

Healthy Food
Environment Policy
Index (Food-EPI):
Nova Scotia

April 21, 2017

Overview

This document was created for the **Healthy Food Environment Policy Index** (Food-EPI) Canada 2016 project, as a part of the Canadian arm of the International Network for Food and Obesity/non-communicable diseases Research, Monitoring and Action Support (known as **INFORMAS**). The INFORMAS network was founded by a group of international experts from 9 universities and 4 global NGOs in the area of food and nutrition, including Dr. L'Abbé, and this network has since expanded to include dozens of researchers from 19 countries across the globe. The objective of INFORMAS is to 'monitor and benchmark food environments and policies globally to reduce obesity, diet-related non-communicable diseases and their related inequalities', and the work aligns with overarching efforts of the United Nations and the World Health Organization to prioritize monitoring on NCDs and associated risk factors to improve population health¹.

The **Food-EPI Canada** project aims to assess provincial and federal government progress in implementing globally recommended policies relating to the food environment. Using a standardized, common Food-EPI process², the information on food policies that is compiled in this document will be used by experts in the areas of food and nutrition from across Canada to rate the extent of implementation by Canadian governments (provincial, territorial and federal) compared to international examples of 'good practices' established for each indicator. As time progresses, these international examples will continue to expand, as more governments implement innovative policies to support a healthy food environment.

This document summarizes policy actions that the Government of Nova Scotia has taken relating to the food environment up until January 1, 2017. It does not include announcements that have not yet been implemented.

Any questions regarding this document can be directed to Dr. Lana Vanderlee (lana.vanderlee@utoronto.ca).

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As far as possible, when policy details are noted in the document, we have provided references to publicly-available sources or noted as a 'written communication' from relevant policy makers. While every effort has been taken to ensure the accuracy of the information in this document, any errors/omissions are the responsibility of the research team.



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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

| | |
|-----------------|--|
| ASC | Advertising Standards Canada |
| CAI | Voluntary Food and Beverage Children's Advertising Initiative |
| CCHS | Canadian Community Health Survey |
| CHMS | Canadian Health Measures Survey |
| Code | The Canadian Code of Advertising Standards |
| CRTC | Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission |
| DHW | Departments of Health and Wellness |
| ECE | Early Childhood Education |
| Food-EPI | Food Environment Policy Index |
| GST | Goods and services tax |
| HERSS | Healthy Eating in Recreation and Sport Settings |
| HIA | Health Impact Assessment |
| HiAP | Health in All Policies |
| HST | Harmonized Sales Tax |
| INFORMAS | International Network for Food and Obesity/non-communicable diseases Research, Monitoring and Action Support |
| LUB | land use bylaws |
| NCDs | Non Communicable Diseases |
| NGOs | Non-Government Organisations |
| NS | Nova Scotia |
| PST | Provincial Sales Tax |
| SPI | Statement of Provincial Interest |

POLICY DOMAINS

Policy area: Food Composition

Food-EPI vision statement: There are government systems implemented to ensure that, where practicable, processed foods and out-of-home meals minimise the energy density and the nutrients of concern (salt, saturated fat, trans fat, added sugar)

COMP2 Food composition targets/standards/restrictions for out-of-home meals

Food-EPI good practice statement

The government has established food composition targets/standards for out-of-home meals in food service outlets for the content of the nutrients of concern in certain foods or food groups if they are major contributors to population intakes of these nutrients of concern (trans fats, added sugars, salt, saturated fat)

Definitions and scope

- Out-of-home meals include foods sold at quick service restaurants, dine-in restaurants and take-away outlets, coffee, bakery and snack food outlets (both fixed outlets and mobile food vendors). It may also include supermarkets where ready-to-eat foods are sold.
- Includes legislated bans on nutrients of concern
- Includes mandatory or voluntary targets, standards (i.e. reduce by X%, maximum mg/g per 100g or per serving)
- Excludes legislated restrictions related to other ingredients (e.g. additives)
- Excludes mandatory out-of-home meal composition regulations related to other nutrients, e.g. folic acid or iodine fortification
- Excludes general guidelines advising food service outlets to reduce nutrients of concern
- Excludes the provision of resources or expertise to support food service outlets with reformulation (see 'COMM1' and/or 'RETAIL4')

International examples

- **New York City, USA:** In 2006, New York City's Health Code was amended to restrict the amount of *trans*-fats allowed in food served by all food service establishments required to hold a license from the New York City Health Department, including restaurants, bakeries, cafeterias, caterers, mobile food vendors, and concession stands. The maximum amount of *trans*-fat allowed per serving is 0.5g. Violators are subject to fines of \$200.00 to \$2,000.00. A range of other US cities have since followed suit and banned restaurants from serving *trans*-fats³.
- **New York City, USA:** In 2009, New York City established voluntary salt guidelines for various restaurant and store-bought foods. In 2010, this city initiative evolved into the National Salt Reduction Initiative that encouraged nationwide partnerships among food manufacturers and restaurants involving more than 100 city and state health authorities to reduce excess sodium by 25% in packaged and restaurant foods. The goal is to reduce Americans' salt intake by 20% over five years. The National Salt Reduction Initiative has worked with the food industry to establish salt reduction targets for 62 packaged foods and 25 restaurant food categories for 2012 and 2014. The commitments and achievements of companies have been published online⁴.

- **New Zealand:** In New Zealand, The Chip group, funded 50% by the Ministry of Health and 50% by industry, aims to improve the nutritional quality of deep-fried chips served by food service outlets by setting an industry standard for deep frying oils. The standard for deep frying oil is maximum 28% saturated fat, 3% linoleic acid and 1% of *trans*-fat. The Chip group oil logo for use on approved oil packaging was developed in 2010⁵.
- **The Netherlands:** On January 2014, the Dutch Ministry of Health, Welfare and Sport signed an agreement with trade organizations representing food manufacturers, supermarkets, hotels, restaurants, caterers and the hospitality industry to lower the levels of salt, saturated fat and calories in food products. The agreement includes ambitions for the period up to 2020 and aims to increase the healthiness of the food supply^{6,7}.

Context

While regulations for packaged food are primarily based at the federal level, composition targets or standards for restaurant foods can potentially fit within the mandate of provincial governments.

Policy details

No policy documents were identified describing limits for saturate fat, added sugar, salt and caffeine or *trans* fat.

Thrive! A plan for a healthier Nova Scotia is a cross-departmental framework to promote healthy eating and physical activity for healthier Nova Scotians⁸. For additional details on Thrive, see the LEAD4 indicator. As a comment from the Government of Nova Scotia:

The Thrive! strategy (detailed in LEAD4) identifies the following action in regards to nutrients of concern “Work to limit fat, added sugar, salt, and caffeine and to eliminate trans fats in the food supply by advocating for the strongest possible national approaches and by exploring the regulatory opportunities under provincial jurisdiction”. As a result of the Thrive! strategy, the NS government is interested in better understanding where it may be able to influence the levels of nutrients of concern in foods and beverages, at both the federal and provincial levels.

**Comments/
notes**

Policy area: Food Labelling

Food-EPI vision statement: There is a regulatory system implemented by the government for consumer-oriented labelling on food packaging and menu boards in restaurants to enable consumers to easily make informed food choices and to prevent misleading claims

LABEL4 Menu labelling

Food-EPI good practice statement

A consistent, single, simple, clearly-visible system of labelling the menu boards of all quick service restaurants (e.g., fast food chains) is applied by the government, which allows consumers to interpret the nutrient quality and energy content of foods and meals on sale

Definitions and scope

- Quick service restaurants: In the Canadian context this definition includes fast food chains as well as coffee, bakery and snack food chains. It may also include supermarkets where ready-to-eat foods are sold.
- Labelling systems: Includes any point-of-sale (POS) nutrition information such as total calories; percent daily intake; traffic light labelling; star rating, or specific amounts of nutrients of concern
- Menu board includes menu information at various points of purchase, including in-store, drive-through and online purchasing
- Includes endorsement schemes (e.g., accredited healthy choice symbol) on approved menu items

International examples

- **South Korea:** Since 2010, the Special Act on Safety Control of Children's Dietary Life has required all chain restaurants with 100 or more establishments to display nutrient information on menus including energy, total sugars, protein, saturated fat and sodium ⁹.
- **Taiwan:** Since July 2015, convenience store chains, drink vendor chains and fast food chains have to label the sugar and caffeine content of prepared-when-ordered drinks (e.g. coffee-and-tea-based drinks, fruit and vegetable juices) according to a regulation based on the Food Safety and Sanitation Act. The amount of sugar added to drinks (specified in sugar cubes) and its calorie content have to be displayed on drink menus and/or notice boards in a prescribed minimum font. In addition, different colours have to be used to signal the level of caffeine contained in coffee drinks⁹.
- **USA:** Section 4205 of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (2010)¹⁰ requires that all chain restaurants with 20 or more establishments display energy information on menus. The implementing regulations were published by the Food and Drug Administration on 1 December 2014. Implementation has been delayed several times and is now set for 5 May 2017. Two states (California and Vermont), seven counties (e.g. King County, WA and Albany County NY) and two municipalities (e.g. New York City, Philadelphia) have already implemented regulations requiring chain restaurants (often chains with more than a given number of outlets) to display calorie information on menus and display boards. These regulations will be pre-empted by the national law once implemented; local governments will still be able to enact menu labelling regulations for establishments not covered by national law. The regulations also require vending machine operators of more than 20 vending machines to post calories for foods where the on-pack label is not visible to consumers by 26 July 2018⁹.

- **Australia:** Legislation in Australian Capital Territory (Food Regulation 2002) and the States of New South Wales (Food Regulation 2010) and South Australia (Food Regulation 2002) requires restaurant chains (e.g. fast food chains, ice cream bars) with ≥ 20 outlets in the state (or seven in the case of ACT), or 50 or more across Australia, to display the kilojoule content of food products on their menu boards. Average adult daily energy intake of 8700kJ must also be prominently featured. Other chains/food outlets are allowed to provide this information on a voluntary basis, but must follow the provisions of the legislation⁹.
- **New York City, USA:** Following an amendment to Article 81 of the New York City Health Code (addition of section 81.49), chain restaurants are required to put a warning label on menus and menu boards, in the form of a salt-shaker symbol (salt shaker inside a triangle), when dishes contain 2,300 mg of sodium or more. It applies to food service establishments with 15 or more locations nationwide. In addition, a warning statement is required to be posted conspicuously at the point of purchase: "Warning: [salt shaker symbol] indicates that the sodium (salt) content of this item is higher than the total daily recommended limit (2300 mg). High sodium intake can increase blood pressure and risk of heart disease and stroke." This came into effect 1 December 2015^{9,11}.

Context

There is currently no federal policy on menu labelling in Canada. There is a FPT Task Group on the Provisions of Nutrition Information in Restaurants and Foodservices; however, this group is not currently active and has not released any guidelines or recommendations regarding menu labelling.

Policy details

There are no provincial policies related to menu labelling.

