

HER

Nutrition Guidelines



HEALTHY EATING RESEARCH (HER) GUIDELINES

What:

Nutrition guidelines tailored to the unique needs and capacity of the charitable food system (food banks, pantries and meal programs).

Goal:

To support the availability of a more nutritious portfolio of food products across the charitable food system, allowing all people in the United States – regardless of income – access to the foods necessary for an active, healthy life.

Why:

Food insecurity is a complex problem, with many food insecure families also experiencing other challenges, such as a lack of affordable housing, low wages, insufficient transportation, and fewer social supports. People living in food insecure households face a number of barriers to eating healthy that make them vulnerable to diet-related chronic diseases, including obesity, diabetes, hypertension, and heart disease.

How:

Focuses primarily on these three nutrients to limit – saturated fat, sodium, and added sugar – based on evidence linking increased consumption to increased risk for diet-related chronic diseases, including obesity, diabetes, hypertension, and cardiovascular disease.

Foods are categorized into tiers labeled as “choose often,” “choose sometimes” and “choose rarely” based on saturated fat, sodium and added sugar nutrient thresholds.

Category	Criteria	Examples
Choose Often	Foods are lower in saturated fat, sodium and added sugar	Fresh produce Lean meat Peanut butter
Choose Sometimes	Foods can vary in one or all nutrients	100% juice Refined grains
Choose Rarely	Foods high in either saturated fat, sodium and added sugar, or a combination of all three	Desserts Packaged snacks Soups/M meal kits



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