



**West End Urban Health Alliance (WEUHA)
Nutrition Affiliate
Healthy Eating Guidelines for Organizations¹
June 2010**

¹ Guidelines adapted from Toronto Public Health Policy. It is recommended that the Guidelines be reviewed on a biannual basis (as per BHO requirements and individual organization timelines).

BACKGROUND

[Your organization], as part of our commitment to the protection and promotion of health, has established Healthy Eating Guidelines for use at all of our community sites where our services are offered. This Healthy Eating Guidelines for Foods and Beverages Served at Programs, Events, Meetings and Functions is adapted from the *Toronto Public Health Policy* of the same name and reflects the *Eating Well with Canada's Food Guide* (2007) and a commitment to healthy eating at [your organization].

GOAL

[Your organization] shows a commitment to the health and well-being of its staff and clients by incorporating the guiding principles into practice in the following ways:

- Supporting healthy eating at meetings, programs, workshops, functions and fundraising events;
- Healthy choices in the vending machines; and
- Whenever/wherever food is sold or offered to our staff and clients.

Balancing these principles will help to ensure our staff and clients are provided with an environment supportive of healthy eating.

PRINCIPLES

[Your organization] is committed to the following six principles which we see as fundamental to healthy eating guidelines:

1. **Promote healthy eating.** Select options that incorporate the key nutrition elements outlined in *Eating Well with Canada's Food Guide*. Vegetables and fruit, whole grain choices, low-fat milk and alternatives, leaner meat and alternatives and foods lower in saturated and trans fat provide the basis for healthy eating. The Food Guide recommends Canadians limit foods and beverages high in calories, fat, sugar or salt, such as: cakes and pastries, chocolate and candies, cookies and granola bars, doughnuts and muffins, ice cream and frozen desserts, French fries, potato chips, nachos and other salty snacks, alcohol, fruit flavoured drinks, soft drinks, sports and energy drinks, and sweetened hot or cold drinks. Canadians are encouraged to satisfy their thirst with water.
2. **Practice safe food handling.** Meet the standards for safe food preparation and service*. *The World Health Organization (1999)* states that food borne illness affects 10% of the population in industrialized countries and possibly more in developing countries. Leaving food at room temperature, cross contamination of foods, and lack of proper hand washing are common causes of food borne illness. It is important to adhere to safe food handling practices and to purchase refreshments from acceptable vendors. (*At least one certified food handler working in a supervisory capacity in each area of the premises where food is prepared, processed, served, packaged or stored, in accordance with City of Toronto Bylaw 678-2006 June, 2006)

3. **Recognize cultural diversity in our community.** Select refreshment options that are culturally acceptable for those attending the event. [Your organization] is committed to ensuring access and equity throughout our organization and to the communities that we serve. The inclusion of culturally diverse foods demonstrates that the richness of cultural differences within our community is valued and respected.
4. **Be environmentally responsible.** Minimize waste from food, food packaging and disposable dishes, and recycle whenever possible. We can make a significant contribution to the environment by reducing consumption, recycling, reducing energy, and emitting less air and water pollution and by using less non-renewable resources.
5. **Promote Ontario products.** Choose Ontario products, whenever possible. This supports Ontario's food and agriculture industries and local businesses. Our organization supports consumption of local products to decrease our dependency on foreign sources of food and for the environmental benefits of reducing fossil fuel emissions during transportation. (See *Foodland Ontario's "Ontario Fresh Fruits and Vegetables Availability Guide"* www.foodland.gov.on.ca)
6. **Be fiscally accountable.** The money spent on refreshments should attempt to meet as many of the principles at the lowest cost (e.g. if there is not enough money to have a variety of choices (i.e. muffins and fruit), offer the healthier option only (i.e. fruit).

POLICY STATEMENT

[Your organization] is committed to supporting healthy eating at all programs, events, meetings and functions. This includes training sessions, educational workshops and community events. We will use the six principles to guide decision-making for the selection of foods and beverages served at programs, events, meetings and functions. Exercising good judgment in balancing these principles will help ensure that food and beverages served at programs, events, meetings and functions supports healthy eating. It is essential for [your organization] to be a role model and to ensure that both our messages and actions demonstrate a commitment to healthy eating.

