

# IDEAS FOR FOOD BOXES & SENDING FOOD HOME

## A GREAT WAY TO SUPPORT STUDENT LEARNING AT HOME

When planning boxes, aim for a variety of foods including vegetables and fruits, whole grains, and protein choices. Consider having options from each food group that would pair well together to make a full meal or snack. Not only are nutritious whole foods important to support learning but they are important to support a healthy immune system.

### BEFORE YOU GET STARTED:

- What type of storage equipment (fridge, freezer) do families have access to?
- What kitchen equipment do families have access to?
- Are there any allergies in the family?
- Are there specific cultural or religious practices that should be taken into consideration?

## 1

### CHOOSE VEGETABLES AND FRUITS

- Fresh examples: apples, bananas, carrots, cabbage, cauliflower, coleslaw, grapes, melons, oranges, pears, potatoes, sweet potato, squash, zucchini
- Frozen examples: berries, broccoli, carrots, mango, peas, pineapple, soy beans, spinach, mixed vegetable or fruit varieties
- Canned & individual cup examples: corn, mushrooms, peaches, peas, pears, pumpkin, tomatoes, unsweetened apple sauce, fruit cup
- Dried examples: raisins, cranberries, apples



- Consider including as many vegetables and fruits as possible and offer vegetables as often as fruit.
- Choose fresh, frozen or canned.
- We encourage programs to offer whole fruit rather than 100% fruit juice.

## 2

### ADD WHOLE GRAINS

- Whole grain loaf of bread
- Whole grain tortilla wraps
- Whole grain buns
- Whole grain bagels
- Whole grain roti
- Whole grain naan
- Whole grain english muffins
- Whole grain rice or pasta
- Whole grain crackers and rice cakes
- Whole grain cereal and oatmeal
- Whole grain pancake/waffle mix
- Whole grain flour

## 3

### ADD PROTEIN OPTIONS

- Milk (1-2%) or plain fortified soy beverage
- Yogurt
- Hard cheese or cheese strings
- Eggs
- Cottage cheese
- Nuts, seeds or trail mix
- Peanut butter or nut free spread (Wow Butter, SunButter)
- Canned or dried pulses such as chickpeas, black beans, kidney beans, or lentils.
- Canned tuna or salmon
- Skim milk powder



- Confectionery (candy, chocolate bars, gummies, gelatin, desserts, licorice) do not meet the nutrient criteria of the Manitoba School Nutrition Guidelines.

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## EXAMPLES OF SMALL FOOD BOXES (1 MEAL FOR 1-2 CHILDREN FOR 5 DAYS)

- 650g 2% vanilla yogurt
- plain instant oatmeal or 1 box of cereal
- 2 apples
- 3 bananas
- 2 pears
- small boxes of raisins
- 2 cucumber
- 1L Skim, 1% or 2% white milk

- 500g peanut/nut/seed butter
- 6 whole wheat bagels
- 1 bag frozen fruit
- 2 oranges
- 2 bananas
- 1 head of celery
- 1L Skim, 1% or 2% white milk

## EXAMPLES OF LARGER FOOD BOXES (1 MEAL FOR 3-4 CHILDREN FOR 5 DAYS)

- eggs (18 carton)
- 4x 675g loaf of whole grain bread
- 8 apples
- 4 pears
- 4 oranges
- 4 tomatoes
- 8 potatoes
- 4 carrots or 1 bag mini carrots
- 4L skim, 1% or 2% white milk

- 480g cheese
- 4x 675g loaf of whole grain bread
- 4x 398ml canned peaches (in juice)
- 8 apples
- 1 broccoli crown
- 8 potatoes
- 4L skim, 1% or 2% white milk



- When choosing packaged or store bought options - use the Moving Forward with School Nutrition Guidelines Nutrition Criteria (page 27) to learn what to look for on ingredient lists and nutrition labels.
- When sending food boxes home with hopes of lasting longer than 1 week, consider the following options to extend the shelf life of food items offered: canned and frozen vegetables and fruits and non-perishable whole grain and protein products.
- The [Manitoba Home Nutrition and Learning Program](#) has 12 booklets that each include 2 easy to prepare recipes and food and nutrition literacy activities. These can be used at home or in the school environment.