



# Food Service Guidelines for Federal Facilities



## Contributors

Contributors to the authorship of the *Food Service Guidelines for Federal Facilities* were from the Food Service Guidelines Federal Workgroup. This workgroup consisted of more than 60 representatives from the following nine federal departments and agencies:

- U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
- U.S. General Services Administration
- U.S. Department of Agriculture
- U.S. Department of Commerce
- U.S. Department of Defense
- U.S. Department of Education
- U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
- U.S. Department of Interior
- U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs

### **Suggested Citation:**

Food Service Guidelines Federal Workgroup. *Food Service Guidelines for Federal Facilities*. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services; 2017.

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## Introduction

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) and the U.S. General Services Administration (GSA) collaboratively released the first food service guidelines for federal facilities in March 2011 in an effort to assist employees in making healthier food and beverage choices and to create an efficient and environmentally beneficial food service system.<sup>1</sup> Those guidelines, *Health and Sustainability Guidelines for Federal Concessions and Vending Operations*,<sup>1</sup> (referred to here as the *2011 HHS/GSA Guidelines*) have been updated and renamed, *Food Service Guidelines for Federal Facilities*.

Updates to the *Food Service Guidelines for Federal Facilities* primarily include the following: 1) alignment of food and nutrition standards with the *2015–2020 Dietary Guidelines for Americans, 8th Edition*<sup>2</sup> (referred to here as the *2015–2020 Dietary Guidelines*); 2) alignment with Executive Order 13693 (*Planning for Federal Sustainability in the Next Decade*)<sup>3</sup> on energy efficiency and environmental performance; 3) additions of food safety standards aligned with the *Food Code*<sup>4</sup> to ensure protection against foodborne illnesses; and 4) behavioral design strategies for encouraging selection of healthier foods and beverages.

## Goals of the *Food Service Guidelines for Federal Facilities*

The standards in the *Food Service Guidelines for Federal Facilities* are designed to achieve three primary goals. These goals are to ensure that:

- **Healthier foods and beverages are available** and encouraged at federal facilities.
- **Environmentally responsible practices are conducted** in federal food service venues, **and communities are economically supported** through local food sourcing.
- **Food safety practices are followed** to minimize the risk of foodborne illnesses.

## Purpose, Goals, and Audience for the *Food Service Guidelines for Federal Facilities*

The purpose of the *Food Service Guidelines for Federal Facilities* is to provide specific standards for food, nutrition, facility efficiency, environmental support, community development, food safety, and behavioral design for use in food service concession and vending operations at federal facilities; examples include cafeterias, cafés, snack bars, grills, concession stands, sundry shops, micro markets,\* and vending machines. The *Food Service Guidelines for Federal Facilities* is to be used primarily for developing contracts and permits for the delivery of food service in these settings.

The intended audiences for this document are federal acquisition officials and staff who develop requests for food service proposals and negotiate contracts; food service vendors competing for federal food service contracts; participants in the Randolph-Sheppard Vending

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\* See glossary for definition.

Facility Program;<sup>†</sup> and persons who monitor or advise food service operations, such as worksite wellness stakeholders or contracting officers. The guidelines in this document may also serve as a model for concession and vending operations at state, local, and tribal government and private worksite facilities.

Two types of food service are provided in federal facilities. One type includes food service venues in which food is sold (such as cafeterias, cafés, and vending machines) and customers purchase their food and beverages from a variety of choices. The other type includes venues in which food is served (such as federal hospitals, correction facilities, or military dining facilities), and the government is responsible for providing individuals with meals that meet all or part of their daily or weekly nutrition needs and individual choice may be limited.<sup>‡</sup> With the exception of the food safety standards, which apply in both types of venues, the standards in the *Food Service Guidelines for Federal Facilities* are written specifically for federal food service venues where food is sold (although they can be adapted to venues where food is served).

### **Process for Updating the *Food Service Guidelines for Federal Facilities***

The standards included in this update were determined by the Food Service Guidelines Federal Workgroup, which consisted of more than 60 representatives from nine federal departments and agencies. The workgroup formed three subcommittees (Food and Nutrition, Facility Efficiency and Procurement, and Food Safety) and a subgroup (Behavioral Design Working Group) to determine the standards for inclusion in the *Food Service Guidelines for Federal Facilities*. Details of the complete process for updating the *Food Service Guidelines for Federal Facilities* and the rationales for decisions regarding the standards are found in *An Ancillary Report of the Food Service Guidelines for Federal Facilities*.<sup>5</sup>



<sup>†</sup> The Randolph-Sheppard Vending Facility Program “provides persons who are blind with remunerative employment and self-support through the operation of vending facilities on federal and other property.” See <https://www2.ed.gov/programs/rsarsp/index.html> for more information.

<sup>‡</sup> The *Food Service Guidelines for Federal Facilities* does not apply to food served to children in child care or school settings that are governed by federal laws and regulations, including the National School Lunch Program, the School Breakfast Program, the Child and Adult Care Food Program, and the Summer Food Service Program.

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## ***Standards for the Food Service Guidelines for Federal Facilities***

## Best Business Practices

The *Food Service Guidelines for Federal Facilities* represents **a set of voluntary best business practices** that can be implemented at federal departments and agencies to increase healthy and safe food options for employees, while also improving facility efficiency and supporting the community through sourcing and procurement of local and regional foods.

