National School Nutrition Programme



GUIDELINES FOR TUCK SHOP OPERATORS, SERVICE PROVIDERS AND SCHOOL VENDORS

basic education
Department:
Basic Education
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

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2030 NDP

Definitions Food Safety refers to the conditions and practices that preserve food quality to prevent contamination and food borne illnesses. Activities to protect the food supply from microbial, chemical, allergenic and physical hazards that may occur during all food production and handling stages.

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1. FOREWORD



The Department of Basic Education (DBE), through the National School Nutrition Programme (NSNP) has a mandate to provides daily nutritious meals in schools and to promote the health and wellbeing of learners. This includes provision of warm nutritious meals, as well as disseminating information on the sale of healthy and safe food items in and around the school. Compliance with health and safety regulations is vital to ensure that learners access only nutritious and safe food, thus minimise exposure to risks associated with unsafe food. Food safety practices are regulated and include having a permit to sell and a certificate of acceptability to ensure hygiene and safety standards are adhered to.

Compliance with regulations ensure that food is free from contaminants, that it is stored correctly and is prepared under hygienic conditions to prevent foodborne illnesses. Food safety is both a public health and economic concern. Schools are faced with a major challenge of providing safe meals for learners as food poisoning is a deepening crisis. A multi-disciplinary approach is required to ensure compliance on food safety and hygiene. Principals and school management teams must be in contact with the environmental health divisions of local municipalities to ensure that businesses in and around the school premises are compliant.

To this end, these guidelines serve to raise public awareness and call to action all stakeholders to implement practical measures including specific compliance requirements for the sale and supply of food in and outside school premises. All stakeholders bear responsibility towards the health of our nation's children. The Department of Basic Education, schools, tuck shop operators, street vendors and parents/ caregivers are encouraged to work together to minimise exposure of children to unhealthy and unsafe food.

MR MH MWELI

DIRECTOR-GENERAL

DATE: 2024/12/05

2. ACRONYMS

CAPS	Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement
COA	Certificate of Acceptability
CRC	(United Nations) Convention on the Rights of the Child
CSTL	Care and Support for Teaching and Learning
DBE	Department of Basic Education
DoH	Department of Health
FBDG	(South African) Food Based Dietary Guidelines
NCS	National Curriculum Statement
NE	Nutrition Education
NPA	National Programme of Action
NSNP	National School Nutrition Programme
SGB	School Governing Body
SLA	Service Level Agreement
SMT	School Management Team
PPE	Personal Protective Equipment

3. INTRODUCTION

A healthy school food environment depends on the type of food served to learners, as well as what is sold by tuckshop operators and vendors in and around the school. Food safety at school level needs to be strengthened to prevent foodborne illnesses. It has been established that learners can become ill after consuming food that is contaminated. School communities must be aware of non-compliant or unsafe food items that are sold in and around school premises.

The school food environment is a combination of physical spaces, infrastructure as well as other policy and economic conditions in and around school that influence the availability, purchase and consumption of food, as well as adherence to environmental health and food safety principles. Compliance to regulations for a healthy school food environment is vital for learner wellbeing and to support quality education. Food safety compliance isn't just about ticking boxes, it is about protecting learners in the school environment. By adhering to food safety practices, minimizes the risk of contamination and ensures that food is safe for consumption.

The whole school community, including learners, educators, school staff, vendors, food service providers, parents and local farmers, have an active role and responsibility in supporting healthier food environments.

Packaging and labelling are also important and include original and specific containers in which food is kept, because this plays an important role in keeping it safe and fresh. Labels need to indicate ingredients, storage requirements and manufacturing and expiration dates that helps to keep food safe for consumption.

Access to sufficient nutritious food is essential to ensure that current and future generations have a fair chance to thrive and reach their full potential.

The term "triple burden of malnutrition" refers to the coexistence of undernutrition (stunting and wasting), micronutrient deficiencies (often termed hidden hunger), and overnutrition (overweight and obesity). This burden of malnutrition can lead to Non-Communicable Diseases (NCD) like hypertension, coronary heart disease, diabetes mellites etc. Thus, ensuring a healthy and safe food environment is crucial to protect learners' wellbeing.

