

# Tonbridge & Malling Borough Council's Healthy Eating Award



## Guidance for Food Businesses



### Why we have a Healthy Eating Award

A healthy diet is important for good health and eating a variety of foods in the right proportion can help people to manage their weight, improve general wellbeing and reduce the risk of conditions including heart disease, stroke, some cancers, diabetes and osteoporosis (thin bones).

A diet based on starchy foods such as rice and pasta, with plenty of fruit and vegetables, some protein-rich foods such as meat, fish and lentils, some milk and dairy foods, and not too much fat, sugar or salt, will provide all the nutrients needed to prevent ill health.

As the number of meals eaten outside of the home continues to increase so does the importance of helping catering businesses to provide a range of healthy food and drink options to its customers. Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council are keen to support the Government's agenda on helping people to make healthy lifestyle choices by improving the diet of people choosing to eat meals outside the home. We are doing this by encouraging food businesses to reduce the amount of salt, sugar and saturated fat in their dishes and to increase fruit and vegetable consumption. We are also promoting healthier cooking methods, correct proportions and serving sizes, and encouraging businesses to promote their healthy food options.

### Who are we working with

We are working to encourage high street restaurants, cafes, takeaways, pubs, schools and nurseries to commit to making changes that will enable people to make healthy choices outside the home. We are also working with catering businesses in workplaces to support their customers to make healthier choices.

Most catering businesses will be eligible to apply for the Healthy Eating Award provided they have achieved at least a hygiene rating of 3 in their most recent food hygiene inspection.

Schools, nurseries and residential homes for the elderly will also be able to apply as long as they can provide evidence to demonstrate the following:

- Schools under local authority control can provide evidence that their menu meets the nutritional and food-based standards for school lunches (<http://www.schoolfoodtrust.org.uk/the-standards/the-nutrient-based-standards> and <http://www.schoolfoodtrust.org.uk/the-standards/the-food-based-standards>).
- For schools not under local authority control, comply with the new food based standards for schools.

- Nurseries meet the nutritional standards for under 5's ([www.cwt.org.uk/publications.html#under5](http://www.cwt.org.uk/publications.html#under5)).
- Residential care homes for the elderly must have regard to relevant guidance (<http://www.cwt.org.uk/pdfs/OlderPeople.pdf>)

### How will your business benefit?

Obtaining the new Tonbridge and Malling Healthy Eating Award will help you demonstrate your commitment to helping residents of Tonbridge and Malling lead healthier lives. Your business can also benefit from:

- Free Nutritional advice from our qualified nutritionist, with support to provide healthier options in a cost effective way.
- Support in marketing and promoting healthier food and drink choices.
- Receive an award to display at your premises, which may attract new customers.
- Use of the Healthy Eating Award Logo on your stationary and menus (with prior permission).
- Your business will be listed on the Council website.
- If requested, we can support you to issue a press release.
- Those qualifying at time of the launch of the new scheme will be invited to a Mayor's presentation event to receive their certificates.

### How to apply

1. Carefully read this Guidance to ensure you understand the aims of the Award.
2. Look closely at your recipes, menus and cooking methods compared to the guidance given. Make any changes required to improve what you do. You do not need to be able to tick 'yes' to everything – only enough to reach one of the 3 levels:

<p>Bronze: min 55</p> <p>Silver: min 75</p> <p>Gold: min 100</p>
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3. Look at how you are going to promote and market your healthier food and drink options to ensure your customers are encouraged to make informed healthy choices.
4. Once you feel confident that you are meeting the criteria to achieve an award please fill in the Application Questionnaire and send it back to us with a copy of all your menus (by post or email).

### What happens next?

1. You will be contacted to arrange a convenient time for us to visit your premises (please allow about 1½ hours).

2. During the visit, the nutritionist will be able to confirm that the questionnaire has been answered correctly and advise on any queries you may have regarding cooking techniques, ingredient choices and recipes.
3. If everything is in place the Award will be confirmed at the end of this visit to either Bronze, Silver or Gold level. If more time is needed to make changes, a follow up phone call or revisit may be made and the Award will be confirmed at a later date.

## Healthy Eating Guidance

### The eatwell plate

Use the eatwell plate to help you get the balance right. It shows how much of what you eat should come from each food group.



Department of Health in association with the Welsh Government, the Scottish Government and the Food Standards Agency in Northern Ireland

Healthy eating is all about getting the balance right and in practice this means eating a variety of foods.

The Eatwell Plate is a tool that makes healthy eating easier to understand by giving a visual representation of the types and proportions of foods needed for a healthy and well balanced diet. In practice it means eating a large amount of fruit and vegetables and wholegrain starchy foods; a moderate amount of meat, fish and alternatives, and having moderate amounts of milk and dairy foods; having small or only occasional amounts of foods and drinks high in fat (especially saturated fat), sugar, or salt.