The standards in the *Food Service Guidelines for Federal Facilities* are categorized into four sections. These are Food and Nutrition; Facility Efficiency, Environmental Support, and Community Development; Food Safety; and Behavioral Design.

The *Food Service Guidelines for Federal Facilities* identifies two levels of implementation: Standard and Innovative. The criteria for both implementation levels are supported by the scientific literature to be beneficial to health and/or the environment, or align with existing national policy or guidance. These terms are defined as follows:

- **Standard** criteria are considered to be widely achievable within food service. Implementation at the standard level is expected.
- **Innovative** criteria promote exceptional performance in various areas of food service. Implementation at the innovative level is encouraged.

## Food and Nutrition Standards

The United States government encourages the availability, promotion, and consumption of healthier foods and beverages as a way to support optimal health and prevent nutrition-related chronic diseases,<sup>2</sup> several of which are among the leading causes of death.<sup>6</sup> *The 2015–2020 Dietary Guidelines*, published by HHS and the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), outlines healthy diets for people aged 2 years and older and states that “all segments of society—individuals, families, communities, businesses and industries, organizations, government, and others—can and should align with the *Dietary Guidelines*.”<sup>2</sup> *The 2015–2020 Dietary Guidelines* serves as the basis for the Food and Nutrition standards included in the *Food Service Guidelines for Federal Facilities*.

In the *2011 HHS/GSA Guidelines*, the food and nutrition standards were categorized as Concessions and Vending. In the updated *Food Service Guidelines for Federal Facilities*, the standards are classified as Prepared Foods, Packaged Snacks, and Beverages (Tables 1, 2 and 3) to simplify guidance for the vendor, and to ensure that standards for similar products apply across all types of food service venues. Using this categorization of standards, the criteria can apply across all concession and vending operations, except as noted. The categories are defined as follows:

- **Prepared Foods.** This category includes foods that are fresh, cleaned, cooked, assembled (e.g., salad or sandwich), or otherwise processed and served “ready-to-eat.” Prepared foods include those that are made and served on site, or those prepared at a central kitchen and then packaged and distributed to other locations. These foods have a relatively limited shelf-life (compared to packaged snacks), and can be sold in any food service venue. Examples of prepared foods include hot entrées, side dishes, soups, salads, deli sandwiches, and fresh whole fruits and vegetables.
- **Packaged Snacks.** This category includes processed foods that are packaged in small portions or individual servings, are widely distributed, and have a relatively long shelf-life (compared to prepared foods). Packaged snacks include food items such as granola bars, chips, crackers, raisins, and nuts and seeds. These foods can be sold in any venue, such as vending machines or “grab-n-go” areas of cafeterias.
- **Beverages.** This category includes drinks such as water, milk, 100% juice, soft drinks, energy drinks, teas, and coffees.

**Table 1. FOOD AND NUTRITION Standards for Prepared Foods, Food Service Guidelines for Federal Facilities**

Category	Standards	Implementation Level <sup>a</sup>
<b>Fruits and Vegetables</b>	Offer a variety <sup>b</sup> of at least 3 fruit <sup>c</sup> options daily, with no added sugars. Fruit can be fresh, canned, <sup>d</sup> frozen, or dried. <sup>e</sup>	Standard
	Offer a variety <sup>b</sup> of at least 3 non-fried vegetable options daily. Vegetables can be fresh, frozen, or canned, and served cooked or raw.	Standard
	Offer seasonal fruit and vegetables.	Standard
<b>Grains</b>	Offer half of total grains as “whole grain-rich” products, <sup>b</sup> daily.	Standard
	Offer a “whole grain-rich” product <sup>b</sup> as the first (i.e., default <sup>b</sup> ) choice.	Innovative
<b>Dairy</b>	Offer a variety of low-fat dairy products <sup>b</sup> (or dairy alternatives) daily, such as milk, yogurt, cheese, and fortified soy beverages.	Standard
	When yogurt is available, offer at least one low-fat plain yogurt.	Innovative
<b>Protein Foods</b>	Offer a variety <sup>b</sup> of non-fried protein foods, such as seafood, <sup>b</sup> lean meats and poultry, <sup>b</sup> eggs, legumes (beans and peas), nuts, seeds, and soy products, daily.	Standard
	Offer protein foods from plants, such as legumes (beans and peas), nuts, seeds, and soy products, at least three times per week.	Standard
	Offer protein foods from plants such as legumes (beans and peas), nuts, seeds, and soy products, daily.	Innovative
	Offer seafood <sup>b</sup> at least two times a week.	Standard

Continued

Category	Standards	Implementation Level <sup>a</sup>
<b>Desserts</b>	When desserts are available, offer 25% of desserts containing ≤200 calories as served.	Standard
<b>Sodium</b>	All meals <sup>b</sup> offered contain ≤800 mg sodium.	Standard
	All entrees <sup>b</sup> offered contain ≤600 mg sodium.	Standard
	All side items <sup>b</sup> contain ≤ 230 mg sodium.	Standard
<b>Trans Fats</b>	All foods do not include partially hydrogenated oils.	Standard
<b>Calorie and Nutrition Labeling</b>	Provide calorie and nutrition information of standard menu items as required by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) in <i>Menu Labeling Final Rule: Food Labeling; Nutrition Labeling of Standard Menu Items in Restaurants and Similar Retail Food Establishments</i> . <sup>f</sup>	Standard
<b>Other Considerations</b>	Limit deep-fried entrée options to no more than one choice per day.	Standard

<sup>a</sup> Standard implementation criteria are considered to be widely achievable within food service; implementation at this level is expected. Innovative implementation criteria promote exceptional performance in various areas of food service; implementation at this level is encouraged.

