



Steps to a healthy school canteen

Healthy School Canteen Guidelines for use in schools

A healthy school canteen facilitates making healthy choices through its vibrant and healthy appearance, and by offering predominately healthy foods. The Netherlands Nutrition Centre's Healthy School Canteen Guidelines can help in this regard. Pupils' eyes will be immediately drawn to the selection of healthy sandwiches, vegetables and fruit. Water is the logical way to quench your thirst. It all looks simply delicious.





Healthy School Canteen Guidelines: steps towards health

We are living in a world of superabundance; we face temptation, all day and every day, to eat unhealthy foods and too much of everything. Most people want to maintain a healthy lifestyle. This is precisely why it is so important to ensure that encountering healthy options each and every day becomes the most natural thing in the world. The foods you present, and the way in which you present them, will inevitably influence the decision-making of others – whether that is in a healthy direction or an unhealthy one. It's possible to arrange your canteen in such a way that pupils and students are nudged in the right direction. By providing a healthy school canteen with plenty of healthy products, and tailoring its appearance to promote healthy choices as well, you can help young people make healthy decisions. For this reason, many schools are currently working towards canteens that position healthy foods as the easy options. The Healthy School Canteen Guidelines can help in this regard.

Will you choose Silver or go for the Gold?

A healthy, vibrant appearance and making better choices are top priorities in the healthy school canteen. We offer practical tips for creating a 'Silver' or 'Gold' canteen. A Gold canteen has more of the better choices and an even healthier and more vibrant appearance than a Silver canteen. We will address these points in greater detail later on in this brochure. You will earn a decorative School Canteen Platter when your canteen has earned Silver or Gold status. This is a way to show the world what you, as a school, have achieved.

- A Silver school canteen will demonstrate ample consideration for better choices. At least 60% of the foods on offer will be better choices. The design and layout of the canteen will induce pupils/students to make better choices as well.
- In a Gold school canteen, the better choice will be self-evident. At least 80% of the foods on offer will be better choices. Both the range of offerings and the design and layout of the canteen will nudge pupils/students towards making better choices.

Silver and Gold canteens ensure healthier products play a starring role, without banishing unhealthy options entirely. Of course, there's nothing stopping you from aiming to be an Ideal canteen. In an Ideal canteen, only products found in the Wheel of Five will be provided, such as sandwiches made from healthy toppings on whole-grain bread, semi-skimmed milk, fruit and snack vegetables. Fruit and vegetables must obviously be on offer. Sugary snacks and savoury snacks such as crisps and ice cream will not be available.

Here's what to do

To make your school canteen healthy according to the Healthy School Canteen Guidelines, and earn a Silver or Gold School Canteen Platter in the process, simply take the following steps:

- Check your canteen
- Choose a healthier range of offerings
- Ensure a healthy, vibrant appearance
- Devise your own policy
- Request a School Canteen Platter

Teamwork

Before getting started, it's a good idea to put together a team – or give an existing team a renewed sense of purpose. Ideally, your team will consist of:

- A Board member: can devise policy and knows whether time and money – or additional amounts of these resources – are available.
- A pupil/student: has first-hand experience using the canteen.
- A caterer or canteen manager: has a direct influence on the range of offerings; knows how to retain pupil/student interest in the new, improved canteen.

It may also be valuable to have:

- A teacher: can promote enthusiasm among colleagues and initiate lessons on a healthy diet.
- A parent: as a source of practical support and to get other parents excited and involved.
- A Public Health Service employee: often involved in guidance of multiple schools in the region; is aware of any local resources that could provide support for this programme.

Check your canteen

Being well-prepared is half the battle. First of all, it's good to find out where your school canteen currently stands.

We have developed the handy Canteen Scan tool for this very purpose. By entering your range of offerings into the tool, you can see how healthy your canteen is overall. The tool will also offer direct recommendations based on your specific situation. You can use the Scan as often as you like; this allows you to track your

canteen's progress. When conducting a second (or third, etc.) Scan, there's no need to enter all of your information again. Simply use the previous Scan as the basis for the new one, adjusting the answers to reflect any changes. You can fill in a Scan at www.voedingscentrum.nl/schoolkantinescan

Choose a healthier range of offerings

The canteen:

- will offer at least one better choice from each product group
- will offer vegetables and/or fruit
- will encourage students/pupils to drink water

For each product group (such as bread, dairy, drinks, sandwich toppings and spreads), the canteen will offer at least one better choice (you can learn more about the definition of 'better choice' on page 7). For example:

Better choice	Uitzondering
✓ Whole-grain bread	▪ White bread
✓ Semi-skimmed milk	▪ Whole milk
✓ Water	▪ Soft drink
✓ 30+ cheese	▪ 45+ cheese

That way, you can make better choices within each group of products. This applies to the range of offerings displayed at the counter, and to products in the vending machines as well. When drinks are offered both at the counter and in the vending machines, for instance, you should ensure that at least one better choice is available at both of these locations. For an extensive overview of better choices, you can download the Inspiration list at www.voedingscentrum.nl/inspiratielijst

The right balance

When designing your canteen, the ratio of healthy products to unhealthy ones that you provide matters as well. If you were to offer 12 apples and 8 cupcakes, for instance, we would calculate the percentage of better choices in your canteen to be 60%. If you were to offer 16 apples and 4 cupcakes, on the other hand, the percentage of better choices would be 80%.