The information below provides a comprehensive look at each section of the Eatwell plate in relation to the Application Questionnaire. Please read each section carefully before completing your application.

## Fact Sheet 1: VEGETABLES, SALAD and FRUIT

Due to the many health benefits of eating a diet high in fruit and vegetables we should all be aiming to eat at least 5 portions of fruits and/or vegetables a day in line with the government's 5-day campaign ([www.nhs.uk/5aday](http://www.nhs.uk/5aday)).

Fruit and vegetables are beneficial for the following reasons:

- Naturally packed with essential vitamins and minerals which are required for optimum health
- Contain a variety of antioxidants and other phytochemicals, vital to protect the body from damage that causes disease.
- High in fibre that helps to improve bowel function.
- High fibre, low fat, low calorie food that can help to maintain a healthier weight.
- Reduced risk of heart disease, high blood pressure, stroke and some cancers.

We should be aiming to eat 400g a day in total, which is about a third of our total daily food consumption. This should include at least 5 different types and a range of colours in order to get a wide range of nutrients. It is easy to achieve if you include one vegetable and one fruit at every mealtime, plus some fruit or a juice for breakfast.

### What is a portion of fruit or vegetable?

A portion of fruit and vegetables is about 80 grams, or a heaped catering spoonful (equivalent to 3 heaped tablespoons).

All types count: raw or cooked, fresh, frozen, dried, tinned (preferably without added salt or sugar) and fruit or vegetable juices. However, potatoes and canned spaghetti do not count towards your 5 a day because they are starchy foods, high in energy (see Fact Sheet 2 – Starchy Foods and Wholegrains). You can only count each type once.

Examples:

- One 150ml glass of unsweetened fruit or vegetable juice (but as the juicing process removes most of the important fibre, you cannot count more than one glass of juice per day).
- A 150 ml smoothie counts as one portion – or it counts as two portions if the crushed fruit or vegetable pulp is included.
- A banana, apple, orange or similar sized fruit.
- Two plums, satsumas or similar sized fruit.
- A handful of grapes or berries.
- One heaped tablespoon of dried fruit.
- Three heaped tablespoons of canned or stewed fruit.
- Three heaped tablespoons of vegetables (raw, cooked, frozen or tinned).
- Three heaped tablespoons of beans or pulses (eg. baked beans).
- A cereal bowl filled with salad.

### Catering Tips

#### Vegetables, beans and pulses

- Offer several large portions of freshly-cooked vegetables every mealtime, without adding any butter “glaze”.
- Add plenty of raw vegetables to salads.
- Home-made soups may contain a variety of vegetables and pulses (peas, beans, or lentils) to help make them more filling and nutritious.

- Incorporate more vegetables and pulses to composite main course dishes such as spaghetti Bolognese, cottage pie, soups, casseroles, stews, curries, stir fries and pizzas, as well as sandwiches, toasties and Paninis.

### Salads

- Offer “undressed” main course salads, and side salads where appropriate, with dressings always served separately.
- Offer lower fat salad dressings and reduced fat mayonnaise (less than 40% fat) to use with salads and in sandwich fillings.
- Include salad ingredients in sandwiches or as a side dish.
- Wash salad vegetables carefully to avoid bruising and tear lettuce rather than shred to prevent it from going brown and reducing vitamin content.
- Do not use salt to remove water from salads such as lettuce.

### Fruit

- Display a variety of visually appealing fruit or vegetables choices in a prominent position for customers to see.
- Offer fruit based desserts (without much added sugar or fat) such as fruit cobbler, fruit crumbles with muesli topping, fruit salad, stewed seasonal fruit, or summer pudding.
- Ensure cakes contain fresh or dried fruit.
- Add fresh, tinned, frozen or dried fruit to fruit salads.
- Use unsweetened 100% fruit juices and fruit canned in natural juice rather than syrup or added sugar.
- Use a fruit juice as a base for fruit salads and do not add extra sugar.

### Storage, preparation and cooking

Nutrients in fruits and vegetables can be easily lost during storage, cooking and preparation, especially the B vitamins and vitamin C, which are easily destroyed when subjected to the air, heat and water for a time.

- Use local, fresh, seasonal fruit and vegetables where possible and use up as quickly as possible. Vitamins are gradually destroyed, and the appearance, texture and taste also deteriorate during storage.
- If your turnover of fresh fruit and vegetable is not high, use frozen vegetables straight from the freezer, which tend to be frozen straight from the fields and therefore retain a high level of nutrients.
- Raw vegetables and salads have the highest nutrient content.
- Leave skins on vegetables and fruit whenever possible for maximum nutrients.
- Prepare vegetables as near to cooking or serving as possible and try not to soak in water before cooking. Avoid soaking vegetables in preservatives (such as Drywite) which destroys vitamins.
- Never add bicarbonate of soda to boiled vegetables, as this also destroys vitamins.
- Steam, microwave, stir-fry or poach vegetables in a minimum of water, as vitamins are leached out into the cooking water. Be careful not overcook vegetables.
- Save the veg cooking water, full of vitamins, to use as a tasty stock in sauces, gravies and soups.
- Serve veg as soon as possible after cooking - hot holding veg for longer than half an hour significantly reduces the vitamin content.

