



Smart Snacks in School Fundraisers

The Healthy Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010 directed the USDA to establish nutrition standards for all foods and beverages sold to students in school during the school day, including foods sold through school fundraisers. The new *Smart Snacks in School* nutrition standards will help schools to make the healthy choice the easy choice by offering students more of the foods and beverages we should be encouraging – whole grains, fruits and vegetables, leaner protein, lower-fat dairy – while limiting foods with too much sugar, fat and salt.

USDA understands that fundraisers are time-honored traditions that support local school activities, including class trips, athletic programs and the purchase of school supplies. Under the “Smart Snacks in School” nutrition standards, USDA has sought to balance the needs of schools to conduct occasional fundraisers, while still ensuring that students have access to healthier foods and beverages during the school day.

Highlights of the *Smart Snacks in School* nutrition standards include:

- **States set an appropriate number of exempt school-sponsored fundraisers.**
States are well-positioned to identify the particular needs of their local communities. As such, each state will have the flexibility to set a certain number of fundraisers that can sell foods or beverages that do not meet the nutrition standards.
- **No limits on fundraisers that meet the new standards.**
In addition, fundraisers that sell non-food items or foods or beverages that meet the new standards are not limited under the nutrition standards. There are many healthy fundraising options available to schools, including selling books, fresh produce, school spirit merchandise or other non-food items during the school day. Your school’s local wellness committee may have some great tips on how to raise funds and help students make healthy choices at the same time.
- **Schools decide what can be sold at events outside of school hours.**
Smart Snacks in School only applies to foods and beverages sold to students on the school campus during the school day. The nutrition standards do not apply to foods and beverages sold at events held after school, off campus, or on weekends, such as school plays or sporting events.
- **Exceptions for fundraiser foods not intended for consumption in schools.**
Fundraising activities that take place outside of school, such as cookie dough or frozen pizza sales, are exempt from the nutrition standards. Distribution of order forms and foods not intended for consumption at school may continue.





Fundraisers and Smart Snacks: Foods Not Intended for Consumption at School

The Smart Snacks in School nutrition standards apply to any foods sold to students during the school day on the school campus, including foods sold as fundraisers.

What can we sell for a fundraiser? If the item being sold is a nonfood item or a food item that meets the Smart Snacks standards, it can be sold anytime. State agencies can permit occasional exempt fundraisers, allowing the sale of foods that do not meet the standards. Organizations planning fundraisers should work with their school administration before initiating a fundraiser to ensure compliance with the Local Wellness Policy, Smart Snacks standards, and any other local policies that may be in place.

What if the foods do not meet the standards? Generally, foods that do not meet the standards cannot be sold to students on campus during the school day. Organizations planning fundraisers of foods that do not meet the standards must work with their school administration to determine if their fundraiser can be allowed as one of the school's limited exempt fundraisers. It is important to remember that the standards do not apply during nonschool hours, on weekends, and at off-campus fundraising events, though local policies may still apply.

No more frozen pizza sales? No more cookie dough? No more Thin Mints®* cookies? Not necessarily! Many extracurricular programs, such as the school band, sports teams, and the school choir as well as youth-based community organizations such as the scouting programs rely on fundraisers to support their activities. There are ways that these groups can continue to raise money on campus under the standards, if allowed under local policies and approved by the school administration.

First, remember that *all* fundraising activities that take place outside of school are exempt from Smart Snack Standards. Just double-check your Local School Wellness Policy to see if other local school policies are in place!

Sale of frozen pizza, cookie dough and other items preordered and distributed in a precooked state or in bulk quantities (multiple servings in a package) for consumption at home is not required to meet the standards. For example, boxes of preordered Girl Scout cookies intended for consumption at home would not be subject to the standards. Students could take orders and deliver them during the school day for consumption outside of school.

Can we take fundraising orders at school? Yes. Orders may be taken at school as long as the foods being sold meet the Smart Snacks standards or are not intended to be consumed on campus during school hours and as long as students receive permission from the school.

Can we deliver the preordered fundraising items at school? Foods that have been purchased through a fundraiser may be delivered on the school campus during the school day if the foods being sold meet the standards or are not intended to be consumed on campus during school hours and as long as students receive permission from the school. However, we encourage

organizations to deliver the foods at a time when parents and caregivers are more likely to be present to collect the items, for example, during specific drop off or pickup times.

Can we sell individual food items that students can eat during the school day? If the foods being sold meet the standards, then you may sell them during the day. However, when the fundraiser includes the sale of food items that do not meet the standards, for example, a doughnut or a candy bar, the fundraiser must be considered an approved exempt fundraiser in accordance with the State agency. The fundraising organization, such as the school band, could then sell doughnuts or candy to students during the allocated exempt fundraising period.

Communication between youth-based organizations and school administration is critical when planning fundraising events on school campus during the school day.

Need more information? We offer a number of tools and resources to help school staff, parents, and students navigate fundraising tactics including the following:

- **Memorandum: Smart Snacks Nutrition Standards and Exempt Fundraisers**
<http://www.fns.usda.gov/sites/default/files/SP36-2014os.pdf>
- **Issue Brief: Fundraisers**
http://www.fns.usda.gov/sites/default/files/allfoods_fundraisers.pdf
- **Healthy Fundraising (USDA Healthy Meals Resource System)**
<http://healthymeals.nal.usda.gov/local-wellness-policy-resources/wellness-policy-elements/healthy-fundraising>

Other policy guidance and resource materials on Smart Snacks may be found at the Food and Nutrition Service website at <http://www.fns.usda.gov/healthierschoolday/tools-schools-smart-snacks>.

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