Comments/ notes

Policy area: Food Promotion

Food-EPI vision statement: There is a comprehensive policy implemented by the government to reduce the impact (exposure and power) of promotion of unhealthy foods to children (<16 years) across all media

PROMO1 Restrict promotion of unhealthy food: broadcast media

Food-EPI good practice statement

Effective policies are implemented by the government to restrict exposure and power of promotion of unhealthy foods to children through broadcast media (TV, radio)

Definitions and scope

- Includes mandatory policy (i.e. legislation or regulations) or voluntary standards, codes, guidelines set by government or by industry where the government plays a role in development, monitoring, enforcement or resolving complaints
- Includes free-to-air and subscription television and radio only (see PROMO2 for other forms of media)

International examples

- **Norway / Sweden:** Under the Broadcasting Act, advertisements (food and non-food) may not be broadcast on television directed to children or in connection with children's programs. This applies to children 12 years and younger¹².
- **Quebec, Canada:** In Quebec, most citizens speak French and it is the only province in Canada, where children below 13 years old are protected under the Consumer Protection Act since 1980¹³. In Québec, the Consumer Protection Act prohibits commercial advertising (including food and non-food) directed at children less than 13 years of age through television, radio and other media. To determine whether or not an advertisement is directed at persons under thirteen years of age, account must be taken of the context of its presentation, and in particular of: a) the nature and intended purpose of the goods advertised; b) the manner of presenting such advertisement; and c) the time and place it is shown. A cut-off of 15% share of children audience is used to protect children from TV advertising¹⁴. Any stakeholder involved in a commercial process (from the request to create an advertisement to its distribution, including its design) may be accused of not complying with the legislation in force. Per indictment, that person is liable to: a fine ranging from \$600 to \$15,000 (in the case of a natural person); a fine ranging from \$2,000 to \$100,000 (in the case of a legal person). Notably, for the rest of Canada, child-directed food marketing is self-regulated using the Canadian Children's Food and Beverage Advertising Initiative (CAI) by Advertising Standards Canada (ASC) through The Broadcast Code for Advertising to Children.
- **Chile:** In 2012, the Chilean government approved a Law of Nutritional Composition of Food and Advertising (Ley 20, 606)¹⁵. In June 2015, the Chilean authority approved the regulatory norms required for the law's implementation (Diario Oficial No 41.193). The regulatory norms define limits for calories, saturated fat, sugar and sodium content considered "high" in foods and beverages. The regulatory norms define limits for calories (275 calories/100g or 70 calories/100mL), saturated fat (4g/100g or 3g/100mL), sugar (10g/100g or 5g/100mL) and sodium (400mg/100g or 100mg/100mL) content considered "high" in foods and beverages. The law restricts advertising directed to children under the age of 14 years of foods in the "high in" category. The regulatory norms define advertising targeted to children as programmes directed to children or with an audience of greater than 20% children, and according to the design of the advertisement. Promotional strategies and incentives, such as cartoons, animations, and toys that could attract the attention of children are included in the ban. The regulation took effect 1 July 2016³. Chile

outlaws Kinder Surprise eggs and prohibit toys in McDonald's 'Happy Meals' as part of this law¹⁶.

- **Ireland:** Advertising, sponsorship, teleshopping and product placement of foods high in fats, sugars and salt, as defined by a nutrient profiling model, are prohibited during children's TV and radio programmes where over 50% of the audience are under 18 years old (Children's Commercial Communications Code, 2013 revision). In addition, there is an overall limit on advertising of foods high in fats, sugars and salt adverts at any time of day to no more than 25% of sold advertising time and to only one in four advertisements. Remaining advertising targeted at children under the age of 13 must not include nutrient or health claims or include licensed characters³.
- **South Korea:** TV advertising to children less than 18 years of age is prohibited for specific categories of food before, during and after programmes shown between 5-7pm and during other children's programmes (Article 10 of the Special Act on the Safety Management of Children's Dietary Life, as amended 2010)^{3,17}.

Context

Restriction of advertising to children falls within the provincial/territorial or federal jurisdiction. It is acknowledged that forms of advertising that cross state borders (i.e. television programming or internet advertising) would be strengthened by consistent legislation across jurisdictions.

Federal context

There is currently no federal policy regarding marketing of unhealthy foods to children. The **Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission (CRTC)** enforces the *Broadcasting Act*¹⁸, the *Broadcast Code for Advertising to Children (Children's Code)*¹⁹ *Canadian Code of Advertising Standards*¹⁹ which includes general provisions for marketing to children

The voluntary **Food and Beverage Children's Advertising Initiative (CAI)** was created in 2007, in which participating companies pledge to advertise only products classified as "better for you" in various media, and uses Uniform Nutrition Criteria²⁰ which require products considered 'better for you' to limit negative nutrients such as fat, sodium and sugar, and increase positive nutrients such as vitamins, minerals and fibre. Both the CAI and the Children's Code are published and administered by Advertising Standards Canada (ASC)²¹, an "industry body committed to creating maintaining confidence in advertising". Compliance with this code of is monitored by ASC, based on a consumer complaint process.

Policy details

There are no provincial policies regarding advertising to children via broadcast media.

The **Thrive! Strategy (detailed in LEAD4)**, NS's strategy to support the creation of healthy environments for healthy eating and active living, has named an action related to marketing to children by stating that NS will work to decrease the influence of marketing to children and youth⁸.

Comments/ notes

PROMO2 Restrict promotion of unhealthy food: non-broadcast media

Food-EPI good practice statement

Effective policies are implemented by the government to restrict exposure and power of promotion of unhealthy foods to children through non-broadcast media (e.g. Internet, social media, food packaging, sponsorship, outdoor and public transport advertising)

Definitions and scope

- Non-broadcast media promotion includes: print (e.g. children's magazines), online (e.g. social media, branded education websites, online games, competitions and apps) outdoors and on/around public transport (e.g. signage, posters and billboards), cinema advertising, product placement and brand integration (e.g. in television shows and movies), direct marketing (e.g. fundraising in schools, provision of show bags, samples or flyers), product design and packaging (e.g. use of celebrities or cartoons, competitions and give-aways) or POS displays
- Where the promotion is specifically in a children's setting, this should be captured in 'PROMO3'

International examples

- **Chile:** In 2012, the Chilean government approved a Law of Nutritional Composition of Food and Advertising (Ley 20, 606)¹⁵. In June 2015, the Chilean authority approved the regulatory norms required for the law's implementation (Diario Oficial No 41.193). The regulatory norms define limits for calories, saturated fat, sugar and sodium content considered "high" in foods and beverages. The regulatory norms define limits for calories (275 calories/100g or 70 calories/100mL), saturated fat (4g/100g or 3g/100mL), sugar (10g/100g or 5g/100mL) and sodium (400mg/100g or 100mg/100mL) content considered "high" in foods and beverages. The law restricts advertising directed to children under the age of 14 years of foods in the "high in" category. The regulatory norms define advertising targeted to children as websites directed to children or with an audience of greater than 20% children, and according to the design of the advertisement. Promotional strategies and incentives, such as cartoons, animations, and toys that could attract the attention of children are included in the ban. The regulation took effect 1 July 2016 and applies to all advertising media³. Chile outlaws Kinder Surprise eggs and prohibit toys in McDonald's 'Happy Meals' as part of this law¹⁶.
- **Quebec, Canada:** In Quebec, most citizens speak French and it is the only province in Canada, where children below 13 years old are protected under the Consumer Protection Act since 1980¹³. In Québec, the Consumer Protection Act prohibits commercial advertising directed at children less than 13 years of age through all media. To determine whether or not an advertisement is directed at persons under thirteen years of age, account must be taken of the context of its presentation, and in particular of: a) the nature and intended purpose of the goods advertised; b) the manner of presenting such advertisement; and c) the time and place it is shown¹⁴. Any stakeholder involved in a commercial process (from the request to create an advertisement to its distribution, including its design) may be accused of not complying with the legislation in force. Per indictment, that person is liable to: a fine ranging from \$600 to \$15,000 (in the case of a natural person); a fine ranging from \$2,000 to \$100,000 (in the case of a legal person). Notably, for the rest of Canada, child-directed food marketing is self-regulated using the Canadian Children's Food and Beverage Advertising Initiative (CAI) by Advertising Standards Canada (ASC) through The Broadcast Code for Advertising to Children.

Context

See PROMO1. The Canadian Code of Advertising Standards applies to all forms of advertising, including **internet, social media, sponsorship, outdoor advertising, etc, but does not apply to packaging, wrappers and labels or point of sale displays within retail establishments**¹⁹. The voluntary CAI does restrict promotion of unhealthy foods via Internet advertising, including company-owned websites, video and computer games, DVDs of movies, and mobile media among participants unless voluntarily included in commitments by the company. The CAI commitments do not include product packaging.

Policy details

There are no provincial policies regarding provincial regulations relating to non-broadcast media.

Thrive!, NS's strategy to support the creation of healthy environments for healthy eating and active living, has named an action related to marketing to children by stating that NS will work to decrease the influence of marketing to children and youth⁸

**Comments/
notes**

PROMO3 Restrict promotion of unhealthy foods: children's settings

Food-EPI good practice statement

Effective policies are implemented by the government to ensure that unhealthy foods are not commercially promoted to children in settings where children gather (e.g. preschools, schools, sport and cultural events)

Definitions and scope

- Children's settings include: areas in and around schools, preschools/ kindergartens, day-care centres, children's health services (including primary care, maternal and child health or tertiary settings), sport, recreation and play areas/ venues/ facilities and cultural/community events where children are commonly present
- Includes restrictions on marketing in government-owned or managed facilities/venues (including within the service contracts where management is outsourced)
- Includes restriction on unhealthy food sponsorship in sport (e.g. junior sport, sporting events, venues)

International examples

- **Chile:** In 2012, the Chilean government approved a Law of Nutritional Composition of Food and Advertising (Ley 20, 606)¹⁵. In June 2015, the Chilean authority approved the regulatory norms required for the law's implementation (Diario Oficial No 41.193). The regulatory norms define limits for calories, saturated fat, sugar and sodium content considered "high" in foods and beverages. The regulatory norms define limits for calories (275 calories/100g or 70 calories/100mL), saturated fat (4g/100g or 3g/100mL), sugar (10g/100g or 5g/100mL) and sodium (400mg/100g or 100mg/100mL) content considered "high" in foods and beverages. The law restricts advertising directed to children under the age of 14 of foods in the "high in" category on school grounds, including preschools, primary and secondary schools. Promotional strategies and incentives, such as cartoons, animations, and toys that could attract the attention of children are included in the ban. The regulation took effect 1 July 2016³.
- **Spain:** In 2011, the Spanish Parliament approved a Law on Nutrition and Food Safety (Ley 17/2011), which stated that kindergartens and schools should be free from all advertising. Criteria for the authorisation of food promotion campaigns, nutritional education and promotion of sports or physical activity campaigns were developed jointly by the Spanish Agency for Consumer Affairs, Food Safety and Nutrition (AECOSAN) and the Regional Health Authorities and was implemented in July 2015. AECOSAN and the Spanish Regional Education and Health Administrations monitor the enforcement of the law³.
- **Uruguay:** In September 2013, the government of Uruguay adopted Law No 19.140 "Alimentación saludable en los centros de enseñanza" (Healthy foods in schools)²². The law prohibits the advertising and marketing of foods and drinks that do not meet the nutrition standards [referenced in Article 3 of the law, and outlined in school nutrition recommendations published by the Ministry of Health in 2014]. Advertising in all forms is prohibited, including posters, billboards, and use of logos/brands on school supplies, sponsorship, and distribution of prizes, free samples on school premises and the display and visibility of food. The implementation of the law started in 2015³.
- **Hungary:** Based on Section 8 of Act XLVIII on Basic Requirements and Certain Restrictions of Commercial Advertising Activities (2008), Hungary prohibits all advertising directed at children under 18 in child welfare and child protection institutes, kindergartens, elementary schools and their dormitories. Health promotion and prevention activities in schools may only involve external organizations and consultants who are recommended by the National Institute for Health Development according to Section 128(7) of the Ministerial Decree 20/2012 (VIII.31.) on the Operation of Public Education Institutions and the Use of Names of Public Education Institutions¹².

Context

See PROMO1 and PROMO2. The restriction of advertising in children's settings could fall within the jurisdiction of provincial/territorial governments.

Policy details

Schools

The **Food and Nutrition Policy for Nova Scotia Public Schools**²³ policy has provisions for marketing to children. Policy Directive 7 is related to promotion and advertising and states “Schools will work to develop a culture that promotes health by promoting healthy food and beverage choices that emphasize and are consistent with the Maximum Nutrition and Moderate Nutrition lists; and giving priority space to healthy food and beverages as defined by the Maximum Nutrition list (e.g., counter-top refrigerators, placement of fruits and vegetables at student eye level)”²⁴.

The policy also includes an expectation that once current food and beverage service contracts expire, promotional items such as scoreboards, clocks and facades for vending machines must also comply with the guidelines.

Early Childhood Education

In regulated childcare, the **Food and Nutrition Standards in Regulated Childcare** describe the requirements for childcare centre operators in regards to a variety of food and nutrition related areas including the promotion and advertising of foods and beverages. Standard 13 (Promotion and Advertising) states:

“Marketing to children has a strong influence on the food that children choose. The Internet, television, games, toys, and character placement on food products, clothing, utensils and placemats make it easy for food companies to market their products to children. This allows companies to create brand loyalty that will last into adulthood. Food and beverages that are marketed to children are often of poor nutritional quality and negatively impact on children’s food preferences. Regulated child care settings have a responsibility to nurture healthy childhood growth and development, which includes creating an early learning environment that fosters healthy food preferences. **Standard 13.1** states that promotional materials that are intended to advertise specific brands or characters are not used to serve meals and snacks.”