## Fact Sheet 2: STARCHY FOODS AND WHOLEGRAINS

About a third of our diet should be made up of wholegrain, starchy, carbohydrate foods such as bread, pasta, noodles, rice, potatoes and breakfast cereals that provide the main source of energy in the diet plus lots essential vitamins, minerals and fibre. They are an essential component of every meal.

Many of these foods come from the seeds of cereal crops such as rice, oats, barley and wheat. In making white flour or rice, the nutrient and fibre-rich outer layer of the seed is removed. When this outer layer is retained, “wholegrain” cereals (such as wholemeal flour/bread or brown rice) contain nearly 75% more nutrients and the health benefits dramatically increase:

- High in two types of fibre – insoluble fibre which helps to keep the bowel healthy and soluble fibre that can reduce cholesterol levels promote healthy gut bacteria.
- Provide a slow release form of energy, which helps to keep you feeling fuller for longer and keep your blood sugar levels more stable (low glycaemic index) whilst helping to maintain a healthy body weight over time.
- Wholegrain starchy foods help to replace foods that are high in fat, again helping to reduce calorie intake and to keep the heart healthy.
- A whole range of essential nutrients: B vitamins and folic acid, vitamin E and omega 3, minerals such as iron and zinc.

### Catering Tips

It is easy to add fat and dramatically increase the calories when preparing starchy foods. Make sure you offer a plain starchy food every mealtime, without any added oil, fat or sauces (this is a compulsory requirement of the Award). This could be boiled, mashed or jacket potatoes, boiled rice, pasta, noodles or couscous.

### Potatoes

- When boiling potatoes do not add any salt and use a minimal amount of water, that can be saved and re-used as stock to retain the vitamins lost in the water.
- Where possible leave the skin on when serving boiled or new potatoes, jackets or wedges – there are lots of nutrients in the skin.
- Refrain from adding fat, such as butter, when cooking or serving potatoes. If necessary, serve butter separately for the customer to use at their discretion.
- As a tasty alternative to chips, make homemade wedges brushed or tossed with a little oil and some spices (such as pepper or paprika) before baking.
- Use thick chunky chips or oven chips, rather than thin or crinkle-styled chips which absorb more oil because of a larger surface area.
- When frying, use unsaturated oils heated to the correct temperature to seal the potato and prevent too much oil being absorbed. For more advice on frying chips visit <http://collections.europarchive.org/tna/20100927130941/http://food.gov.uk/healthi/creating/healthycatering/healthycatering2/chips>
- Ensure the frying oil is changed regularly to prevent rancid odours and dangerous chemicals forming.
- For roast potatoes cut large pieces and ensure they are added to a little preheated oil to minimise absorption of fat into the potato.
- Allow customers to add their own salt to chips/potatoes – some people do not want it.

### Pasta, rice, noodles and other cereal grains (couscous, bulgar wheat)

- Offer a choice of plain boiled rice or noodles when serving fried versions.
- Use oil sparingly when frying rice or noodles.
- Offer a choice of brown rice and wholewheat pasta at least a few days per week, in salads, composite dishes and as accompaniments to dishes. (This is not applicable for children under 2 years old).

### Bread, rolls and baguettes

- Offer a selection of breads, including wholemeal and/or granary.
- Varying the types of breads will keep up consumer interest (eg. sliced bread, rolls, baguettes, wraps, bagels, paninis, pitta).
- Use thicker-cut slices of bread for sandwiches, to serve the right proportions of bread to filling.

### Baking

- Make pastry and crumble using wholemeal flour or a “half and half” mixture of wholemeal and white. Alternatively make crumbles using oats.
- Wholemeal flour may also be used in cakes, but you may need to add a little more moisture (milk or water).

### Breakfast cereals

- Be aware that many breakfast cereals are extremely high in sugar and salt, especially chocolate, honey or sugar-coated varieties.
- “Healthy” cereals include porridge (made with oats and skimmed or semi-skimmed milk only, which may be served with fresh or dried fruit – but not jam), unsweetened muesli, Wheetabix, Shreddies and Bran flakes.
- “Moderately healthy” cereals generally contain less fibre, more sugar and salt. These include corn flakes and rice pops.
- Offer skimmed or semi-skimmed milk, low fat yoghurts or fromage frais to accompany breakfast cereals.
- Offer fresh, canned or dried fruit to sweeten cereal instead of sugar.
- You could offer artificial sweeteners as an option for customers to add to cereals (not in schools or nurseries).



