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Health Matters

Making the Healthy Choice the Easy Choice in School Cafeterias

North Shore secondary students have tasty, healthy foods and drinks to choose from in their cafeterias. The choices meet the provincial Guidelines for Food & Beverage Sales in BC Schools. Gemini Foods is a local company that operates the public secondary school, Mulgrave and Collingwood cafeterias.



Suppliers have been changing their products to meet the Guidelines and make it easier for the cafeteria staff to order healthy products. Food is prepared using ActNow BC recommendations, such as adding fresh vegetables to sandwiches, using whole grains, offering healthy portion sizes and limiting the addition of products high in salt and or saturated and trans fat. Deep fat fryers have been removed and replaced with convection and combination convection and steam ovens. Extra virgin olive oil is used to provide a healthy source of fat for cooking.

Some of the choices include:

- daily features that often include protein (poultry or beef), whole grains, vegetables or fruits
- 100% fruit juices, spritzers, smoothies, plain and flavoured milks
- baked potato chips
- whole grain breads, pastas, and baked items
- baked chicken strips and fries
- fresh fruits and vegetables
- sauces and soups made at the school



Gemini Foods has also taken steps to protect the environment by using biodegradable packaging and utensils and ensuring that recycling containers are available for students to use. They have also worked with parents and staff to support them in offering healthy choices for school events.

Parents who organize food and drink sales at elementary schools have also been changing the choices offered to support the health and learning of students.

For more information on foods and drinks that meet the Guidelines or for tips on healthy eating at school visit the www.brandnamefoodlist.ca and www.healthyeatingatschool.ca websites or call HealthLink at 811 and ask to speak to a dietitian. A “Lunches to Go” handout is available on the Healthy Eating At School website for students or parents who are looking for ideas for lunches brought from home.

If you have any suggestions for future topics, please contact Kathy Romses, Community Dietitian at 604-904-6200 or Kathy.Romses@vch.ca. If you have general nutrition questions, call **Health Link at 811** and ask to speak to a dietitian or visit www.HealthLinkBC.ca.