During a facility inspection, licensing officers will ensure that promotional items are not used during meal and snack times. Facilities are also instructed that if play foods are used within the dramatic play areas of the centre, only foods representing the food groups within Eating Well with Canada’s Food Guide can be used. Play materials that represent unhealthy foods and beverages are not permitted.

<https://www.ednet.ns.ca/earlyyears/providers/FoodandNutritionalSupport.shtml>

Recreation Centres

The Guidelines for **Healthy Eating in Recreation and Sport Settings** (HERSS)²⁵ were released in fall of 2015 and include specific recommendations regarding promotion, marketing and advertising and sponsorship in recreation and sport settings.

Guideline 2 of HERSS relates to Promotion, Marketing and Advertising and Sponsorship:

Guideline 2.1 states that partnerships between recreation and sport and businesses must always be designed to meet the health and educational needs of the participants, rather than serve commercial motives.

Guideline 2.2 states that marketing of any foods or beverages in the “Minimum Nutrition” and “Food and Beverages Not to be Served or Sold” categories should not be allowed in recreation and sport settings.

Guideline 2.3 states that branding for food and beverage products in the “Minimum Nutrition” and “Food and Beverages Not to be Served or Sold” categories or from formula restaurants should not be allowed in recreation and sport settings.

These are guidelines only, and are not mandated or enforced.

The **Thrive! strategy** also includes an action to “explore further policy options to limit the influence of marketing in places where children and youth gather.”

**Comments/
notes**

Policy area: Food Prices

Food-EPI vision statement: Food pricing policies (e.g., taxes and subsidies) are aligned with health outcomes by helping to make the healthy eating choices the easier, cheaper choices

PRICES1 Reduce taxes on healthy foods

Food-EPI good practice statement

Taxes or levies on healthy foods are minimised to encourage healthy food choices where possible (e.g. low or no sales tax, excise, value-added or import duties on fruit and vegetables)

| | |
|-------------------------------|---|
| Definitions and scope | <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Includes exemptions from excise tax, ad valorem tax or import duty- Includes differential application of excise tax, ad valorem tax or import duty- Excludes subsidies (see 'PRICES3') or food purchasing welfare support (see 'PRICES4') |
| International examples | <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Australia: Goods and services tax (GST) exemption exists for basic foods (including fresh fruits and vegetables)²⁶.- Tonga: In 2013, as part of a broader package of fiscal measures, import duties were lowered from 20% to 5% for imported fresh, tinned or frozen fish in order to increase affordability and promote healthier diets²⁷.- Poland: In Poland, the basic rate of tax on goods and services is 22%, while the rate is lower (7%) for goods related to farming and forestry and even lower (3%) for unprocessed and minimally processed food products²⁸.- Fiji: To promote fruit and vegetable consumption, Fiji has removed the excise duty on imported fruits, vegetables and legumes. Import tax was decreased for most varieties from the original 32% to 5% (exceptions: 32% remains on tomatoes, cucumbers, potatoes, squash, pumpkin and 15% remains on coconuts, pineapples, guavas, mangosteens) and removed completely for garlic and onions²⁷. |

Context Taxes on products in Canada are governed by the **Excise Tax Act** and its regulations, which are also typically applied to food products.

National Context

In Canada, a Goods and Service Tax (GST) applies to most supplies of goods and services, at a rate of 5%. There is a Harmonized Sales Tax (HST), which harmonizes provincial sales tax with GST in several participating provinces at the following rates: 13% in Ontario, and 15% in New Brunswick, Newfoundland and Labrador, Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island. Also, effective April 1, 2013, the 12% HST in British Columbia was replaced by the GST and a provincial sales tax.

Policy details

Nova Scotia charges HST. Briefly, for food products, the application of GST and HST is considered based on whether or not foods are considered 'basic groceries'. Currently Canada's GST and HST legislation exempts some 'healthy' foods. The list of foods exempt from GST/HST include fresh, frozen, canned and vacuum sealed fruits and vegetables, breakfast cereals, most milk products, fresh meat, poultry and fish, eggs and coffee beans.

Comments/ notes

PRICES2 Increase taxes on unhealthy foods

Food-EPI good practice statement

Taxes or levies on unhealthy foods (e.g. sugar-sweetened beverages, foods high in nutrients of concern) are in place and increase the retail prices of these foods by at least 10% to discourage unhealthy food choices where possible, and these taxes are reinvested to improve population health

Definitions and scope

- Includes differential application of excise tax, ad valorem tax or import duty on high calorie foods or foods that are high in nutrients of concern

International examples

- **Mexico:** In December 2013, the Mexican legislature passed two new taxes as part of the national strategy for the prevention of overweight, obesity and diabetes. An excise duty of 1 peso (\$0.80) per litre applies to sugary drinks. Sugary drinks are defined under the new law as all drinks with added sugar, excluding milks or yoghurts. This is expected to increase the price of sugary drinks by around 10%. An ad valorem excise duty of 8% applies to foods with high caloric density, defined as equal to or more than 275 calories per 100 grams. The food product categories that are affected by the tax include chips and snacks; confectionary; chocolate and cacao based products; puddings; peanut and hazelnut butters. The taxes entered into force on 1 January 2014. The aim is for the revenue of taxes to be reinvested in population health, namely providing safe drinking water in schools, but there is no evidence (yet) that this is the case as the taxes are not earmarked^{27, 29}.
- **Hungary:** A "public health tax" adopted in 2012 is applied on the salt, sugar and caffeine content of various categories of ready-to-eat foods, including soft drinks (both sugar- and artificially-sweetened), energy drinks and pre-packaged sugar-sweetened products. The tax is applied at varying rates. Soft drinks, for example, are taxed at \$0.24 per litre and other sweetened products at \$0.47 per litre. The tax also applies to products high in salt, including salty snacks with >1g salt per 100g, condiments with >5g salt per 100g and flavourings >15g salt per 100g^{27, 30}.
- **French Polynesia:** Various food and beverage taxes have been in place since 2002 to discourage consumption and raise revenue e.g. domestic excise duty on sweetened drinks and beer; import tax on sweetened drinks, beer and confectionery; tax on ice cream. Between 2002 and 2006, tax revenue went to a preventive health fund; from 2006, 80% has been allocated to the general budget and earmarked for health. The tax is 40 CFP (around \$0.44) per litre on domestically-produced sweet drinks, and 60 CFP (around \$0.68) per litre on imported sweet drinks²⁷.
- **St. Helena:** In effect since 27 May 2014, a £0.75 per litre excise duty (about \$1.14) is applied to high-sugar carbonated drinks in St. Helena (Customs and Excise Ordinance Chapter 145, Section 5). High sugar carbonated drinks are defined as drinks containing ≥15 grams of sugar per litre²⁷.
- **UK:** The Government announced a sugar tax on the soft drinks industry as part of the 2016 Budget³¹. Soft drinks manufacturers will be taxed according to the volume of the sugar-sweetened drinks they produce or import. Drinks will fall into two bands: one for total sugar content above 5g per 100mL (to be taxed at 18 pence per L), and a second, higher band for the most sugary drinks with more than 8g per 100mL (to be taxed at 24 pence per L). The tax will come into force in 2017 in order to give companies time to change the ingredients of their products. The measure will raise an estimated £520 million a year, and will be spent on doubling funding for sport in primary schools. Secondary schools will meanwhile be encouraged to offer more sport as part of longer school days. Pure fruit juices and milk-based drinks will be excluded, as well as small producers.

Context

Policy details

There are no provincial policies regarding taxes on unhealthy foods in NS.

In the **Thrive! plan**, there is an action to “Develop policy options on specific issues of food access and affordability, through a cross-government committee. The new committee will align departmental goals and develop policy options on financial incentives and disincentives to improve access to healthy food”⁸.

**Comments/
notes**

PRICES3 Existing food subsidies favour healthy foods

Food-EPI good practice statement

The intent of existing subsidies on foods, including infrastructure funding support (e.g. research and development, supporting markets or transport systems), is to favour healthy rather than unhealthy foods in line with overall population nutrition goals

Definitions and scope

- Includes agricultural input subsidies, such as free or subsidised costs for water, fertiliser, seeds, electricity or transport (e.g., freight) where those subsidies specifically target healthy foods
- Includes programs that ensure that farmers receive a certain price for their produce to encourage increased food production or business viability
- Includes grants or funding support for food producers (i.e. farmers, food manufacturers) to encourage innovation via research and development where that funding scheme specifically targets healthy food
- Includes funding support for wholesale market systems that support the supply of healthy foods
- Includes population level food subsidies at the consumer end (e.g. subsidising staples such as rice or bread)
- Excludes incentives for the establishment of, or ongoing support for, retail outlets (including greengrocers, farmers markets, food co-ops, etc. See 'RETAIL2').
- Excludes subsidised training, courses or other forms of education for food producers
- Excludes the redistribution of excess or second grade produce
- Excludes food subsidies related to welfare support (see 'PRICES4')
- Population nutrition goals related to the prevention of obesity and diet-related NCDs (e.g., reducing intake of nutrients of concern, not related to micronutrient deficiencies)

International examples

- **Singapore:** The government, through the Health Promotion Board (HPB) increases the availability and use of healthier ingredients through the "Healthier Ingredient Scheme" (formerly part of the "Healthier Hawker" programme, launched in 2011), which provides in the first instance transitional support to oil manufacturers and importers to help them increase the sale of healthier oils to the food service industry³². The Healthier Ingredient Subsidy Scheme offers a subsidy to suppliers stocking healthier items. Cooking oil is the first ingredient under the scheme, which subsidises oils with a saturated fat level of 35 per cent or lower.

Context

Federal Context

The federal **Nutrition North Canada** (NNC) program was established in 2011 to provide increased food access to isolated Northern communities in Canada. Registered retailers in the North, country food processors/distributors located in eligible communities, and food suppliers in the South who supply small retailers, institutions and individuals in these eligible isolated communities, can apply for a subsidy based on the weight of eligible foods shipped by air to eligible northern communities. These subsidies are to be passed on to northern consumers by appropriate reductions in the selling prices of eligible foods. There are no NNC eligible communities in NS.

The **Thrive! plan** includes an action to "Develop policy options on specific issues of food access and affordability, through a cross-government committee."

Policy details

The **Fluid Dairy Pricing Regulations of the Dairy Industry Act** set the minimum wholesale and minimum retail prices of fluid milk in containers that are sold in NS from processors to retailers, and from retailers to customers. For example, the minimum price for a 4 L of skim, partly skimmed, or whole milk is \$5.19 while the minimum price for a 4 L of chocolate milk is \$5.74. Other minimum prices are set for buttermilk, light cream, blend cream, coffee cream, whipping cream, egg nog, and concentrated milk (<https://www.novascotia.ca/just/regulations/regs/difdpric.htm>).

The **School Milk Program** has existed in NS since 1974 and is run through the NS Department of Agriculture. The goal of the School Milk Program is to increase access to and consumption of milk in schools. All public schools (grade primary to twelve) are eligible to participate in the program and must agree to provide students with milk at a cost not greater than 40 cents per 250 mL serving. The cost of school milk is based on the **Fluid Dairy Pricing Regulations**, part of the NS **Dairy Industry Act** (<https://www.novascotia.ca/just/regulations/regs/difdpric.htm>). The milk must be consumed by students on school premises and only applies to unflavoured milk.

