

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](#).

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.

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

| Food Components : Breakfast | Grade K - 5 | Grade 6 – 8 | Grade 9 - 12 |
|--|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| Vegetables | | | |
| 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) | | | |
| 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
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Red/Orange Vegetables:



Red/Orange Vegetables Grown in Washington: Winter Squash, Red Peppers, Carrots, Tomatoes

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 1/2 cup portion sticks (2 oz)

Options for Additional Processing:

- Tomato sauce
 - Salsa
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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

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

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)