

Fresh Perspectives Series

Examining common misconceptions surrounding school meals to offer guidance on how to steer the conversations within your community!



Claim: “Schools Sell Too Much Junk Food”

Let’s Take a Closer Look...

Response:

All food items available in schools during the school day must adhere to nutrition standards. The Smart Snacks in School regulation applies to foods sold a la carte, in school stores, vending machines, and any other locations where food is offered to students. This means that all snacks provided in schools are specifically manufactured to meet these strict nutritional guidelines. Additionally, Arizona Healthy Schools Act (A.R.S. §15-242.01) prohibits the use of specific ingredients and additives in food and beverage products served or sold in Arizona public schools.

Arizona Healthy Schools Act

Ultra processed foods contain one or more of the following per the Arizona Healthy Schools Act (A.R.S. §15-242.01)

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• POTASSIUM BROMATE• PROPYL PARABEN• TITANIUM DIOXIDE• BROMINATED VEGETABLE OIL• YELLOW DYE 5 | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• YELLOW DYE 6• BLUE DYE 1• BLUE DYE 2• GREEN DYE 3• RED DYE 3• RED DYE 40 |
|---|---|

Smart Snacks

To be classified as a Smart Snack, a snack or entrée must adhere to the general nutrition standards:

- Grain product that contains 50 percent or more whole grains by weight (with a whole grain as the first ingredient)
- First ingredient must be a fruit, vegetable, dairy product, or protein food
- May be a combination food that includes at least ¼ cup of fruit and/or vegetable
- Must comply with nutrient standards regarding calories, sodium, fats, and total sugars.

Crucial Points to Chat About...

Here are suggested points to effectively communicate your **dedication and efforts** to solely provide nutrient-rich, minimally processed foods at your sites:

- **Utilization of the Smart Snacks Calculator:** Discuss the method you employ to assess your snacks by inputting the Nutrition Facts panel and ingredient list into the [Alliance for a Healthier Generations' Smart Snacks Product Calculator](#)
- **Reference the Arizona Healthy Schools Act:** Provide information on [A.R.S. §15-242.01](#) along with your official [Certification of Compliance](#) to adhere to guidelines and refrain from serving unapproved ingredients in all your school meals and a la carte offerings.



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