Comments/ notes

PRICES4 Food-related income support is for healthy foods

Food-EPI good practice statement

The government ensures that food-related income support programs are for healthy foods

Definitions and scope

- Includes programs such as 'food stamps' or other schemes where individuals can utilise government-administered subsidies, vouchers, tokens or discounts in retail settings for specific food purchasing.
- Excludes general programs that seek to address food insecurity such as government support for, or partnerships with, organisations that provide free or subsidised meals (including school breakfast programs) or food parcels or redistribute second grade produce for this purpose.
- Excludes food subsidies at the consumer end (e.g. subsidising staples at a population level – see 'PRICES3')

International examples

- **UK:** The British Healthy Start programme provides pregnant women and/or families with children under the age of four with weekly vouchers to spend on foods including milk, plain yoghurt, and fresh and frozen fruit and vegetables. Participants or their family must be receiving income support/jobseekers allowance or child tax credits. Pregnant women under the age of 18 can also apply. Full national implementation of the programme began in 2006²⁷.
- **USA:** In 2012, the USDA piloted a "Healthy Incentives Pilot" as part of the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP, formerly "food stamps"). Participants received an incentive of 30 cents per US\$ spent on targeted fruit and vegetables (transferred back onto their SNAP card). The Pilot included 7500 individuals²⁷. In New York City and Philadelphia, "Health Bucks" are distributed to farmers markets. When customers use income support (e.g. Food Stamps) to purchase food at farmers markets, they receive one Health Buck worth 2USD for each 5USD spent, which can then be used to purchase fresh fruit and vegetable products at a farmers market²⁷. In Philadelphia, the programme has been expanded to other retail settings like supermarkets and corner stores.
- **USA:** In 2009, the U.S. Department of Agriculture's implemented revisions to the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) to improve the composition and quantities of WIC-provided foods from a health perspective. The revisions include: increase the dollar amount for purchases of fruits and vegetables, expand whole-grain options, allow for yoghurt as a partial milk substitute, allow parents of older infants to buy fresh produce instead of jarred infant food and give states and local WIC agencies more flexibility in meeting the nutritional and cultural needs of WIC participants²⁷.

Context

In Canada, social assistance is administered at the provincial/territorial level, and there are no national income support programs specific to food-related support.

Policy details

General income assistance in NS has no special provisions for purchasing healthy foods.

As part of the **Employment Support and Income Assistance Program**, a **Maternal Nutritional Allowance** is provided per month (\$51) from the date a caseworker is notified of the pregnancy and up to 12 full months after the birth of the child³³.

There is also a special diet allowance that is available to those who have additional dietary needs. The special diet allowance may be provided to an income assistance applicant/recipient, their spouse, or dependents up to a maximum of \$150 per month per person. The approval for a special diet allowance is based on receiving medical documentation specific to the condition that support the type of special diet and allowances³⁴.

There are no requirements for this to be used to purchase healthy foods, and no mechanisms are in place to monitor and/or limit what foods and beverages are purchased using food based allowances.

**Comments/
notes**

Policy area: Food Provision

Food-EPI vision statement: The government ensures that there are healthy food service policies implemented in government-funded settings to ensure that food provision encourages healthy food choices, and the government actively encourages and supports private companies to implement similar policies

PROV1 Policies in schools promote healthy food choices

Food-EPI good practice statement

The government ensures that there are clear, consistent policies (including nutrition standards) implemented in schools and early childhood education and care services for food service activities (canteens, food at events, fundraising, promotions, vending machines etc.) to provide and promote healthy food choices

Definitions and scope

- Early childhood education and care services (0-5): includes all early childhood care services which may be regulated and required to operate under the National Quality Framework
- Schools include government and non-government primary and secondary schools (up to year 12)
- Includes policies and nutrition standards to provide and promote healthy food choices or to limit or restrict the provision or promotion of unhealthy food choices
- Includes policies that relate to school breakfast programs, where the program is partly or fully funded, managed or overseen by the government
- Excludes training, resources and systems that support the implementation of these policies (see 'PROV3')

International examples

- **Chile:** In 2012, the Chilean government approved a Law of Nutritional Composition of Food and Advertising (Ley 20, 606)¹⁵. In June 2015, the Chilean authority approved the regulatory norms required for the law's implementation (Diario Oficial No 41.193). The regulatory norms define limits for calories, saturated fat, sugar and sodium content considered "high" in foods and beverages. The regulatory norms define limits for calories (275 calories/100g or 70 calories/100mL), saturated fat (4g/100g or 3g/100mL), sugar (10g/100g or 5g/100mL) and sodium (400mg/100g or 100mg/100mL) content considered "high" in foods and beverages. The law prohibits the sale of foods in the "high in" category in schools. These were scheduled to take effect 1 July 2016³⁵.
- **Finland:** In 2008, the National Nutrition Council approved nutrition recommendations for school meals. These include food and nutrient recommendations for salt, fibre, fat, starch, fat and salt maximums for meat and processed meat, and drinks. There are also criteria for snacks provided in schools³⁵.
- **Australia:** There are no national mandatory standards. However, six states and territories have implemented mandatory standards, which are either based on the national voluntary guidelines or nutrient and food criteria defined by the state: Australian Capital Territory (2015), New South Wales (2011), Northern Territory (2009), Queensland (2007), South Australia (2008), and Western Australia (2014). All of these states and territories identify 'red category' foods, which are either completely banned in schools or heavily restricted (e.g. offered no more than one or two times per term)³⁵. The New South Wales (NSW) policy for school canteens prohibits availability of red foods, high in saturated fats, sugars, or sodium. Foods provided in school canteens should be at least 50% green foods to ensure that canteens do not increase the number of "amber" foods. Green foods include low-fat carbohydrates, fruits and vegetables, and lean meat as well as small

portions of pure fruit juice. Also Queensland's Smart Choices school nutrition standards ensure that "red" foods and drinks are eliminated across the whole school environment.

- **Mauritius:** In 2009, a regulation was passed banning soft drinks, including diet soft drinks, and unhealthy snacks from canteens of pre-elementary, elementary and secondary schools³⁵.
- **UK:** England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland have mandatory nutritional standards for school food, which also apply to food provided in schools other than school lunches. These standards apply to most state schools (with the exception of around 4,000 academies established between September 2010 and June 2014, which are exempt) and restrict foods high in fat, salt and sugar, as well as low quality reformed or reconstituted foods³⁵.
- **Brazil:** The national school feeding programme³⁶ places great emphasis on the availability of fresh, traditional and minimally processed foods. It mandates a weekly minimum of fruits and vegetables, regulates sodium content and restricts the availability of sweets in school meals. A school food procurement law³⁷, approved in 2001, limits the amount of processed foods purchased by schools to 30%, and bans the procurement of drinks with low nutritional value, such as sugary drinks. The law requires schools to buy locally grown or manufactured products, supporting small farmers and stimulating the local economy. Resolution no 38 (16 July 2009) sets food- and nutrition-based standards for the foods available in the national school meal programme (Law 11.947/2009). Article 17 prohibits drinks of low nutritional value (e.g. soda), canned meats, confectionary and processed foods with a sodium and saturated fat content higher than a specified threshold.
- **Costa Rica:** Executive Decree No 36910-MEP-S (2012) of the Costa Rican Ministries of Health and Education sets restrictions on products sold to students in elementary and high schools, including food with high levels of fats, sugars and salt, such as chips, cookies, candy and carbonated sodas. Schools are only permitted to sell food and beverages that meet specific nutritional criteria. The restrictions were upheld by the Constitutional Court in 2012 following a challenge by the food industry³⁵.
- **Hungary:** Since 2012, food and beverages subject to the public health product tax may not be sold on school premises or at events organized for school children, including out of school events based on the Ministerial Decree 20/2012 (VIII.31) on the Operation of Public Education Institutions and the Use of Names of Public Education Institutions. Section 130(2) of the Decree requires the head of the educational institution to consult the school health service prior to entering into agreements with vending machine operators or food vending businesses. The school health service verifies whether the products to be sold meet the nutritional guidelines set by the National Institute of Pharmacy and Nutrition. Products that do not comply are prohibited³⁵.
- **Uruguay:** In September 2013, the government of Uruguay adopted Law No 19.140 on "healthy eating in schools". It mandated the Ministry of Health to develop standards for food available in canteens and kiosks in schools, prohibited advertising for these same foods and restricted the availability of salt shakers. The school food standards were elaborated in March 2014 in two further documents: Regulatory Decree 60/014 and the National Plan of Health Promoting Schools. The standards aimed to promote foods with natural nutritional value with a minimum degree of processing and to limit the intake of free sugars, saturated fat, trans fat and sodium. Limits are set per 100g of food, 100mL for drinks and also per 50g portion. Prohibited foods include sugary beverages and energy drinks, confectionery, salty snacks, cakes and chocolate. The school food standards and restrictions on advertising began to be implemented in public schools in 2015 and are being monitored for compliance³⁵.

Context

In Canada, education is largely decentralized to the provinces and territories, and there is no federal Department of Education. Therefore, setting nutrition standards in schools currently falls largely on provincial/territorial governments, and Ministries of Education and/or Ministries of Health (or equivalent) in each province are responsible for developing criteria for nutritional standards in schools.

National Context

In 2013, the Federal/Provincial/Territorial Nutrition Working Group on Improving the Consistency of School Food and Beverage Criteria created a technical document, the **Provincial and Territorial Guidance Document for the Development of Nutrient Criteria for Foods and Beverages in Schools 2013**, to guide and support provinces as they create and revise policies or guidelines³⁸.

Policy details

Schools (2006):

In the NS public school system, grade primary to grade 12, there is a comprehensive policy for food and nutrition called **Food and Nutrition Policy for NS Public Schools** (SFNP). According to the policy, all foods and beverages sold in school must meet the **Food and Beverage Standards for Nova Scotia Public Schools Standards**²⁵. The policy was phased-in over a three-year period from September 2006 to June 2009 with full policy implementation required by June 2009.

The Standards have 3 categories of foods and beverages: “Maximum Nutrition” foods can be served or sold daily in schools and make up about 70% of foods and beverages sold in schools, “Moderate Nutrition” can be served or sold no more than two times per week and make up no more than 30% of choices at one location, and “Minimum Nutrition” foods can be served or sold only once or twice a month as part of special functions. Criteria are based on fat (total, trans and saturated), fibre, sodium, sugar, caffeine and artificial sweeteners depending on the food category. Schools are only permitted to serve milk (white, chocolate, flavoured and nutritional alternatives to milk, e.g., soy), 100% juice and water as beverages as per the standards. The policy also bans the use of deep fat fryers to prepare food.

Other details include:

- The standards are also in effect during evening programs provided by the school.
- In addition, the policy also states that schools will make affordability the primary consideration when setting prices or profit margins. Foods of Minimum Nutrition are permitted once or twice a month for Special Functions at schools.
- For fundraising: **Policy Directive 5.1**³⁹ states that “fundraising with food and beverages organized by and through schools will centre only on items of Maximum or Moderate Nutrition (i.e., healthy items).” A support document with recommendations is provided to implement this program.

School Feeding Programs

Provincial Breakfast Program Standards were adopted since 2005 by the Nova Scotia Departments of Education and Health Promotion and Protection that must be followed by any programs supported by funding from the Provincial Breakfast Program.

Food and beverages provided in school feeding programs must follow the guidelines of the **Food and Nutrition Policy for Nova Scotia Public Schools**⁴⁰. In addition, breakfast should provide foods from at least three of the four food groups from Eating Well with Canada’s Food Guide. Policy also dictates that schools will ensure that students and parents are aware of the breakfast, lunch and snack programs available, and that they must ensure that food programs are made available in a non-stigmatizing manner.

Early Childhood Education (ECE):

In regulated childcare, the provision of food is regulated in the **Day Care Act** and **Day Care Regulations**. Section 25 of the Day Care Regulations state:

25(1) A licensee must adhere to the food and nutrition standards established by the Minister.

25(2) Except as provided in subsection (3), a licensee or, in the case of a family home day care program, a care provider must ensure that each child in attendance at a day care program is provided with a meal during regular meal times and a snack if the child attends before or after a regular meal period.

25(3) Each child enrolled in a school-age program may bring a lunch from home or be provided with a lunch.

The **Food and Nutrition Standards in Regulated Childcare** describe requirements for childcare centre operators for the provision of foods and beverages. According to the standards:

Standard 1 states the selection of food and beverages served in regulated child care settings is based on **Eating Well with Canada's Food Guide** and complies with the **Food and Beverage Criteria for Regulated Child Care Settings**. In addition, the standards state that:

- 1.1. Foods and beverages served are consistent with the Food and Beverage Criteria for Regulated Child Care Settings. The facility director, or the person responsible for menu development, signs and dates the menu to confirm that it complies with the Food and Beverage Criteria.
- 1.2. Full fat milk (3.25% MF) is provided to children under the age of two years.
- 1.3. Menu planning is the responsibility of the facility director or care provider. The facility director may delegate this responsibility to one person, for example, a cook.
- 1.4. Menus are posted in a conspicuous area and identify substitutions that are made.
- 1.5. Menus are developed at least one week in advance of when they will be posted.
- 1.6. All menus and any substitutions made must be kept on file for one year.