4. LEGISLATIVE AND POLICY FRAMEWORK

The foundation of Government's commitment to healthy school food environment is derived from the following imperatives:

ACTS

- **Constitution of the Republic of South Africa**, 1996 (Act 108 of 1996)
- **The Children's Act** (Act 38 of 2005)
- **South African School's Act**
- **The Local Government: Municipal Systems Act of 2000** (Act no 32 of 2000)
- **Foodstuffs, Cosmetics and Disinfectants Act 1972** (Act No 54 of 1972)
- **Division of Revenue Act (DORA)**
- **Agricultural Products Standards Act** (Act 119 of 1990)
- **Trade Metrology Act** (Act 77 of 1973)
- **National Regulator for compulsory specifications act** (Act 05 of 2008)
- **Hazardous Substances Act** (Act 15 of 1973)

REGULATIONS AND POLICIES

- **REGULATION 638: Regulations governing hygiene requirements for food premises, the transport of food and related**
- **REGULATION 146: Regulations relating to labelling and advertising of Food Stuffs**
- **REGULATION 328: Powers and duties of inspectors and analysis conducting inspections and analyses of foodstuffs and at food premises**
- **The NSNP Conditional Grant Framework**
- **A Standard Draft By-Law for Township Economies on 7 November 2024 (No. 51529)**
- **Action Plan to 2019 Towards the realisation of schooling 2030**
- **Care and Support for Teaching and Learning (CSTL)**
- **The National Strategy for Prevention and Management of Obesity in South Africa for 2023-2028**

5. OBJECTIVES

These guidelines are intended for School Management Teams (SMTs), School Governing Bodies (SGBs), educators, tuck shop operators, service providers and vendors operating in and around school premises, learners, parents and the wider community. Schools are encouraged to consider and make these guidelines meaningful for their respective situation.

The guidelines are intended to:

- promote the availability of healthy food items in schools.
- create awareness about food safety, quality and proper food handling practices to minimise the risk of food contamination which can lead to foodborne illness outbreak.
- educate school communities on how to clearly distinguish between healthy and non-healthy food items and what measures to take during an outbreak.

6. FOOD SAFETY

Food safety is both a public health and economic concern. Schools are faced with a major challenge of providing safe meals from school children as food poisoning is a deepening crisis. Unsafe food contains harmful bacteria, viruses, fungi and/or chemical substances that can lead to the occurrence of diseases ranging from diarrhoea to cancer and may even lead to fatalities.





6.1 Safe Food Handling Practices

PREPARATION

- ✓ Sort, separate, and check for foreign objects in food before cooking.
- ✓ Use clean water and boil it to make it safe.
- ✓ To disinfect kitchen counters, mix 1½ tablespoons bleach with 2 cups of water (500ml). Use bleach that has no fragrances added.
- ✓ Keep surfaces and utensils clean all the time.

COOK THOROUGHLY

- ✓ Food must not be pre-cooked
- ✓ Cook food every morning and serve immediately.
- ✓ All food should be eaten on the day it is cooked on the school premises.
- ✓ Leftovers can be given to learners who are still hungry to have a second portion.
- ✓ **DO NOT TAKE LEFTOVERS HOME.**

KEEP CLEAN

- ✓ Always wash your hands
- ✓ Do not dry your clean hands on a dirty towel or your clothes, rather shake your hands dry
- ✓ Keep hair always covered
- ✓ Wear clean clothing with apron

RECEIVING FOOD

- ✓ Check expiry dates, quality and quantity
- ✓ Due to safety considerations, foodstuffs used in the NSNP must be within the sell-by, use-by, and best-before dates and not used after these dates.
- ✓ Use the **FIRST IN FIRST OUT** (FIFO) principle

FOOD STORAGE

- ✓ Keep all food on shelves
- ✓ Store food out of direct sunlight
- ✓ Place cleaning products and chemicals away from food
- ✓ Ensure access control
- ✓ Have a stock control management

WASTE DISPOSAL

- ✓ Store waste in a refuse bin with a tight-fitting lid
- ✓ Clean up spills around garbage containers immediately
- ✓ Use registered pest controller
- ✓ Store all pesticides in a locked cupboard away from food preparation areas
- ✓ Carefully follow instructions on how to use any product that kills pests.

