**USDA School Meal Pattern Basics**

The USDA Meal Pattern outlines what foods must be offered to each student so the meal is a “reimbursable”. Schools offer a minimum of 1½ – 2 cups of fruit and ¾ – 1 cup of vegetables per day per student, with actual amount based on grade. More information about the USDA meal pattern is available from [OSPI](http://www.washington.gov/). Vegetable subgroups, organized by color or type of vegetable, are fairly new. The requirements for different quantities of vegetable subgroups have resulted in schools looking for a wider variety of vegetables and offering vegetables in more creative ways.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Food Components: Lunch</th>
<th>Grade K - 5</th>
<th>Grade 6 – 8</th>
<th>Grade 9 - 12</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Vegetables (total)</strong></td>
<td>3¾ cups/week</td>
<td>3¾ cups/week</td>
<td>5 cups/week</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-Daily / Weekly min</td>
<td>(¾ cup daily min)</td>
<td>(¾ cup daily min)</td>
<td>(1 cup daily min)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Dark Green Subgroup</strong></td>
<td>½ cup/wk</td>
<td>½ cup/wk</td>
<td>½ cup/wk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Red / Orange Subgroup</strong></td>
<td>¾ cup/wk</td>
<td>¾ cup/wk</td>
<td>1¼ cup/wk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Legumes Subgroup</strong></td>
<td>½ cup/wk</td>
<td>½ cup/wk</td>
<td>½ cup/wk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Starchy Subgroup</strong></td>
<td>½ cup/wk</td>
<td>½ cup/wk</td>
<td>½ cup/wk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Other Subgroup</strong></td>
<td>½ cup/wk</td>
<td>½ cup/wk</td>
<td>¾ cup/wk</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Fruits                 | 2½ cups/week| 2½ cups/week| 5 cups/week  |
| -Daily / Weekly min    | (½ cup daily min)| (½ cup daily min)| (1 cup daily min)|

The Breakfast meal pattern is simpler than the lunch meal pattern. The mandatory fruit at breakfast is new for the 2014-15 school-year, so there is likely a higher need for minimally processed foods at this time.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Food Components: Breakfast</th>
<th>Grade K - 5</th>
<th>Grade 6 – 8</th>
<th>Grade 9 - 12</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Vegetables</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May be substituted for fruits, but the first 2 cups/week must be from a subgroup other than starchy (dark green, red/orange, legumes, other)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Fruits | 5 cups/week | 5 cups/week | 5 cups/week |
| -Daily / Weekly min | (1 cup daily min) | (1 cup daily min) | (1 cup daily min) |
Dark Green Vegetables:

*Dark Green Vegetables Grown in Washington:* Broccoli, Romaine and other dark green leaf lettuce, Spinach, Kale, Chard, Collards, Bok Choy

*Minimally Processed Options:*
- Shredded lettuce
- Chopped romaine
- Washed, trimmed spinach leaves
- Salad mix
- Braising greens mix
- Broccoli florets

*Options for Additional Processing:*
- Cooked frozen spinach, broccoli

Red/Orange Vegetables:


*Minimally Processed Options:*
- Fresh or frozen peeled and cubed squash
- Red pepper slices
- Carrot coins (5/16”), sticks (1/2” x 4”), shreds
  - Single serve ½ cup portion sticks (2 oz)

*Options for Additional Processing:*
- Tomato sauce
- Salsa

Legumes:

*Legumes Grown in Washington:* Lentils, Chickpeas, Black Beans, Navy Beans, Great Northern Beans, Pinto Beans

*Minimally Processed Options:*
- Dried

*Options for Additional Processing:*
- Cooked and canned
- Cooked pureed
  - Refried beans
  - Hummus
**Starchy Vegetables:**

*Starchy Vegetables Grown in Washington:* Corn, Green Peas, Potatoes, Sunchokes

**Minimally Processed Options:**
- Fresh husked and cut corn
- Frozen corn
- Fresh shelled peas
- Frozen peas
- Frozen cut potatoes
  - Multi-colored
  - Wedges, diced, shreds

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**Other Vegetables:**

*Other Vegetables Grown in Washington:* Asparagus, Mushrooms, Beets, Brussels Sprouts, Cabbages, Celery, Cauliflower, Cucumber, Green beans, Leeks, Onions, Peppers (other than red), Radish, Summer Squash

**Minimally Processed Options:**
- Shredded cabbage, cabbage-carrot mix
- Celery sticks
- Cauliflower florets
- Trimmed &/or sliced green beans
- Sliced or wedged radishes

**Options for Additional Processing:**
- Canned green beans, beets, asparagus

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**Fruits:**

*Fruits Grown in Washington:* Apples, Pears, Peaches, Nectarines, Apricots, Plums, Pluots, Strawberries, Raspberries, Blueberries, Grapes, Cherries, Melons

**Minimally processed options:**
- Single-serve ½ Cup portions:
  - Sliced apples (2 oz) – ascorbic acid ok
  - Grapes (3 oz)
- Frozen berries (grade B for smoothies)
- Frozen stone fruits
- Dried fruits

**Options for Additional Processing:**
- Canned fruits (whole, halved or puree)