

## Using Commodities to Meet This Standard

The USDA Food Distribution Program plans to offer new low-sodium, canned vegetables through the USDA Commodity Food Program in the 2009-2010 school year. Schools can also order frozen vegetables as a lower sodium option.

## Menu Tips

- Cut back on high-sodium foods gradually to give students' taste buds time to adjust.
- Introduce lower sodium versions of popular menu items and recipes at the beginning of a school year.
- Serve more fresh foods and fewer processed foods. Processed foods, such as canned vegetables, soups, luncheon meats, and frozen entrees, are often high in sodium.
- Be aware of the sodium content of condiments. Some condiments, such as soy sauce and ketchup, can be high in sodium.
- Talk to food vendors and make product comparisons. Order lower sodium versions when purchasing popular processed foods.

## Recipe Ideas

- Offer high-sodium foods less often. Go easy on pre-prepared, processed entrees and side dishes, such as pizza, chicken nuggets, and hot dogs. Use grilled chicken breast instead of luncheon meat, bacon, sausage, or ham.
- Modify recipes that use high-sodium ingredients such as cheese sauces, canned soups, tomato sauce, paste, or spaghetti sauce, canned

vegetables, chips, and taco shells. Use lower sodium versions or use less of these items. Remove salt from recipes whenever possible. (Note: Do not leave out the salt when preparing baked goods because it could affect the baking process.)

- Use fresh or dried herbs, spices, lemon or orange zest, or fruit juices to intensify flavors in foods without adding sodium.

**Read Labels to Reduce Sodium**

Example A:  
Canned Green Beans

*Nutrition Facts	
Serving Size 1/2 cup (121 g)	
Amount Per Serving	
Calories 20	Calories from Fat 0
% Daily Value	
Total Fat 0 g	0%
Saturated Fat 0 g	0%
Cholesterol 0 mg	0%
Sodium 200 mg	88%
Total Carbohydrates 4 g	8%
Dietary Fiber 2 g	8%
Sugars 2 g	
Protein 1 g	
Vitamin A 0%	Vitamin C 4%
Calcium 2%	Iron 4%

380 mg  
difference  
per 1/2 cup  
serving.

Example B:  
Low-Sodium  
Canned Green Beans

*Nutrition Facts	
Serving Size 1/2 cup (121 g)	
Amount Per Serving	
Calories 20	Calories from Fat 0
% Daily Value	
Total Fat 0 g	0%
Saturated Fat 0 g	0%
Cholesterol 0 mg	0%
Sodium 10 mg	4%
Total Carbohydrates 4 g	8%
Dietary Fiber 2 g	8%
Sugars 2 g	
Protein 1 g	
Vitamin A 0%	Vitamin C 4%
Calcium 2%	Iron 4%

Sodium content of foods can vary by several hundred milligrams in similar food products. It is important to read food labels and make comparisons to determine the best product for meeting the sodium standards.