



520



?



Divide by
5 days

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
WGR English muffin w/ jelly (1 oz eq) Grapes (1/2 c) Apple juice (1/2 c) Choice of milk	WGR toast (1 oz eq) Peanut butter (1 oz eq) Banana (1/2 c) Orange juice (1/2 c) Choice of milk	Yogurt (2 oz eq) Granola (1 oz eq) Apple slices (1 c) Choice of milk	WGR donut (2 oz eq) Strawberry cup (1/2 c) Orange juice (1/2 c) Choice of milk	WGR French toast w/ SF syrup (1 oz eq) Orange slices (1/2 c) Apple juice (1/2 c) Choice of milk
400 calories	475 calories	375 calories	490 calories	520 calories


452

×

0.10

=

?

 Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
WGR English muffin w/ jelly (1 oz eq) Grapes (1/2 c) Apple juice (1/2 c) Choice of milk	WGR toast (1 oz eq) Peanut butter (1 oz eq) Banana (1/2 c) Orange juice (1/2 c) Choice of milk	Yogurt (2 oz eq) Granola (1 oz eq) Apple slices (1 c) Choice of milk	WGR donut (2 oz eq) Strawberry cup (1/2 c) Orange juice (1/2 c) Choice of milk	WGR French toast w/ SF syrup (1 oz eq) Orange slices (1/2 c) Apple juice (1/2 c) Choice of milk

400 calories	475 calories	375 calories	490 calories	520 calories
--------------	--------------	--------------	--------------	--------------

45.2 average calories
from added sugars



4 calories per
gram of sugar



?

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
WGR English muffin w/ jelly (1 oz eq) Grapes (1/2 c) Apple juice (1/2 c) Choice of milk 1 g 9 g	WGR toast (1 oz eq) Peanut butter (1 oz eq) Banana (1/2 c) Orange juice (1/2 c) Choice of milk 2 g	Yogurt (2 oz eq) Granola (1 oz eq) Apple slices (1 c) Choice of milk 12 g 8 g	WGR donut (2 oz eq) Strawberry cup (1/2 c) Orange juice (1/2 c) Choice of milk 8 g	WGR French toast w/ SF syrup (1 oz eq) Orange slices (1/2 c) Apple juice (1/2 c) Choice of milk 9 g

400 calories

475 calories

375 calories

490 calories

520 calories

10 g

M

+

4 g

T

+

20 g

W

+

8 g

R

+

9 g

F

=

?

➡

Divide by

5 days

Monday	2 g Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
WGR English muffin w/ jelly (1 oz eq) Grapes (1/2 c) Apple juice (1/2 c) Choice of milk 1 g 9 g	WGR toast (1 oz eq) Peanut butter (1 oz eq) Banana (1/2 c) Orange juice (1/2 c) Choice of milk 2 g	Yogurt (2 oz eq) Granola (1 oz eq) Apple slices (1 c) Choice of milk 12 g 8 g	WGR donut (2 oz eq) Strawberry cup (1/2 c) Orange juice (1/2 c) Choice of milk 8 g	WGR French toast w/ SF syrup (1 oz eq) Orange slices (1/2 c) Apple juice (1/2 c) Choice of milk 9 g
400 calories	475 calories	375 calories	490 calories	520 calories

This menu can have an average of 11.3 grams of added sugars over the week. We calculated that the menu has an average of 10.2 grams of added sugars.



Source: USDA

Make More In-House

- Sugars are often added to heat-and-serve items for taste, texture, and shelf-life
- Scratch and speed-scratch cooking can give you more control



Packaged French Toast Sticks

- Serving size: 4 pieces (91 g)
- Calories: 260
- Total Fat: 10 g
- Sodium: 300 mg
- Total Sugars: 9 g (8 g added)
- Protein: 6 g
- Calcium: 40 mg
- Fiber: 3.5 g
- Shelf life from manufacture: 540 days

Single-Serve Syrup

- Calories: 110
- Sodium: 20 mg
- Total Sugars: 22 g (22 g added)

Maple Baked French Toast Squares (USDA)

