



UKHOSPITALITY

Nutrition guide

**A PRACTICAL GUIDE FOR CHEFS
AND CATERING MANAGERS**



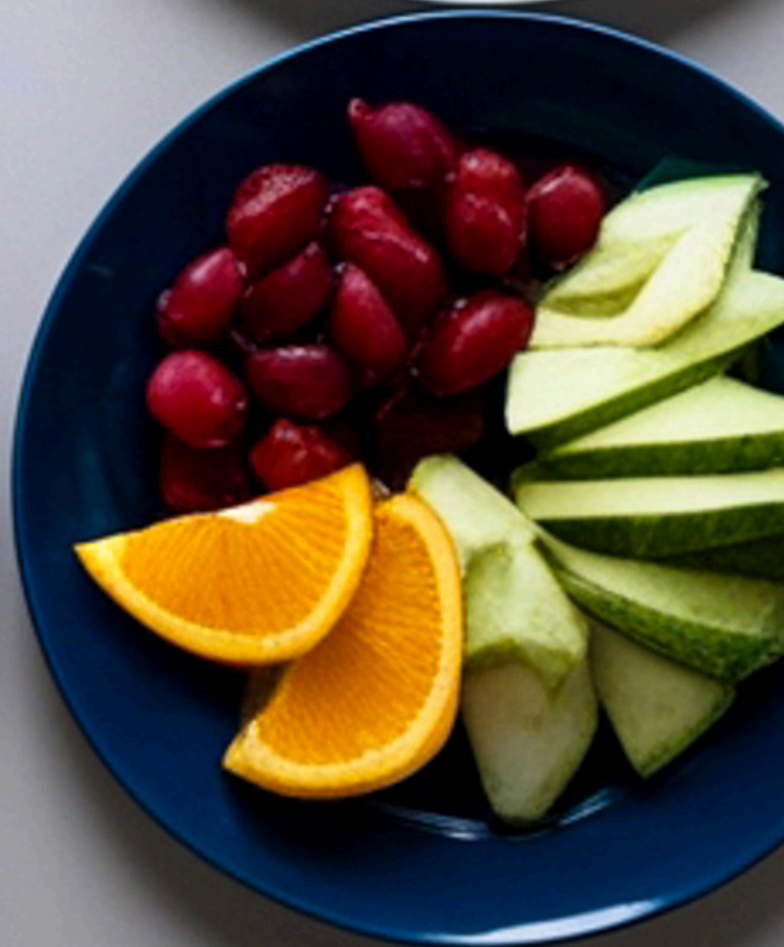
Acknowledgements

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Sarah Healey, Mitchells & Butlers
Wan Mak, Chair of the UKHospitality Nutrition Group, Sodexo
Samantha Mollart, Bidfood
Lydia Rybalcenkaite, Mitchells & Butlers

Our thanks also go to those members who contributed to the first edition of this guide.





Foreword

We are delighted to present the first edition of the UKHospitality Nutrition Guide, aimed at providing chefs and catering managers with the practical guidance and support they need to deliver healthy, nutritious dishes across their menus.

The hospitality sector has made, and continues to make, significant strides in supporting healthier eating - whether through offering lower-calorie options, increasing fibre content, or incorporating more fruit and vegetables into dishes. In the context of changing consumer eating habits and growing expectations around health and wellbeing, hospitality businesses have had to continually adapt their offering, while still delivering the high-quality, delicious food and memorable experiences that customers expect.

Across our incredibly diverse sector, businesses of all sizes are innovating and responding to these challenges in different ways. However, with staff shortages and increasing cost pressures continuing to have a significant impact across hospitality, it is clear that some businesses, particularly SMEs, may not always have the bandwidth or resource available to make meaningful progress alone. That is why we have developed this guide, in collaboration with our members, to provide practical, accessible support for hospitality businesses looking to strengthen their approach to healthy eating.

This guide forms part of UKHospitality's steadfast commitment to supporting our members across the wider food agenda, whether that be in nutrition or food safety. We know that chefs and catering managers play a vital role in shaping the nation's eating habits, and we hope this guide will help businesses continue to make a positive contribution to public health.

Finally, I would like to extend my sincere thanks to the Chair of our Nutrition Group, Wan Mak, for her tireless work and leadership in this area. Our Nutrition Group remains an essential vehicle for driving this work forward, and I would encourage all of our members to get involved and contribute to its continued success.



Allen Simpson
Chief Executive
UKHospitality



Introduction

I am pleased to present this guide, developed by industry for industry, to support food businesses in adopting healthier cooking practices without compromising on taste and quality. Across our diverse hospitality and out-of-home sector, organisations continue to invest significantly in nutrition and healthier eating to meet the needs of customers of all ages. This builds on the strong progress already made in reducing salt, sugar, and fat, the introduction of calorie labelling, and ongoing efforts to meet increasingly complex nutrition and allergen requirements, all aligned with the wider public health agenda.

At a time when the sector continues to face significant skills shortages alongside rising expectations from government, regulators, and customers, it is more important than ever that businesses are equipped with practical, accessible nutritional guidance for day-to-day operations.

Chefs and catering professionals play a pivotal role in shaping the nation's diet. Their creativity, skill, and passion uniquely position them to make healthier options both appealing and accessible, enabling customers to make informed and healthier choices with ease.

This guide provides them with clear, practical approaches to healthier cooking, together with a straightforward overview of key regulatory requirements. It is also a valuable resource for chefs, apprentices, and catering professionals at every stage of their careers, supporting the embedding of healthier choices from recipe development through to menu design, so that best practice becomes instinctive within professional kitchens, while also maintaining regulatory compliance.

Finally, I would like to extend my sincere thanks to the nutrition working group for their commitment, expertise, and time given beyond their day-to-day roles. Their contribution ensures the content is accurate, credible, and practical, providing a trusted reference for kitchens as we work towards a future where healthier, high-quality, and safe food is the consistent standard. I encourage the industry to make full use of this guide and apply its principles in everyday practice to drive continued improvement in healthier cooking across the sector.



Wan Mak
Head of Nutrition and Dietetics
Sodexo Group

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The purpose of this guide

This guide has been produced for the industry by the industry - it contains quick and easy approaches that will help your food business to adopt healthy practices.

A go-to guide for chefs and catering managers, it has been structured to cover everything from menu planning and food purchasing through to serving and presenting your dishes without compromising on taste, cost or appearance.

UKHospitality member companies – from across all parts of an incredibly diverse sector – invest significant work and resource in nutrition and healthy eating to give customers the best possible choices when going out for a meal, having lunch at the office, and eating food on the go.

A great amount of work across the food service industry has been carried out in line with previous policy, including the Public Health Responsibility Deal, salt and voluntary calorie labelling. As an industry, we will continue these efforts in line with the evolving Government policy.