### Fact Sheet 3: MILK AND DAIRY FOODS

Milk and dairy products (such as cheese, milk, yoghurt and fromage frais) are an important source of calcium, which is required to keep our bones strong and is also important for muscle contraction and blood clotting. Milk and dairy foods are also good sources of protein and essential vitamins such as Vitamin A, B12, and D and can contribute greatly to the nutrient intake of children.

However, milk and dairy foods also contain high levels of saturated fat and although the amount of fat can vary quite dramatically between products, when eaten too often in large amounts these foods can affect our health (see Fact Sheet 5 on Fat).

#### Catering Tips

- Offer semi-skimmed or skimmed milk for drinking, adding to hot drinks, cereals and for cooking (eg. cheese sauce, custard) as these contain lower fat than whole milk.
- When catering for small children, you will need to have whole milk available for drinking by the under twos, although semi-skimmed milk may be introduced after the age of two.
- Where cream is used in cooking, try to replace it with semi-skimmed milk (1.6% fat), low fat yoghurt (1%) or low fat crème fraiche (2.7%).
- As an accompaniment to puddings or desserts, offer low fat custard (made with skimmed or semi-skimmed milk), evaporated milk, low fat natural or Greek yoghurt, fromage frais, low fat crème fraiche, low fat ice-cream or frozen yoghurt. Always ask customers whether they want an accompaniment.
- Lower fat varieties of cheeses such as Edam, Brie, Camembert, cottage cheese or lower fat varieties of cheddar may be used for sandwiches, salads, ploughmans, cheeseboards and for cooking.
- Stronger flavoured cheese can be grated and used sparingly for sandwiches, sauces, pizzas and toppings as you will be able to get away with using less without compromising on taste. You can also enhance cheese flavour by adding a little mustard.



## Fact Sheet 4: MEAT, FISH AND VEGETARIAN ALTERNATIVES

The following are all excellent sources of protein, plus essential vitamins and minerals:

- Meat and poultry
- fish
- eggs
- soya products
- Quorn
- pulses (beans, peas, lentils and chickpeas)
- nuts and seeds

Protein is needed for growth and repair and is an essential part of all the body's cells. It is especially important in the diets of children, adolescents and pregnant or breastfeeding women. Meats, especially red meat, are also an excellent source of important vitamins and minerals such as vitamin B12, iron and zinc, essential for the release of energy and keeping the blood healthy.

However animal protein foods, such as meat and dairy, can also be high in saturated fat (see Fact Sheet 5 on Fats) which when eaten in large quantities can be linked to heart disease and obesity.

Fish on the other hand is an excellent source of protein and contains a healthier type of fat than meat. White fish (such as cod, haddock and plaice) is very low in fat, whilst oily fish (such as sardines, mackerel, pilchards, trout and salmon) is rich in beneficial fish oils. The fat in oily fish is not saturated fat, but a very good source of polyunsaturated "omega 3" fatty acids. These oils have been shown to protect us against coronary heart disease as they help prevent the blood from clotting.

### Catering tips

Meat, poultry and meat products (such as bacon, sausages, pate, beef burgers)

- Selecting lean cuts of meat and lean mince will reduce the fat content. You can further reduce it by trimming off the visible fat before cooking.
- If using minced meat, drain off excess fat once the meat has been browned.
- Try to include some red meat (beef or lamb) on your menu for its iron content (especially if catering for children).
- For all poultry dishes other than roast chicken, remove the skin and fat before cooking or buy skinless. Most of the fat in chicken is just under the skin, but once removed it is a very lean meat.
- Limit the use of processed meats (such as tinned meat, chicken nuggets, sausages and salami) and meat products (such as pies, sausage rolls and pasties) as they usually contain hidden fat and high levels of salt.
- Try using low fat sausages and homemade burgers made with lean mince.
- Complement and "bulk out" composite meat dishes (such as cottage pie and casseroles) with veg and pulses such as beans or lentils, to help reduce the fat content of dishes without altering the protein content.
- Roast, grill, microwave, bake or steam all meats on a rack where possible so the fat can drain off. You do not need to add any fat.
- Ensure there is always an adequate proportion of rice, pasta or potatoes served with protein foods (for example, serving plenty of pasta and slightly less meat sauce, or a little more rice and a little less meat curry).

## Fish

- Make sure you include some fish on your menu. This could be white or oily fish.
- Try to promote oily fish, such as salmon, pilchards, sardines, herring, mackerel (both fresh or canned) and fresh tuna.
- Canned tuna is not classified as an oily fish as the oil is lost during processing, so try to offer other canned oily fish as sandwich fillings, with salads and in other fish dishes.
- Tuna canned in spring water is preferable to salted water/brine or oil.
- Frying fish really increases its fat content, so microwave, grill or oven bake it instead.
- Use breaded fish, which can be grilled or baked instead of using a batter that will need to be fried.
- If you are worried that you may not sell much fish, then buying frozen portions or small tins of tuna, pilchards or salmon will help avoid waste.
- If one type of fish does not sell well, try another recipe.