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

When making our final food service provider selection, the following factors will be considered:

- Choose a reputable company (i.e. good business practices and adhere to safe food handling regulations)
- Check if the provider received a "pass" during their last food safety inspection by a Toronto Public Health Inspector
- At least one staff has a safe food handler certificate (cafeteria operator/caterer)
- Check if the provider is able and willing to offer foods that meet the Healthy Eating Guidelines (e.g. similar price for healthy vs. less healthy foods)
- Check if the provider is able and willing to offer Ontario products

PLANNING SUGGESTIONS

Please see the attached list of food and beverage ideas and sample menus.

BREAKFAST

Vegetables and Fruit

(Choose at least 1 and make it Ontario grown, if possible)

- Fresh vegetable or fruit (whole or sliced)
- Fruit salad
- Fruit or vegetable tray
- Fruit cups (packed in juice)

Breakfast Items

- Whole grain breads, toast, bagels, pitas
- Hot or cold whole grain cereal
- Trans-fat free, lower-fat baked goods: muffins, cereal/granola bars
- Lower-fat cheeses (20% M.F. or less)
- Lower-fat yogurt (2% M.F. or less)
- Poached or boiled eggs, ham or baked beans

Beverages

- Water
- 100% vegetable or fruit juice
- 2%, 1%, skim milk, or fortified beverages (e.g. soy beverage)
- Decaffeinated beverages (e.g. herbal tea)
- Consider milk for coffee or tea

Dips and Spreads

- Spreads (e.g. light cream cheese, jam, peanut butter, non-hydrogenated margarine)
- Lower fat dips (e.g. plain yogurt, lower fat fruit yogurt, hummus, light sour cream)

Sample Breakfast

- Bowl of washed apples
- 100% fruit juice
- Whole grain bagels
- Lower-fat cream cheese
- Coffee/tea and 2% milk

SNACKS

Vegetables and Fruit

(Choose at least 1 and make it Ontario grown, if possible)

- Fresh vegetable or fruit (whole or sliced)
- Fruit salad
- Fruit or vegetable tray
- Fruit cups (packed in juice)
- Dried fruit (e.g. apricots, raisins)

Beverages

- Water
- 100% vegetable or fruit juice
- 2%, 1%, skim milk, or fortified beverages (e.g. soy beverage)
- Decaffeinated beverages (e.g. herbal tea)
- Consider milk for coffee and tea

Snack Items

- Whole grain crackers, plain popcorn
- Breads, pitas, bagels, flat breads
- Lower-fat cheese tray (20% M.F. or less)
- Lower-fat yogurt (2% M.F. or less)
- Trail mix, mixed nuts or pretzels
- Trans-fat free, lower-fat baked goods: muffins, cereal/granola bars, oatmeal cookies

Dips or Spreads

- Lower fat dips (e.g. plain yogurt, lower fat fruit yogurt, hummus, light sour cream)
- Spreads (e.g. light cream cheese, jam, peanut butter, non-hydrogenated margarine)

Sample Snack

- Mini carrots
- Whole grain pitas
- Hummus dip
- Jugs of chilled tap water

LUNCH

Salads & Vegetables

- ❑ Dark green salads, such as Romaine lettuce or spinach (Ontario grown if possible)
- ❑ Vegetable salads, such as tomato & cucumber or green bean salad
- ❑ Vegetable tray
- ❑ Lower-fat salad dressings or salad dressings served on the side
- ❑ Lower fat dips (e.g. hummus, plain yogurt, bean dip or light sour cream)

Sandwiches

- ❑ Whole grain breads, bagels, pita, tortillas, rolls or roti
- ❑ Lower-fat sandwich fillings such as lean roast beef, turkey, chicken, ham, salmon tuna, or lower-fat cheese (20% M.F. or less)
- ❑ Vegetarian fillings e.g. tofu, chickpeas, eggs, grilled or fresh vegetables
- ❑ Ask for sandwiches made with lower-fat mayonnaise, little or no butter or margarine, or order these served on the side. Offer mustard, chutney, relish, light cream cheese or hummus as alternatives