GOOD PRACTICE

- ✓ Keep a sample of each food item prepared. Cover it carefully and keep it in the fridge for 48 hours. At the end of the 48 hours, throw the food away.
- ✓ The South African government, through DBE-NSNP, provides nutritious meals that are carefully prepared, strictly monitored, and traceable products.

GOOD PRACTICE

- ✓ Parents to warn their children **NOT** to buy food from Street Food Vendors, Spaza Shops, and/or other facilities that do not have **Certificate of Acceptability**
- ✓ Learners must bring food from home instead of buying lunch meals. Home-cooked meals are a safer option.
- ✓ Avoid bringing party packs, birthday cakes, and cupcakes at school.

6.2 Practical Steps

The following practical measures must be undertaken to heighten awareness in school communities:

- Complete template to report day-to-day incidents of food poisoning (Annexure A);
- Share Food Safety Tips above on how to prevent food poisoning/contamination and the Standard Operating Procedures on steps to take for suspected food poisoning and/or contamination (**Annexure B**);
- Boil water if harvested from an unreliable source;
- Monitor food safety in the National School Nutrition Programme (NSNP) as well as food sold by vendors outside the school premises more intensely;
- Dates on packaging 'best before' or 'sell by' must be adhered to;
- Simple and cost-effective strategies such as hand washing, proper storage of food, and use of clean and sanitised tools, surfaces, and utensils should be encouraged in schools to prevent food contamination;
- Use a registered pest controller;
- Extreme caution must be taken to ensure hazardous chemicals such as organophosphates, pesticides, insecticides or poisonous substances are not contaminating food;
- Promote and strengthen healthy food choices and food safety amongst school communities;
- Engage and strengthen collaboration with key government Departments like Department of Health and local municipalities for enforcement of certification of vendors, spaza shops and tuckshop operators including sourcing food from reputable manufacturers/suppliers for the NSNP;
- Leverage the Department of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs (COGTA's) newly gazetted Standard Draft by-laws for Township Economies on 7 November 2024 (No. 51529).

7. GOOD NUTRITION REQUIREMENTS





7.1 Good Practices for Food Items in a Tuckshop

Healthy food options should always be available in tuckshops or sold by vendors. This will aid learner health and support participation in schooling activities. Good practices for fluids, snacking and eating meals are important for optimal growth.

Options for dinking can include:

- Providing unsweetened or 100% pure fruit juices;
- Providing milk drinks that are low fat and unsweetened;
- Always provide bottled water as an option.

Food options can be as follows:

- nutritious snacks are good for the provision of required energy and for metabolic processes and growth;
- a variety of fresh produce like fruit and vegetables;
- nuts, popcorn, boiled mealies and raisins
- Brown bread sandwiches (protein and vegetable fillings)

TABLE 1: EXAMPLES OF HEALTHY ALTERNATIVES

Examples of nutritious snacks	Nutrition information
 Fresh Fruits and vegetables	Good sources of vitamins, minerals and fibre
 Cooked / Roasted Peanuts	Good source of proteins and good fats
 Fish: grilled or canned	Good source of protein and iodine
 Brown bread sandwich **(Protein)**	Good source of protein (egg, chicken, fish)
 Brown bread sandwich (veggy)	Contains vitamins (lettuce, avocado, tomato, spinach, mushrooms)

Examples of nutritious snacks	Nutrition information
 Cooked / roasted mealies	Provides vitamins, fibre, starch and minerals
 Popcorn	Good source of fibre
 Brown bread sandwich (vegetable protein)	Good source of protein Lentils, sugar beans and peanut butter)

7.2 Bad Practices for Items sold in Tuckshops

Unhealthy food options are bad for a growing body as it can lead to diseases like diabetes mellites, hypertension, cardiovascular and kidney diseases. Poor food choices are mostly high in energy but low in nutrients that can lead to obesity or poor intake of nutrients required for optimal growth.