## Vegetarian alternatives

- Try to avoid serving cheesy dishes every day for vegetarians.
- Egg is an excellent protein source. Offer them boiled, poached, or scrambled rather than fried. You can enhance the flavour with pepper and chives rather than adding salt. NB. Not suitable for vegans.
- Pulses (beans, peas, lentils and chickpeas) including soybeans and their products (such as textured vegetable protein, TVP, Vegemince or tofu / soybean curd), plus meat substitutes like mycoprotein (eg. Quorn) and nuts and seeds can provide a range of protein options for vegetarians and vegans. Try to use a variety on your menu cycle.

## Fact Sheet 5: FAT

Fat is a very concentrated form of energy, needed by the body in small amounts to provide energy and help to absorb some vitamins. But it is only needed in very small amounts because when eaten in excess a diet high in fat can lead to heart disease and excess weight gain. On average, people in the UK consume far too much fat so the main aim as a caterer is to reduce the total consumption of all types of fat used in food preparation, and especially foods high in saturated fat.

### Types of Fats

#### Saturated Fatty Acids (Saturated fat)

These tend to be solid at room temperature. When eaten in high amounts, saturated fat can increase the risk of heart disease by raising levels of the bad type of cholesterol (LDL) in the blood. These are found in:

- lard (animal fat )
- butter
- hard margarine
- coconut and palm oils.

#### Monounsaturated fatty acids (Monounsaturated fat)

Healthiest of all fats, as it can help to lower harmful cholesterol levels. However, it is still high in calories so oils should be used sparingly in cooking. Liquid at room temperature, but sets easily when stored in the fridge. Found in:

- olives / olive oil
- almonds
- peanuts / peanut oil
- rapeseed oil
- avocados.

#### Polyunsaturated fatty acids (Polyunsaturated fat)

Liquid at room temperature. These tend not to keep so long, especially if exposed to air and light, or once cooking oils are contaminated with bits of food.

- sunflower oil
- vegetable oil
- other seed oils.

#### Omega 3 fatty acids

- sardines
- salmon
- mackerel.

#### Trans fatty acids

When processing liquid oils into solid or semi-solid fats to make margarine and spreads, the process of hydrogenation can result in some "trans fat" being produced. This hydrogenated fat or partially-hydrogenated oil is used as a cheap alternative to butter or lard and has longer shelf life than oil. These products are often used in pastry, pies, cakes, biscuits, some margarines and vegetable ghee.

Trans fats are associated with an increased risk of heart disease because they significantly increase the bad cholesterol in the blood. Trans fats should therefore be avoided whenever possible.

Some manufacturers control the hydrogenation process better in order to minimize any trans fats being produced and may declare their product “virtually trans fat free”.

## **Catering tips**

### Spreads and Cooking Fats, Frying and Sauces

- Take care to choose oils and fats that are healthy and suitable for your purpose.
- Use lower fat and unsaturated types where possible, and avoid hydrogenated fats/oils that may contain trans fat.
- Don't buy too much oil, as it does not keep long. Never use any oil that smells rancid as this can be dangerous.
- Ask customers if they want any spread on their bread or jacket potato, especially when using a moist filling like mayonnaise. Alternatively, serve butter or spread separately or on the side with jackets, bread rolls or toast.
- Otherwise, use lower fat, monounsaturated or polyunsaturated spreads instead of butter. And spread it thinly.
- Keep added fat/oil to a minimum, by choosing fat-free cooking methods (steaming, grilling or oven baking).
- Don't add butter or oil before hot holding potatoes, vegetables, pasta or noodles.
- If frying or stir frying, add very little oil to the pan – it will quickly spread and coat the surface as it heats up.
- When stir-frying or sautéing, avoid butter and ghee. Polyunsaturated oils like corn, sunflower, vegetable and rapeseed oil are great for deep frying. Olive oil is only suitable for brief shallow frying as it starts to break down and smoke at relatively low temperatures.
- Cut the food in large chunks for frying or roasting, to minimise the surface area that will absorb oil.
- Check the oil has reached the correct temperature before frying, to prevent the food absorbing too much fat.
- Drain off excess oil on kitchen paper after frying.
- Avoid part frying foods and then re-frying again later, as this will double the fat content.
- If re-using your cooking oil, filter it daily to remove food particles and change it completely every week (or monthly if only used occasionally), before it starts to foam, froth, smoke, changes colour or smells, as chemical changes from reheating oil can generate trans fats.
- Some businesses (eg. schools) now rarely offer deep fried chips at all. Others insist on selling chips only as part of a meal. Instead try offering oven chips or homemade oven-baked potato wedges tossed in a little oil and some spices.
- When roasting and baking, add the barest minimum of oil just to grease the tins or dishes.
- Remove all visible fat from meats and the skin from chicken before cooking.
- Skim any fat that rises to the surface of gravy and casseroles.
- Offer tomato-based sauces as an alternative to creamy based sauces for curries and pasta. Tomato sauces are much lower in fat and also a good way of increasing vegetable consumption.
- Use skimmed or semi-skimmed milk in white creamy sauces, and reduced fat cheese or less of strong cheddar.