The Canteen Scan will calculate this ratio for you. The products on offer in the canteen counter displays and

those offered in the vending machines will be calculated separately. The lowest of these percentages, in combination with the number of appearance points earned (see the chapter entitled 'Ensure a healthy, vibrant appearance'), will determine what kind of canteen you have: Silver, Gold or Ideal. Let's imagine that the results of the Canteen Scan show that 80% of the products in your counter display are better choices and 60% of the vending machine offerings are better choices. In this case, you would have a Silver canteen.



In a Gold canteen, you would have more brown bread products and fewer white bread products and currant buns, say, than in the Silver example. In other words, the ratio of better choices to occasional foods is better in a Gold canteen.

With Gold, the drinks are different as well: more bottled water, light soft drinks, milk and dairy beverages and less of the regular soft drinks and juices.

It's worth noting that the Canteen Scan evaluates the ratio across the entire range of offerings; results are not calculated per product group.

Offering vegetables and fruit

In a Silver canteen, pupils are offered at least vegetables or fruit. A Gold canteen offers vegetables and fruit. Of course, the more fruits and veg you offer, the better. You can offer vegetables in form of snack tomatoes, mini cucumbers or bite-sized peppers. Vegetables might also mean lettuce, or slices of tomato or cucumber, served on sandwiches. Fruit can be offered in a number

of varieties. You might arrange apples, mandarin oranges and bananas on a dish to form an attractive display that is refilled regularly. Or you could offer cut fruit on skewers or in small dishes. You can also offer fruit as a bread topping, such as slices of apple, fresh pineapple or banana on a grilled cheese, or a pear-and-goat's cheese sandwich.

Encourage pupils to drink water

Water is available at all times in your healthy school canteen, both as a product in the counter display and in the vending machines.

It would be great if you could install a water tap in the school as well. That way, pupils/students have an opportunity for filling their cups and bottles with free tap water instead of purchasing soft drinks. If it is not possible to install a water tap in the school,

you can place pitchers of (free) water on the counter during breaks. These will allow pupils/students to help themselves in between classes. For the sake of variety, you could also add fresh mint sprigs, lemon wedges or other fruit or herbs to the pitchers before serving.

You could also provide bottled water, although this is a less sustainable option.

The possibilities for offering fruit and veg are practically infinite! And water can be served at the counter in a number of attractive ways, too.



What is the better choice?

To define what constitutes a better choice, we have taken the Wheel of Five as the basis for the Healthy School Canteen Guidelines. The Wheel of Five is full of healthy products to choose from. When you eat according to the Wheel of Five, you will get enough of those products that boost your health, plus all the nutrients you need to start each day in tip-top shape.

We distinguish between products found in the Wheel of Five and those not included in the Wheel of Five. The products that do not appear in the Wheel of Five are divided into daily choices and weekly choices. A daily choice is something small; you opt for these

no more than three to five times each day. Examples are a small biscuit, an ice lolly or a tablespoon of ketchup. A weekly choice is something a little bigger, that you pick no more than 3 times a week: a croissant, soft drink or packet of crisps.

In short, you can say that:

- Better choice = Wheel of Five and daily choices
- Occasional foods = weekly choices

Criteria to be a 'better choice'

Products not included in the Wheel of Five are considered a daily choice if they meet the following criteria:

- Energy ≤ 75 kCal per packaging unit
- Saturated fatty acids ≤ 1.7 grams per packaging unit
- Sodium ≤ 0.5 grams per packaging unit
- In addition, water, tea, and coffee should have no sugar added.