These standards are monitored and enforced. Facilities are inspected at least twice a year. Facilities that are non-compliant with licensing requirements in some area(s) receive more frequent inspections. Licensing Services makes objective assessments based on first-hand observations, reviews of written records, files and other documentation, and interviews with operators, their employees, and clients. The licensing requirements applied to a facility are based on the acts, regulations, and standards applicable to the type of facility and compliance with the **Food and Nutrition Standards** are included in these requirements (<https://www.ednet.ns.ca/earlyyears/licensing/frequently-asked-questions.shtml>).

**Comments/
notes**

PROV2 Policies in public settings promote healthy food choices

Food-EPI good practice statement

The government ensures that there are clear, consistent policies in public sector settings for food service activities (canteens, food at events, fundraising, promotions, vending machines, public procurement standards etc.) to provide and promote healthy food choices.

Definitions and scope

- Public sector settings include:
- Government-funded or managed services where the government is responsible for the provision of food, including public hospitals and other in-patient health services (acute and sub-acute, including mental health services), residential care homes, aged and disability care settings, custodial care facilities, prisons and home/community care services
- Government-owned, funded or managed services where the general public purchase foods including health services, parks, sporting and leisure facilities, community events etc.
- Public sector workplaces
- Includes private businesses that are under contract by the government to provide food
- Excludes 'public settings' such as train stations, venues, facilities or events that are not funded or managed by the government (see 'RETAIL4')
- Excludes school and early childhood settings (see 'PROV1')
- Includes policies and nutrition standards to provide and promote healthy food choices or to limit or restrict the provision or promotion of unhealthy food choices
- Includes the strategic placement of foods and beverages in cabinets, fridges, on shelves or near the cashier
- Includes the use of signage to highlight healthy options or endorsements (such as traffic lights or a recognised healthy symbol)
- Includes modifying ingredients to make foods and drinks more healthy, or changing the menu to offer more healthy options

International examples

- **Latvia:** In 2012, the government set salt levels for all foods served in hospitals and long-term social care institutions. Levels may not exceed 1.25g of salt per 100g of food product; fish products may contain up to 1.5g of salt per 100g of product³⁵.
- **Bermuda:** In 2008, the Government Vending Machine Policy was implemented in government offices and facilities to ensure access to healthy snacks and beverages for staff. The policy requires that all food and beverages in vending machines on government premises meet specific criteria based on levels of total fat, saturated fat, *trans* fat, sodium and sugar. Criteria exclude nuts & 100% fruit juices³⁵.
- **New York City, USA:** New York City's Food Standards (enacted with Executive Order 122 of 2008) set nutritional standards for all food purchased or served by city agencies, which applies to prisons, hospitals and senior care centres. The standards include: maximum and minimum levels of nutrients per serving; standards on specific food items (e.g. only no-fat or 1% milk); portion size requirements; the requirement that water be offered with food; a prohibition on the deep-frying of foods; and daily calorie and nutrient targets, including population-specific guidelines (e.g. children, seniors)^{35, 41}. As of 2015, 11 city agencies are subject to the NYC Food Standards, serving and selling almost 250 million meals a year. The Food Policy Coordinator has the responsibility of ensuring adherence with the Food Standards. Self-reported compliance with the standard is 96%.
- **Wales:** Vending machines dispensing crisps, chocolate and sugary drinks are prohibited in National Health Service hospitals in Wales. The Welsh government issued a guidance defining what is allowed and not allowed, and has liaised with major vending providers to find ways to introduce healthier food and drink options (Health Promoting Hospital Vending Directions and Guide 2008).

- **UK:** The UK Government Buying Standard for Food and Catering Services (GBSF of 2014, updated March 2015) by the Department of Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, sets out standards for the public sector when buying food and catering services. It is supported by the Plan for Public Procurement: Food and Catering Services (2014), which includes a toolkit consisting of the mandatory GBSF, a balanced scorecard, an e-marketplace, case studies and access to centralised framework contacts in order to improve and facilitate procurement in the public sector. The nutrition requirements have to be followed by schools, hospitals, care homes, communities and the armed forces. To improve diets, the GBSF sets maximum levels for sugar in cereals and generally for saturated fat and salt, in addition to minimum content of fibre in cereals and fruit in desserts. Meal deals have to include vegetables and fruit as dessert and menu fish on a regular basis².

Context

Policy details

Recreation Centres: The Nova Scotia Department of Health and Wellness, the Healthy Eating in Recreation and Sport Provincial Steering Committee created the **Healthy Eating in Recreation and Sport Settings (HERSS)**²⁵ (Fall 2015) to “enable those who work, participate, and support activities in recreation and sport settings to change the food environment to support eating well.” Main objectives of the guideline include increasing access to healthy food and decreasing access to unhealthy food. Recommendations are based on Canada’s Food Guide, and the guidelines apply to wherever foods and beverages are sold within the recreation and sport setting.

The guidelines are meant to be implemented in a stepwise approach, and are voluntary. Other details include:

- 1.1. The nutrient criteria have 4 categories (Maximum, Moderate, Minimum, and Not to be Served). By year 4, at least 50% of foods sold should be from the Maximum criteria, and No more than 10% from the minimum criteria.
- 1.2. The stated percentage of maximum/minimum/moderate products for each type of service (e.g., vending, canteen, programming) are proposed to inform the sales of food and beverages, and not per setting (e.g., facility, camp and provincial organization).
- 1.3. The guidelines also recommend that when program activities are off-site, efforts should be made to choose food and beverages that fit within the maximum and moderate nutrient criteria.
- 1.4. Finally, the guidelines suggest that priority placement is given to those foods and beverages that meet the maximum and moderate nutrient criteria.

Hospitals: No provincial guidelines exist but local healthy eating policies are in place. See comment, below.

Public Sector Workplaces: NS has a **Healthy Workplace Policy**, which gives direction to public sector Healthy Workplace initiatives⁴². It states:

The Government of NS is committed to providing a healthy, safe and supportive workplace which will enhance employee health and job satisfaction, and enable employees to contribute most effectively in their roles of delivering high-quality public service.

The policy gives direction to Government’s Healthy Workplace Initiative and provides the umbrella or overarching context under which individual policies, programs and activities comprising a comprehensive healthy workplace approach will fall.

The Public Service Commission created a **Healthy Eating in the Workplace** guide as a resource to help groups implement healthy eating policy⁴³. The guide contains a **Healthy Eating Checklist for Cafeterias, Canteens and Other Eateries** with nutrient or nutritional

criteria for some types of foods that would be considered “healthier.” The guide provides additional **Vending Machine Suggestions** to provide healthier foods in vending machines.

The NS Department of Health and Wellness has a healthy eating policy for the department that came into effect in 2014. The policy applies to all Departments of Health and Wellness (DHW) workplaces and sites where staff works on a daily basis; to catering and vending services for all DHW organized or sponsored events including meetings, conferences, and special functions; and to fundraising and gifts purchased by DHW. The policy directives include foods and beverages served or sold in DHW workplaces, when to order catering, clean drinking water, dietary considerations, food safety, time to eat, special functions, fundraising, nutrition education, food packaging and environmental consciousness, and storage, handling, and preparation of food from home.

Other Settings:

In 2012/13 and 2015/16 fiscal years, the NS Department of Health and Wellness provided healthy eating grants to publicly funded institutions (sport and recreation settings, district health authorities, post-secondary institutions and provincial or municipal governments) to implement food and nutrition policies to create supportive food environments as part of the Thrive! strategy. The process was a competitive grant review and approval process. These could address foods sold and served, pricing, portion size, minimum eating time, fundraising and special functions, infant feeding including breastfeeding, marketing and advertising, access to clean drinking water, procuring local food, role modelling, and environmental considerations⁴⁴. The goal of the grants was to spark healthy eating policy work in these settings (these grants were not available for public schools or regulated childcare because funding support was already provided to these settings to support implementation of the required policies/standards in those settings). This program has not been continued.

**Comments/
notes**

The NS Department of Health and Wellness has supported the efforts of the Nova Scotia Health Authority (formerly the nine district health authorities) and the IWK Health Centre in the development of a provincial healthy eating policy for the healthcare sector in NS. During this time, healthy eating policies have been developed and changes have occurred at the local level of the healthcare system in NS related to the provision of food including the removal of salt shakers from cafeteria dining room tables, better menu labelling, and changes to recipes and product reformulation for foods and beverages served and sold in healthcare facilities. Additionally, efforts are underway in many Nova Scotian municipalities to develop and/or implement healthy eating policies at the municipal level. Efforts have also been underway over the past several years to improve the nutritional quality of foods and beverages provided at NS’s post-secondary institutions including universities and community colleges.

PROV3 Support and training systems (public sector settings)

Food-EPI good practice statement

The government ensures that there are good support and training systems to help schools and other public sector organisations and their caterers meet the healthy food service policies and guidelines

- Definitions and scope**
- Includes support for early childhood education services as defined in 'PROV1'
 - Public sector organisations includes settings defined in 'PROV2'
 - Support and training systems include guidelines, toolkits, templates (e.g. policy/guidelines or contracts), recipes and menu planning tools, expert advice, menu and product assessments, online training modules, cook/caterer/other food service staff information and training workshops or courses
- International examples**
- **Australia:** The Healthy Eating Advisory Service supports settings such as childcare centres, schools, workplaces, health services, food outlets, parks and sporting centres to provide healthy foods and drinks to the public in line with Victorian Government policies and guidelines. The Healthy Eating Advisory Service is delivered by experienced nutritionists and dietitians at Nutrition Australia Victorian Division. The support includes training cooks, chefs, food service and other key staff, discovering healthier recipes, food ideas and other helpful resources to provide healthier menus and products⁴⁵.
 - **Japan:** In Japanese, "Shoku" means diet and "iku" means growth and education. In 2005, Basic Law on Shokuiku was enacted and it was the first law that regulates one's diets and eating habits. It involved Cabinet Office as the leading office to plan, formulate and coordinate Shokuiku policy and strategy, in collaboration with Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare, Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT) and Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries. The laws included several concepts: promotion of Shokuiku at home, schools or nursery schools and promotion of interaction between farm producers and consumers⁴⁶. Dietitian and registered dietitian are playing important roles to implement Shokuiku programs by providing dietary guidance in various setting. In Japan, at least one dietitian should be assigned at the facility with mass food service over 100 meals/time or over 250 meals/ day, whereas at least one registered dietitian is needed when it is over 500 meals/time or 1500 meals/day. In specific settings such as school, the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology established the Diet and Nutrition Teacher System in 2007. Diet and Nutrition Teachers are responsible to supervise school lunch programs, formulate menus and ensure hygiene standards in public elementary schools and junior high schools in accordance with the needs of local communities. They also deal with dietary education issues in collaboration with nutrition experts such as registered dietitian and dietitian⁴⁷. Under the revised School Lunch Act 2008, it included School Lunch Practice Standard which stipulates proper school lunch including reference intake values of energy and each nutrient as per age groups⁴⁸. Moreover, it outlined costs of facilities and manpower (e.g. cooks) to be covered by municipalities and guardians only cover the cost of ingredients, amounting an estimate of 4000 yen/month/student for school lunch program⁴⁹.

Context The NS Department of Health and Wellness has supported the development, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation of several healthy eating policies in publicly funded institutions (e.g. public schools, regulated childcare, sport and recreation settings, healthcare, and post-secondary institutions). Through health system re-design, the function and leadership for supporting implementation of the healthy eating policies mentioned herewithin has been transitioned to the Nova Scotia Health Authority.

Policy details

Nourish Nova Scotia is a non-profit organization that supports healthy eating in NS, including supporting school breakfast programs. The Government of NS is a sustaining partner for the organization. Nourish provides a number of resources for planning breakfast programs⁵⁰, including:

- A menu planning template
- Sample breakfast menu
- Healthy breakfast ideas
- Strive for Five Breakfast Recipes
- Special Occasion, Healthy Holiday Snack and Valentine's Day Health Snack Ideas
- Cereal and Grain Products Suggestions

Similar resources are available for lunch and snack programs.