- Traditional vinaigrette is very oily. Use reduced or low fat (less than 3% fat) salad dressings and mayonnaise. Either ask if the customer wants dressing and add it sparingly or offer dressings separately. Do not add dressings automatically.

#### Pastry, Pies, Cakes and Biscuits

- Pastry and crumble mix is extremely high in fat so try to limit the number of pastry dishes on offer.
- Replace puff pastry with shortcrust pastry.
- Make your pastry with a low -fat spread instead of butter, margarine or lard.
- Roll pastry thinly.
- Use half white and half wholemeal flour in pastry, cakes and biscuits as this increases the nutrient content.
- Halve the fat by using only a pastry lid or base.
- Better still, use mashed or sliced potato as a pie topping, and muesli instead of crumble on fruit.
- If buying pre-prepared dishes the government's label guidance for maximum limits are:
  - Fat less than 20g per 100g and
  - Saturated fat less than 5g per 100g.
- Avoid prepared dishes that list hydrogenated or partially hydrogenated oil in their ingredient list as they are likely to contain trans fats. Choose ones that say that they are "free" or "virtually free" from trans fats.

## Fact Sheet 6: SUGAR

Sugar occurs naturally in some foods, such as milk or fruit. It can also be added to food during the manufacturing process or cooking. Most adults and children in the UK eat far too much sugar in their diet and this can lead to a range of health conditions such as excess weight gain and obesity. When eaten frequently between meals, sugary foods and drinks can also lead to tooth decay.

Natural sugars in food include the fruit sugar, *Fructose*, (found in fruits, fruit puree and 100% fruit juices), the milk sugar, *Lactose*, (found in milk and dairy products such as milk yoghurt and cheese). Sugars added to foods include *Glucose* (a refined sugar used in sweets, fizzy drinks, sports drinks and tinned fruit in syrup) and *Sucrose*, commonly known as sugar (added to tea, coffee, cereals, ice-cream, desserts, cakes and biscuits)

Manufacturers often hide sugar in foods by using different names when listing the ingredients in their products. Any food product with the ingredients listed below high up on the ingredient list will contain a lot of sugar:

- Dextrose
- Sucrose
- Glucose
- Syrup
- Malt
- Honey
- Maltose
- Molasses

### Catering tips

- Offer whole or cut fresh fruit, or an attractive fresh fruit salad (use different fruits each time to vary the offering). Prominently display and favourably price these compared to desserts and puddings to encourage customers to choose them.
- Offer lower sugar desserts such as fruit salad in orange juice, fruit in jelly, fruit fool (made with stewed fruit and custard), baked apples or other fruits, rice pudding, fruit cobbler, fruit crumble (with very little sugar in the crumble), summer fruit pudding or low fat yoghurts.
- Reduce the amount of sugar used in your recipes.
- Use fresh or dried fruit to naturally sweeten cakes and desserts – some fruity recipes do not need any sugar added at all.
- Try not to decorate cakes with icing or buttercream.
- Offer fruit breads, malt loaf, bread pudding and teacakes rather than cake and muffins, as these options are also lower in fat.
- For healthier snacks, offer dried fruit, unsalted nuts, plain popcorn and rice cakes and baked crisps.
- Plain breakfast cereals such as Wheetabix, Shredded Wheat, unsweetened muesli or porridge are much healthier than sugar, honey or chocolate-coated cereals.
- Offer artificial sweeteners to customers as an alternative to sugar for drinks. You can also replace sugar with artificial sweeteners in recipes.
- Watch out for “reduced sugar” products, such as beans, jelly, jam and ketchup.
- Make tap water freely available to customers.
- Offer other healthy drinks: unsweetened fruit juices, milk, squash with no added sugar, mineral water and iced water in addition to soft drinks.

## Fact Sheet 7: SALT

Eating too much salt can increase your risk of developing high blood pressure, which increases your risk of heart disease and having a stroke. On average people in the UK are eating far too much salt and government guidelines recommend that we should be reducing average intake by a third and not eat more than 6g (tsp) of salt in total (children should be eating a lot less).