<sup>b</sup> See glossary for definition.

<sup>c</sup> Fruits mixed with foods from other food groups such as grain and dairy do not count towards meeting this standard.

<sup>d</sup> Canned fruit may be packed in 100% juice with no added sugars.

<sup>e</sup> Dried fruits are exempted from the sugar criterion for this standard. Dried fruits may contain nutritive sweeteners required for processing and/or palatability.

<sup>f</sup> The rule “applies to restaurants and similar retail food establishments if they are part of a chain of 20 or more locations, doing business under the same name, offering for sale substantially the same menu items and offering for sale restaurant-type foods.”<sup>7</sup> Restaurants or similar retail food establishments (including food service operations) with fewer than 20 locations may voluntarily register to be covered by the rule.<sup>7</sup>





**Table 2. FOOD AND NUTRITION Standards for Packaged<sup>a</sup> Snacks, Food Service Guidelines for Federal Facilities**

Category	Standards	Implementation Level <sup>b</sup>
Food and Nutrient Profile <sup>c</sup>	All packaged snacks contain $\leq 200$ mg sodium per package.	Standard
	All packaged snacks have 0 grams of <i>trans</i> fat.	Standard
	At least 75% of packaged snacks meet the following food and nutrient standards.	
	<p><b>Food Standards:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Have as the first ingredient a fruit, a vegetable, a dairy product, or a protein food; or</li> <li>• Be a whole grain-rich grain product;<sup>d</sup> or</li> <li>• Be a combination food that contains at least <math>\frac{1}{4}</math> cup of fruit and/or vegetable.</li> </ul> <p>AND</p> <p><b>Nutrient Standards:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Calorie limit: <math>\leq 200</math> calories</li> <li>• Saturated fat limit: <math>&lt; 10\%</math> of calories <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ Exemptions: Reduced-fat cheese and part skim mozzarella; nuts, seeds and nut/seed butters; and dried fruit with nuts/seeds with no added nutritive sweeteners or fats.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Sugar limit: <math>\leq 35\%</math> of weight from total sugars in foods. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ Exemptions: Dried/dehydrated whole fruits or vegetables with no added nutritive sweeteners; dried whole fruits or pieces with nutritive sweeteners required for processing and/or palatability; products consisting of only exempt dried fruit with nuts and/or seeds with no added nutritive sweeteners or fats.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	Standard
Calorie Labeling	All snack foods <sup>e</sup> sold in vending machines are consistent with FDA's <i>Vending Machine Final Rule: Food Labeling; Calorie Labeling of Articles of Food in Vending Machines</i> . <sup>f</sup>	Standard

<sup>a</sup> Standards are written to apply per package, irrespective of size or number of servings.

<sup>b</sup> Standard implementation criteria are considered to be widely achievable within food service; implementation at this level is expected. Innovative implementation criteria promote exceptional performance in various areas of food service; implementation at this level is encouraged.

<sup>c</sup> The food and nutrient profile standards were adapted from USDA's Smart Snacks in School nutritional criteria.<sup>8</sup>

<sup>d</sup> See glossary for definition.

<sup>e</sup> This standard applies to both packaged and unpackaged snack foods sold in vending machines.

<sup>f</sup> This rule "requires operators who own or operate 20 or more vending machines to disclose calorie information for food sold from vending machines, subject to certain exemptions."<sup>9</sup> Vending machine operators with fewer than 20 vending machines may voluntarily register to be covered by the rule.<sup>9</sup>

**Table 3. FOOD AND NUTRITION Standards for *Beverages, Food Service Guidelines for Federal Facilities***

Category	Standards	Implementation Level <sup>a</sup>
<b>Beverages</b>	Provide free access to chilled, potable water.	Standard
	When milk and fortified soy beverages are available, offer low-fat beverages with no added sugars.	Standard
	When juice is available, offer 100% juice with no added sugars. <sup>b</sup>	Standard
	At least 50% of available beverage choices contain ≤40 calories per 8 fluid ounces <sup>c</sup> (excluding 100% juice and unsweetened fat-free or low-fat [1%] milk).	Standard
	At least 75% of available beverage choices contain ≤40 calories per 8 fluid ounces <sup>c</sup> (excluding 100% juice and unsweetened fat-free or low-fat [1%] milk).	Innovative

<sup>a</sup> Standard implementation criteria are considered to be widely achievable within food service; implementation at this level is expected. Innovative implementation criteria promote exceptional performance in various areas of food service; implementation at this level is encouraged.

<sup>b</sup> Vegetable juice contains <230 mg sodium per serving.

<sup>c</sup> Equivalent measures include ≤60 calories per 12 fluid ounces or ≤100 calories per 20 fluid ounces.

## Facility Efficiency, Environmental Support, and Community Development Standards

The United States government encourages practices that are beneficial to the environment, largely through the efforts of federal departments and agencies, such as USDA and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). All federal departments and agencies have been charged (through executive orders) to follow environmentally sound operating procedures in the management of their buildings. Food service, as part of overall building operations, is a key area in which strategies and policies can be implemented to reduce environmental impact, increase energy efficiency, and improve facility management of natural resources.

