

FALL 2018

NUTRITION NEWS

WHAT'S HAPPENING IN SCHOOL FOOD?

School Lunch vs. Packed Lunch?

Did you know?

Recent research shows school lunch rates higher for nutrition compared to lunches brought from home.

Three separate university studies – from Tufts, Baylor and Virginia Tech – compared lunches brought to school by students versus school lunches and found packed lunches consistently were less nutritious.^{1,2,3}

Now that the meal pattern and nutrition requirements of the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act are in full effect for the National School Lunch Program, every school lunch must offer (at a minimum):



- Up to 1 cup of fruit
- Up to 1 cup of vegetables (mix of colors)
- Up to 2 servings of whole grains
- Up to 2 or more ounces of meat or vegetarian protein
- 1 cup of low-fat or fat-free milk
- Controlled amounts of calories, saturated fat and sodium

But even if they are more nutritious, how does school lunch taste?

Aramark's team of chefs develops nutritious and innovative menus using feedback from students, school faculty and parents based on results obtained from surveys, taste tests and sampling events.

School lunch examples include popular items with a healthy twist, such as:

- Chicken nuggets with whole-grain coating
- Whole-grain crusted pizzas
- Baked chicken patties
- Whole-wheat burritos
- Oven baked French fries... and so much more!

¹ Hubbard KL, et al. What's in Children's Backpacks: Foods Brought From Home JADA. 2014; 1424-1431.

² Caruso ML, Cullen KW. Quality and Cost of Student Lunches Brought From Home. JAMA Pediatr. 2015;169(1):86-90.

³ Farris AR, et al. Nutritional Comparison of Packed and School Lunches in Pre-Kindergarten and Kindergarten Children Following the Implementation of the 2012-13 National School Lunch Program Standards. J Nutr Educ Behav 2014;46(6): 621-626.

Just **27%** of lunches brought from home included at least three of the five school lunch program requirements.¹

Another study showed about **90%** of packed lunches contained foods such as high calorie desserts, snack chips and sweetened beverages – all foods that are not permitted or are very limited in the school lunch program.²

Want to share your thoughts?

Your school's cafeteria manager and nutrition director want to serve all students meals they enjoy and are good for them. Any and all feedback is welcome.



Since everyone's health history and nutritional needs are so different, please make sure that you talk with your doctor and a registered dietitian to get advice about a diet and exercise plan that's right for you. [visit myhealthyforlife.com](http://myhealthyforlife.com)



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