- Serving size: 1 square (82 g)
- Calories: 180
- Total Fat: 5 g
- Sodium: 178 mg
- Total Sugars: 15 g (13.5 g added)
- Protein: 8 g
- Calcium: 97 mg
- Fiber: 2 g
- Shelf life from preparation: 7 days under refrigeration



[This Photo](#) by Unknown Author is licensed under [CC BY-NC](#)



French Toast Sticks + Syrup

- Serving size: 4 pieces (91 g) w/ syrup packet
- Calories: 370
- Total Fat: 10 g
- Sodium: 320 mg
- Total Sugars: 31 g (30 g added)
- Protein: 6 g
- Calcium: 40 mg
- Fiber: 3.5 g
- Shelf life from manufacture: 540 days



8 teaspoons added sugars

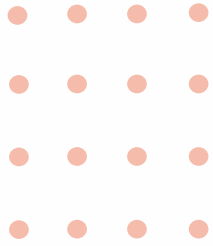
Maple Baked French Toast Squares (USDA)

- Serving size: 1 square (82 g)
- Calories: 180
- Total Fat: 5 g
- Sodium: 178 mg
- Total Sugars: 15g (13.5g added)
- Protein: 8g
- Calcium: 97 mg
- Fiber: 2 g
- Shelf life from preparation: 7 days under refrigeration



~3 1/3 teaspoons added sugars

Grams of added sugars (weekly average)	K-5	6-8	9-12
Breakfast	8.75-12.5 g	10-13.75 g	11.25-15 g
Lunch	13.75-16.25 g	15-17.5 g	18.75-21.25 g

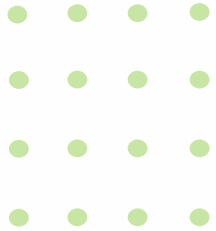


Bake with Less Sugar

- In recipes where sugar hasn't already been reduced, you can try decreasing the amount by 25%



- Sweet toppings or glazes provide a hit of flavor
- Examples:
 - Glaze on top of cinnamon roll with less sugared filling
 - Reduced sugar muffin with streusel topping
 - Thin layer of cream cheese frosting on reduced sugar banana bread



Activity: Reduce Added Sugar in Baked Goods





Whole Grain Snickerdoodles

Cookie dough ingredients



Cinnamon sugar topping



Ingredients	Weight	Measure
Margarine, liquid	1 lb	2 cups
Sugar, granulated	2 lbs	
Eggs, whole, raw		5 large
Vanilla extract		1 Tbsp + 1 tsp
Milk, fluid, 1%	4 fl oz	
Flour, whole wheat	2 lbs 8 oz	
Baking powder		1 Tbsp + 1 tsp
Baking soda		2 tsp
Salt		2 tsp
Nutmeg		1 ½ tsp
Cinnamon, ground		1 Tbsp + 1 tsp
Topping		
Sugar, granulated	8 oz	
Cinnamon, ground		1 Tbsp



Whole Grain Snickerdoodles

How much
sugar is in
the cookie
dough?



Ingredients	Weight	Measure
Margarine, liquid	1 lb	2 cups
Sugar, granulated	2 lbs	
Eggs, whole, raw		5 large
Vanilla extract		1 Tbsp + 1 tsp
Milk, fluid, 1%	4 fl oz	
Flour, whole wheat	2 lbs 8 oz	
Baking powder		1 Tbsp + 1 tsp
Baking soda		2 tsp
Salt		2 tsp
Nutmeg		1 ½ tsp
Cinnamon, ground		1 Tbsp + 1 tsp
Topping		
Sugar, granulated	8 oz	
Cinnamon, ground		1 Tbsp



Whole Grain Snickerdoodles

Multiply
2 lbs by
25%

Ingredients	Weight	Measure
Margarine, liquid	1 lb	2 cups
Sugar, granulated	2 lbs	
Eggs, whole, raw		5 large
Vanilla extract		1 Tbsp + 1 tsp
Milk, fluid, 1%	4 fl oz	
Flour, whole wheat	2 lbs 8 oz	
Baking powder		1 Tbsp + 1 tsp
Baking soda		2 tsp
Salt		2 tsp
Nutmeg		1 ½ tsp
Cinnamon, ground		1 Tbsp + 1 tsp
Topping		
Sugar, granulated	8 oz	
Cinnamon, ground		1 Tbsp

Subtract from the original amount to get the new sugar measurement.