Chefs and catering managers are a crucial part of the hospitality sector. They have the creativity, curiosity and eagerness to develop dishes that delight customers – making them perfectly placed to make dishes healthier.

However, nutrition, health and wellbeing are not mandatory components of qualifications for trainee chefs at catering colleges and so nutrition is often not instinctively considered when planning menus and preparing foods. Chefs working for high street caterers, in corporate catering and the public sector, will find that demands for good nutrition and healthy choices are continually

increasing. These out of home eating experiences are making an increasingly important contribution to our national diet.

With this in mind, this guide aims to provide practical advice for chefs and catering managers, allowing businesses to continue contributing positively to healthy eating across the UK.

WHAT IS HEALTHY EATING?

The ultimate aim is that everyone eats a diet based around plenty of starchy carbohydrates (wholegrain where possible), eating at least five portions of a variety of fruit and vegetables every day, some reduced fat dairy or dairy alternatives, some beans, pulses, fish, eggs, meat and other non-dairy proteins, unsaturated oils and spreads, drinking between six to eight glasses of water or other fluids a day and consuming foods and drinks high in fat, salt and sugar less often and in smaller amounts.

Evidence shows that on average the population consumes more saturated fat,

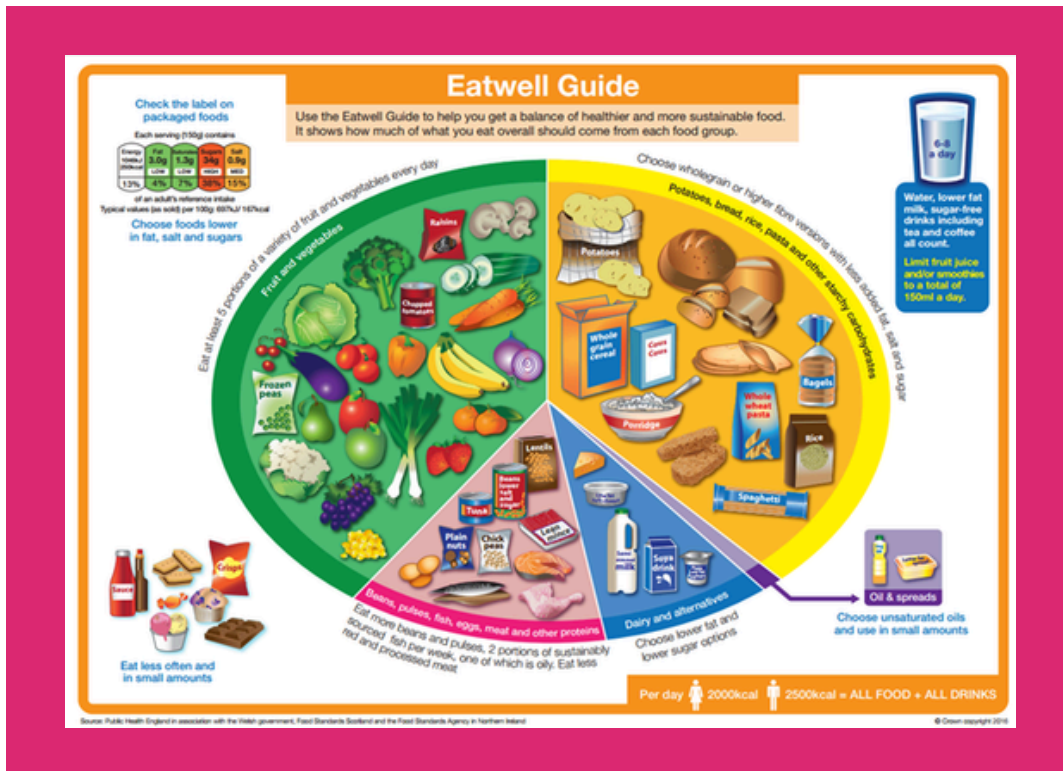
salt and sugars and eats less fibre, oily fish, fruit and vegetables than is recommended. In addition, some population groups have intakes of vitamins and minerals below the recommended levels.

Almost two thirds of adults and a third of children in the UK are overweight or obese, and it is estimated that the associated health costs to the NHS are more than £6 billion a year. Obesity is a risk factor for type 2 diabetes, stroke, heart disease and some types of cancers.

The Eatwell Guide

The Eatwell Guide has been produced by the Government to help consumers to make healthier choices. It is a food-based dietary guideline to help demonstrate a well-balanced and healthy diet for adults and children over

two years old. It represents the recommended proportions of the different food groups in your diet, though not necessarily for each individual meal.



Source: Public Health England in association with the Welsh Government, Food Standards Scotland and the Food Standards Agency in Northern Ireland

Part one



1. Preparation

Kitchen practices

Working in the food service industry, you can make small, simple changes to many aspects of food preparation, which together can positively impact the health and nutrient content of the dish.

Food preparation techniques - preserving nutrients

Some nutrients, such as vitamin C and certain B vitamins, dissolve in water or are easily damaged by heat. Reducing time spent in water and keeping cooking time short will help to ensure more of these valuable nutrients end up in the meals you serve.

Try:

- Putting prepared vegetables directly into boiling water, rather than bringing them to the boil whilst in the water.
- Cutting vegetables in bigger pieces or chunks.
- Cooking leafy greens in small quantities and as quickly as possible.
- Steaming vegetables in a combi oven or microwave.
- Stir frying, with a minimum amount of fat.

Helpful equipment

Certain kitchen equipment can help you to prepare dishes in a healthier manner. Cost and space may not always make these particular suggestions possible, but they are worth considering when designing new kitchens or refurbishing existing ones.

- A combi oven – as per above, these are great for steaming vegetables and preserving nutrients.
- Sufficient oven space means that you can increase your baked meals and reduce fried foods. Roasting vegetables, with minimal oil sprayed on them, for example sweet potato.
- Microwaves – retention of vitamins in vegetables is especially good in short, sharp cooking times possible with microwaves. Just add a minimal amount of water, cover, and follow the cooking instructions.
- Sharp knives can be invaluable for healthy food preparation. They can reduce vegetable cell damage which preserves nutrients, and can efficiently trim excess fats from meats.

Review your ingredients

Many manufacturers have been working on producing solutions to make it easier to create healthier and nutritious offerings and can help to meet requirements such as Government Buying Standards (GBS) and the Government's salt reduction targets. For example, suppliers have changed their products in line with the GBS e.g. reducing saturated fat in hard cheeses to a maximum of 25g / 100g, supplying reduced fat milk and dairy products, ranges of oils and spreads with unsaturated fats and reformulating cereals to contain more than 6g / 100g fibre.