At the local level of the system, supports have been put in place from both the health system and school board system to support the implementation of the **Food and Nutrition Policy for Nova Scotia Public Schools** at the school level. Examples of efforts underway at a local level include shared planning and collaboration between health and education, workshops for school administrators and school food service providers, training for School Advisory Councils and Home and School Associations, support for menu reviews and/or recipe changes, support for local level research opportunities related to school food, support for grant applications and report writing, development of local level or school board level resources to support implementation, supporting Youth Health Centre activities related to school food, and support for school breakfast programs. Some of this support, but not all, would be provided by the Government of NS.

Early Childhood Education

The **Manual for food and nutrition in regulated child care settings**⁵¹ describes the Food and Nutrition Standards in Regulated Childcare Settings and answers frequently asked questions in regard to the policy.

A provincial training session was conducted in March of 2011 for Public Health Nutritionists, ECE Development Consultants and Licensing Officers in NS prior to implementation of the standards, with a follow-up session in 2011. Ongoing support is implemented locally.

In many local areas of the province, childcare workshops are offered annually, covering a variety of licensing issues including nutrition and food safety. These are supported by local public health nutritionists, and the level of support varies across the province. This is not funded by the provincial government.

Recreation Centres:

Examples of support efforts to support implementation of **Healthy Eating in Sport and Recreation Setting Guidelines** by Public Health Services within the Nova Scotia Health Authority include: collaboration between health, sport and recreation stakeholders, and municipalities; menu reviews and/or recipe and product suggestions; policy development; workshops and training sessions for the sector including boards of directors, councils, municipalities, wellness committees; support for media presentations; support for local level research on healthy eating in the sport and recreation setting; resource development; and support for grant application processes and reporting.

Comments/ notes

PROV4 Support and training systems (private companies)

Food-EPI good practice statement

Government actively encourages and supports private companies to provide and promote healthy foods and meals in their workplaces

Definitions and scope

- For the purpose of this indicator, 'private companies' includes for-profit companies and extends to non-government organisations (NGOs) including not-for-profit/charitable organisations, community-controlled organisations, etc.
- Includes healthy catering policies, fundraising, events
- Includes support and training systems including guidelines, toolkits, templates (e.g. policy/guidelines or contracts), recipes and menu planning tools, expert advice, menu and product assessments, online training modules, cook/caterer/other food service staff information and training workshops or courses (where relevant to the provision of food in a workplace)
- Excludes the provision or promotion of food to people not employed by that organisation (e.g. visitors or customers)
- Excludes support for organisations to provide staff education on healthy foods

International examples

- **UK:** The UK responsibility deal includes collective pledges on health at work, which set out the specific actions that partners agree to take in support of the core commitments. One of the pledges is on healthier staff restaurants, with 165 signatories to date⁵².
- **Victoria, Australia:** 'Healthy choices: healthy eating policy and catering guide for workplaces' is a guideline for workplaces to support them in providing and promoting healthier foods options to their staff. The guideline is supported by the Healthy Eating Advisory Service that helps private sector settings to implement such policies. Menu assessments and cook/caterer training are available free of charge to some eligible workplaces⁵³.
- **Singapore:** The National Workplace Health Promotion Programme, launched in Singapore in 2000, is run by the Health Promotion Board. Both private and public institutions are encouraged to improve the workplace environment by providing tools and grants. Grants are awarded to help companies start and sustain health promotion programmes. Tools include a sample Healthy Workplace Nutrition Policy, a sample Healthy Workplace Catering Policy, and a detailed Essential Guide to Workplace Health, setting out ways to transform the workplace into a health-supporting work environment⁵⁵.

Context

Policy details

No policy documents were identified.

Comments/ notes

Policy area: Food Retail

Food-EPI vision statement: The government has the power to implement policies and programs to support the availability of healthy foods and limit the availability of unhealthy foods in communities (outlet density and locations) and in-store (product placement)

RETAIL1 Robust government policies and zoning laws: unhealthy foods

Food-EPI good practice statement

Zoning laws and related policies provide robust mechanisms and are being used, where needed, by local governments to place limits on the density or placement of quick serve restaurants or other outlets selling mainly unhealthy foods in communities

Definitions and scope

- Includes the consideration of public health in State/Territory Planning Acts that guide the policies, priorities and objectives to be implemented at the local government level through their planning schemes
- Includes the consideration of public health in State/Territory subordinate planning instruments and policies
- Includes a State/Territory guideline that sets the policy objective of considering public health when reviewing and approving fast food planning applications
- Excludes laws, policies or actions of local governments

International examples

- **South Korea:** In 2010, the Special Act on Children's Dietary Life Safety Management established the creation of 'Green Food Zones' around schools, banning the sale of foods (fast food and soda) deemed unhealthy by the Food and Drug Administration of Korea within 200 metres of schools^{17, 54}. In 2016, Green Food Zones existed at over 10000 schools.
- **Dublin, Ireland:** Fast-food takeaways will be banned from opening within 250 metres of schools. Dublin city councillors have ruled the measure to enforce "no-fry zones", which will be included in a draft version of the council's six-year development plan. City planners will be obliged to refuse planning permission to fast food businesses if the move is formally adopted after public consultation⁵⁵.
- **Detroit, USA:** In Detroit, the zoning code prohibits the building of fast food restaurants within 500 ft. of all elementary, junior and senior high schools³.
- **UK:** Around 15 local authorities have developed "supplementary planning documents" on the development of hot food takeaways. The policies typically exclude hot food takeaways from a 400m zone around the target location (e.g. primary schools). For example, Barking and Dagenham's Local Borough Council, London, adopted a policy in 2010 restricting the clustering of hot food takeaways and banning them entirely from 400m exclusion zones around schools. In 2009, the Local Borough Council of Waltham Forest, London developed a planning policy restricting the development of hot food takeaways in local centres, and excluding them completely from areas within 10min walks from schools, parks or other youth centres. St. Helens Council adopted a planning document in 2011 and Halton in 2012³.

Context

In Canada, planning and zoning laws are typically administered at the provincial/territorial or local level. Although this varies between provinces/territories, provincial or territorial governments typically set overarching zoning legislation, and local governments are responsible for creating, implementing and enforcing municipal policies that are in line with the provincial/territorial mandates.

Policy details

Municipal Government Act – Chapter 18 of the Acts of 1998 in section 219 and 220 states that local governments are responsible for the preparation and enforcement of municipal land use bylaws (LUB) and planning in their jurisdiction⁵⁶. Section 219 clearly links a municipal planning strategy with an LUB. It provides that: provisions in a municipal planning strategy or a strategy amendment that deal with ‘regulating land use and development’ must be implemented by an LUB. Sections 220(1) and (2) of the Act require that an LUB establish zones, lists permitted or prohibited uses for each, and provide for any other matters required to implement a strategy. The number of zones and the provisions contained within them should reflect the level of land use control necessary and desired by the municipality. The guidance for this level of control comes from the overall planning direction set out in the municipal planning strategy.

A Statement of Provincial Interest (SPI) outlines the province's interest in the use and development of land and is adopted as regulations under the Municipal Government Act. The Municipal Government Act requires that municipal planning documents and activities of the province must be reasonably consistent with an SPI.

Comments/ notes

The Departments of Health and Wellness (DHW) and Municipal Affairs (DMA) are co-leading the development of the Statement of Provincial Interest on Healthy Built Environments (SPI-HBE). Initial work has focused on healthy eating and physical activity as called for by Thrive!, which includes an action to “Create a Statement of Provincial Interest on land use to support healthy eating and physical activity.”

RETAIL2 Robust government policies and zoning laws: healthy foods

Food-EPI good practice statement

Zoning laws and related policies provide robust mechanisms and are being used, where needed, by local governments to encourage the availability of outlets selling fresh fruit and vegetables

Definitions and scope

- Outlets include supermarkets, produce markets, farmers' markets, greengrocers, food co-operatives
- Includes fixed or mobile outlets
- Excludes community gardens, edible urban or backyard gardens (usually regulated by local governments)
- Includes State/Territory policies to streamline and standardise planning approval processes or reduce regulatory burdens for these outlets
- Includes policies that support local governments to reduce license or permit requirements or fees to encourage the establishment of such outlets
- Includes the provision of financial grants or subsidies to outlets
- Excludes general guidelines on how to establishment and promote certain outlets
- Excludes laws, policies or actions of local governments

International examples

- **USA:** In February 2014, the US Congress formally established the Healthy Food Financing Initiative (following a three year pilot) which provides grants to states to provide financial and/or other types of assistance to attract healthier retail outlets to underserved areas. The pilot has distributed over 140 million USD in grants. To date, 23 US states have implemented financing initiatives³. For example, the New Jersey Food Access Initiative provides affordable loans and grants for costs associated with building new supermarkets, expanding existing facilities, and purchasing and installing new equipment for supermarkets offering a full selection of unprepared, unprocessed, healthy foods in under-served areas; the initiative targets both for-profit and not-for-profit organisations and food cooperatives.
- **New York City, USA:** The 'Green Cart Permit' was developed with reduced restrictions on zoning requirements to increase the availability of fresh fruits and vegetables in designated, underserved neighbourhoods³. In 2008, New York City made 1000 licences for green carts available to street vendors who exclusively sell fresh fruit and vegetables in neighbourhoods with limited access to healthy foods³. In addition, in 2009, New York City established the food retail expansion to support a health programme of New York City (FRESH). Under the programme, financial and zoning incentives are offered to promote neighbourhood grocery stores offering fresh meat, fruit and vegetables in under-served communities. The financial benefits consist of an exemption or reduction of certain taxes. The zoning incentives consist of providing additional floor area in mixed buildings, reducing the amount of required parking, and permitting larger grocery stores in light manufacturing districts.
- **Scotland:** In 2004, a small group of suppliers and retailers in Scotland established a pilot project called Healthy Living Neighbourhood Shops to increase the availability of healthier food options throughout Scotland, in both deprived and affluent areas, where little or no option existed to buy. The programme received funding from the Scottish Executive and worked closely with the Scottish Grocers' Federation, which represents convenience stores throughout Scotland. Through a number of different trials, the programme established clear criteria for increasing sales and also developed bespoke equipment/point of sale (POS) materials which were given to participating retailers free of charge. This has led to around 600 convenience stores across Scotland improving their range, quality and stock of fresh fruit and vegetables and other healthier eating products⁵⁷.

Context

In Canada, planning and zoning laws are typically administered at the provincial/territorial or local level. Although this varies between provinces/territories, provincial or territorial governments typically set overarching zoning legislation, and local governments are responsible for creating, implementing and enforcing municipal policies that are in line with the provincial/territorial mandates.

Policy details

No policy documents were identified.

**Comments/
notes**

RETAIL3 In-store availability of healthy and unhealthy foods

Food-EPI good practice statement

The government ensures existing support systems are in place to encourage food stores to promote the in-store availability of healthy foods and to limit the in-store availability of unhealthy foods

| | |
|-------------------------------|--|
| Definitions and scope | <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Food stores include supermarkets, convenience stores (including 'general stores' or 'milk bars'), greengrocers and other speciality food retail outlets- Support systems include guidelines, resources or expert support- In-store promotion includes the use of key promotional sites such as end-of-aisle displays, checkouts and island bins as well as the use of shelf signage, floor decals or other promotional methods- In-store availability includes reducing or increasing supply (volume) of a product such as reducing the amount of shelf-space dedicated to sugar-sweetened drinks and confectionary, or offering fresh produce in a convenience store |
| International examples | <ul style="list-style-type: none">- USA: The Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) requires WIC authorised stores to stock certain healthier products (e.g. wholegrain bread)²⁷. |

Context

Policy details No policy documents were identified.

