

# Dietary Specifications Assessment Tool

Assess your breakfast and lunch food service practices to determine the risk for violations related to calories, saturated fat, sodium, and trans fat. Think of a response in terms of always, sometimes and never. If practices vary by school, consider standardizing practices across all schools in the SFA.

1.	Do bid specifications for menu items and condiments require vendors to provide information on saturated fat, sodium and trans fat?
2.	Only low-fat (1 percent milk fat or less, unflavored) or fat-free (unflavored or flavored) milk is used for student consumption and in menu recipes.
3.	Low-fat, fat-free milk products are used. This includes yogurt and cottage cheese.
4.	Cheese (all varieties including reduced fat) is controlled by placing items in portion cups, portion controlled packaging or the use of appropriate serving size utensils to limit portion size allowed per meal. This includes cheese offered on salad bars.
5.	Are non-creditable cheese products offered as part of a reimbursable meal? (Non-creditable cheese includes: cheese sauce without a CN label, cheese product, imitation cheese and powdered cheese).
6.	Reduced-fat, low fat, fat-free mayonnaise, sour cream, and/or salad dressings are offered instead of full-fat varieties.
7.	Broths and/or soups with low or reduced sodium are used, rather than regular broths and soups.
8.	Fresh, frozen, and/or low sodium or no sodium canned vegetables are offered, rather than reduced sodium or regular canned vegetables.
9.	How often are pickles, olives, packaged crackers and/or croutons offered on the service line and/or salad bar?
10.	How often are meats such as hot dogs, luncheon meats (e.g. ham, turkey) and/or sausage offered on the service line and/or salad bar? (All varieties - including reduced and/or low sodium).
11.	Canned fruits are packed in water, fruit juice, or light syrup.
12.	Grain-based desserts such as doughnuts, pastries, cakes, and cookies are limited to 2 oz. eq. per week or less.
13.	Whole grain-rich foods offered meet the USDA criteria for "whole grain-rich."
14.	Other seasonings, such as herbs and spices, are substituted for salt.
15.	Oil is used in recipes, rather than shortening, margarine, or butter.
16.	Fat is drained from browned meats and poultry and/or fat is skimmed from broths, soups, stews, or gravies and/or skin is removed from poultry or skinless poultry is used.
17.	Is a deep fat fryer used on-site to prepare school meal items?
18.	Is butter or margarine added to breads and/or vegetables prior to serving?
19.	Standardized recipes are followed. All ingredients are weighed or measured with standardized weight or measuring utensils.
20.	Meal pattern for appropriate age/grade groups are used for menu planning, including the meal patterns and serving sizes. Weekly requirements for meats and grains are followed.
21.	How often are extra, non-reimbursable food items (e.g. potato chips, ice cream, pudding and/or gelatin) offered on the menu? Items sold a la carte are exempt.
22.	Portion sizes for condiments (e.g. hot sauce, ketchup, mustard, salad dressing) are controlled by placing items in portion cups, portion controlled packaging or the use of appropriate serving size utensils to limit portion size allowed per meal.
23.	Food items that may not contribute to reimbursable meal components, such as bacon, bacon bits, pepperoni, and chow mien noodles, are offered on salad bars and/or food bars.
24.	Students are offered butter or margarine in the serving line, at the condiment station and/or if they ask for it.
25.	Students are offered salt in the serving line, at the condiment station, on meal tables and/or if they ask for it.
26.	Larger portions and/or bonus items and/or seconds are offered (offering portion sizes that are inconsistent with the planned menu). Entrées sold a la carte are exempt.