Executive Order 13693,<sup>3</sup> which was released in March 2015, directs government agencies to increase energy efficiency and improve environmental performance. Among the many goals set forth in Executive Order 13693, was a goal for 50% diversion of non-hazardous solid waste, including food and compostable material.<sup>3</sup> Additionally, in September 2015, USDA and EPA announced the “first-ever national food waste reduction goal, calling for a 50-percent reduction by 2030.”<sup>10</sup> Many of the standards in this section of the



*Food Service Guidelines for Federal Facilities* were updated from the 2011 HHS/GSA Guidelines to align with Executive Order 13693.<sup>3</sup> Other standards were updated to align with EPA<sup>11–15</sup> and USDA guidance.<sup>16</sup>

Standards from the 2011 HHS/GSA Guidelines were reorganized into the current classifications of Purchasing, Food Service Management and Consumer Engagement, and Waste Diversion. Unlike other sections in the *Food Service Guidelines for Federal Facilities*, in which standards apply across food service venues, the standards in the Facility Efficiency, Environmental Support, and Community Development section apply to concessions (such as cafeterias, snack bars, and grills) unless noted as applying to vending. See Table 4 for the complete list of standards.

**Table 4. FACILITY EFFICIENCY, ENVIRONMENTAL SUPPORT, and COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT Standards for the *Food Service Guidelines for Federal Facilities***

Category	Standards	Implementation Level <sup>a</sup>
Purchasing	Institute accurate forecasting <sup>b</sup> and just-in-time ordering concepts. <sup>c</sup>	Standard
	Provide materials for single-service items (e.g., bottled beverage containers, trays, flatware, plates, bowls) that are compostable and/or made from biobased <sup>b,d</sup> products.	Standard
	Use bulk-serve condiments instead of single-serve packs, while following necessary food safety procedures. <sup>e</sup>	Standard
	When purchasing packaged products, give preference to products in recyclable, compostable, or biobased <sup>b,d</sup> packaging.	Standard
	Use cleaning products and services that are environmentally preferable, <sup>b,f</sup> while following necessary food safety procedures.	Standard
	Offer at least 25% of foods and beverages as locally sourced, <sup>b,g</sup> certified organic, <sup>b,h</sup> produced with another certified community-development or environmentally beneficial practice, or any combination thereof. <sup>i</sup>	Standard
	Offer at least 35% of foods and beverages as locally sourced, <sup>b,g</sup> certified organic, <sup>b,h</sup> produced with another certified community-development or environmentally beneficial practice, or any combination thereof. <sup>i</sup>	Innovative
	FOR VENDING: Offer at least 10% of foods and beverages as locally sourced, <sup>b,g</sup> certified organic, <sup>b,h</sup> produced with another certified community-development or environmentally beneficial practice, or any combination thereof. <sup>i</sup>	Innovative
	When seafood options are available, offer seafood procured from fisheries and aquaculture operations that are responsibly managed, sustainable, and healthy. Purchasing U.S. wild-captured and farmed seafood, which adhere to some of the most strict sustainability practices in the world, is one way to ensure compliance with this standard. <sup>j</sup>	Standard

Continued

Category	Standards	Implementation Level <sup>a</sup>
Food Service Management and Consumer Engagement	Promote and incentivize the use of reusable beverage containers, while following necessary food safety procedures. <sup>k</sup>	Standard
	Use or promote the use of reusable serving ware such as plates, utensils, bags, and other service items, while following necessary food safety procedures. <sup>k</sup>	Innovative
	Utilize cleaning practices and equipment operations that conserve resources, such as water and energy. These could include using ENERGY STAR <sup>l</sup> and WaterSense products and services. <sup>m</sup>	Standard
	Use integrated pest management practices, green pest control alternatives, and a routine cleaning schedule, while following necessary food safety procedures. <sup>n</sup>	Standard
	When applicable, label food products at the point of purchase as locally sourced, <sup>b,g</sup> certified organic, <sup>b,h</sup> or produced with another certified community-development or environmentally beneficial practice.	Standard
	Provide information to customers on food products that are locally sourced, <sup>b,g</sup> certified organic, <sup>b,h</sup> or produced with another certified community-development or environmentally beneficial practice.	Innovative
	FOR VENDING: Provide information to customers on food products that are locally sourced, <sup>b,g</sup> certified organic, <sup>b,h</sup> or produced with another certified community-development or environmentally beneficial practice.	Innovative
	Partner with a farmers' market that operates on-site. <sup>o</sup>	Innovative
	FOR VENDING: If purchasing new vending machines, purchase ENERGY STAR certified machines or those that meet ENERGY STAR criteria. <sup>p</sup>	Standard
	FOR VENDING: Retrofit existing vending machines (refrigerated and non-refrigerated) to use energy conservation methods such as LED lighting, occupancy sensors, or shut down or set-back modes.	Innovative