Comments/ notes

RETAIL4 Food service outlet availability of healthy and unhealthy foods

Food-EPI good practice statement

The government ensures support systems are in place to encourage food service outlets to increase the promotion and availability of healthy foods and to decrease the promotion and availability of unhealthy foods

Definitions and scope

- Food service outlets include for-profit quick service restaurants, eat-in or take-away restaurants, pubs, clubs
- Support systems include guidelines, resources or expert support
- Includes settings such as train stations, venues, facilities or events frequented by the public
- Excludes settings owned or managed by the government (see 'PROV2' and 'PROV4')
- Includes the strategic placement of foods and beverages in cabinets, fridges, on shelves or near the cashier
- Includes the use of signage to highlight healthy options or endorsements (such as traffic lights or a recognised healthy symbol)
- Includes modifying ingredients to make foods and drinks more healthy, or changing the menu to offer more healthy options

International examples

- **Singapore:** 'Healthier Hawker' program involved the government working in partnership with the Hawker's Association to support food vendors to offer healthier options such as reduced saturated fat cooking oil and wholegrain noodles and rice, reduced salt soy sauce and increased vegetable content. As part of the "Healthier Dining Programme" launched in June 2014 (formerly called the "Healthier Hawker" programme launched in 2011), food operators are encouraged to offer lower calorie meals and use healthier ingredients such as oils with reduced fat content, and/or whole grains without compromising taste and accessibility. To participate, food and beverage companies must complete an application form and implement nutrition guidelines set by the Health Promotion Board (HPB) in all outlets for a period of two years. Following HPB's approval the "Healthier Choice Symbol Identifiers" can be used next to the healthier dishes in all menu and marketing materials (e.g. "We serve lower-calorie options", "We use healthier oil"). To date, the HPB has partnered with 45 widely known food service providers (food courts, coffee shops, restaurants) to offer lower calorie and healthier meals across 1500 outlets and stalls. Between the launch of the programme and September 2015, the number of healthier meals sold more than doubled, from 525000 in June 2014 to 1.1 million in September 2015.
- **USA:** In December 2011, San Francisco implemented the Health Food Incentives Ordinance which bans restaurants, including takeaway restaurants, to give away toys and other free incentive items with children's meals unless the meals meet nutritional standards as set out in the Ordinance: meals must not contain more than 600 calories, 640mg sodium, 0.5g trans-fat, 35% total calories from fat and 10% calories from saturated fat and include a min amount of fruits and vegetables, while single food items and beverages must have <35% total calories from fat and <10% of calories from added caloric sweeteners. Incentives are defined as physical and digital items that appeal to children and teenagers, as well as coupons, vouchers or similar which allow access to these items. In 2010, Santa Clara county, California banned restaurants from providing toys or other incentives with menu items high in calories, sodium, fat or sugars. The law (Ordinance No NS300-820) sets nutrition standards prohibiting restaurants from linking toys or other incentives with single food items or meals with excessive calories (more than 200 for single food items and more than 485 calories for meals), excessive sodium (more than 480mg for single food item and more than 600mg for a meal), excessive fat (more than 35% for total fat), excessive saturated fat (>10%) and sugar (more than 10% total calories from caloric sweeteners) or more than 0.5g of trans fats. It also applies to drinks with excessive calories (more than 120 calories) and fat (more than 35% from fat) and excessive sugars (more than 10% from caloric sweeteners) added non-nutritive sweeteners or caffeine¹².

- **France:** Since January 2017, France has banned unlimited offers of sweetened beverages for free or at a fixed price in public restaurants and other facilities accommodating or receiving children under the age of 18. Sweetened beverages are defined as any drink sweetened with sugar or artificial (caloric and non-caloric) sweeteners, including flavoured carbonated and still beverages, fruit syrups, sport and energy drinks, fruit and vegetable nectars, fruit- and vegetable-based drinks, as well as water- milk- or cereal-based beverages³.

Context

Policy details

No policy documents were identified to specifically address the affordability and accessibility of healthy foods in outlets.

The **Thrive! plan** includes an action to “Develop policy options on specific issues of food access and affordability, through a cross-government committee.”

Comments/ notes

INFRASTRUCTURE SUPPORT DOMAINS

Policy area: Leadership

Food-EPI vision statement: The political leadership ensures that there is strong support for the vision, planning, communication, implementation and evaluation of policies and actions to create healthy food environments, improve population nutrition, and reduce diet-related inequalities

LEAD1 Strong, visible, political support

Food-EPI good practice statement

There is strong, visible, political support (at the Head of State / Cabinet level) for improving food environments, population nutrition, diet-related NCDs and their related inequalities

Definitions and scope

- Visible support includes statements of intent, election commitments, budget commitments, establishing priorities and targets, demonstration of support in the media, other actions that demonstrate support for new or strengthened policy
- Documents that contain evidence of strong political support include media releases, speeches, pre-election policy papers, introduction of a bill, State-level strategic plans with targets or key performance indicators
- Head of State is the Premier

International examples

- **New York City, USA:** As Mayor of New York City, Michael Bloomberg prioritised food policy and introduced a number of ground breaking policy initiatives including 'Health Bucks', a restriction on trans fats, establishment of an obesity taskforce, a portion size restriction on sugar-sweetened beverages, public awareness campaigns, etc. He showed strong and consistent leadership and a commitment to innovative approaches and cross-sectoral collaboration⁵⁸.
- **Brazil:** The Minister of Health showed leadership in developing new dietary guidelines that are drastically different from the majority of dietary guidelines created by any nation to date, and align with some of the most commonly cited recommendations for healthy eating⁵⁹.
- **CARICOM Countries:** Active NCD commissions exist in six of the 20 CARICOM member states (Bahamas, Barbados, Bermuda, British Virgin Islands, Dominica, Grenada) which are all housed in their Ministries of Health, with members recommended by the Minister of Health and appointed by the Cabinet of Government for a fixed duration; all include government agencies and to a varying degree, civil society and the private sector.

Context

In 2010, Federal/Provincial/Territorial Ministers endorsed **Curbing Childhood Obesity: A Federal, Provincial and Territorial Framework for Action to Promote Healthy Weights**, which included a mandate to “increasing the availability and accessibility of nutritious foods and decreasing the marketing to children of foods and beverages that are high in fat, sugar and/or sodium”⁶⁰.

Policy details

The Premier of NS and the Minister of Health and Wellness have endorsed the **Thrive! A Plan for a Healthier Nova Scotia**⁸. The premier specifically endorses a government-wide priority of health.

The most recently available **Annual Statement of Mandate** (2015-2016) does not mention food environments, nutrition, diet or diet-related NCDs⁶¹.

The 2015 **Mandate Letter to the Minister of Health and Wellness** does not include any mention of diet, nutrition, obesity or NDCs⁶².

The 2016 **Speech from the Throne** does not include any references to healthy diet, nutrition or obesity and diet-related NCDs⁶³.

**Comments/
notes**

LEAD2 Population intake targets established

Food-EPI good practice statement

Clear population intake targets have been established by the government for the nutrients of concern to meet WHO and national recommended dietary intake levels

| | |
|-------------------------------|---|
| Definitions and scope | <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Includes targets which specify population intakes according to average reductions in percentage or volume (e.g. mg/g) for salt, saturated fat, trans fats or added sugars- Excludes targets to reduce intake of foods that are dense in nutrients of concern- Typically requires the government to establish clear dietary guidelines on the maximum daily intake of nutrients of concern |
| International examples | <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Brazil: The "Strategic Action Plan for Confronting NCDs in Brazil, 2011-2022 specifies a target of increasing adequate consumption of fruits and vegetables, from 18.2% to 24.3 % between 2010 and 2022 and reduction of the average salt intake of 12g to 5g, between 2010 and 2022⁶⁴.- South Africa: The South African plan for the prevention and control of non-communicable diseases includes a target on reducing mean population intake of salt to <5g per day by 2020⁶⁵.- UK: In July 2015, the government adopted as official dietary advice the recommendation of the Advisory Committee on Nutrition that sugar should make up no more than 5% of daily calorie intake (30g or 7 cubes of sugar per day). Current sugar intake makes up 12 to 15% of energy. An evidence review by Public Health England outlines a number of strategies and interventions⁶⁶. |

Context

Federal Context

The Sodium Working Group, led by Health Canada and others, recommended an interim average intake of sodium at 2,300 mg of sodium per day by 2016, and longer term goal of 95% of the population with a sodium intake below the upper limit of 2,300 mg per day. These were not formally adopted by the Canadian Government in practice⁶⁷. In the Guidance for Food Industry on Reducing Sodium in Processed Foods, one of the roles of Government is to "Support reduction of Canadians' average sodium intake to 2,300 mg per day by 2016"⁶⁸.

The Trans Fat Task Force issued recommendations for targets for *trans*-fat in the food supply to align with the WHO recommendations for *trans* fats that suggest limiting intake to less than 1% of total energy intake⁶⁹. This was accepted by the Minister of Health.

Policy details

According to the report **Reducing the sodium intake of Canadians: A Provincial and Territorial Report on Progress and Recommendations for Future Action** (2012), "Canada's Premiers have endorsed sodium reduction as an important healthy living measure, and the federal, provincial and territorial Ministers of Health and Healthy Living, except Québec, have committed to achieving an interim population average intake goal of 2,300 mg per day by 2016".

The report also identifies opportunities for the federal government to support the work that provinces and territories are doing to help achieve the 2016 sodium intake goal of 2,300 mg per person each day, as agreed to by federal, provincial and territorial ministers in September 2010.

There are no other provincial targets for nutrients or food groups of concern in NS.

Comments/ notes

LEAD4 Comprehensive implementation plan linked to state/national needs

Food-EPI good practice statement

There is a comprehensive, transparent, up-to-date implementation plan (including priority policy and program strategies) linked to state/national needs and priorities, to improve food environments, reduce the intake of the nutrients of concern to meet WHO and national recommended dietary intake levels, and reduce diet-related NCDs

Definitions and scope

- Includes documented plans with specific actions and interventions (i.e. policies, programs, partnerships)
- Plans should be current (i.e. maintain endorsement by the current government and/or are being reported against)
- Plans may be at the state/department/branch/unit/team level and ownership may or may not be shared across government
- Plans should refer to actions to improve food environments (as defined in the policy domains above) and should include both policy and program strategies
- Excludes overarching frameworks that provide general guidance and direction

International examples

- **European Union:** The European Food and Nutrition Action Plan 2015-20 outlines clear strategic goals, guiding principles, objectives, priorities and tools. The plan aligns with the WHO Global Action Plan and under 'Objective 1 – Create healthy food and drink environments', there are clear policy and program actions identified⁷⁰.

Context

The Healthy Eating Action Group of the Nova Scotia Alliance for Healthy Eating and Physical Activity, in partnership with the Office of Health Promotion (now the Department of Health and Wellness), developed **Healthy Eating Nova Scotia**, a provincial healthy eating strategy, in 2005. Overall, the Strategy seeks to improve the nutritional health of Nova Scotians, leading to improved health outcomes and reduced health disparities. Four priority areas were identified, and relevant sub-priorities are bolded below:

- 1) Breastfeeding
 - a. To increase initiation and duration of breastfeeding.
 - b. To increase the number of health care organizations that have adopted the Ten Steps to Successful Breastfeeding.
 - c. To increase the number of public and community health agencies that have adopted the Seven Point Plan for Protection, Promotion and Support of breastfeeding.
- 2) Children and youth
 - a. **To improve eating patterns of children and youth, based on Canada's Food Guide to Healthy Eating.**
 - b. **To increase the availability and affordability of healthy foods in child care, school and other child and youth settings.**
 - c. To increase knowledge about food and nutrition among parents, teachers and caregivers.
 - d. To increase skills for encouraging the development of healthy eating practices in the early years, among parents and other caregivers of young children.
- 3) Fruit and vegetable consumption
 - a. **To increase consumption of fruit and vegetables among all Nova Scotians.**
 - b. **To increase the availability of fruit and vegetables in community, work, school and health care settings.**
 - c. **To improve access to and affordability of fruit and vegetables for low income populations.**
- 4) Food security
 - a. To increase the proportion of Nova Scotians who have access to nutritious foods.
 - b. To increase the availability of nutritious, locally produced foods throughout the province.

The strategy had a specific focus on reducing diet-related chronic diseases.

**Policy
details**

The **Thrive!** strategy⁸ is the current framework across government departments to promote healthy eating and healthy living, and involves:

- Department of Education
- Service Nova Scotia and Municipal Relations
- Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal
- Natural Resources, and Environment, among others.

There are 4 strategic directions for action:

- Direction #1: Support a Healthy Start for Children and Families
- Direction #2: Equip People with Skills and Knowledge for Lifelong Health
- Direction #3: Create More Opportunities to Eat Well and Be Active
- Direction #4: Plan and Build Healthier Communities

The strategy is comprehensive and built on a foundation of social policy and determinants of health. The overall Thrive! plan proposes to use policy to influence the environment. The strategy includes aspects of the RETAIL, PRICES, PROV, and PROMO domains.