Often, pre-prepared food products can be cooked in a variety of ways. For example, the same piece of breaded fish could be oven baked, grilled or fried, giving you some flexibility to fit the method to your customers' preferences.

Consider these purchasing tips:

- When selecting ingredients, opt for healthier versions where available. This includes reduced or low sugar, fat, and salt options, such as baked beans, mayonnaise, and tomato sauce. Additionally, choose healthier alternatives for popular ingredients, such as unsaturated fats and oils, or white pasta with added fibre.
- Work with your company buyers to encourage suppliers to reformulate their products to reduce salt, sugar and fat levels on standard product lines.

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- If applicable, encourage your buyers to procure single serve snacks and drinks that are in line with best practice in the GBS. For example, savoury snacks in servings of 30g or less, confectionary and sweet snacks in portions not exceeding 250kcal and sugar sweetened drinks no more than 330ml servings. A choice of a low or no calorie soft drink should always be available.
- Speak to your supplier's customer care line to help you consider the health credentials of new products when making purchasing decisions.
- If you are considering changing or trying a new healthier product, most suppliers will have samples you can try to see how they look, handle and taste. It is always worth starting a conversation with suppliers on their reformulation plans, as a means of starting conversations to create healthier dishes.



2. Designing healthier meals

Increasing fruit and vegetable content

Although some fruit and vegetables can be expensive, clever use of what you have in stock can help to reduce waste. Soups, casseroles and fruit puddings are all natural dishes for any number of vegetables and fruits that are soon to be out of date. You can boost the variety of vegetables and fruits on your menus by opting for those in season which will also help to lower costs.

Increasing serving sizes of fruit and vegetables has also been shown to increase overall consumption. To keep costs down, try using seasonal, frozen or canned items where appropriate.

Remember that 80g of either fresh, frozen or canned vegetables or fruit, and around 30g of dried fruit is considered to be a 'portion' and makes up one of your 5 A Day. Juice or smoothies can also count as 1 of your 5 A Day, but these should be limited to a combined amount of 150ml per day. It is recommended that dried fruit, juice and smoothies are consumed with meals to reduce the risk of tooth decay. For more information on 5 A Day, please find referenced later in the document.



Increase variety

The more variety that is offered to customers, the greater the likelihood that total vegetable consumption increases. For example, rather than just serving carrots, try presenting carrots, broccoli and green beans. With fruits, offer a range with a variety of colours and textures, for example, some stone fruits, berries and citrus.



What's on the plate

Replacing items such as meat and pastry with vegetables, including pulses, can sometimes reduce costs and counts towards your 5 A Day recommendations. These can also help to potentially lower salt, fat, saturated fat and total calories and increasing intakes of fibre, vitamins and minerals.

TRY THIS:

Increase the fruit content of puddings using fresh, canned, dried or frozen fruits – they all count towards our 5 A Day.

- Increase the vegetable content of curries, casseroles, pasta dishes, lasagne and sauces by including diced and pureed vegetables in the recipe.
- Offer a range of undressed, colourful and varied salads as side dishes.
- Add dried or fresh fruit to breakfast cereals or in tray bakes.

'5 A Day' and composite foods

Composite foods (foods containing more than one ingredient) are an important source of fruit and vegetables. Examples include baked beans, vegetable curry and lasagne. Please be aware that these products may be high in fat, saturates, sugar and salt, and choose healthier versions wherever possible.

Please note that the Government 5 A Day logo cannot be used on composite foods, however, you can still communicate the 5 A Day message.



















Composite food	Portion that counts towards one of your five a day (80g fresh, frozen, tinned)
Fresh, frozen, tinned fruit and vegetables	80g
100% concentrated fruit or vegetable puree	This can vary on supplier, please use industry guidance
100% fruit or vegetable juice	150ml
Pureed non-concentrated fruit or veg, tomato puree	80g
Dried pulses	40g
Cooked, reconstituted pulses	80g
Dried fruit	30g



Remove, reduce and replace

Simple and small changes can be made to food preparation to reduce the total calories and levels of fat, sugars and salt.

FAT AND SATURATED FAT

REMOVE	REDUCE	REPLACE
 <p>Remove poultry skin and trim visible fat from meat cuts</p>	 <p>Choose leaner cuts of red meat</p>	 <p>Try meat substitutes such as tofu, beans and textured vegetable protein as alternatives to meat and poultry</p>
 <p>Do not toss pasta in butter</p>	 <p>Bake, roast, grill, poach or steam rather than frying</p>	 <p>Provide alternatives to pies, pastries, sausages and burgers</p>
 <p>Serve vegetables unglazed</p>	 <p>Use low fat versions of spreads, crème fraiche, cheese, fromage frais and yoghurts</p>	 <p>Offer plain baked fish as well as battered fish</p>
 <p>Do not enrich dishes with butter</p>	 <p>Use grated cheese in sandwiches and salads so less is required</p>	 <p>Provide boiled or poached eggs as an alternative to fried for breakfast</p>
	 <p>Use thick cut chips or wedges in preference to thin cut chips</p>	 <p>Use low fat natural yoghurt or potatoes to thicken sauces</p>
	 <p>Decant oil into spray bottle to use less whilst still evenly distributing over food</p>	 <p>Use reduced fat coconut milk instead of coconut cream in curries</p>
		 <p>Make sauces and soups from pureed vegetables, rather than roux based</p>
		 <p>Use skimmed milk in mashed potatoes rather than butter</p>

SUGAR

REMOVE



Remove breakfast cereals that are high in sugar

REDUCE




Use lower sugar varieties of yoghurts, preserves, baked beans



Use sugar sparingly when sweetening desserts




Poach fruits in unsweetened fruit juice




Gradually reduce the sugar content of recipes over time


REPLACE




Offer water, lower-fat milks, diet, sugar-free or no-added sugar drinks including squashes and cordials



Offer fresh fruit and lower sugar alternatives to cakes and biscuits




Use non-stick frying pans



Use silicone bake ware where possible


SALT

REMOVE




Remove salt cellars from table


REDUCE




Use herbs, garlic, spices, lemon or lime juice or zest in place of salt




Don't over-use stock pastes, granules or cubes



Reduce the use of packet soups, sauces, gravy browning and soy sauce




Reduced sauces will concentrate the salt flavour, so reduce them first, then add salt to taste if needed




Provide salt cellars with reduced holes if necessary

REPLACE



Provide a reduced sodium alternative



Ensure that soups, cooking sauces and stock preparations meet the Government's Salt Targets where possible.



Plate fill

Consumers find a 3:4 plate fill level to be the most pleasing from an aesthetic point of view. Research shows that overfilling beyond this level does not increase perceptions of value.

To achieve this ratio, fill plates with starchy carbohydrates, choosing wholegrain higher fibre varieties where possible and vegetables to retain customer satisfaction while displacing other higher calorie and cost elements of the meal.