Continued



Category	Standards	Implementation Level <sup>a</sup>
<b>Waste Diversion</b>	Participate in and implement waste diversion programs (waste reduction, recycling, and where feasible, composting) for employees in the kitchen, break rooms, and administrative areas (i.e., back-of-house operations).	Standard
	Participate in and implement waste diversion programs (waste reduction, recycling, and where feasible, composting) in areas that a consumer will be exposed to during their visit to the food service operation (i.e., front-of-house operations).	Standard
	Implement systems to monitor relationship between waste and food procurement, including the development of goals for waste reduction and quarterly to annual reporting of waste reduction and waste diversion benchmarks. <sup>q</sup>	Standard
	Re-purpose excess food for future meal preparation, while following necessary food safety procedures. <sup>r</sup>	Standard
	Train staff on methods for reducing food waste.	Standard
	Donate edible surplus food for human consumption where possible, while following necessary food safety procedures. <sup>s</sup>	Innovative

<sup>a</sup> Standard implementation criteria are considered to be widely achievable within food service; implementation at this level is expected. Innovative implementation criteria promote exceptional performance in various areas of food service; implementation at this level is encouraged.

<sup>b</sup> See glossary for definition.

<sup>c</sup> For information on forecasting, just-in-time ordering, and other food waste reduction strategies see EPA's *Reducing Wasted Food & Packaging: A Guide for Food Services and Restaurants* at [http://www.epa.gov/sites/production/files/2015-08/documents/reducing\\_wasted\\_food\\_pkg\\_tool.pdf](http://www.epa.gov/sites/production/files/2015-08/documents/reducing_wasted_food_pkg_tool.pdf).

<sup>d</sup> See USDA's BioPreferred Program website: <https://www.biopreferred.gov/BioPreferred/faces/pages/AboutBioPreferred.xhtml>. USDA's BioPreferred Program lists products that are both biobased and compostable.

<sup>e</sup> See the FDA *Food Code* for considerations when using bulk serve condiments, Sections: 3-306.11, 3-306.12, 3-306.13, 3-306.14, and 3-307.11.

<sup>f</sup> For information on environmentally preferable products and services, see EPA's "About the Environmentally Preferable Purchasing Program" website at <https://www.epa.gov/greenerproducts/about-environmentally-preferable-purchasing-program>; EPA's "Sustainable Marketplace: Greener Products and Services" website at <https://www.epa.gov/greenerproducts>; EPA's "Safer Choice Products" website at <https://www.epa.gov/saferchoice/learn-about-safer-choice-label>; and GSA's "Sustainable Facilities Tool" website at <https://sftool.gov/>. For guidance on safe cleaning practices, see the FDA *Food Code*, Chapters and Subparts: 4-5, 4-6, and 4-7.

<sup>g</sup> Based on the definition provided in the *Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008: Conference Report to Accompany H.R. 2419*, locally sourced refers to an agricultural product that is transported less than 400 miles from its origin or is distributed within the same state as it was produced.<sup>17</sup>

<sup>h</sup> For information on organic production see USDA's "Organic Agriculture" website at <https://www.usda.gov/wps/portal/usda/usdahome?navid=organic-agriculture> and USDA's "National Organic Program" website at <http://www.ams.usda.gov/about-ams/programs-offices/national-organic-program>.

<sup>i</sup> Although locally sourced, certified organic, and produced with another certified community-development or environmentally beneficial practice may not be mutually exclusive, the intent of this standard is to ensure that the noted percentage (10%, 25%, or 35%) of the product line is met by any combination of these criteria.

<sup>j</sup> The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) FishWatch Program defines sustainable seafood as "catching or farming seafood responsibly, with consideration for the long-term health of the environment and the livelihoods of the people that depend upon the environment." Verifying the health and sustainability of U.S. and international fisheries is not always simple. Domestic fisheries and aquaculture are managed and regulated by federal and state agencies under legally established fisheries management plans and a host of environmental and food safety laws. Seafood caught or farmed in U.S. waters or in the United States has been produced responsibly/sustainably. International fisheries are managed under sovereign laws and international treaties. Guidance on how to make sustainable seafood choices is found on the NOAA FishWatch website at <http://www.fishwatch.gov/>.

<sup>k</sup> See the FDA *Food Code* for guidance on safely using reusable containers: Sections: 3-304.16, 3-304.17, 4-1, and 4-2.

<sup>l</sup> For more information about ENERGY STAR, see <https://www.energystar.gov/>.

<sup>m</sup> For more information on WaterSense, see <https://www3.epa.gov/watersense/commercial/index.html>.

<sup>n</sup> For guidance on pest control, see the FDA *Food Code*, Section 6-501.111.

<sup>o</sup> For information on farmers' markets on federal property, see the USDA and GSA publication "Opening a Farmers Market on Federal Property: A Guide for Market Operators and Building Managers" at [http://www.gsa.gov/portal/mediaId/226767/fileName/GSA\\_USDA\\_Farmers\\_Markets.action](http://www.gsa.gov/portal/mediaId/226767/fileName/GSA_USDA_Farmers_Markets.action).

<sup>p</sup> For more information on ENERGY STAR vending machines, see [https://www.energystar.gov/products/other/vending\\_machines](https://www.energystar.gov/products/other/vending_machines) and [https://www.energystar.gov/products/other/vending\\_machines/key\\_product\\_criteria](https://www.energystar.gov/products/other/vending_machines/key_product_criteria).

<sup>9</sup> Reporting requirements may vary by agency.