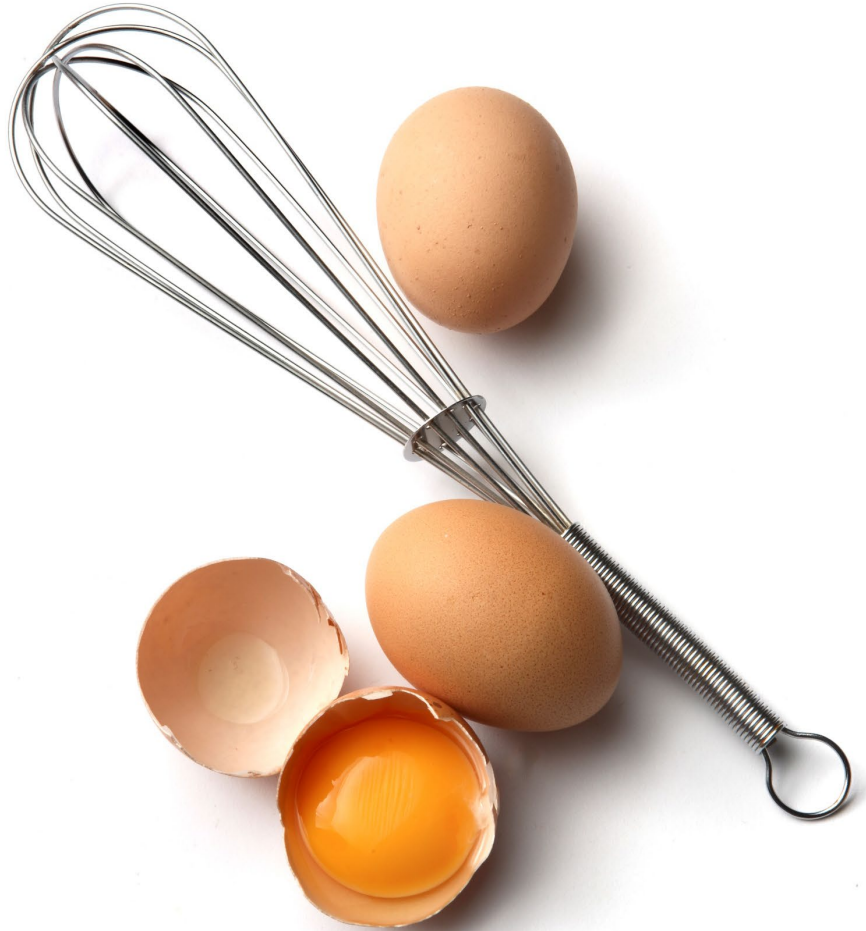
2 lbs sugar

—

0.5 lb sugar

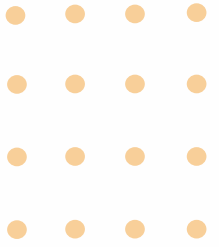
=

?



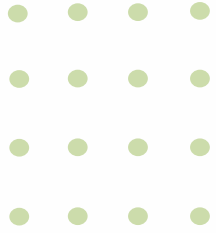
Caveats

- Test the recipe multiple times if needed
- Be careful with the type of sugar you are reducing
- Taste test with students