Some of the salt we eat comes from the salt we add to food in cooking and at the table, but nearly 75% of the salt we eat comes "hidden" in the everyday foods we buy - especially processed foods, such as:

- bread
- some breakfast cereals (compare labels)
- cheese
- processed meats (bacon, ham, salami, pate, sausages and sausage meat)
- smoked meat and fish, prawns and anchovies
- ready meals such as pizzas and curries
- canned or dried soups and other tinned foods
- sauces and condiments, including soy sauce and ketchup
- salted snacks (crisps and salted nuts)

When looking at food labels a product is **high in salt if there is more than 1.5g salt per 100g (0.6g sodium)** or low in salt if there is less than 0.3g per 100g (0.1g)

Salt is sodium chloride but manufacturers tend to list both sodium and salt on their labels. To convert sodium to salt, multiply by 2.5.

### Catering Tips

- Check the labels and choose lower salt choices where possible.
- Use unsalted water when boiling potatoes, vegetables, pasta or rice.
- Reduce the quantity of salt used in recipes and cooking by at least a third, or gradually stop using it altogether if you can.
- Instead flavour food with herbs, spices, lemon juice, vinegar, garlic or mustard.
- Cut down on the use of stock cubes / granules or bouillon and use low salt (and low fat) types where possible. Better still, use vegetable cooking water for making gravy and sauces instead
- Avoid using Monosodium Glutamate (MSG, a flavour enhancer).
- Reduce the use of soy sauce where possible and try to obtain low salt soy sauce.
- Soak ham/gammon joints in water for a few hours before cooking to remove salt.
- Do not add salt to chips or other foods before serving unless specifically requested - let customers add salt at their discretion.
- Make salt less accessible to customers by keeping salt pots on the counter (rather than tables) and use salt shakers with smaller holes.
- Buy tinned vegetables with no added salt (or sugar). Check the labels - look out for words like "brine" or "cured" which will mean the product is high in salt. If using salted vegetables or beans, rinse them with water first.
- Reduce the use of tinned meats, which contain high levels of added salt. Instead use home cooked roast meat for salads and sandwiches.
- Where possible make home-made soup and sauces rather than using processed, tinned or powdered versions.



## Fact Sheet 8: PROMOTING HEALTHY EATING

### Food for Children

- Try not to rely on processed “children’s foods” like burgers, chicken nuggets and fish fingers, which often contain poor quality meat, lots of salt and are deep fried.
- Make sure you can offer smaller portions of at least some of the adult meals on your menu.
- Examples of healthy meals for children might include beans on toast, pasta with a Bolognese sauce or salmon and broccoli sauce, or jacket potato with some healthy fillings (eg. baked beans or tuna).
- Make sure each main meal includes at least one child’s portion (40-60g, depending on the age of the child) of salad or vegetables. These may be incorporated into the meal or on the side.
- Offer a free piece of fruit as part of a “meal deal”.
- Do not add salt to food for children.

### Catering Safely for Food Allergies

Food allergies occur when the body’s immune system produces antibodies against a protein within food, known as an “allergen”. This results in the body releasing histamine which causes the symptoms of allergy, including eczema, asthma and in severe cases the life threatening anaphylaxis. For such people, even minute quantities of the food or ingredient can have rapid and fatal effects.

Any food can cause an allergic reaction in someone, but labeling legislation requires certain ingredients to be spelled out on labels of pre-packed foods:

These are:

- Peanuts (also called groundnuts)
- Tree nuts (such as almonds, hazelnuts, walnuts, Brazil nuts, cashewd, pecans, pistachiod, macadamia nuts and Queensland nuts)
- Cereals containing Gluten (including wheat, oats, barley and rye)
- Cow’s milk
- Eggs
- Fish
- Shellfish (molluscs and crustaceans, such as crabs, lobsters and prawns)
- Soya (soyabeans)
- Celery (including celeriac)
- Lupin (the flour is sometimes used to replace wheat flour)
- Mustard
- Sesame seeds
- Sulphur dioxide and sulphites at levels above 10mg/kg or 10mg/litre

People with Coeliac disease need to avoid all foods containing cereals containing gluten. Gluten is a type of protein found in wheat, barley and rye, and some oats. Wheat flour is widely used in most processed foods and many dishes.

The Food Standards Agency has produced a number of resources and guidance to support and update caterers on legislation and guidance surrounding food allergens in foods:

- *Food Allergy - What you need to know* is a leaflet that gives tips on responding to customers with allergies, highlighting the main allergens people are allergic to and which foods they are likely to be found in. A copy can be downloaded at: <http://www.food.gov.uk/multimedia/pdfs/publication/loosefoodsleaflet.pdf>
- The Food Standards Agency's *Guidance on Allergen Management and Consumer Information* – which contains particular reference to avoiding cross contamination and using appropriate advisory labelling: <http://www.food.gov.uk/safereating/allergyintol/guide/>
- An interactive food allergy training tool can be found at [allergytraining.food.gov.uk](http://allergytraining.food.gov.uk). This training offers practical help for anyone wanting to learn more about food allergy, such as catering managers and staff.