Consider plate sizes

Smaller plates can encourage smaller portion sizes. As plates can be a big investment, factor this consideration into future planning.



Chips

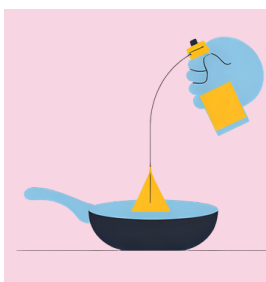
Did you know that by knocking 20g off medium sized chips you can save almost 50 calories and 2.5g of fat?

Alternative non-fried potato options can also be offered. Try switching to oils lower in saturated fats and higher in unsaturated fats.

Frying

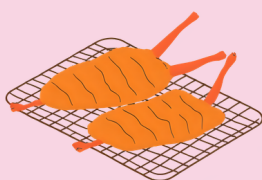
Whenever you are frying, there are things you can do to reduce the amount of fat the food absorbs, which will help you to reduce the calorie content.

Here are some great tips to try:



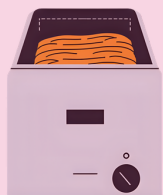
TRY SPRAY OIL IN PANS, WHICH CAN REDUCE FAT CONTENT IN YOUR MEAL SIGNIFICANTLY.

MAKE SURE THAT THE OIL IS AT THE RIGHT TEMPERATURE BEFORE FRYING; IF THE TEMPERATURE IS TOO LOW IT WILL TAKE LONGER TO COOK AND ABSORB MORE FAT.



DRAIN FRIED FOOD WELL AFTER COOKING.

DO NOT RE-FRY CHIPS – THIS CAN DOUBLE THE FAT CONTENT.



MAKE SURE THE OIL YOU ARE FRYING IN IS CLEAN, FRESH AND CHANGED REGULARLY.

THE NUTRIENTS IN OLIVE OIL MAY BREAK DOWN AT HIGHER TEMPERATURES, SO IT IS BEST TO USE THESE OILS IN SALADS AND USE A STANDARD VEGETABLE OIL SUCH AS RAPESEED OR SUNFLOWER OIL FOR FRYING.



DID YOU KNOW?

- Switching from double to single cream saves 251 calories per 100g.
- Swapping from Greek yoghurt to 0% fat Greek yoghurt saves 39 calories per 100g.
- Changing from whole milk to skimmed milk saves 108 calories per 350ml latte.



DID YOU KNOW?

- Choosing lower salt, lower sugar baked beans can cut salt by 0.3g and sugar by 5.1g per half can.
- Having lower salt gravy can save 0.2g of salt per 50ml serving.



DID YOU KNOW?

- Reducing salt can reduce blood pressure and lower the risk of heart attacks or stroke.
- Perception of saltiness can differ from person to person, so chefs and customers may have different opinions as to how salty a dish is.
- Products from the supermarkets are much lower in salt than they used to be, so many consumers may be used to less salty foods.
- Whilst it is important to have some salt in your diet, most people are eating too much. A high salt intake increases the risk of high blood pressure resulting in hypertension and other cardiovascular problems.





3. Designing meals for different population groups

Allergens

Given the importance of managing allergens in hospitality and catering businesses, this guide is not intended to duplicate information provided elsewhere. For detailed information on managing allergens, please refer to the [UKHospitality Industry Guide to Good Hygiene Practice](#).

By law, businesses must be able to identify which of the 14 allergens listed in the [Food Information for Consumers Regulations \(2014\)](#) are in their food and drink, and have this information available for customers prior to ordering.

For foods that are pre-packed for direct sale, refer to Government [guidance on PPDS](#).

Designing for children

The food industry has a crucial role to play in promoting healthier diets among children and young people. Diet-related ill health is not limited to adults, with one third of children living with overweight or obesity by the time they leave primary school.

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When designing children's options, we recommend reviewing the Food Standard Agency's Healthier Catering tips for Children [here](#) and Food Standards Scotland's version [here](#). The School Foods Standards applicable to those serving educational establishments can be found [here](#). The Government standards for early years foundation stage can be found [here](#).

Making children's menus healthier helps in many ways:

- By providing delicious, well-balanced dishes out of the home, we can help make healthy eating a part of everyday life.
- Eating habits are established early in life, so by encouraging healthy eating we can increase children's chances of a healthy diet in adulthood.
- Child-friendly portions can help educate children and parents on what an appropriately sized meal or snack looks and feels like.

Tips for children's menus and meals

- There is no official guidance on exactly how much food children need, however, the following may be useful when developing menus:
- The Eatwell Guide - to check if each food group is represented in an appropriate proportion.
- For tips on portion size, look at the [School Food Standards](#).
- Children often like adult meal choices, so consider offering child-sized or half portions of popular dishes on the adult's menu and price accordingly.
- If appropriate, encourage families to share adult starters.
- Using smaller plates for children helps avoid portion size dissatisfaction, as the plate can still be filled.
- Test and learn - keep an eye on what is coming back from tables. If there is a lot of food waste, consider reducing portion sizes.

INGREDIENTS:

- Strive to use fresh or frozen fish, meats and ingredients.
- Foods and drinks high in fat, sugar and/or salt should be minimised.
- Where possible, use lower fat, sugar and/or salt varieties of products such as ketchup, mayonnaise and baked beans.
- To help children get their 5 A Day, look for opportunities to include colourful fruits and vegetables such as in sauces, soups or on pizzas.
- Look for opportunities to provide wholegrain or 50/50 varieties of bread, pasta, rice etc.
- Offer a variety of sides (these can be from the adult's menu) such as such as salads, baked or mashed potatoes in appropriate portions.

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COOKING TIPS:

- Remove salt in the preparation and cooking of all children's foods.
- Offer homemade chunky chips, baked in unsaturated fat (such as rapeseed oil) and serve salt free.
- Include at least one meal that isn't fried - try baking, grilling or steaming instead.

HEALTHIER CHILDREN'S DESSERTS:

- Fresh fruit - chopped is often more appealing than whole.
- Lower-fat, lower-sugar yoghurt (such as plain, natural or Greek).
- Frozen yoghurt.
- Sugar-free jelly with fruit.
- Lower-fat, lower-sugar milk puddings - serve with fruit or compote.
- 50% fruit-based desserts as per the School Food Standards, such as a fruit crumble or cake.