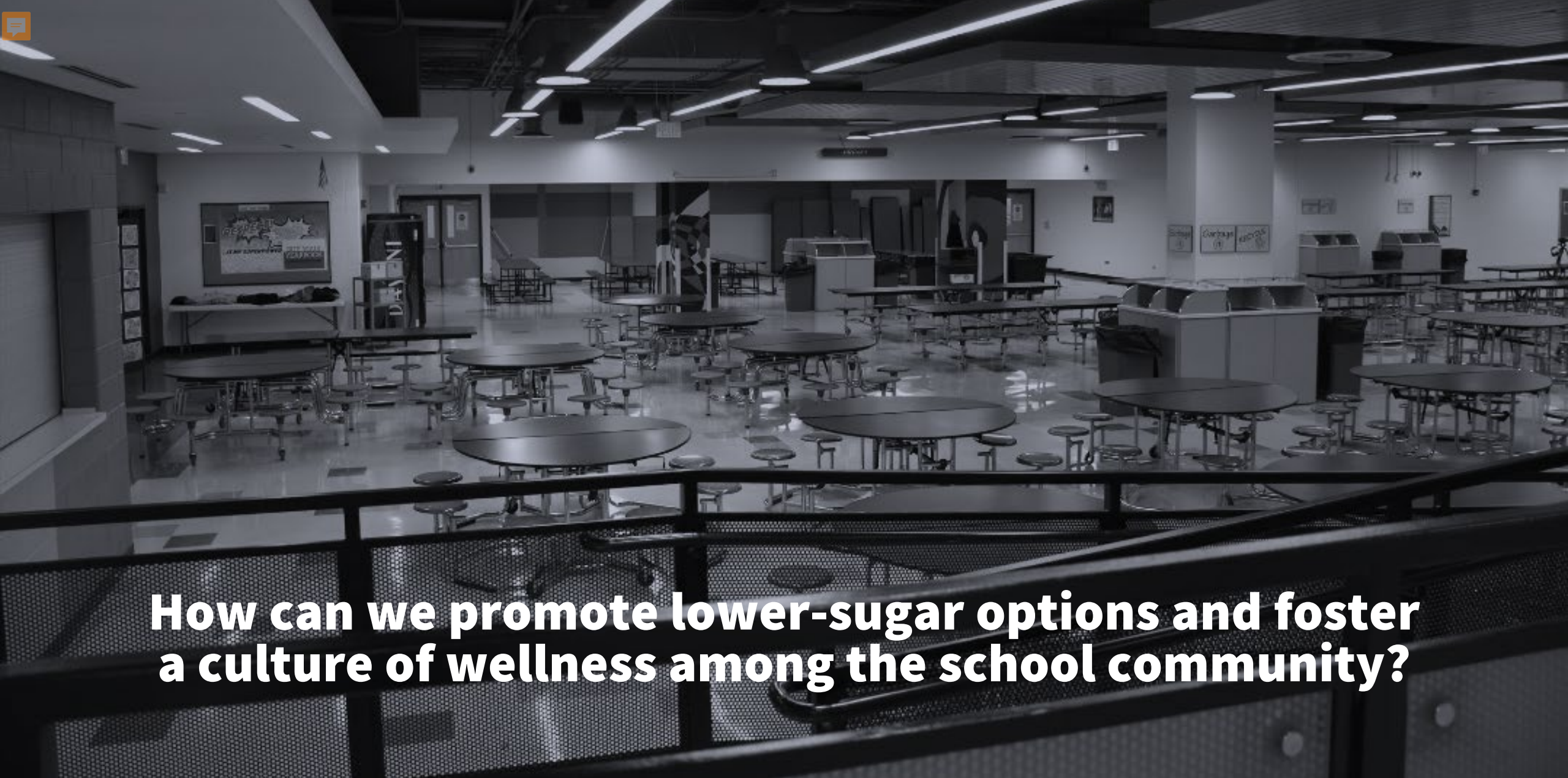
Add Protein

- Savory protein-rich items tend to be lower in added sugars
- Eggs, beans, cheese, Greek yogurt, nuts and seeds, meats
- Do you include any protein-rich items that are popular?



Take Action for School Wellness





How can we promote lower-sugar options and foster a culture of wellness among the school community?



Make Water Available

- Per school meal regulations, students must have access to plain water!
- Make sure water is EASY to access
- Infused/naturally-flavored waters are also allowed, but only in addition to plain water

Offer Infused/Naturally-Flavored Waters



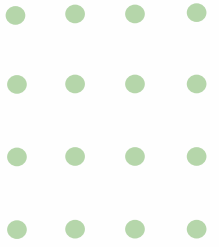
Cucumber-
lemon-mint

Berry-
lemon-lime

Mint-
grapefruit

Plum-
lemon

Mint-
lemon-lime



Benefits of Infused Water

- Use up imperfect produce
- Low-cost a la carte option for staff
- Can increase student engagement



Signage

- Creates a welcoming atmosphere
- Free, low-cost, or higher-cost options
- Highlight benefits of water, milk, etc.

