MyPyramid.gov
STEPS TO A HEALTHIER YOU

Fact Sheet

Trim *Trans* Fat for Healthier School Meals

KEY ISSUES:

- **Most Americans, including children, need to decrease their intake of *trans* fat according to the *2005 Dietary Guidelines for Americans.***
- **A high intake of *trans* fat, as well as saturated fat and cholesterol, may increase the risk of coronary heart disease.**
- **Schools should serve meals with little or no *trans* fat to help reduce this risk.**

We know that fats and oils are a part of a healthful diet, but the type of fat makes a difference to heart health. Although a small amount of *trans* fat is found naturally in foods like meat, butter, and milk, most *trans* fat is formed when hydrogen is added to an oil to make a more solid fat like shortening or margarine. This process, called "hydrogenation," increases shelf life and helps maintain the flavor and texture of foods.

You can reduce the amount of *trans* fat your students consume by eliminating products with *trans* fat or serving them less often. Check the Nutrition Facts labels and note the amount of "*trans* fat" listed just below "saturated fat." Food manufacturers can show "0 grams of *trans* fat" if a serving contains less than 0.5 gram.

Nutrition Facts
Serving Size 1 slice (34g)
Servings Per Container 108

Amount Per Serving		
Calories 90	Calories from Fat 15	
		%Daily Value*
Total Fat 1.5g		**2 %**
Saturated Fat 0g		**0 %**
Trans Fat 0g		
Cholesterol 0mg		**0 %**
Sodium 140mg		**6 %**
Total Carbohydrate 16g		**5 %**
Dietary Fiber 1g		**0 %**
Sugars 2g		
Protein 2g		
Vitamin A 0%	• Vitamin C 0%	
Calcium 0%	• Iron 6%	

* Percent Daily Values are based on a 2,000 calorie diet.

Easy ways to follow the 2005 Dietary Guidelines for Americans

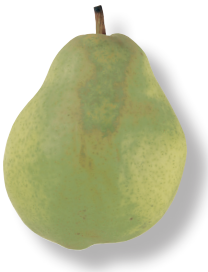
Recipe for Success

- **Review your menus**. Serve foods with *trans* fat less often.
- **Check Nutrition Facts labels and ingredient lists on similar foods**. Choose the food with the lowest amount of *trans* fat. Review nutrition labels frequently, as manufacturers change products regularly. Foods that list "shortening" or "partially hydrogenated vegetable oil" as an ingredient may contain *trans* fat.
- **Talk with your current food vendors about new products with little or no *trans* fat**. Look for vendors that have eliminated or reduced *trans* fat in their products.

USDA Commodity Foods

USDA eliminated *trans* fat from its frozen potato products and stopped offering solid shortening. For more information about USDA commodity products and updates on efforts to reduce *trans* fat in other popular products, visit: www.fns.usda.gov/fdd/foods/SY09-schfoods.pdf

- **Write specifications for food products** with no *trans* fat.
- **Serve nonbreaded meat products**, which usually contain less *trans* fat than breaded products.
- **Offer fruits and vegetables** to satisfy kids' tastes for sweet and crunchy foods.
- **Discontinue the sale of á la carte snacks** containing *trans* fat such as certain types of cakes, cookies, and crackers.
- **Take the HealthierUS School Challenge!** Go for the Gold and offer meals that include more fruits, vegetables, and whole grains, which are naturally low in *trans* fat!



For more information:

www.MyPyramid.gov

www.cfsan.fda.gov/~dms/transfat.html#whatis

www.cnpp.usda.gov/DietaryGuidelines.htm

www.teamnutrition.usda.gov/HealthierUS/index.html

Messages for Students

- **Be "label able."** Learn to read the Nutrition Facts label so you can make healthier food choices.
- **For a fast and fun snack**, grab nuts and fruits instead of cookies and chips.

Did You Know?

Processed foods and oils provide about 80 percent of *trans* fat in the diet, compared to about 20 percent that occur naturally in food from animal sources.

These categories of processed foods contribute to the 80 percent:

40%	cakes, cookies, crackers, pies, bread, etc.
17%	margarine
8%	fried potatoes
5%	potato chips, corn chips, popcorn
4%	household shortening
5%	other foods including breakfast cereal and candy

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