

School Meals in Arizona

How'd they do that?

Laveen Elementary School District

Child Nutrition Purchasing Guidelines

- Comprised of a questionnaire for vendors to fill out for any given product, and one page of "ingredients of concern" (unwanted ingredients and ingredients on the watch list).
- **Unwanted ingredients** are those that are not acceptable at any level in products. Ingredients on the **watch list** are those that are common in foods of lower nutritional quality and/or tend to indicate a highly processed food.

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Item: _____

Sample available? Yes No

Item available individually wrapped, bulk, or both? IW Bulk Both

Does item have CN label? Yes No

Distribution through Shamrock Foods? Yes No ASPIN Pricing? Yes No

If yes, Special Order or Stocked (Indicate Code):

Does the item contain pork (including gelatin made from pork)? Yes No

Does the item contain 10 grams of added sugar or less? Yes No

Does the item contain 1 or more of the top 9 allergens? Please indicate which one(s):

Egg	Peanut	Soy
Finned Fish	Sesame	Tree Nuts
Milk	Shellfish	Wheat

Is there precautionary allergen labeling for peanuts or tree nuts on the package? Yes No
Label says, "May contain peanuts or tree nuts," or "May contain traces of..."
Label says, "Made in a facility that also processes peanuts or tree nuts."
Label says, "Made on shared equipment with peanuts or tree nuts."

Free from Life Time Foundation's "Ingredients of Concern"? (Please refer to page 2.)

Artificial Colors	Artificial Sweeteners & Other Sugar-Free Sweeteners
Artificial Preservatives	Artificial & Unspecified Natural Flavors, and Flavor Enhancers
Emulsifiers	Flour Treatment Agents

Steps for Developing Your Own!

1. Identify what your "standards" are.

- Decide what ingredients, products, items, etc., you want to start adding or eliminating from your menu and put them on paper.
- Start small: Focus on one ingredient as your non-negotiable and go from there.

2. Use what is already available to you.

- Use [Laveen's Child Nutrition Purchasing Guidelines](#) as a launching point for your own guidelines!
- Review the CSPI recommendations in the [Ingredient Guide for Better School Food Purchasing](#) to determine which ingredients you want to focus on.

3. Customize your guidelines to fit your needs!

- Add or delete items from your guidelines based on your audience's specific needs and wants.
- Don't limit guidelines to just your menu. Establish them for disposables, smallwares, a la carte items, equipment, etc.

Backstory

"We have always had a reputation with our industry partners as a district seeking 'clean label' products, as well as being pork- and peanut-free. We were really looking for something very pointed and objective so that when we worked with manufacturers, we had clear guidelines of what we were willing to put on our menu. We created our purchasing guidelines to establish a clear understanding and starting point with vendors, so that we can screen products from the very beginning and really focus on any and all products that meet our standards and go from there. It's a time-saver for our vendors and us so that we can quickly look through ingredient lists and product formulation statements before even having the conversation about an item. It's been a great resource so far."

-Jennifer Gordon
Director, Child Nutrition Services
Laveen Elementary School District

Other Items to Consider When Developing Your Guidelines!

- Common allergens amongst your school community (i.e., nuts, soy, dairy, etc.)
- Religious, cultural, and environmental preferences (i.e., pork products, meat-based entrees, etc.)
- Medical and dietary accommodations
- Preferences for certain manufacturing methods (i.e., Arizona-based/local, supporting small business, Buy American, Farm to School, etc)