For soft drinks and juices, the guidelines are:

- Energy ≤ 4 kCal per 100 millilitres
- Saturated fatty acids ≤ 1.7 grams per packaging unit
- Sodium ≤ 0.5 grams per packaging unit

As we have recently adopted new guidelines, a period of transition is in effect. This period will allow schools sufficient time to adjust their range of offerings. As a result, the following will also count as a better choice until 1 January 2020:

Drinks	Drinks with a maximum of 30 kCal per 100 millilitres and no more than 110 kCal per packaging unit
Sandwiches and bread with toppings	Brown or whole-grain rolls and bread with maximum quantities*: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Bread roll: no more than 25 grams sweet or 30 grams savoury topping/spread ▪ Per two slices of bread or club sandwich: no more than 30 grams sweet or 40 grams savoury topping/spread ▪ Sauce and dressing: no more than 1 tablespoon (15 grams)
Hot meals and main-course salads	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Meals that contain at least 150 grams of vegetables ▪ Meals that contain at least 100 grams of vegetables per 150 grams of meal sauce ▪ Sauce and dressing; no more than 1 tablespoon (15 grams)
Soups	Soups with no more than 100 kCal per 100 grams
Sweet and savoury snacks, ice cream	Snacks and ice cream/frozen treats with no more than 110 calories per packaged unit

* Until 1-1-2020, the type of sandwich topping or spread will not be considered when classifying sandwiches, although it is desirable to ensure as many toppings belonging to the Wheel of Five as possible.

Ensure a healthy, vibrant appearance

Better choices are displayed at the most eye-catching locations

Research has shown that people will make healthier choices when healthy products are both abundant and attractively presented. The order in which products are offered and their location can also influence people's decisions. That is why a healthy appearance is a crucial part of a healthy school canteen.

In order to evaluate canteens on the basis of their appearance, we have established nine potential 'appearance points'.

Basic appearance points

- Points 1 through 3 are the foundation of a healthy school canteen. These points must be met, at a minimum, in order to qualify your school for a Silver or Gold School Canteen Platter.

Additional appearance points

- For a Silver canteen, you must meet at least 3 additional appearance points (as well as the basic points).
- For a Gold canteen, you must qualify on at least 5 additional appearance points (as well as the basic points).

Is one of the appearance points listed not applicable at your canteen? No problem – simply mark this point as having been met. An example: Point 7 states that 'The majority of offerings on the menu and/or price list are better choices' – but maybe your canteen doesn't use a menu or price list. In that case, you can consider your canteen to have 'met' the requirement for this point.



Basic appearance points

1. Better choices will be placed at the most eye-catching spots in the counter displays.

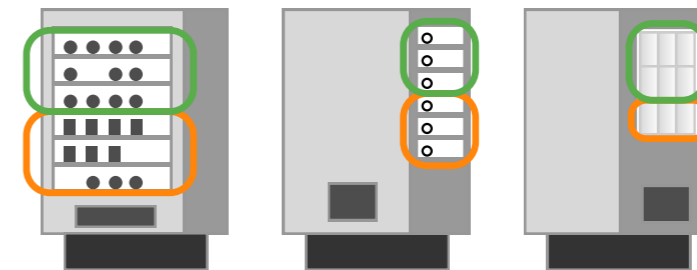
Better choices should literally be at the pupils' fingertips: they should be easiest to grab. They can be found by the checkout, in the display cases and on the racks – and always at the front. Vegetables and fruit should in any case be placed in a prominent location. In the example below, you can see what we consider to be prominent locations (green circle).



The occasional foods are to the rear, the better choices towards the front.

2. Better choices are stocked at the most eye-catching places in the vending machines

Products in the top half of the vending machines will be exclusively better choices. In this example, the facings circled in green are considered prominent locations. The facings circled in orange are considered less prominent.



3. If you offer foods or drinks by the cash register, these products should be better choices only

This refers to products located at or near the register, so that customers can grab or order them easily when they pay, or while they are waiting for their turn.



Additional appearance points

4. Present fruit and veg in an attractive manner

This might be on a nice platter or in a basket by the cash register. You could also consider pre-cut, ready-to-eat portions of fruits and vegetables served in small dishes. Including fruit and veg in sandwiches and grilled cheeses is also an option.



5. On the walking route through the canteen, the better choices are seen first

Consider the walking route carefully and ensure that better choices will catch the eye first.



6. Special promotions or discounts will feature only better choices

This could mean price cuts, loyalty campaigns and promotions where you offer two products in combination for a lower total price – a sandwich and a piece of fruit, for example. Other special promotions or discounts offered by the school should also promote exclusively better choices.



7. The majority of offerings on the menu and/or price list will be better choices.

At least half of offerings on your menu and/or price list should be better choices.





Request a School Canteen Platter

Last but not least: request your own School Canteen Platter! The decorative School Canteen Platter is the perfect way to show the world that your school has a healthy school canteen.



Only applicable for schools in The Netherlands.

How can you request a School Canteen Platter?

1. Once you are satisfied with your canteen, go ahead and fill in the Canteen Scan again. Your canteen's results will need to qualify as Silver, Gold or Ideal. Save these results as a PDF document.
2. Take photos of the canteen's appearance. We want to see the entire buffet counter, as well as a number of close-ups. You can find the complete list at www.voedingscentrum.nl/fotoinstructies
3. E-mail the following documentation to degezondeschoolkantine@voedingscentrum.nl:
 - Result of the Canteen Scan in PDF form.
 - Photos of the canteen (as instructed).
 - Your existing canteen policy.