<sup>1</sup> For information on re-purposing excess food, see EPA's *Reducing Wasted Food & Packaging: A Guide for Food Services and Restaurants* at [http://www.epa.gov/sites/production/files/2015-08/documents/reducing\\_wasted\\_food\\_pkg\\_tool.pdf](http://www.epa.gov/sites/production/files/2015-08/documents/reducing_wasted_food_pkg_tool.pdf).

<sup>5</sup> For information on donating surplus food, including food safety considerations, see EPA's "Reduce Wasted Food By Feeding Hungry People" website at <https://www.epa.gov/sustainable-management-food/reduce-wasted-food-feeding-hungry-people> and *Reducing Wasted Food & Packaging: A Guide for Food Services and Restaurants* at [http://www.epa.gov/sites/production/files/2015-08/documents/reducing\\_wasted\\_food\\_pkg\\_tool.pdf](http://www.epa.gov/sites/production/files/2015-08/documents/reducing_wasted_food_pkg_tool.pdf), and USDA's food donation website at <https://www.usda.gov/oce/foodwaste/resources/donations.htm>.

## Food Safety Standards

The United States government works to protect the American public from foodborne illnesses through the collaborative efforts of HHS's Food and Drug Administration (FDA) and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), and USDA's Food Safety and Inspection Service. FDA publishes the *Food Code*,<sup>4</sup> which provides guidance for a uniform system of addressing food safety issues in all retail food and food service establishments, such as restaurants, cafés, and cafeterias. While not a regulation itself, the *Food Code* has served as the primary model for retail food regulations and ordinances at state, local, and tribal levels since the publication of the first edition in 1993. It has also served as the basis for food safety policy and recommendations of numerous federal agencies that have responsibility for the oversight of food service and retail facilities on federal property.

The primary Food Safety standard in the *Food Service Guidelines for Federal Facilities* states that contractors operating in federal facilities are expected to adhere to the most recently published *Food Code* and its Supplements (Table 5). Because the *Food Code* is periodically updated, this overarching standard is written so that the most recent version of the *Food Code* is followed. Other standards were developed to identify managerial practices, employee behaviors, and food preparation practices that go beyond what is described in the *Food Code* and that, when implemented, may further reduce the risk of foodborne illness in foodservice operations. These additional standards are included at the Innovative level of implementation, except for the standard for certified food protection managers, which is included at the Standard level of implementation.



The Food Safety standards included in the *Food Service Guidelines for Federal Facilities* apply to concessions (such as cafeterias, cafés, and grills) where food is prepared and sold or served. They also apply to merchandising and vending operations that offer foods that require temperature control for safety. The standards are not intended to apply to operations that offer only prepackaged foods that do not require temperature control for safety, as the *Food Code* is not intended to apply to these operations.

**Table 5. FOOD SAFETY Standards for the *Food Service Guidelines for Federal Facilities***

Category	Standards	Implementation Level <sup>a</sup>
<b>Food Code</b>	Follow the guidance and standards in the most recently published <i>Food Code</i> <sup>4</sup> (and all Supplements) relating to food safety procedures and practices.	Standard
<b>Food Safety Management System/Active Managerial Control</b>	Establish a comprehensive written food safety plan that seeks to achieve active managerial control of foodborne illness risk factors, including but not limited to a) improper holding temperatures; b) inadequate cooking, such as undercooking raw shell eggs; c) contaminated equipment; d) food from unsafe sources; and e) poor personal hygiene. The plan could describe the food safety procedures for the particular food service facility, including how employees are to be trained on those procedures and the methods by which proper implementation of those procedures are routinely monitored.	Innovative
<b>Undercooked Meat, Poultry, and Egg Products</b>	Do not serve raw or undercooked meat, poultry, or egg products, even upon request of the customer.	Innovative
<b>Practices to Control <i>Listeria monocytogenes</i> in Ready-to-Eat Products</b>	Develop and implement written sanitation and temperature control programs that target the control of <i>Listeria monocytogenes</i> in ready-to-eat products. Include documentation of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cleaning frequencies for equipment, utensils, and non-food contact surfaces (e.g., walls, floors, ceilings).</li> <li>• Temperature control in coolers, deli cases, and refrigerators.</li> </ul>	Innovative
<b>Sick Employees</b>	Develop and implement a written employee health policy that outlines: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How employees are trained on the reporting of symptoms, diagnoses, and activities that are associated with the transmission of foodborne illness from food workers and how such training is documented.</li> <li>• The policies for excluding, restricting, and reinstating employees who have or report symptoms, diagnoses, or activities as described in the <i>Food Code</i>.</li> </ul>	Innovative
<b>Certified Food Protection Managers</b>	Have at least one management/supervisory employee (not necessarily the Person in Charge) who is a Certified Food Protection Manager present during all hours of operation.	Standard
<b>Food Handler Training</b>	Develop and implement a written policy that addresses employee food safety training.	Innovative

<sup>a</sup> Standard implementation criteria are considered to be widely achievable within food service; implementation at this level is expected. Innovative implementation criteria promote exceptional performance in various areas of food service; implementation at this level is encouraged.

# Behavioral Design

The United States government recognizes the importance of using research from the field of behavioral sciences to benefit its citizens. The 2015 executive order, *Using Behavioral Science Insights to Better Serve the American People*, directs federal agencies to apply behavioral insights to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of government programs.<sup>18</sup> For example, USDA supports implementation of *Smarter Lunchrooms* strategies in schools, which use environmental cues, lunchroom layout, and other techniques to encourage healthier food and beverage selection by students.<sup>19</sup> Strategies such as these are commonly referred to as behavioral design strategies.

