

Great Plates Meal Planning Resource

To meet the specific nutrient needs of program recipients, it is important to plan well-balanced meals that include foods from each of the food groups. The following chart is designed to serve as a guide to assist restaurants participating in the Great Plates Delivered and Great Plates 2.0: Dinner Delivered programs to plan and serve well-balanced meals that meet the nutrient needs of program recipients; the chart includes the suggested number and size of servings from each food group and suggestions for healthy food options.

Meal Component	Servings	Examples
<p>Dairy</p> <p>The dairy group includes fat-free and low-fat dairy products, including fortified soy beverages.</p> <p>The dairy food group provides protein, calcium, and other important nutrients.</p>	<p>Optional: Provide 1 serving per meal</p> <p>1 serving equals:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 cup milk or soy beverage • 1 cup yogurt • 1½ oz. cheese 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All milk, including lactose-free and lactose-free products and fortified soy beverages (soymilk), yogurt, and cheeses. • Note - Cream, sour cream, and cream cheese are not included due to their low calcium content.
<p>Grains</p> <p>One-half of the daily grains should be from whole grains.</p> <p>Whole grains and fortified food are good sources of fiber and B vitamins.</p>	<p>Provide 1 – 2 servings per meal</p> <p>1 serving equals:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 slice bread, ½ bagel or bun • ½ cup cooked rice or pasta or cereal • 1 oz. ready-to-eat cereal (1 cup flaked cereal) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Whole-grain products and whole grains used as ingredients: for example, whole-wheat bread, whole-grain cereals and crackers, oatmeal, quinoa, popcorn, and brown rice. • Refined grain products and refined grains used as ingredients should be enriched.
<p>Fresh Fruit and/or Vegetable</p> <p>The fruit and/or vegetable food group includes whole fresh fruit and vegetables which are rich in important nutrients and fiber.</p> <p>Include vegetables from all the five vegetable subgroups: dark green, red and orange, legumes (beans and peas), starchy, and other. These include all fresh, frozen, canned, and dried options in cooked or raw forms, including vegetable juices. Choose canned varieties that are low in sodium.</p>	<p>Provide a minimum of 1 serving of fresh fruit and 1 serving of vegetables</p> <p>1 serving equals:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 medium whole fruit • ½ cup chopped raw or cooked fresh fruit or vegetable • 1 cup leafy salad greens 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Whole fruits such as bananas, apples, oranges, grapes, melons, berries, etc. • Dark green: broccoli, spinach, kale, collard/mustard greens • Red and orange: tomatoes/tomato juice, red peppers, carrots, sweet potatoes, and winter squash • Legumes: beans (kidney, white, black, pinto), lentils, chickpeas, split peas, and edamame • Starchy: white potatoes, corn, green peas, and lima beans • Other: lettuce, green beans, cucumbers, cabbage, zucchini, mushrooms, and green pepper
<p>Protein Foods</p> <p>The protein group contains foods from both animal and plant sources. Meats and poultry should be lean or low-fat and nuts should be unsalted. Legumes can be considered part of this group as well as the vegetable group but should be counted in one group only.</p> <p>Protein rich foods provide many important nutrients.</p>	<p>Provide a minimum of 1 serving per meal</p> <p>1 serving equals:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2 oz. meat, poultry, or seafood • 2 eggs • ½ cup cooked beans or tofu 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seafood, lean meat, and poultry • Eggs • Legumes (beans and peas) • Nuts and seeds • Soy products (tofu/tempeh)