



Healthy Eating

Vending Machine Food and
Beverage Standards



Model Food Vending Machine Standards

Your employees spend much of their day at work and are likely making many of their breakfast, lunch, snack, and beverage decisions there, too. This presents a unique opportunity to support them in their desire for good health by making good nutrition convenient, accessible, and affordable.

Applying nutrition standards for foods and beverages in vending machines can improve access to healthier selections. This document will help you implement a healthy food vending machine policy.

As members of the National Alliance for Nutrition and Activity (NANA), the American Cancer Society and its nonprofit nonpartisan advocacy affiliate, the American Cancer Society Cancer Action NetworkSM, participated in the development of these food and beverage standards. The NANA Model Vending Standards were developed in 2012 by a workgroup of approximately 40 NANA members with expertise in food and nutrition. The standards were based on the best available science and nutrition recommendations, including the Dietary Guidelines for Americans, coupled with practical considerations. The standards were reviewed in 2016 following the release of the 2015-2020 Dietary Guidelines for Americans, and no updates were deemed to be necessary at that time.

NANA Food Standards

Provide an assortment of healthier food choices with more fruits, vegetables, whole grains, fat-free/low-fat dairy products, and lower amounts of saturated fats, trans-fats, added sugars, and sodium.

Snack Foods and Side Dishes

100% of snack foods (and side dishes) must meet the following criteria:

- No more than 200 calories per item as offered (per package)
- No more than 35% of calories from fat (e.g., no more than 7 grams of fat for a 200-calorie snack), with the exception of packages that contain 100% nuts or seeds; snack mixes that



contain components other than nuts and seeds must have no more than 35% of calories from fat

- No more than 10% of calories from saturated fat (e.g., no more than 2 grams of saturated fat for a 200-calorie snack), with the exception of packages that contain 100% nuts or seeds; snack mixes that contain components other than nuts and seeds must have no more than 10% of calories from saturated fat
- 0 grams of trans fat
- No more than 35% of calories from total sugars and a maximum of 10 grams of total sugars in the product, with the exception of fruits and vegetables that do not contain added sweeteners or fats; and with the exception of yogurt, which contains no more than 30 grams of total sugars per 8-ounce container (adjust proportionally for smaller containers)
- No more than 200 mg of sodium per item as offered (per package/container)
- Each snack food item must contain at least one of the following: 1) a quarter-cup of fruit, non-fried vegetable, or fat-free/low-fat dairy; 2) 1 ounce of nuts or seeds or 1 tablespoon of nut butter; 3) at least 50% of the grain ingredients are whole grain (determined by the product having whole grain as the first ingredient, from the manufacturer, or if the product has a whole-grain claim); or 4) at least 10% of the Percent Daily Value of a naturally occurring nutrients of public health concern (calcium, potassium, vitamin D, or fiber).
- Sugarless chewing gum can be sold without having to meet the above nutrition standards.

Entrée Foods

100% of entrée-type foods (e.g., sandwich, pizza, burger) must meet the following criteria:

- No more than 400 calories per item as offered (per package)
- No more than 35% of calories from fat (e.g., no more than 15 grams of fat for a 400-calorie item)
- No more than 10% calories from saturated fat (e.g., no more than 4 grams of saturated fat for a 400-calorie entrée-type item)
- 0 grams trans-fat
- No more than 35% of calories from total sugars and no more than 15 grams of total sugars in the item
- No more than 480 mg of sodium per item as offered



- Each food item must contain at least two of the following: 1) a quarter-cup of fruit, non-fried vegetable, fat-free/low-fat dairy; 2) 1 ounce of nuts or seeds or 1 tablespoon of nut butter; 3) at least 50% of the grain ingredients are whole grain (determined by the product having whole grain as the first ingredient, from the manufacturer, or if the product has a whole-grain claim); or 4) at least 10% of the Percent Daily Value of a naturally occurring nutrient of public health concern (calcium, potassium, vitamin D, or fiber).

NANA Beverage Standards – (Vending Machines)

100% of beverages must be one or a combination of the following:

- Water, including carbonated water (no added caloric sweeteners); coffee or tea with no added caloric sweeteners (if condiments are provided, sugars and sugar substitutes may be provided and milk/creamer products, such as whole or 2% milk, that have less fat than cream)
- Fat-free or 1% low-fat dairy milk or calcium- and vitamin-D-fortified soy milk with less than 200 calories per container
- 100% fruit juice or fruit juice combined with water or carbonated water (limited to a maximum of a 12-ounce container; no added caloric sweeteners)
- 100% vegetable juice (limited to a maximum of a 12-ounce container, no added caloric sweeteners, and ≤ 200 milligrams of sodium per container)
- Low-calorie beverages that are ≤ 40 calories per container

Marketing and Promotion

Here are tips from NANA to successfully implement vending standards:

- Price. Beverages and foods that meet nutrition standards should be priced competitively (e.g., at or below) to similar items that do not meet the nutrition standards (if you choose a phased-in approach).
- Placement. Beverages and foods that meet nutrition standards should be as visible – or more so – than similar items that do not meet the nutrition standards (e.g., they should be closer to eye level).



- Promotion. Promotional space on vending machines (e.g., sides and front panel), including but not limited to language and graphics, should only promote products that meet the nutrition standards.
- Hold taste-testings. Partner with vendors to offer taste-testings of a variety of snack and beverage options that meet the nutrition standards. Have survey cards handy and tally up votes. Share results of taste-testings and keep vending machines stocked with favorite items. Note: preferences may be location specific.
- Administer online surveys. Provide online surveys in addition to or in lieu of in-person taste-testings. Use online surveys as opportunities to promote healthy options in vending machines.
- Provide education and promote the program. Work with nutrition committee or health team to educate leadership and employees about the benefits of offering and choosing healthy foods and beverages. Use available methods to promote healthy options, cultivate support for the program, and promote educational events, taste-testings, etc. Promotional methods might include posters, flyers, e-cards, emails to staff, newsletter articles, postings on bulletin boards, or signage near vending machines. Work with leadership from the outset for strong buy-in and have leadership's message and signature on promotional materials and messages.

A Phased-In Approach Implementation Timeline

100% of items in vending machines should meet the nutrition standards for beverages and foods. If this is not feasible initially, consider using the following phased-in approach:

- 50% of all items in vending machines will meet nutrition standards for beverages and foods within 1 year.
- 75% of all items in vending machines will meet nutrition standards for beverages and foods within 2 years.
- 100% of all items in vending machines will meet nutrition standards for beverages and foods within 3 years.