The selection and consumption of foods and beverages that are sold or served are influenced by how they are prepared, placed, presented, promoted, or priced.<sup>20–22</sup> The Behavioral Design standards included in the *Food Service Guidelines for Federal Facilities* encourage the use of these influencers to make healthier food and beverage items easier for consumers to choose. These standards, which are listed in Table 6, are suggested at the Innovative level of implementation because they augment the Food and Nutrition standards and because the feasibility of their implementation may vary across different types of food service venues.



**Table 6. BEHAVIORAL DESIGN Standards for the *Food Service Guidelines for Federal Facilities***

Category	Standards	Implementation Level <sup>a</sup>
<b>Placement and Layout</b>	<p>Strategically place foods and beverages and design the layout of food service venues to foster selection of healthier foods and beverages. Possible methods include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Creating flow paths that emphasize healthier choices (i.e., placing healthier choices in prime selling locations).</li> <li>• Placing healthier foods and beverages at eye level or just below eye level, next to the cash register, at the front of cold and hot entrées sections, or within reach of a consumer.</li> <li>• Providing a food service line that features only healthier options.</li> </ul>	Innovative
<b>Product Innovations and Defaults</b>	<p>Use product innovations and the inclusion of healthier options as default<sup>b</sup> choices at decision points to encourage healthier choices. Possible methods include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Offering smaller portion size options (e.g., half-sandwiches, half-sized entrées, smaller beverage containers).</li> <li>• Making healthier items default options throughout the menu (e.g., serving fruit instead of chips or salad instead of fries).</li> <li>• Offering healthier items in an easily accessible “grab-and-go” form.</li> <li>• Bundling and attractively naming healthier<sup>c</sup> options (e.g., “Fit and Fresh Special”).</li> </ul>	Innovative
<b>Pricing and Promotion</b>	<p>Use price incentives and marketing strategies to highlight healthier food and beverage items. Possible methods include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Introducing healthier products by providing samples for consumers.</li> <li>• Featuring meals that include only healthier offerings.</li> <li>• Promoting healthier items through sales or pricing specials.</li> <li>• Offering healthier foods and beverages at a lower price than less healthy items.</li> </ul>	Innovative
<b>Tableware</b>	<p>Promote healthy portion sizes by optimizing the size of plates, bowls, glasses, other dishware, and serving ware. Possible methods include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Using tongs and serving spoons that match appropriate serving sizes in all serving lines, including self-serve.</li> <li>• Using smaller plates and bowls where consumers self-serve to encourage appropriate portion size selection.</li> </ul>	Innovative
<b>Information</b>	<p>Use information, displays, decorations, and signage to highlight healthier choices. Possible methods include use of visual or color-coded signage and point-of-purchase displays to highlight healthier foods.</p>	Innovative
<b>Organizational Policy</b>	<p>Work with worksite wellness programs or other employee organizations to promote healthier options. Possible methods include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Offering space in cafeteria for employees “lunch and learn” sessions.</li> <li>• Featuring pricing and promotion incentives for healthier foods and beverages in an employee wellness newsletter.</li> </ul>	Innovative

<sup>a</sup> Standard implementation criteria are considered to be widely achievable within food service; implementation at this level is expected. Innovative implementation criteria promote exceptional performance in various areas of food service; implementation at this level is encouraged.

<sup>b</sup> See glossary for definition.

<sup>c</sup> Labeling of menu or packaged items with the terms “healthy,” “health,” “healthier,” “healthful,” “healthfully,” “healthiest,” “healthily,” or “healthiness,” must occur in accordance with FDA’s nutrition labeling regulations for the implied nutrient content claim “Healthy.” See the Code of Federal Regulations at <https://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/granule/CFR-2002-title21-vol2/CFR-2002-title21-vol2-sec101-10/content-detail.html> for information on nutrition labeling of restaurant foods (21 CFR 101.10) and <https://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/granule/CFR-2012-title21-vol2/CFR-2012-title21-vol2-sec101-65/content-detail.html> for implied nutrient claims and related label statements (21 CFR 101.65). For additional labeling guidance, visit FDA’s website at <http://www.fda.gov/food/guidanceregulation/guidancedocumentsregulatoryinformation/labelingnutrition/ucm2006828.htm>.

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## Glossary

**Biobased Products**—According to *Implementing Instructions for Executive Order 13693 Planning for Federal Sustainability in the Next Decade*, “Biobased products are defined as products derived from plants and other renewable agricultural, marine, and forestry materials and provide an alternative to conventional petroleum derived products.”<sup>23</sup>

**Default**—The *Food Service Guidelines for Federal Facilities* defines default as a pre-set menu option, i.e., a menu item that is automatically provided in the absence of a specific request by a consumer. For example, a default item can be the side dish that is typically served with a meal or the type of bread that comes on a sandwich.