Bad practices that must be eliminated:

- Processed snacks laden with fat and sugar like chocolate bars, sweets and crisps and ice lollies
- Fried food like fat cakes and fries;
- Sugar laden fizzy drinks;
- High energy drinks;
- Food fried in old or multiple used oil is not allowed. (pre-used frying oil);

- Snacks that are loaded with colourants and additives cause learners to be hyperactive and lead to lack of concentration in class which leads to behavioural problems;
- Foods with a high salt content;
- Items containing drugs or alcohol.

TABLE 2: EXAMPLES OF SNACKS TO AVOID

Snack	Nutrition information
 **Fried food**	High fat content
 **Processed food items**	High salt content
 **Cakes and pastries**	High unhealthy fat and sugar content
 **Repackaged and unlabelled foods**	No nutritional benefit High risk for contamination

Snack	Nutrition information
 **Fizzy drinks / Powdered cold drink / High energy drinks**	High concentration of sugar, additives and colourants

7.3 Labelling and packaging

Labelling in South Africa is regulated a under Regulation R146 from DoH. Labelling must provide legally mandated information about the product to inform the customer such as quality, quantity, features, price, product name, producer name, contents of the product, batch number, manufacturing and expiry date, instructions for use, storage and disposal, weight and barcode. The label is not approved if there is missing information of the product. The primary purpose of packaging is to protect its contents from any damage that could happen during transport, handling and storage. Packaging also keeps its contents safe and ensure consumers' safety. Thus, food must not be repackaged as it can be contaminated and be harmful to learners when sold. Packaging must be labelled to ensure content is safe for human consumption.

7.4 Nutrition Messages

- School communities are encouraged to advocate for healthy eating.
- Nutrition messages can be in the form of posters in classes or a wall painted with good nutrition messages, waste bins painted with messages or chalkboards at the tuckshop can be used to promote good nutrition.
- Clean safe water should be available and areas of access (waterpoints) can be in or in front of classrooms.
- Address nutrition messages in parent and community meetings.
- Nutrition messages can further be highlighted in newsletters or in circulars to parents.

8. CLEANING AND HYGIENE IN SCHOOL FACILITIES

Cleaning and hygiene interventions play an important role in promoting health and preventing food contamination and the spread of diseases. Schools, working together with local health authorities and municipalities, can help ensure learners and educators have a safe and healthy learning and working environment.

8.1 General Cleaning and Maintenance of Premises including Tuckshops

Routine environmental cleaning is an essential part of disinfection. Physical cleaning must therefore precede the use of disinfectants. Cleaning reduces the soil and plant debris, allowing the disinfectant to work. Removal of germs requires thorough cleaning followed by disinfection. Schools should ensure that cleaning and hygiene maintenance of premises is done routinely.

These guidelines should be read in conjunction with the Guidelines for Cleaning and Hygiene in School Facilities. Tuckshops are high touch surfaces or frequently touched surfaces as they often accommodate the number of people who are coming to buy food. Daily cleaning is important to prevent and break the cycle of cross transmission of pathogens that are transferred from people's hands.

a) Premises including tuckshops should be cleaned daily using soap and water.

b) Damp mopping of floors is preferable to dry mopping.

c) Counters or working surfaces, door handles and light switches should be wiped with wet cloth using soap and water. Disinfection of surfaces should be done using household bleach. To optimise its effectiveness and to prevent poisoning, household bleach should be mixed as per package instructions.

d) Expired cleaning solution and disinfectant should not be used and should be stored far from food to avoid contamination.

e) Air spraying, both indoors and outdoors for pest control should be by a certified pest controller.

Schools tuckshops should be cleaned daily to ensure health and hygiene programmes. Importantly, hygiene practices should be observed in and outside of the school to keep the school community safe.







