



Chinese and Indian Restaurants and Takeaway Actions and top tips

For creating a more nutritious menu

Guidance only





Welcome

Welcome to the Café, coffee and sandwich shops guide, produced by Suffolk County Council. This guide aims to promote healthier eating options across our county, ultimately enhancing the well-being of our residents.

Customers are increasingly seeking nutritious, lower-calorie, and more sustainable choices when eating out.

This guidance outlines key objectives that could help to enhance your menu, providing you with helpful tips and strategies for implementing these changes.

We are thrilled to embark on this journey alongside you. Together, we can make healthier and more sustainable food accessible to our customers.

Thank you for dedicating your time to review this guidance.





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Fibre, Fruit and Vegetables

Actions

- Increase the amount of fibre across your menu.
- Provide high fibre options as standard.
- Increase the amount of fruit, vegetables or salad across your menu.

Tips & tricks

- Offer wholegrain, wholemeal or other high fibre carb options as standard. Suggestion to provide white options available on request.
- Use more vegetables, beans or pulses in dishes (e.g. chef specials could be vegetable based). This will save money by reducing expensive ingredients. It'll also give your customers a hearty, fibre rich meal that's packed with nutrients and flavour.
- Serve fruit, vegetables and salad in or with meals. This is a good way to make a meal look bigger for less. Can offer paid upgrade for crisps/ chips.
- Encourage customers to choose healthier toppings and sides with lower salt and fat. Try offering tuna, chicken and vegetables.
- Using tinned, dried or frozen options can be a good way to reduce costs and waste.
- Offer half size or smaller options with the addition of salad or vegetables instead.
- Leaving skins on fruits and veg can help to reduce waste and increase fibre- [Food Savvy](#) is a great place to visit for inspiration.
- Changing fruit and vegetables in line with the seasons can help you to save money and is better for the environment and helps support the local economy.
- Use descriptive language to promote fruit and vegetables on your menu (e.g. 'crunchy' for vegetables or 'sweet' and 'juicy' for fruit).

Fats

Actions

- For the preparation and serving of foods, substitute fats high in saturates (e.g. butter) with fats predominately made up of monounsaturated or polyunsaturated fats (e.g. rapeseed or olive oil).
- Avoid industrially made trans-fat (partially hydrogenated vegetable oil). This can be found in added to certain foods (e.g. cakes, biscuits and pies).
- Minimise use of full fat dairy options, by:
 - Using semi-skimmed milk as default.
 - Swapping to half or low-fat dairy menu options. If unable to do so, try to change the proportions of each used (e.g. 50% full-fat cream, 50% low-fat crème fraîche).
- Reduce absorption of fat into food during preparation and cooking.
- Use cooking methods which limit need for additional oil (e.g. grill, bake, tandoor, steam, air fryer).

Tips & tricks

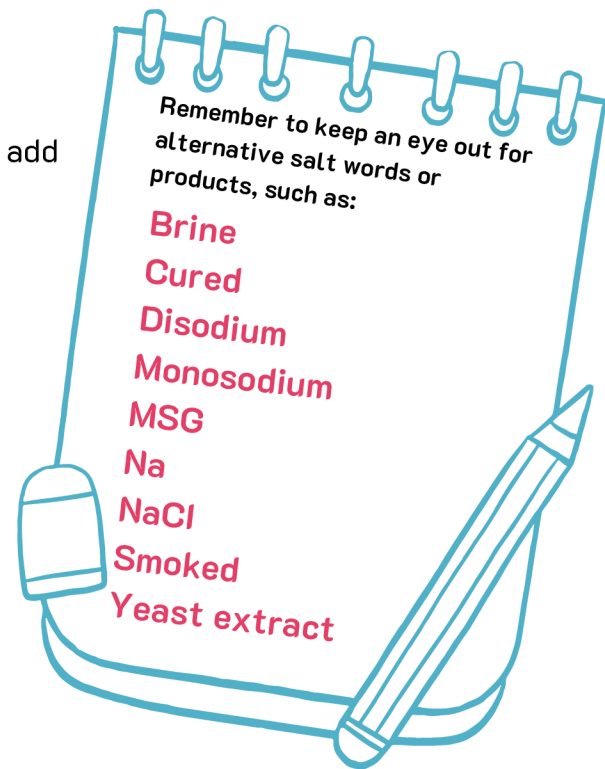
- When making fillings, try making lower fat alternatives (e.g. half-fat crème fresh/ coconut milk instead of full-fat cream/coconut milk for curry bases).
- Garnish desserts with fruit instead of cream. As well as reducing fat, this also adds a great burst of colour and flavour.
- Try to choose naturally lower fat or reduced fat products.
- Avoid serving chips/ other deep friend sides as default. Instead offer fruit, vegetables, salad as standard with option to pay extra for chips.