**Entrée**—USDA defines an entrée as “an item that includes only the following three categories of main dish food items:

- A combination food of meat/meat alternate and whole grain-rich food, or
- A combination food of vegetable or fruit and meat/meat alternate, or
- A meat/meat alternate alone, with exception of yogurt, low-fat or reduced fat cheese, nuts, seeds and nut or seed butters, and meat snacks (i.e., dried beef jerky and meat sticks).”<sup>24</sup>

**Environmentally Preferable**—According to the *Implementing Instructions for Executive Order 13693 Planning for Federal Sustainability in the Next Decade*, “Environmentally preferable products and services are those that have a lesser or reduced effect on human health and the environment when compared with competing products or services that serve the same purpose.”<sup>23</sup>

**Forecasting**—The *Food Service Guidelines for Federal Facilities* defines forecasting as a process for making predictions on the amount of food to order or prepare to meet consumer demand and ensure minimal food waste, based on factors such as historical sales data, the population of the venue serviced, and the day of the week.

**Lean Meat and Lean Poultry**—The *2015–2020 Dietary Guidelines* defines lean meat and lean poultry as “any meat or poultry that contains less than 10 g of fat, 4.5 g or less of saturated fats, and less than 95 mg of cholesterol per 100 g and per labeled serving size, based on USDA definitions for food label use. Examples include 95% lean cooked ground beef, beef top round steak or roast, beef tenderloin, pork top loin chop or roast, pork tenderloin, ham or turkey deli slices, skinless chicken breast, and skinless turkey breast.”<sup>2</sup>

**Locally Sourced Products**—Based on the definition in the *Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008: Conference Report to Accompany H.R. 2419*, locally sourced refers to an agricultural product that is transported less than 400 miles from its origin or is distributed within the same state as it was produced.<sup>17</sup>

**Low-Fat Dairy Products**—This category of foods includes dairy products (and dairy alternatives), such as milk, yogurt, cheese, and fortified soy beverages that meet FDA’s nutrient claim definition<sup>25</sup> for no-fat or low-fat.

**Meal**—The *Food Service Guidelines for Federal Facilities* defines a meal as consisting of an entrée and two side items.

**Micro Markets**—The *Food Service Guidelines for Federal Facilities* defines micro markets as small food service areas, such as stores or kiosks, in which a cashier is not present and the consumer makes purchases through self-checkout stations.

**Organic Food**—According to USDA, “Organic is a labeling term for food or other agricultural products that have been produced using cultural, biological, and mechanical practices that support the cycling of on-farm resources, promote ecological balance, and conserve biodiversity in accordance with the USDA organic regulations. This means that organic operations must maintain or enhance soil and water quality, while also conserving wetlands, woodlands, and wildlife. Synthetic fertilizers, sewage sludge, irradiation, and genetic engineering may not be used. Only products that have been certified as meeting the USDA’s requirements for organic production and handling may carry the USDA Organic Seal.<sup>26</sup> USDA also states that “Organic meat, poultry eggs, and dairy products come from animals that are given no antibiotics or growth hormones.”<sup>27</sup>

**Seafood**—The *2015–2020 Dietary Guidelines* defines seafood as, “Marine animals that live in the sea and in freshwater lakes and rivers. Seafood includes fish (e.g., salmon, tuna, trout, tilapia) and shellfish (e.g., shrimp, crab, oysters).”<sup>2</sup>

**Side Item**—The *Food Service Guidelines for Federal Facilities* defines a side item as a single serving of a food or beverage that may accompany a meal or entrée or eaten on its own.

**Soy Products**—The *Food Service Guidelines for Federal Facilities* defines soy products as soy-containing foods that provide a source of protein, such as edamame, soy nuts, soybeans, tempeh, textured soy protein, tofu, and soy meat alternatives. Meat alternatives containing soy protein or tofu may be used to imitate meat, such as burgers, sausages, bacon, and hot dogs.

**Variety**—The *Food Service Guidelines for Federal Facilities* uses the *2015–2020 Dietary Guidelines* to define variety as “a diverse assortment of foods and beverages across and within all food groups and subgroups selected to fulfill the recommended amounts without exceeding the limits for calories and other dietary components. For example, in the vegetables food group, selecting a variety of foods could be accomplished over the course of a week by choosing from all subgroups, including dark green, red and orange, legumes (beans and peas), starchy, and other vegetables.”<sup>2</sup>

**Waste Diversion**—Waste diversion means “redirecting materials from disposal in landfills or incinerators to recycling or recovery, excluding diversion to waste-to-energy facilities.”<sup>28</sup> According to *Implementing Instructions for Executive Order 13693 Planning for Federal Sustainability in the Next Decade*, “Diversion of organic waste is particularly important because the anaerobic decomposition of organics in municipal solid waste landfills produce significant quantities of methane, which has a Global Warming Potential (GWP) twenty-five times greater than carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>).”<sup>23</sup>

**Whole Grain-Rich Products**—In defining foods that meet the whole grain-rich criteria, USDA states the following: “Foods that meet the whole grain-rich criteria for the school meal programs contain 100 percent whole grain or a blend of whole-grain meal and/or flour and enriched meal and/or flour of which at least 50 percent is whole grain. The remaining 50 percent or less of grains, if any, must be enriched.”<sup>29</sup> Examples of whole grain-rich products include 100% whole grain foods such as oatmeal, wild rice, barley, or quinoa, or products such as bread, pasta, or tortilla shells that are made with a blend of whole grain meal or flour and enriched meal or flour, of which at least 50% is whole grain.

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Publication date: January 2017