8.1.1 General food handler or tuckshop operator personal hygiene

- Practicing good personal hygiene behaviour: Washing hands with soap under clean running water (after using the toilet, before and after meals etc.);
- Covering hair during food preparation;
- Keeping short fingernails without nail polish for people preparing meals;
- Covering open wounds;
- Wearing clean clothes and using protective clothing during meal preparation.

8.1.2 Use of personal protective equipment (PPE) and its care

a. Wash hands before putting on and after removing cleaning gloves.

b. Use heavy duty gloves. Elbow-long gloves are recommended. Gloves should be used as per the manufacturer instructions. Torn or chipped gloves should be disposed of immediately and safely.

c. Do not use alcohol-based disinfectants on plastic gloves as the disinfectant may erode the material thus increasing the risk of exposure to contaminants.

d. Eye protection may be worn, such as goggles or visors.

e. Follow the instructions on the label to ensure the safe and effective use of the product.

f. Gloves (if disposable), masks and other waste generated during cleaning should be placed into a waste bin with a lid and disposed of safely.

8.2 Waste disposal

a. All waste generated in the school must be disposed of according to the municipal bylaws in the jurisdiction within which the school is located and following the established practices in the school. As far as is possible, the 3R's should be applied, namely Reduce; Reuse; Recycle.

b. Waste must be placed in a refuse bin with a tight-fitting lid, lined with a bin liner or a garbage plastic bag.

c. Refuse should be taken out when full.

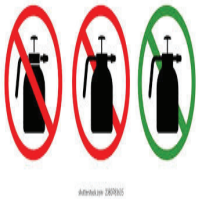
d. The refuse bin and lid must be cleaned every day.

e. Kitchen waste, including food scraps, must be disposed of safely.

Schools must be proactive in ensuring that the waste from the NSNP is safely handled and does not harm the environment. As far as is possible, food waste and vegetable scraps, should be recycled through composting. Composting is a natural recycling process where micro-organisms such as bacteria and fungi break down (or decompose) organic matter in plant and animal tissues into simpler substances. These substances are then re-absorbed by plants through the roots.

8.3 Pest control

Pests can be a real problem around food. Cockroaches and flies spread bacteria. Rats and mice can cause diseases in humans; they eat through packaging to get to the food product, chew electric wires and can contaminate food. Weevils are little insects found in grains such as maize, beans, rice and flour. They are not dangerous and will not harm if you eat them, but they are a nuisance and degrade the quality of the food item.



Pesticides are substances that controls, kills and repels insects and rodents like cockroaches, flies, mice, rats and other pests. Do Not use restricted pesticides and chemicals on school premises. These can poison or even kill humans. They can also kill domestic animals like dogs, cats and chickens. Store all pesticides in locked cupboards away from food preparation areas and where children cannot find them. Make sure you carefully follow the instructions on how to use any product that kills pests. Foodstuffs shall be removed from the area to be treated.

The public should be reassured that, if pesticides are used in accordance with the instructions on the label and if the warnings on the label are heeded, contamination of the environment and poisoning of humans can be avoided. The prevention of poisoning is easier than its treatment. All users of pesticides should nevertheless be knowledgeable about basic first-aid measures in case of suspected poisoning. It is recommended that schools outsource this activity to certified pest controllers.

9. RESPONSIBILITIES OF STAKEHOLDERS

9.1 School Management Teams (SMTs) and School Governing Bodies (SGBs)



- Schools must ensure that food is procured from registered and certified service providers (CoA).
- The SGB and SMT should play a leading role in ensuring that only healthy food items and beverages are sold and marketed to learners.
- The SMT should contact the Environment Health Practitioner (EHP) from the local municipality to conduct inspection.
- The SMT should check the storage area for compliance.

- The school should keep a database of individuals selling food and beverage items on or near the school premises.
- The SGB should enter into a Service Level Agreement (SLA) with school tuck shop operators. Such a Service Level Agreement should include the right to sanction and/ or terminate the services of a non-compliant -tuck shop operator. The operators should also have Municipal permits.
- Each school should make available clean, safe water within its premises.
- SMTs should promote healthy lifestyles among all individuals in the school premises leading by example through good nutrition and regular exercise.

