



CALORIE RANGE

New Standard

As a weekly average, School Food Authorities shall serve at a minimum 100% and a maximum 110% of the appropriate level of calories per week to ensure meals offered to children comply with USDA calorie levels.

Rationale

School meal standards have focused on providing at least the minimum quantities of food for food-insecure students.

Students need enough food energy to grow and learn; therefore, the USDA requires a minimum calorie level. For this reason, schools should not serve meals with less than 100% of calories. This is very important for those free and reduced price meal eligible students who may rely on school meals for the majority of their calorie and nutrient needs.

It is now time to consider the needs of overweight students as well. It is important that schools do not overfeed students; therefore, a maximum level of 110% has been established.

What is a Calorie?

Calories are units of energy. Just like a car needs gas to run, the human body needs calories for energy. Calories come from three groups: carbohydrates, protein and fats.