HEALTHIER CHILDREN'S DRINKS:

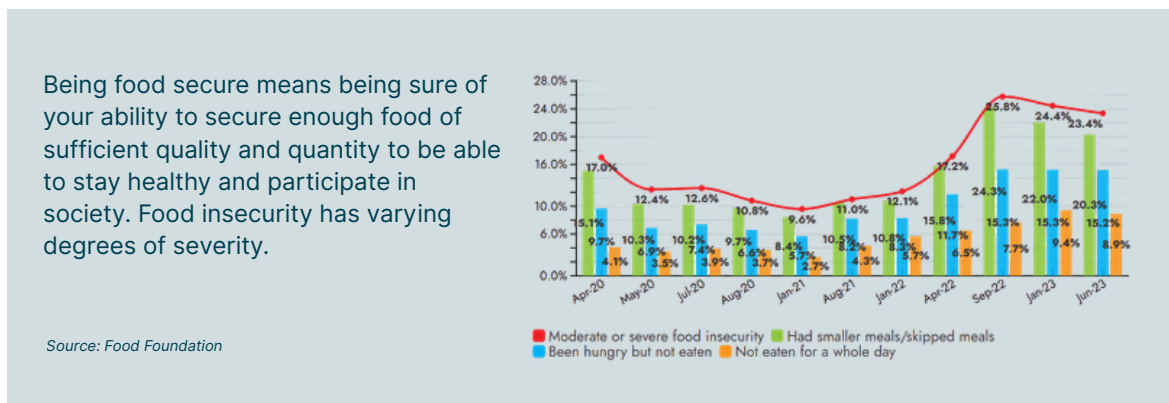
- Water.
- Milk (whole for young children, especially under the age of 2 and semi-skimmed for older children).
- Minimise sugar-sweetened drinks, offer low or no calorie drinks (such as squash) instead.
- Unsweetened fruit juices/smoothies count as 1 of your "5 A Day", however, these drinks contain free sugars so should be limited to 150ml. To make them go further, dilute with sparkling or still water (see glossary).
- Serve drinks in smaller glasses to help manage portion sizes.



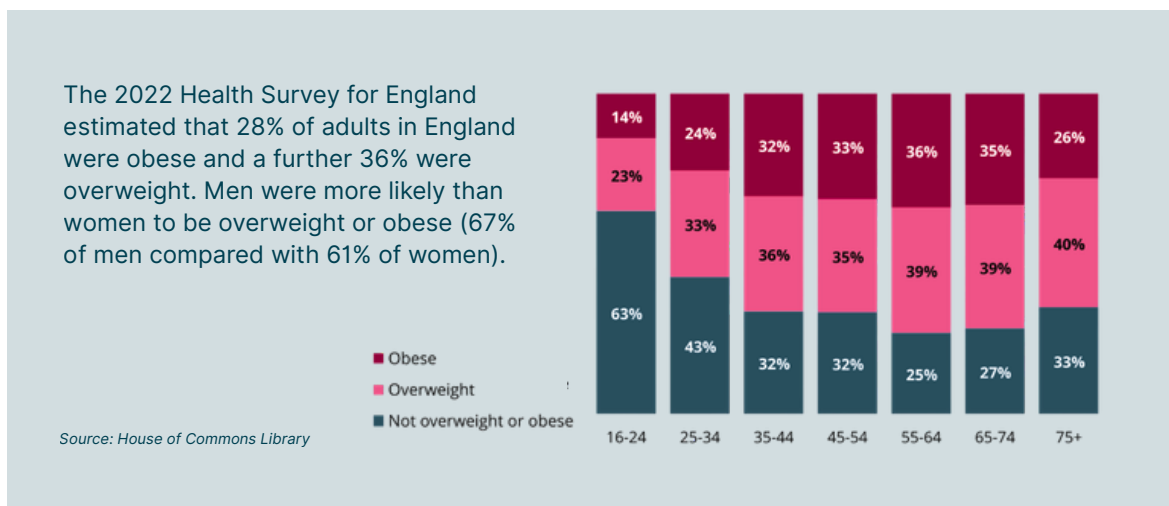
Childhood overweight rates have more than doubled since 1990



Percentage of households with children experiencing food insecurity



Two thirds of those aged 35 and over were overweight or obese in England in 2022



4. Designing healthier menus

Many customers are looking for healthier options, especially if they eat out regularly. There has been a significant shift in recent years and changes in customer behaviour post-pandemic. As such, there is an increased expectation to not only have healthier dishes available, but that they are easy to select.

Healthier dishes can also help to improve the perception of the freshness and quality of your menu, as well as create an excellent marketing opportunity and give your business a competitive edge. However, it is important to ensure that you communicate healthier options clearly, responsibly and in compliance with legislation.

Modify your menu

- Making small changes to your menu over time, especially to popular dishes, can have a big impact.
- Consider the spread of dishes across your menu, with a focus on including healthier options.
- Ensure dish names/descriptions are updated as necessary when modifying dishes.

Exhibit healthier options

- Place healthier items first on the menu, or alongside popular items where customers are likely to see them.
- Market healthier options as the 'dish of the day' or 'seasonal special'. Putting them in the spotlight will encourage your customers to buy them.

Tap into trends

- Smaller portions and tapas style dishes are growing in popularity and can be useful for those looking for a lighter option.
- Sharing dishes can also help lower calorie, fat, sugar and salt intake.
- Some dishes work well as a half or starter portion, such as pizza, pasta or risotto (see childrens' menu session).

Get clever with promotions

It is important to sell food responsibly. We know that promotions sell, so encourage customers to try healthier options by considering the following:

- Offer free tasters to encourage customers to try something new.
- Display healthier foods where customers can easily see them.
- Make sure that the prices of healthier options are competitive with regular menu options.
- Develop theme days that align with your healthier options.
- Think of special promotions to help grow sales such as a week of different pasta dishes.
- Use seasonal produce as an opportunity to reduce the price, for example, a seasonal fruit crumble.
- Design a meal deal with multiple healthy items, such as sandwich or soup with a piece of fruit.
- Accompany sandwiches or snacks with chopped vegetables or fruit to help customers reach their '5 A Day'.
- Always brief your whole team before service; employees who are knowledgeable and enthusiastic are more likely to have the confidence to help guide customers to opt for healthier options.

Don't underestimate photography

- Photos and videos are a great way to promote and tempt customers to try healthier options.
- Consider using social media, posters, table talkers and/or digital menu boards to help bring your healthier dishes to life.



Part two



5. Responsible marketing of food

Menus and marketing of food are subject to a number of legal considerations to ensure customers have full transparency and information around what they are ordering. This section sets out some of these factors to take into account.

Calorie labelling in the out of home sector

THE LAW

Calorie labelling for out of home businesses in England requires large outlets who prepare food for immediate consumption such as restaurants, cafes, takeaways, contract catering etc, with 250 or more employees, to display calorie information at the point of choice.

The regulation came into force on 6 April 2022. This aims to help consumers make informed choices about their food intake, addressing public health concerns related to obesity. The information must include the total calorie content per portion or meal, along with a reference/disclaimer that the average adult requires around 2,000 kcal per day.