9.2 Tuck shop operators and vendors

- Tuck shop operators and vendors should comply with all the guidelines that are stipulated by the SGB.
- Apply for and display a Certificate of Acceptability and comply with the conditions thereof.





9.3 Learners, Parents, Caregivers and the Community

- Learners should be able to make healthy choices when buying food on school premises.
- Parents and caregivers are encouraged to provide healthy home cooked food (lunch box) to their children and avoid giving them money to buy food/ snacks from the streets.
- School communities should monitor all food that are available within school premises and ensure compliance.







9.4 NSNP service providers contracted to supply food to schools



- All service providers and suppliers must comply with health regulations and municipal by-laws.
- Service providers/suppliers must procure food from registered suppliers.
- Service providers should keep business premises in a clean and hygienic condition.
- Warehouses should have a CoA.

9.5 Environmental Health Practitioners (EHPs)

- Conduct inspections of food preparation area, tuckshops and vendors, and educate school communities about food safety and quality.
- Ensure compliance with relevant regulations.

9.6 Districts

- Provide training to school on compliance to these guidelines.
- Monitor school compliance to food safety procedures.
- Ensure that all role players comply with respective responsibilities regarding food safety.

9.7 Traditional Council / Leaders

- The Municipal Systems Act, section 76 (no. 32 of 2000) makes provision for Traditional Council/Leaders to enter a service level agreement (SLA) with municipalities.
- Traditional Council/Leaders grant permission for business entities, spaza shops etc. to operate on land i.e. Permission to Occupy (PTO).
- Traditional Council/Leaders and municipalities have a joint responsibility to monitor and oversee the operations of the business/spaza shops.
- Support schools by monitoring compliance of school tuckshops and vendors.
- Issue permits to school tuckshops and vendors.
- Ensure that safe water is accessible to schools under their jurisdiction to enable cooking and maintain school food gardens.
- Ensure school environments are safe and hygienic.

ANNEXURE A: PROVINCIAL FOODBORNE OUTBREAK REPORTING TEMPLATE

Foodborne outbreak reporting Template (National School Nutrition Programme)																
Province	District	School Name	Enrolment	Number of learners affected	Date of incident	What occurred/or allegedly happened	Observed symptpoms	Menu on date	Breakfast menu	Was a sample of each food item kept	No. of Hospitalised learners	Fatalities	How many reffered to local clinic	Any other additional information	Laboratory test results	Reccommendations by EHPs

ANNEXURE B: STEPS TO TAKE IN CASE OF A FOODBORNE ILLNESS OUTBREAK



NB: Adhere to Food Safety Tips to prevent a similar incidents.

ANNEXURE C: SOUTH AFRICAN GUIDELINES FOR HEALTHY EATING

Food Based Dietary Guidelines

The Department of Health (DoH) in 2012 reviewed the Food Based Dietary Guidelines (FBDGs) which addresses South African food security and enables people to eat healthily.

The South African Guidelines for Healthy Eating

- Enjoy a variety of foods;
- Make starchy food part of most meals;
- Eat plenty of vegetables and fruit every day;
- Eat dry beans, split-peas, lentils and soya regularly;
- Fish, chicken, lean meat or eggs could be eaten daily;
- Have milk, maas or yoghurt every day;
- Use fat sparingly; choose vegetable oils rather than hard fats;
- Use salt and food high in salt sparingly;
- Use sugar and food and drinks high in sugar sparingly;
- Drink lots of clean safe water; and
- Be Active!

See also: The 3 Fives - Five keys to safer food, Five keys to a healthy diet, Five keys to appropriate physical activity published by the Department of Health.

The following diagram is the food guide that supports the FBDG messages.


Beans
Soya Mince
Savoury
LENTILS
BEANS
SPLIT PEAS
Breakfast Cereal
RICE
Maize Meal
Macaroni
Milk
FISH
Peanut Butter


REPORT
UNSAFE FOOD
PRACTICES
If you suspect food poisoning, report it immediately to your municipality or the Consumer Ombudsman at 0800 029 999. Let's keep our kids safe!
basic education
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YEARS
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Notes

Notes

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