

Manager's Corner

Vegetable Subgroups in School Meals

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PURPOSE

Improve the operation of child nutrition programs through research, education and training, and information dissemination.

VISION

Lead the nation in providing research, education, and resources to promote excellence in child nutrition programs.

MISSION

Provide relevant research-based information and services that advance the continuous improvement of child nutrition programs.

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Professional Standards

GENERAL NUTRITION – 1300

Employee will be able to understand the *Dietary Guidelines for Americans*, USDA's food guidance system concepts and general nutrition principles.

1310 – Relate the Dietary Guidelines and USDA's food guidance system (such as MyPlate) concepts to the goals of school nutrition programs.

1320 – Understand general nutrition concepts that relate to school meals, such as whole grains, sodium, etc.

Introduction

Manager's Corner: Vegetable Subgroups in School Meals is designed for managers to use in training their staff. Each lesson is roughly 15 minutes. *Manager's Corner: Vegetable Subgroups in School Meals* provides a method for empowering managers to train their staff. This lesson plan contains the following:

- learning objective,
- statement explaining the importance of the topic,
- list of materials,
- instructions on how to present the information,
- questions to ask staff, and
- activity to strengthen or refresh the knowledge of the school nutrition staff.

Lesson Overview—Questions

Objective: Identify vegetable subgroups and weekly requirements for a reimbursable school meal.

Why it is important? It is important to correctly identify vegetables within their subgroup in order to meet weekly requirements for a reimbursable school meal.

Materials:

- **Materials included in this document:**
 - **K-5 Weekly Lunch Menu**
 - **Menu: Vegetable Subgroup Identification in School Meals Worksheet**
 - **Menu: Vegetable Subgroup Identification in School Meals Worksheet Answer Key**

Instruction:

Ask participating staff to answer the questions included in this training. Facilitate the activity. Reiterate the importance of meeting these requirements not only to meet USDA standards but to promote overall health of the students that eat school meals.

Questions to Staff

- **What are the required vegetable subgroups for a reimbursable school lunch meal?**

Answer: The meal patterns for the National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program include five subgroups of vegetables which count toward minimum requirements: dark green vegetables, red/orange vegetables, legumes, starchy vegetables, and other vegetables.
- **When are vegetable subgroups required to be served?**

Answer: Vegetable subgroups are required to be served at lunch. Breakfast does not require a vegetable subgroup to be served.

- What are the minimum weekly vegetable subgroup requirements?

Minimum Weekly Vegetable Subgroup Requirements for School Meals					
Grade Level	Dark Green	Red/Orange	Legumes (Beans/Pea)	Starchy	Other
K-5	½ cup	¾ cup	½ cup	½ cup	½ cup
6-8	½ cup	¾ cup	½ cup	½ cup	½ cup
9-12	½ cup	1 ¼ cup	½ cup	½ cup	¾ cup

K-5 Weekly Lunch Menu

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Hamburger on a bun or Peanut Butter and Jelly Sandwich	Chicken Wrap Spanish Brown Rice or Fish Taco Spanish Brown Rice	Spaghetti with Meat Sauce Garlic Bread or Spaghetti with Tofu and Marinara Sauce	Taco Salad (Tortilla Chips) or Yogurt and Blueberry Oat Muffin Plate	Tilapia with fruit salsa Whole Wheat Roll or Turkey and Cheese Sub Sandwich
Roasted Red Potatoes	Romaine Lettuce	Garden Salad	Red Bell Pepper Strips	Mashed Potatoes
Broccoli with Cheese	Tomato Slices	Green Beans	Refried Beans	Fresh Baby Carrots
	Sautéed Zucchini		Romaine Lettuce	
Fresh Apple Slices	Tropical Fruit	Fresh Berries	Fresh Watermelon	Fresh Grapes
Milk Choice 1% fat or Fat-free (flavored or unflavored)	Milk Choice 1% fat or Fat-free (flavored or unflavored)	Milk Choice 1% fat or Fat-free (flavored or unflavored)	Milk Choice 1% fat or Fat-free (flavored or unflavored)	Milk Choice 1% fat or Fat-free (flavored or unflavored)

Note: All salads are made with Romaine lettuce.

Source: United States Department of Agriculture. (2016). *Healthier Kansas menus*. Retrieved from <https://healthymeals.fns.usda.gov/healthier-kansas-menus-1>

Menu: Vegetable Subgroup Identification in School Meals Worksheet

Instructions: Using the **Vegetable Subgroups** mini-poster as an aid, identify vegetable subgroups for each day of the week within the **K-5 Weekly Lunch Menu**.

Vegetable Subgroups	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Dark Green Vegetables					
Red/Orange Vegetables					
Legumes					
Starchy Vegetables					
Other Vegetables					

Menu: Vegetable Subgroup Identification in School Meals Worksheet Answer Key

Instructions: Using the **Vegetable Subgroups** mini-poster as an aid, identify vegetable subgroups for each day of the week within the **K-5 Weekly Lunch Menu**.

Vegetable Subgroups	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Dark Green Vegetables	Broccoli	Romaine Lettuce	Garden Salad	Taco Salad and Romaine Lettuce	
Red/Orange Vegetables		Tomato Slices	Spaghetti Sauce	Red Bell Pepper Strips	Fresh Baby Carrots
Legumes				Refried Beans	
Starchy Vegetables	Roasted Red Potatoes				Mashed Potatoes
Other Vegetables		Sautéed Zucchini	Green Beans		

References

Institute of Child Nutrition. (2019). *Reimbursable school meals*. University, MS: Author.

United States Department of Agriculture. (2015). *Professional standards for school nutrition professionals*. Retrieved from <https://www.fns.usda.gov/school-meals/professional-standards>



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