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Due to variations in supply, or to prevent food waste, some businesses may need to substitute ingredients on their menus. The obligation to calculate calorie content will continue to apply to the food as sold and there is a tolerance for plus or minus 20%.

Further information can be found on the UKHospitality website [here](#), and to see the official Government guidance please click [here](#).

BEST PRACTICE

To calculate accurate calorie information, it is best practice to use a registered nutritionist or dietician and for the business to develop and implement processes to ensure the food can be reproduced consistently each time it is made.

There are three legally acceptable methods that can be used to obtain nutrition information:

- The manufacturer's analysis of the food.
- A calculation from the known or average values of the ingredients used; or
- A calculation from generally established and accepted data e.g. McCance and Widdowson Composition of Foods Dataset.

HFSS restrictions

The Government Nutrient Profiling Model is a tool used to calculate HFSS status. This can be used to differentiate foods based on their nutritional profile and is used by the Government to determine whether a food is less healthy. To score a food or drink, it considers both beneficial nutrients (fibre, protein, fruits, vegetables and nuts) and nutrients that the UK population should eat less of (energy, saturated fat, sugars and sodium). HFSS status is increasingly being used for regulation. Restrictions are in place to limit where certain HFSS products can be placed in retail environments, with restrictions on volume-based price promotions in retail environments and TV and online advertising. Alongside this, many local councils have banned HFSS adverts in their local areas.

For further guidance, please see the Nutrient Profiling Model Technical Guidance [here](#). Additional information can also be found on the UKHospitality website [here](#).

Nutrition and Health Claims Regulation

In the UK, the Great Britain Nutrition and Health Claims Regulation lays out which claims can be made on food, regarding the nutrient content and health properties of foods and beverages. This regulation is enforced by Trading Standards, and the same requirements are reflected in the [Advertising Codes](#) which regulate adverts.

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR MY MENU?

If you plan to communicate around the nutrient content or health benefits of a dish or section of your menu, it is important that as a business you understand and follow the relevant regulations. Even general claims, such as nutritious, healthy, veg packed, are strictly regulated. More information on this can be found in the general health claims section below.

WHAT ARE NUTRITION AND HEALTH CLAIMS?

The NHCR categorises claims as nutrition claims, health claims and general health claims:

Nutrition claims	Claims that suggest that a food has beneficial nutritional properties, for example high in protein.
Health claims	Claims that suggest that health benefits can result from consuming a food, or one of its ingredients, or nutrition content. For example: protein contributes to the maintenance of muscle mass.
General health claims	Statements that could be interpreted as suggestions that products improve health, for example packed full of goodness.

Nutrition claims can only be made if the product meets certain conditions. These conditions, and the list of authorised health claims can be found [here](#).

For further information, please see [the Nutrition and Health Claim Guidance on nutrition and health claims on foods](#).

General or non-specific health claims

HOW TO COMPLY WITH THE LAW

General health claims cannot be used without an authorised health claim.

Examples of general health claims include:

- Goodness
- Healthy
- Wellness
- Wholesome
- Nutritious
- Good for you

Terms such as natural, traditional, fresh, hand-made and pure should be used responsibly. The Food Standards Agency has published [guidance on using these terms](#) to help the food industry to provide specific, transparent and consistent labelling and to help enforcement authorities provide advice. For more information see the useful links section.

Comparative claims

The only comparative nutrition claims allowed are those listed in the [Nutrition and Health Claim Register](#). In order to use a comparative nutrition claim, the product must meet the listed conditions of use and the comparison must be made with two or more foods from the same category, which are unable to make a claim. The claim must also state by how much the food is reduced when compared to the same quantity of the other food(s). It is important that the product used for the comparison is identified along with the quantity of reduction, for example 'x grams less fat, compared to our standard product'.

Example:



Lower in sugar (desserts) contains at least 30% less sugar per 100g compared to sugar content of all desserts with comparable components.

Belgian Chocolate Brownie  

A mini portion of our Belgian chocolate brownie with some cheeky chocolate sauce *284kcal*

Unauthorised claims

THE LAW

The NHCR makes it clear that claims must be honest. They state that the claims in the box below are not permitted in any case. Food businesses should stick as closely as possible to the authorised wording of health claims to prevent confusion amongst consumers and to help enforcement officers judge whether claims are being used in compliance with the law.

Banned claims

THE FOLLOWING TYPES OF CLAIMS ARE NOT ALLOWED:

- Misleading claims.
- Medicinal claims, about preventing, treating or curing a disease.
- Claims that call into question the safety of other products or the benefits of a balanced diet.
- Claims on alcoholic beverages (more than 1.2% alcohol), other than low/reduced alcohol or energy.
- Claims that suggest health could be affected by not consuming the food.
- Claims that make reference to a rate or amount of weight loss.
- Claims that make reference to recommendations of individual doctors and health professionals.
- Contains as much as or X times as much (name of nutrient e.g. calcium) as (name of common food e.g. milk).

Claims to avoid

Unless a product has a specific health claim, it is best to avoid the below claims:

- Fuller for longer, satisfying, filling.
- Guaranteed to keep you going for hours.
- Low carb, carb free.
- Slimming, weight control.
- Suitable for diabetics.
- Probiotic, prebiotic.
- Low Glycaemic Index (Low GI).

Annexes and useful links



Useful links

REGULATIONS

The NHCR makes it clear that claims must be honest. They state that the claims in the box below are not permitted in any case. Food businesses should stick as closely as possible to the authorised wording of health claims to prevent confusion amongst consumers and to help enforcement officers judge whether claims are being used in compliance with the law.

The calorie labelling (OOH) Regulations 2021 [The Calorie Labelling \(Out of Home Sector\) \(England\) Regulations 2021](#)

Commission Regulation (EU) No 907/2013 of 20 September 2013 setting the rules for applications concerning the use of generic descriptors (denominations), European Union
<http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/ALL/?uri=CELEX:32013R0907>

Committee of Advertising Practice Food Health Claims, CAP
<https://www.cap.org.uk/Advice-Training-on-the-rules/Advice-Online-Database/Food-Health-claims.aspx#.V2vqIPkrKUI>

EU List of Approved Nutrition Claims and Conditions for Use, European Commission:
http://ec.europa.eu/food/food/labellingnutrition/claims/community_register/nutrition_claims_en.htm#16

Regulation (EU) No 1169/2011 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 25 October 2011 on the provision of food information to consumers, European Commission:
<http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/en/ALL/?uri=CELEX:32011R1169>

Regulation (EC) No 1924/2006 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 20 December 2006 on Nutrition and Health Claims Made on Foods, European Union:
<http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/en/ALL/?uri=CELEX:32006R1924#>