Main Dishes

- ❑ Meatless dishes such as pasta with tomato sauce, vegetarian lasagne, stir-fried vegetables, rice casserole
- ❑ Pasta, couscous, bean or lentil salads
- ❑ Pizza with vegetable toppings and lower fat meat toppings (such as chicken, ham)
- ❑ Meat, fish or poultry dishes that are broiled, roasted or steamed instead of fried
- ❑ Tomato based instead of creamy sauces
- ❑ Ask for whole wheat pasta, brown rice, baked potatoes or wedges instead of white pasta, white rice or French fries

Beverages

- ❑ Water
- ❑ 100% vegetable or fruit juice
- ❑ 2%, 1%, skim milk, or fortified beverages (e.g. soy beverage)
- ❑ Decaffeinated beverages (e.g. herbal tea)
- ❑ Consider milk for coffee and tea

Desserts

- ❑ Fresh fruit, fruit salads or kebabs (Ontario grown if possible) with lower fat yogurt dip
- ❑ Fruit cups (packed in juice)
- ❑ Lower-fat yogurt (2% M.F. or less)
- ❑ Lower-fat oatmeal cookies

Sample Lunch

- Assorted sandwich tray:
 - whole grain breads
 - turkey, lower-fat cheese
 - fresh and grilled vegetables
 - mustard and lower-fat mayonnaise on the side
- Mixed greens salad with raspberry vinaigrette on the side
- Fruit platter
- Jugs of chilled tap water

BARBECUE

Salads & Vegetables

- Dark green salads, such as Romaine lettuce or spinach (Ontario grown if possible)
- Vegetable salads, such as tomato & cucumber, potato salad or coleslaw in non-creamy dressings
- Pasta, rice or bean salad in non-creamy dressings. Ask for whole grain pasta or rice
- Vegetable tray
- Lower-fat salad dressings or salad dressings served on the side
- Lower fat dips (e.g. hummus, plain yogurt, bean dip or light sour cream)

Beverages

- Water
- 100% vegetable or fruit juice
- 2%, 1%, skim milk, or fortified beverages (e.g. soy beverage)

Grilled Items

- Non-breaded poultry burgers (e.g. grilled chicken breast)
- Vegetarian burgers or veggie dogs
- Lean or extra lean beef burgers
- Kebabs – vegetables, lean meats or poultry
- Grilled vegetables (e.g. corn on the cob, eggplant, peppers)
- Grilled fruit (e.g. pineapple, peaches)
- Whole grain buns
- Vegetable toppings such as sliced tomatoes, cucumber, Romaine lettuce, onions
- Lower-fat mayonnaise, mustard, salsa, relish, chutney, lower-fat cheese slices

Desserts

- Fresh fruit, fruit salads or kebabs (Ontario grown if possible) with lower fat yogurt dip
- Fruit cups (packed in juice)
- Lower-fat yogurt (2% M.F. or less)
- Lower-fat oatmeal cookies

Sample Barbecue

- Grilled chicken breast, lean beef and veggie burgers with assorted vegetable toppings and lower-fat condiments
- Vegetable tray with lower-fat sour cream dip
- Watermelon slices
- Water
- 100% juice

FUNDRAISING

Healthier Food Items

- Fruits (e.g. apples, citrus fruit)
- Fruit or vegetable baskets
- Dried fruit mixes
- Plain popcorn
- Peanuts or nut mixes
- Sunflower or pumpkin seeds
- Cheese baskets

Other Items

- Flowers
- Raffles and silent auctions
- “Garage” or rummage sales
- Fabric lunch bags or tote bags
- Greeting cards
- Cookbooks, novels, magazine subscriptions
- Second hand books sales
- T shirts
- Car washes
- Bike-thons
- 2 or 5 km walks or runs