- Use leaner cuts of meat and try trimming, skimming and draining excess fat.
- Aim to cook with healthier methods, such as grilling, tandoor, steaming or oven baking.
- If needing to use oils high in saturated fat, such as ghee, try adding small amount at the end, instead of through cooking process.
- Use thicker cuts for fried/ deep fried foods to reduce surface area absorption (e.g. medium/ thick cut chips).
- Pre-dry foods before frying to remove excess water.
- Get oil to temperature before frying foods and use highest possible temperature without spoiling oil (160-175°C) and then bang and shake to reduce excess oil.
- If using a basket for frying, try to ensure never more than half full. This stops the oil temperature dropping, reducing cooking time and providing a more consistent finish.
- Avoid frying food more than once. If needing to pre-prepare, par boil foods, drain excess water, and then flash fry.

Salt

Actions

- Encourage customers to reduce the amount of salt they add to foods.
- Use salt sparingly when preparing dishes.
- Try to source lower salt/,SG varieties of products.
 - Low salt = <0.3g salt /100g.
 - Low sodium = <0.1g sodium/ 100g.



Tips & tricks

- Remove salt from service counters/tables and only make available upon request.
- Provide saltshakers with fewer holes (e.g. no more than 5 holes in the shaker).
- Cut down on ultra processed foods. Many are high in salt, so try to use fresh, whole ingredients as much as possible.
- Avoid adding salt when cooking vegetables and boiled starchy foods (e.g. rice and potatoes).
- Avoid adding salt to batters and sauce mixes.
- If using store bought batters and readymade mixes, prioritise ones without added salt.
- Use low salt/sodium in sauces, spreads, stock, seasoning etc.
 - Low salt = <0.3g salt /100g.
 - Low sodium = <0.1g sodium/ 100g.
- As well as your standard meals, why not try promoting new combinations that offer less salty, high fat options and more exciting vegetables? (e.g. chicken and broccoli instead of lemon chicken).

Sugar

Actions

- Put in place measures to reduce added sugar within recipes and meals.

Tips & tricks

- If providing sweetener, ensure natural variety used (e.g. stevia, monk fruit).
- Limit addition of sugar within savoury dishes (e.g. added sugar within tomato based sauce or noodle dishes).
- If you sell dessert, offer mini dessert options (e.g. 3 banana fritter balls instead of the standard 6).
- Offer no added sugar- fruit based dessert options.