The Consumer Protection from Unfair Trading Regulations 2008
[http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2008/1277/contents/made/Calorie_labelling_in_the_out_of_home_sector_implementation_guidance_-_GOV.UK_\(www.gov.uk\)](http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2008/1277/contents/made/Calorie_labelling_in_the_out_of_home_sector_implementation_guidance_-_GOV.UK_(www.gov.uk))

Guidance documents

Criteria for the Use of the Terms Fresh, Pure, Natural etc. in Food Labelling, Food Standards Agency:

<https://www.food.gov.uk/business-guidance/packaging-and-labelling>

Food Standards Agency Resources for allergen information

<http://www.food.gov.uk/business-industry/allergy-guide/allergen-resources>

General Principles on Flexibility of Wording for Health claim, Department of Health:

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/217005/health-claims-flexibility-of-wording-principles-UK-19-Dec-2012.pdf

Guidance on the Consumer Protection from Unfair Trading Regulations 2008, Office of Fair Trading

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/284442/oft1008.pdf

Technical Guidance on Nutrition Labelling, Department of Health:

www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/207842/2013-06-19_Nutrition_Technical_Guidance.pdf



Other useful links

A plan for public procurement: food and catering, Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/a-plan-for-public-procurement-food-and-catering>

Government guide to creating a front of pack (FoP) nutrition label for pre-packed products sold through retail outlets

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/300886/2902158_FoP_Nutrition_2014.pdf

Healthier and More Sustainable Catering, Public Health England

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/healthier-and-more-sustainable-catering-a-toolkit-for-serving-food-to-adults>

McCance and Widdowson's 'composition of foods integrated dataset' on the nutrient content of the UK food supply, Public Health England

www.gov.uk/government/publications/composition-of-foods-integrated-dataset-cofid

Sustainable procurement: the Government Buying Standards (GBS), Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs

[Criteria for the Use of the Terms Fresh, Pure, Natural etc. in Food Labelling, Food Standards Agency:](#)

https://www.food.gov.uk/business-guidance/packaging-and-labelling_

The Eatwell Guide, NHS Choices

[Criteria for the Use of the Terms Fresh, Pure, Natural etc. in Food Labelling, Food Standards Agency:](#)

https://www.food.gov.uk/business-guidance/packaging-and-labelling_

Sources of nutritional information by product category

Nutrition information for single ingredient products could be directly obtained from a published data source such as McCance & Widdowson. Examples include:

- Produce (fruit and vegetables)
- Plain, natural proteins - red meat, poultry, game, fish, seafood (excludes minced foods, brined or additive/flavour enhanced)
- Plain unflavoured pasta, rice, couscous, other grains
- Herbs and spices (that have no added salt)
- Plain, unflavoured milks, creams
- Unsalted butter
- Eggs
- Flours
- Sugars
- Vinegars
- Oils

Nutrition information for the following products could be obtained from theoretical data – for example calculated using a nutritional software programme:

These products have one or more of the following characteristics:

- Composed of two or more ingredients.
- There is no identical product match available in a published data source e.g. McCance and Widdowson.
- The preparation method involves simple assembly of ingredients in defined quantities and/or processes that only involve water loss/gain and no loss or gain of other nutrients such as fat.
- The calculation can be made using known or average values of the ingredients and may be from generally established and accepted data such as the 7th Edition [McCance & Widdowson's Composition of Foods](#).
- The moisture loss/gain must be included in the calculation e.g. the volume of water lost during baking.

A record of the calculation should be kept, including:

- A list of all component ingredients included in the calculation
- The quantity of each ingredient
- Cook loss/gain including raw and cooked weights

Nutrition information for the following products should be obtained from lab analysis, as theoretical data would not be representative of the food as served to the customer

If the preparation of the food served to your customer involves any one of the following processes, then it is impossible to accurately calculate the nutritional composition of the food served to the customer because the values of one or more nutrients will have been unpredictably altered from the theoretical values of the unprepared ingredients. Therefore, the cooked product must be sent for analytical nutrition testing:

NUTRITION GUIDE

- Deep frying in oil - oil will be absorbed and water will be evaporated in unknown quantities, which will unpredictably influence the energy, fat and sat fat content of the cooked product.
- Shallow frying in oil and draining oil from the ingredient before serving.
- Fermentation - bacteria, mould and yeast convert the sugars into other substances that will unpredictably affect the energy, carb and sugars content e.g. cheese, yogurt.
- Fat and/or juices are skimmed from the surface during cooking e.g. when making a meat-based sauce.
- Fat and/or juices ooze or are drained from the product e.g. from the base of a pie or roasted joint of meat or during grilling.
- Product is cooked, separated into components and the components re-combined in different proportions e.g. stews, casseroles.
- Product contains inedible components and therefore accurate data for the edible portion doesn't exist in the 7th Edition [McCance & Widdowson's Composition of Foods](#) e.g. lamb shank, chicken wings, ribs.
- Product is seasoned or marinated before, during or after cooking.



Alternative wording for nutrition claims

Glossary

5 A Day

The government recommendation is that people eat at least five 80g portions of fruit and vegetables per day.

Allergen

A substance which can cause an allergic reaction.

Allergy

Food allergy is a reaction involving the immune system where the body sees a food as harmful. In severe cases this reaction can be life threatening and result in an anaphylactic shock.

Artificial Sweetener

A sugar substitute that is manmade rather than natural. Some can be hundreds of times sweeter than table sugar (sucrose). Those used in the EU have been checked by authorities and are declared safe. They can be used to replace sugar.

Back of Pack Nutrition Labelling

The provision of nutrition labelling for pre-packed foods. This is currently voluntary, except where a nutrition or health claim is made, but will become a legal requirement in December 2016.

Best Before Date

This date shows when a product will be at its best with respect to quality. Beyond this date the food will gradually start to lose its flavour or texture, but will not be a food safety concern. These dates are found on foods like biscuits or canned tuna.

Best Practice

Commercial or professional procedures that are accepted or provided as being the most effective way of completing an activity.

Calorie

A unit of energy used to express the energy yield of foods. The average woman requires 2000 calories per day, and the average man 2500 calories per day.

CAP

The Committees of Advertising Practice (CAP) are responsible for writing and maintaining the UK Advertising Codes. The UK Code of Non-broadcast Advertising, Sales Promotion and Direct Marketing covers advertisements placed in traditional and new media, sales promotions, direct marketing communications and marketing communications on marketers' own websites. The UK Code of Broadcast Advertising regulates all advertisements on Ofcom-licensed television channels and radio stations.

Carbohydrate

The major food source of energy. Carbohydrates include sugars, fibres and starches.

Cooked weight

Cooked weight is the weight of a food when it has been through a cooking process. This may vary to the products raw weight due to absorption or loss of oil/water for example.

