



# The Food Group's Healthy Foods Policy

## Purpose

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The Food Group is committed to providing high quality and nutritious food to its hunger relief partners. It is widely recognized that nutrition is a key component in maintaining health and preventing chronic disease. There is strong evidence that those affected by food insecurity are at the highest risk for obesity and other diet related illnesses. The Food Group believes that everyone utilizing a hunger relief program should have access to healthy foods.

## Nutrition Guidelines

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The Food Group is committed to distributing food in accordance with the recommendations from the “Dietary Guidelines for Healthy Americans” at [www.health.gov/dietaryguidelines/2010.asp](http://www.health.gov/dietaryguidelines/2010.asp).

### The Food Group will prioritize distributing:

- Fresh vegetables and fruit
- Whole grain products (with at least 16 grams or more of whole grains per serving)
- Food low in saturated and trans fats
- Food low in sodium
- Lean sources of protein (plant and animal sources; canned, dried, or frozen)
- Fruits that are minimally processed (canned, frozen, or dried; whole, cut-up, or pureed) or 100% fruit juice
- Vegetables that are minimally processed (frozen, canned, or dried/dehydrated; whole, cut-up, or mashed) or 100% vegetable juice
- Dairy products that are high in calcium, but also low in fat
- Beverages including: 100% fruit or vegetable juice, skim/low-fat milk, bottled water
- Basic staple foods that tend to provide the best nutrition per dollar

### The Food Group will not distribute:

- All diet or regular sodas in bottles or cans and other sugary, non-nutrient dense beverages (i.e. energy drinks, vitamin waters, punches or “ades”, sweetened iced teas, or Frappuccinos)
- Hard candy and lollipops
- Gum
- Chocolate bars or pieces (not including meal replacement, diet supplement or sport bars)
- Soft candy (i.e. marshmallows, caramels, taffy, licorice, gummy items)

**Nutrition Rationale:** *These foods contain little to no vitamins, minerals, or other protective nutrients for the body. When eaten in excess, they lead to an increase in obesity, heart disease, and diabetes risks. These foods are also often more accessible for people on a limited food budget.*

## Implementation

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### **Purchased Products:**

- The Food Group is committed to having our Bulk Purchasing offers reflect a balanced diet as described by USDA's MyPlate and will conduct quarterly evaluations using the Healthy Eating Index (HEI), striving to be in or as close to a "good" score of 81 or higher
- The Food Group will purchase top quality, fresh produce to make available to agency partners each week
- In addition to nutrition, The Food Group's purchased foods will reflect the culturally specific needs of agency partners

### **Donated Products:**

- The Food Group will communicate healthy food drive guidelines to all new food drive partners
- The Food Group is committed to sourcing fresh produce to distribute to agency partners free of charge
- The Food Group will consider the nutritional value of any bulk donation offered and will not take donations that fall under the "Dietary Guidelines for Healthy Americans" foods to reduce
- In addition to foods that The Food Group will not ever distribute, bulk donations of cookies, snack cakes, and chips will not be accepted

### **Program Specific Guidelines:**

#### *Kid Pack Products*

- The Food Group is committed to sourcing foods that are nutritionally balanced and rich in key nutrients that are necessary for optimal mental and physical development in children including:
  - A variety of foods from each food group in USDA's MyPlate
  - Lean proteins, complex carbohydrate, healthy fats, and fiber and calcium rich foods
  - Nutrient dense foods (i.e. diced peaches) vs. empty calorie foods (i.e. fruit snacks)
- Each Kid Pack will strive to offer at least:
  - 2 Proteins, ½ Fruit, ½ Vegetable, ½ Dairy, and 3 Grains (with at least 1 Whole Grain)
  - 30% DV of Calcium and 8 to 10 grams of fiber
  - 850 total calories and less than 90 empty calories

## Nutrition Commitment

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### **In addition to being committed to distributing healthy foods:**

- The Food Group has a full-time dietitian on staff who provides internal expertise and oversight of purchasing and procurement
- The Food Group is committed to offering a variety of nutritional support services to our agency partners
- The Food Group seeks to be a resource and leader in the development and implementation of nutrient profiling for hunger relief

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