Poster from GetVisualz.com. Example only -not an endorsement.

Free poster from USDA Team Nutrition





Bulletin Boards



Photo from Wilson Elementary School, Granite City, IL



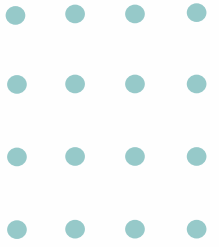
Bulletin board kit from GetVisualz.com. Example only - not an endorsement.



Student-Made Signage

- Partner with teachers
- Print coloring sheets to correspond with NSLW, NSBW, etc.

Photo from Patoka CUSD 100, Patoka, IL

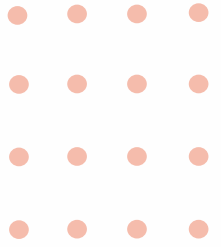


Communicate with Caregivers

- Participate in school events (PTA nights, P-T conferences, back-to-school fairs)
- Send out information on added sugars in your program



**How can we support
lower sugar
initiatives outside
the cafeteria?**



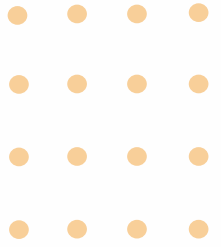
Use Positive Messages

- “Choose water or milk to support a healthy body”
- “Make every sip count!”
- “Stay hydrated with water today!”
- “Don’t forget your water bottle!”



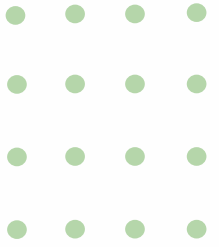
Water in the Classroom

- Access to water fountains
- Access to personal water bottles



Classroom Management

- Replace treats given for good behavior with non-food rewards
- Small prizes, getting to wear a special pin or sash
- Other ideas?



Celebrations

- If you have capacity, offer treats for caregivers and staff to purchase
- Healthier, allergy-friendly options
- Additional revenue stream



Wellness Policy Language Examples

- Limit celebrations involving food to no more than three class parties per year.
- Class parties should include no more than one item that does not meet the district's nutrition standards.
- Food items are strongly encouraged to meet the district's nutrition standards.
- Provide caregivers with a list of acceptable snacks to bring for their child's birthday.
- Foods or beverages served at class functions shall be store bought, unopened, and include an ingredient label on packaging.
- No celebratory food items will be allowed during the school day in celebration of a student's birthday.

San Diego County Childhood Obesity Initiative

Foods Sold Outside School Hours



Non-Food Fundraising Ideas

Products:

- Greeting cards and stationery
- Wrapping paper
- Plants
- School spirit apparel and merchandise

Activities:

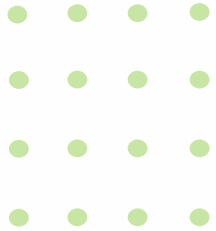
- Game night
- Raffles
- Silent auctions
- Car washes

Fitness:

- Fun runs/walks
- Walk-a-thon, jump-rope-a-thon
- Golf or tennis tournament
- 30-day challenges



For more information on addressing competitive foods, celebrations, and rewards, visit the Illinois State Board of Education's [website for Local School Wellness Policy](#).



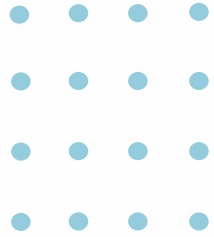
**Which strategies might
you try?**



Evaluation

Please help us improve our programs!





**TIME FOR
QUESTIONS!**



THANK YOU!



<http://go.Illinois.edu/abcs>



schoolnutrition@illinois.edu



Illinois Extension

UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS URBANA-CHAMPAIGN



This institution is an equal opportunity provider.

This material is funded by USDA's Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program – SNAP and the Illinois State Board of Education.

University of Illinois Extension provides equal opportunities in programs and employment.

University of Illinois | USDA | Local Extension Councils Cooperating