Cross contact

Cross contact happens when one food comes into contact with another food and their proteins mix. As a result, each food then contains small amounts of the other food. These amounts are so small that they usually can't be seen but may still be harmful for someone with an allergy or intolerance.

Dietary Fibre

A group of carbohydrates that are not digested, however provide a small amount of energy.

Dietician (Registered)

Dieticians are qualified health professionals that assess, diagnose and treat diet and nutrition problems at an individual level and wider public health level.

Eatwell Guide

The Eatwell Guide helps to show you how to get the right balance of the foods you eat. It shows how much of what you should eat from the five food groups – fruit and vegetables; potatoes, bread, rice, pasta and other starchy carbohydrates; beans, pulses, fish, eggs, meat, and other proteins; dairy and alternatives foods; and oils and spreads. See Page 7.

E-Numbers

Within the EU, food additives can be listed on labels either by their chemical name or their nominated number in the EU list of permitted food additives. Numbers with an E have been declared safe by the EU.

Fat

Fat is made up of different types of fatty acids, some of which are essential for health in small amounts. Fat provides more calories than any other nutrient.

Food intolerance

Similar to an allergy but does not include the immune system.

Free sugars

Free sugars are any sugars added to food by the manufacturer, cook or consumer plus any sugars naturally found in unsweetened fruit juice, honey and syrups. Sugars found naturally in dairy products and within the cellular structure of a food, such as intact fruit, as well whole fruits and vegetables, are not included

Colour-coded Front of Pack Nutrition Labelling

These labels are found on the front of many pre-packed foods. It is voluntary for the manufacturer to provide them. They are a consistent way to provide 'at a glance' information on labels about the nutritional content of foods through the use of colour coding.

Gluten

A type of protein found in cereals namely - wheat, rye, barley and oats or their hybridised strains.

Glycaemic Index

Index to rank how quickly foods affect blood glucose levels after they have been eaten.

GDA

Replaced by Reference Intake (RI's)

Government Buying Standards (GBS)

These standards form part of the toolkit associated with the Defra's Plan for Public Procurement. They require government buyers to source food produced to high sustainability, nutritional and environmental standards from UK producers.

Health Claim

Any statement about a relationship between food and health. These must be authorised by the European Commission before use.

Honey

A free sugar.

Kilojoules

A measure of how much energy one gets from consuming a food or drink.

Lactose

The carbohydrate of milk, often called milk sugar. Sugars found naturally in milk and dairy products are not included in the term 'free sugars.' Some people may have food intolerance to it.

Lifestyler

An individual who chooses to avoid a food or ingredient due to lifestyle choices not health implications.

May contain

For consumers with food allergies or intolerances, eating just a small amount of the food they are sensitive to can cause them to be unwell. Therefore, ingredients that are possible cross- contaminants can voluntarily be highlighted on a warning label. These should only be used where there is a demonstrable and significant risk of allergen cross- contamination.

McCance and Widdowson's the Composition of Foods Integrated Dataset

The UKs recognised nutrient composition tables.

Micronutrients

Vitamins and minerals which are needed in very small amounts, as opposed to macronutrients, like fats and proteins which are needed in much larger amounts.

Minerals

A type of micronutrient required in the body, in small amounts, for example iron and calcium.

Medicinal claim

UK food laws prevent the use of food manufacturers claiming that their product can help treat, prevent or cure disease.

Nutrients

Essential dietary factors such as carbohydrate, protein, fat, minerals and vitamins.

Nutrition claim

Any claim which states, suggests or implies that a food has particular nutritional benefit to the consumer. See section 2.1, Page 17.

Nutritionist (Registered)

Registered nutritionists are qualified to provide information about food and healthy eating. Nutritionists registered with the Association for Nutrition must demonstrate that their training and experience ensures they have the knowledge, skills and competence to deliver the work of a nutritionist.

Nutrition and Health Claim Regulation (NHCR)

The EU has created a register of permitted nutrition and health claims and their conditions of use and restrictions.

Oily fish

Oily fish are a good source of Vitamin A and D along with long chain omega -3 fatty acids. It is recommended that at least one portion of oily fish is eaten every week. Examples include mackerel, sardines, herrings, anchovies, salmon, trout and fresh tuna.

Out of home

Out of home dining covers all areas of eating out, for example coffee shops, restaurants, casual dining.

Omega- 3 Fatty Acids

Omega -3 fatty acids are polyunsaturated fatty acids (PUFAs) which contribute to the normal function of the heart. The most widely available source is from oily fish like mackerel, fresh tuna, salmon and sardines.

Proteins

Proteins are needed by the body for growth and repair. Sources include meat, fish, eggs, beans and lentils.

Portion size/serving size

There are no set recommendations for portion sizes except for oily fish and fruit and vegetables. The Eatwell Guide balances food groups. When adjusting portion size, the overall balance of food groups should stay the same.

RI

Reference Intake have replaced GDA's. They give an indication of the average person's energy and nutrient needs.

Salt

Refers to sodium chloride, common salt or table salt. Adults should limit intakes to 6g/day.

Saturated fat

A fat that contains mainly saturated fatty acids, is solid at room temperature, and comes chiefly from animal food products. Some examples of saturated fat are butter, lard, meat fat, solid shortening, palm oil, and coconut oil. Too much saturated fat can increase blood cholesterol levels which in turn increases the risk of heart disease.

Sucrose

Cane or beet sugar. A disaccharide made up of glucose and fructose. A free sugar.

Sweeteners

Ingredients used to sweeten foods of which there are four classes – sugars, where sucrose is the most common; bulk sweeteners like sugar alcohols; low calorie sweeteners (intense sweeteners) like aspartame and stevia; and other chemicals like glycerol.

Traffic light labelling

The Food Standards Agency has developed the traffic light labelling system to ensure and help consumers make healthier choices quickly and easily.

Trans fats

A type of unsaturated fats that are uncommon in nature, but can be produced artificially during food processing.

Unsaturated fat

A fat that is liquid at room temperature and comes from a plant, such as olive, peanut, corn, cottonseed, sunflower, safflower, or soybean oil. Unsaturated fat tends should be included as part of a healthy diet.

UPF

This stands for ultra-processed food.

Use By Date

This date refers to the safety of the food. It is not recommended to consume the food after its use by date as it may cause illness. These dates are used on foods with short shelf lives e.g. cooked chicken.

Vitamins

Micronutrients required by the body in small amounts for example vitamin C.

Vegetarian

Those who do not eat the flesh of animals or fish, although some consume animal products like milk and eggs.

Vegan

Those who consume no foods from animal origin. For more detail on vegan claims, please see the FSA website [here](#).

Voluntary

Not required by law or legislation but can be provided.



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