Options and Promotions

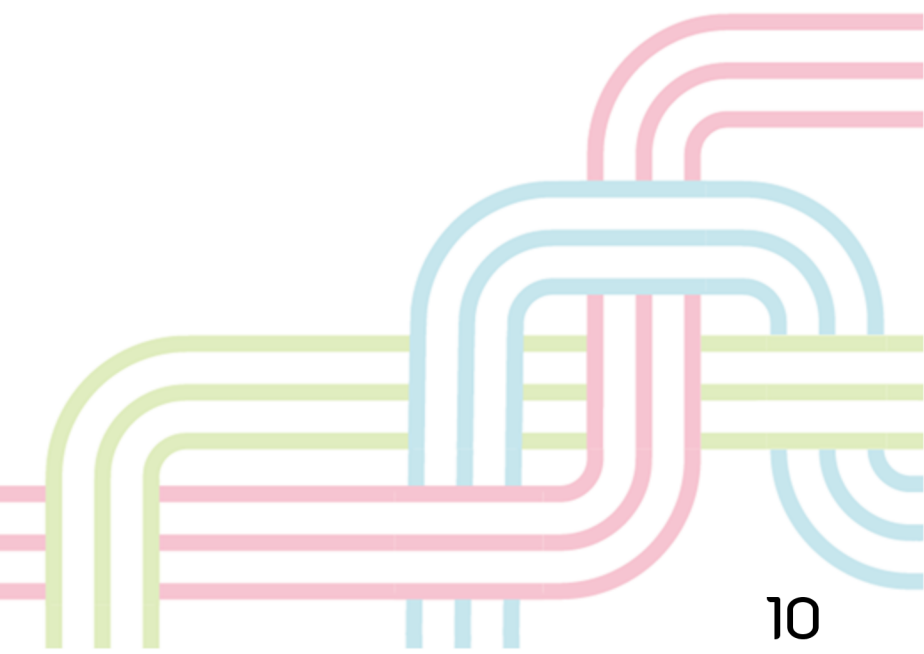
Actions

- Review menu to try reduce calorie content, for overall and individual dishes.
- Limit free products given.
- Product placement and nudge techniques to promote nutrient dense options.

Tips & tricks

- Offer child sized portions, half or reduced portion sizes.
- Train your staff to prepare and serve smaller standardised portions. This will help reduce food waste. Tell your staff about the correct use of equipment and recipes. Explain why these are important.
- For takeaway, reduce container size and/or underfill container.
- Unless sugar free , avoid serving mint or sweet with receipt.
- If serving free poppadum's, prawn crackers etc, limit amount given per person.
- Promotions and upselling for healthy options (e.g. grilled fish and fizzy water instead of cream based curry or chips and a fizzy drink).
- Provide customers with healthier alternative as standard with option to change (e.g. low sugar soy sauce or low sugar ketchup).

- More nutrient dense foods listed in right or left top corner of menu or as top option if a limited menu (e.g. use space to market salads).
- Use descriptive language to promote fruit and vegetables on your menu (e.g. 'crunchy' for vegetables or 'sweet' and 'juicy' for fruit).
- Your staff and your social media are great assets. Ask them to promote the healthier options. This is also a great way to make sure that fresh food does not get wasted.
- Share the stories behind the ingredients and suppliers with your customers. Highlight any local farmers, producers and sustainable practices. Customers often enjoy knowing the origins of their food.



Drinks

Actions

- When serving milk use lower fat and calorie options and increase range of alternative milk choices whilst being conscious of added ingredients.
- If serving alcohol, ensure availability of non-alcoholic options
- Improve access to tap water.
- Use promotion techniques to encourage purchase of lower calorie drinks.

Tips & tricks

- Use semi-skimmed milk as standard instead of full-fat milk.
- Offer a variety of alternative plant based milk choices (e.g. almond milk, soya milk, coconut milk etc).
- Prioritise the use of milk(s) with no added oil or sugar.
- Serve tap water on tables as standard or clearly accessible for self service.
- Offer at least one no added sugar or sweetener soft drink (e.g. kombucha).
- Sugar sweetened beverages only available in 330ml or less.
- Fruit juices/ smoothies of maximum 150ml serving size.
- Place “healthier” drinks at eye level, if on display at fridge, relevant to target audience (e.g. milk for children and sparkling water for adults).
- If serving alcohol, offer non-alcoholic options (e.g. alcohol free beer).
- If serving alcoholic/non-alcoholic cocktails, offer low sugar options (e.g. mojito containing rum/ light coconut milk, lime, mint leaves, sparkling water).

Thank you for taking time to read this guidance.

Together we can put healthier and more sustainable food in reach for customers.

For more information contact the Public Health & Communities, Health Behaviours team at phc_business_support@suffolk.gov.uk