We will use these three pieces of documentation to evaluate whether your school is eligible to receive a Silver, Gold or Ideal School Canteen Platter. If that's the case, we will send you your Platter straight away!

Devise your own policy

The Healthy School Canteen Guidelines should be formally included in your school's written policy.

You have made your school a Healthy School. Establishing your healthy school canteen as a matter of policy is a condition of the Healthy School Canteen Guidelines.

This will make it clear to students/pupils, parents and teachers what steps your school is taking to promote a healthy diet. It is good to integrate this canteen policy in the school policy plan or school prospectus as well. Put the policy on your school's website, too.

The policy must contain at least the following measures:

- That the canteen will offer vegetables and/or fruit and at least one better choice from every product group. There is no need to describe the specific products

you offer.

- That better choices are displayed at the most eye-catching locations. You don't have to describe the effects of your canteen's appearance.
- What your school is doing to encourage pupils to drink water.

For an example that can be adapted to meet your school's particular desires, visit www.voedingscentrum.nl/beleidschoolkantine



What else can you do to help?

- Would you like to give lessons on a healthy diet using the free online lesson plan from the Netherlands Nutrition Centre, 'Know Your Food'?
- Would you like to create a base of support or evaluate your current policy?
- Want to work towards greater sustainability and food safety?

Visit www.voedingscentrum.nl/gezondeschoolkantine for additional information.

Healthy School vignette



When your school canteen is healthy, you are mere steps away from earning a Nutrition certificate, part of the Healthy School vignette. This certificate shows that you are devoting your full attention to the health of your pupils.

For more information, visit www.gezondeschool.nl/voortgezet-onderwijs

Background information

The Dutch government would like to see all school canteens in the Netherlands become healthy school canteens. This intention has been established in a number of motions. The Ministry of Public Health, Welfare & Sport has charged the Netherlands Nutrition Centre with assisting schools in making their canteens healthier. The schools themselves are responsible for adjusting their range of food offerings. Are you interested in learning more about our decision to use this approach, featuring the Healthy School Canteen Guidelines? In our fact sheets 'Healthy School Canteen Guidelines' and 'Influence of the physical environment on eating behaviour', you can read all about the scientific evidence that supports our recommendations. These can be found at

www.voedingscentrum.nl/factsheets

Need some assistance?

The Healthy School Canteen Brigade can offer practical tips to help you get started.

Call us: 070-306 8875

E-mail: degezondeschoolkantine@voedingscentrum.nl

Twitter: @GezondeBrigade

Website: www.voedingscentrum.nl/gezondeschoolkantine



Examples of product arrangement at the counter



Gold canteen
Better choice Occasional

Silver canteen
Better choice Occasional

	Gold canteen		Silver canteen	
	Better choice	Occasional	Better choice	Occasional
Fruit and vegetables				
Mini-tomatoes (packet)	7		7	
Small dish of raw veggie salad	6		4	
Apple	11		8	
Banana	10		8	
Small dish of cut fresh fruit	5		5	
Drinks				
Spa intense (0.5l)/ Spa Reine (non-carbonated)	5		5	
Coca-Cola light (33 cl)	5		0	
Wicky zero fruit (2 dl)	6		4	
Tap water infused with cucumber and mint	14		14	
Coca-Cola classic (33 cl)		3		4
Fanta Orange (33 cl)		3		4
Fresh-squeezed orange juice		3		4
Apple juice		0		4
Milk and dairy products				
Skimmed milk	6		3	
Optimel Drink, raspberry flavour (2 dl)	5		0	
Semi-skimmed chocolate milk, AH		3		6
Alpro soya Banana/Fruit		3		6
Sandwiches and spreads all including a smear of margarine				
Whole-wheat bread roll with smoked salmon and cucumber slices	8		5	
Whole-grain bread roll with chicken breast and cucumber slices	8		5	
Grilled cheese and tomato on brown bread	6		5	
Whole-grain bun with 100% nut spread and banana slices	4		5	
Currant bun with 48+ cheese		3		8
White bread roll with egg and lettuce		3		5
White kaiser roll with tuna salad and tomato slices		3		5
Panini with mozzarella, pesto and tomato		3		5
Fruit and vegetables on bread	11		6	
Sweet snacks				
Fruit2Go (squeezable fruit packet)	6		5	
Snelle Jelle ginger cake		3		6
Savoury snacks				
Pop chips	5		4	
Sausage roll		2		5
Total number of items per product	128	32	93	62
Total percentage	80%	20%	60%	40%



www.voedingscentrum.nl/gezondeschoolkantine