## Catering Tips

- You should train all the staff in your business about allergies before they start work, whether they are going to work in the kitchen or serve customers.
- Ensure staff are updated on changes in ingredients and make sure they never suggest a food is free of an ingredient if they are not sure. Best to play safe at all times.
- Be ready to answer customer questions about your recipes. Retaining the labelling or packaging until that batch of food is used up can help you answer any questions. Be aware that ingredients may change in a new batch.
- Put a note on your menu, or on the wall of your business, to let customers with food allergies know they can ask staff for advice about which dishes may contain allergens.
- At the least, your menu should highlight the presence of peanuts and tree nuts in your recipes (eg. "Chicken Korma – contains nuts"). You may also wish to include other allergens.
- Remember to update the menu when recipes change.
- Clear communication between the customer and the chef cooking for them is essential to avoid the relevant allergens – it is best if they talk face to face.
- If you use unrefined nut or seed oils (also called cold-pressed or crude oils) in cooking or in salad dressings, make sure you say this on the menu.
- Ensure there are no hidden ingredients, especially peanuts and nuts in any ready meals that are used on your menu or within other dishes, that may not be on the product description.
- When you have been asked to prepare a meal that does not contain a certain food, make sure staff wash their hands and worktops and all the equipment are thoroughly cleaned with hot soapy water before preparation starts.
- Use fresh oil for frying for allergic customers in case there are residues from previously cooking allergens (eg. prawn toasts with sesame seeds).
- Put up a sign if nuts are offered in self-service areas, such as salad bars.
- Make sure foods that can cause severe allergic reactions are stored and kept away from other foods and utensils/containers for use with these foods are also kept separate.
- Ensure all staff know how to help a customer in an emergency. If the customer is struggling to breathe, do not hesitate to call an ambulance.

## **Promoting and Marketing Healthy Eating**

Educated customers, who are aware of the health implications of the diet they choose to eat, are more likely to choose the healthy options you offer. Posters and signs or leaflets left on tables can help educate customers about the benefits of healthy eating - posters and leaflets are freely available from the food standards agency and NHS websites.

It is essential that your customers know which are the healthier options on offer, otherwise they will not be able to choose them. You can highlight these by means of a separate section on your menu or symbols against the healthy options throughout your menu. Alternatively, you could put up signs next to the dishes on a counter or buffet.

Displaying colourful donuts at a child's eye level helps to sell them! But instead, why not display pots of pretty fruit in jelly or colourful salad so that customers see them first?

Offering free tasting samples to customers can help them discover new tastes. This is particularly useful for less popular foods like vegetables, fruits and fish dishes. Cookery demonstrations and themed days can also help generate interest in your new healthy dishes. In any case, make sure you regularly change the menu to keep up interest, especially if some dishes are not selling.

Special offers and favourable pricing on healthier options will also encourage customers to try things.

Once you receive your Healthy Eating Award, have a "launch party" promotion for your customers, to make them aware of your achievement. You could offer free tasting samples of your healthy options and give out some healthy eating leaflets or discount vouchers for the healthy options.

## **Training**

It is essential all your staff know what the Award is about and it's objectives in helping customers to:

1. Increase consumption of fruit and vegetables, to at least "5 a day"
2. Eat plenty of starchy foods, especially wholegrains
3. Reduce fat
4. Reduce sugar
5. Reduce salt

Kitchen staff need to know how foods must be prepared and cooked from now on. Your serving staff need to be kept up to date about which healthy options are available each day, and ready to answer customer questions.

It is highly recommended that at least one person from your premises completes formal training in nutrition or healthy eating. This is compulsory if you wish to achieve our Gold Award. A course of at least a day is recommended, such as the CIEH's or RPH's "Level 2 Award in Healthier Food and Special Diets".

For CIEH and RPH courses and to find local trainers:

[http://www.cieh.org/training/food\\_safety.html](http://www.cieh.org/training/food_safety.html)

<http://www.rsph.org.uk/en/qualifications/qualifications/qualifications.cfm>

## **Further information**

You can find more information on healthy eating from <http://www.food.gov.uk/healthiereating/>

Eatwell plate: [http://www.dh.gov.uk/en/Publichealth/Nutrition/DH\\_126493#\\_1](http://www.dh.gov.uk/en/Publichealth/Nutrition/DH_126493#_1)

For further information about Traffic Light Labelling: <http://www.food.gov.uk/multimedia/pdfs/publication/foodtrafficlight1107.pdf>

Allergy: <http://www.food.gov.uk/multimedia/pdfs/publication/loosefoodsleaflet1109.pdf>

Salt: <http://www.food.gov.uk/multimedia/pdfs/saltbook1009.pdf>

Healthy takeaways: <http://www.nidirect.gov.uk/healthier-takeaways>

If you should have any questions please contact Carolyn Mell on 01732 876194 or [carolyn.mell@tmbc.gov.uk](mailto:carolyn.mell@tmbc.gov.uk)