The plan was originally created in 2012, and an action plan with clear leadership roles and a timeline was created up until 2014-2015. Although the strategy has expired, a comment from a government representative stated:

The evidence and priorities identified in the Thrive strategy continue to guide the healthy eating and physical activity related work in NS. Many of the actions were completed within the strategy's timelines, while work continues on other actions (written communication, April 2017).

**Comments/
notes**

LEAD5 Priorities for reducing inequalities

Food-EPI good practice statement

Government priorities have been established to reduce inequalities or protect vulnerable populations in relation to diet, nutrition, obesity and NCDs

Definitions and scope

- Frameworks, strategies or implementation plans specify aims, objectives or targets to reduce inequalities including taking a preventive approach that addresses the social and environmental determinants of health
- Frameworks, strategies or implementation plans identify vulnerable populations or priority groups
- Implementation plans specify policies or programs that aim to reduce inequalities for specific population groups
- Excludes priorities to reduce inequalities in secondary or tertiary prevention

International examples

- **New Zealand:** The Ministry of Health reports the estimates derived from health surveys and nutrition surveys by four subpopulation groups including age group, gender, ethnic group and an area level deprivation index. Similarly, estimates derived from other data types (e.g. mortality) are presented by these subpopulation groups. The contracts between MoH and NGOs or other institutions include a section on Maori Health and state: “An overarching aim of the health and disability sector is the improvement of Maori health outcomes and the reduction of Maori health inequalities. You must comply with any: a) Maori specific service requirements, b) Maori specific quality requirements and c) Maori specific monitoring requirements”. In addition, the provider quality specifications for public health services include specific requirements for Maori:” C1 Services meet needs of Maori, C2 Maori participation at all levels of strategic and service planning, development and implementation within organisation at governance, management and service delivery levels, C3: support for Maori accessing services”. In the specific contract between the Ministry of Health and Agencies for Nutrition Action, the first clause is on Maori Health: “you must comply with any Maori specific service requirements, Maori specific quality requirements and Maori specific monitoring requirements contained in the Service specifications to this agreement”.
- **Australia:** The National Indigenous Reform Agreement (Closing the Gap) is an agreement between the Commonwealth of Australia and the States and Territories. The objective of this agreement is to work together with Indigenous Australians to close the gap in Indigenous disadvantage. The targets agreed to by COAG relate to health or social determinants of health. For the target ‘Closing the life expectancy gap within a generation (by 2031)’, one of the performance indicators is the prevalence of overweight and obesity.

Context

Policy details

The Message from the Chief Public Health Officer in 2015 states:

“We are working with our partners to help develop policies and create environments that allow all Nova Scotians to lead healthier lives. This means shifting our focus to address root causes and the social determinants of health, to minimize health inequities, and to have the most significant impact on the health of the population as a whole.”

The vision for the **Thrive! plan** includes a principle of Comprehensiveness and Equity to increase equity for groups at higher risk. However, there is little specific focus on inequities relating to food environments in the plan.

Since, 2007, NS has a Poverty Reduction Working Group, under the **Poverty Reduction Working Group Act**. In 2009, NS developed **Preventing Poverty, Promoting Prosperity, Nova Scotia's Poverty Reduction Strategy**⁷¹. No specific inequity strategies or frameworks relating to diet, nutrition, obesity or NCDs were identified.

**Comments/
notes**

Policy area: Governance

Food-EPI vision statement: Governments have structures in place to ensure transparency and accountability, and encourage broad community participation and inclusion when formulating and implementing policies and actions to create healthy food environments, improve population nutrition, and reduce diet-related inequalities

GOVER1 Restricting commercial influence on policy development

Food-EPI good practice statement

There are robust procedures to restrict commercial influences on the development of policies related to food environments where they have conflicts of interest with improving population nutrition

Definitions and scope

- Includes government policies, guidelines, codes of conduct or other mechanisms to guide actions and decision-making by government employees, for example conflict of interest declaration procedures
- Includes procedures to manage partnerships with private companies or peak bodies representing industries that are consulted for the purpose of developing policy, for example committee procedural guidelines or terms of reference
- Includes publicly available, up-to-date registers of lobbyist and/or their activities

International examples

- **USA:** Mandatory and publicly accessible lobby registers exist at the federal level, as well as in nearly every state. Financial information must be disclosed, and the register is enforced through significant sanctions. A number of pieces of legislation uphold compliance with the register including Lobbying Disclosure Act of 1995 and the Honest Leadership and Open Government Act 2007.
- **New Zealand:** The State Services Commission has published Best Practice Guidelines for Departments Responsible for Regulatory Processes with Significant Commercial Implications. They cover the development and operation of a regulatory process and include specific references to principles around stakeholder relationship management⁷².
- **Australia:** The Australian Public Service Commission's Values and Code of Conduct includes a number of relevant sections such as the Conflict of Interest, Working with the Private Sector and other Stakeholders and the Lobbying Code of Conduct.

Context

Federal Context There is currently a ban on political contributions from corporations, trade unions, associations and groups federally.

Provincial Context Provincially, Alberta, Manitoba, Quebec, Ontario and Nova Scotia prohibit corporate and union donations.

**Policy
details**

As of 2001, NS has a **Lobbyists' Registration Act**⁷³, requiring consultant or in-house lobbyists to file a return with the Registrar within 10 days of commencing any lobbying activity. The information on lobbyists is publicly posted on the **Registry of Lobbyists website database**⁷⁴.

As of 2010, there is also a **Conflict of Interest Act**⁷⁵ for members of the House of Assembly, Executive Council and Public Employees. According to the **Conflict of Interest Act**, Ministers cannot manage a business carried on by a corporation, or hold partnership/stocks.

Public Private Partnership - A Guide for Local Government - details of the partnerships are allowed to be determined within municipal governments in NS, as stated in the **Municipal Act**.

According to the **Elections Act**⁷⁶, individuals are allowed to make political contributions to a party, candidate or an electoral district association; organizations such as corporations, partnerships, or unions, may not. Individuals can contribute up to \$5,000 annually. Public disclosure of the amounts greater than \$200 donated must be provided to the Chief Electoral Officer in a disclosure statement including the full name and residential address of the donor annually. Anonymous donations are not allowed.

A statement from a government representative suggested that it has been the practice of the Department of Health and Wellness to not include industry in evidence review/policy development process. Industry representatives have contributed through public consultation processes and/or stakeholder focus groups/roundtables once draft policy documents have been shared publicly (written communication, April 2017)

**Comments/
notes**

GOVER2 Use of evidence in food policies

Food-EPI good practice statement

Policies and procedures are implemented for using evidence in the development of food policies

| | |
|-------------------------------|--|
| Definitions and scope | <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Includes policies, procedures or guidelines to support government employees in the use of evidence for policy development including best practice evidence review methodology (including types and strength of evidence needed) and policy implementation in the absence of strong evidence (where the potential risks or harms of inaction are great)- Includes policies, procedures or guidelines that stipulate the requirements for the establishment of a scientific or expert committee to inform policy development- Includes the use of evidence-based models, algorithms and tools to guide policy development or within policy to guide implementation (e.g. nutrient profiling model)- Includes government resourcing of evidence and research by specific units, either within or across government departments |
| International examples | <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Australia: The National Health and Medical Research Council Act 1992 (NHMRC Act) requires NHMRC to develop evidence-based guidelines. These national guidelines are developed by teams of specialists following a rigorous nine-step development process⁷⁷. |

Context

Policy details

No policy documents were identified outlining the use of evidence or the formation of scientific or expert committees for policy development.

Comments/ notes

GOVER3 Transparency for the public in the development of food policies

Food-EPI good practice statement

Policies and procedures are implemented for ensuring transparency in the development of food policies

| | |
|-------------------------------|---|
| Definitions and scope | <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Includes policies or procedures to guide the online publishing of private sector and civil society submissions to government around the development of policy and subsequent government response to these- Includes policies or procedures that guide the use of consultation in the development of food policy- Includes policies or procedures to guide the online publishing of scoping papers, draft and final policies- Include policies or procedures to guide public communications around all policies put forward but not progressed |
| International examples | <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Australia / New Zealand: Food Standards Australia New Zealand (FSANZ) is required by the Food Standards Australia New Zealand Act 1991 to engage stakeholders in the development of new standards. This process is open to everyone in the community including consumers, public health professionals, and industry and government representatives. FSANZ has developed a Stakeholder Engagement Strategy 2013-16 that outlines the scope and processes for engagement. Under the Stakeholder Engagement Priorities 2013-16, it outlines “maintain our open and transparent approach” as one of the first priorities⁷⁸. |

Context

Policy details

The Public Engagement Support Unit (PESU) exists within the Office of Planning and Priorities to encourage engagement throughout the NS government.

Public consultations are undertaken by each department individually, and there is no central repository of policies not progressed. Public comments on consultations are not publicly posted.

Comments/ notes

GOVER4 Access to government information

Food-EPI good practice statement

The government ensures public access to comprehensive information and key documents (e.g. budget documents, annual performance reviews and health indicators) related to public health nutrition and food environments

| | |
|-------------------------------|---|
| Definitions and scope | <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Includes policies and procedures to guide the timely, online publishing of government budgets, performance reviews, audits, evaluation reports or the findings of other reviews or inquiries- Includes 'freedom of information' legislation and related processes to enable the public access to government information on request, with minimal restrictions and exemptions- Includes policies or procedures to guide the timely, online publishing of population health data captured / owned by government |
| International examples | <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Australia / New Zealand: The Freedom of Information Act provides a legally enforceable right of the public to access documents of government departments and most agencies. |

Context

Policy details

NS's **Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act** guarantees the right to access records held by Public Bodies. Most information is available through "routine access". If not, a written request must be addressed to the Public Body stating what records are required. Under the Act, Public Bodies have 30 days to respond to your request (with some caveats). A \$25 application fee and additional processing fees (for work greater than 2 hours) will be applied, and will be provided in a fee estimate⁷⁹.

The Government of NS has also developed a **Respecting Your Access and Privacy Rights - A Citizen's Guide for Nova Scotians** detailing the information available to citizens and how to request such information⁸⁰.

Additionally, the Government of NS has an open Data policy as of 2016, which provides public access to raw datasets, including a number of indicators relating to health. This information is housed in an open data portal⁸¹.

Budget documents are released annually by each department and by the Government of NS.

Comments/ notes

Policy area: Monitoring & Intelligence

Food-EPI vision statement: The government's monitoring and intelligence systems (surveillance, evaluation, research and reporting) are comprehensive and regular enough to assess the status of food environments, population nutrition and diet-related NCDs and their inequalities, and to measure progress on achieving the goals of nutrition and health plans

MONIT1 Monitoring food environments

Food-EPI good practice statement

Monitoring systems, implemented by the government, are in place to regularly monitor food environments (especially for food composition for nutrients of concern, food promotion to children, and nutritional quality of food in schools and other public sector settings), against codes / guidelines / standards / targets

Definitions and scope

- Includes monitoring systems funded fully or in part by government that are managed by an academic institution or other organisation
- Includes regular monitoring and review of the impact of policies implemented by the government on food environments (as relevant to the individual State / Territory, and described in the policy domains above), in particular:
 - Monitoring of compliance with voluntary food composition standards related to nutrients of concern in out-of-home meals (as defined in the 'Food composition' domain)
 - Monitoring of compliance with food labelling regulations (as defined in the 'Food labelling' domain above)
 - Monitoring of unhealthy food promoted to children via broadcast and non-broadcast media and in children's settings (as defined in the 'Food promotion' domain above)
 - Monitoring of compliance with food provision policies in schools, early childhood services and public sector settings (as defined in the 'Food provision' domain above)

International examples

- **Many countries** have food composition databases available. For example, the New Zealand Institute for Plant & Food Research Limited and the Ministry of Health jointly own the New Zealand Food Composition Database (NZFCD), which is a comprehensive collection of nutrient data in New Zealand containing nutrient information on more than 2600 foods.
- **New Zealand:** A national School and Early Childhood Education Services (ECES) Food and Nutrition Environment Survey was organised in all schools and ECES across New Zealand in 2007 and 2009 by the MoH to measure the school and ECES food environments.
- **UK:** In October 2005, the School Food Trust ('the Trust'; now called the Children's Food Trust) was established to provide independent support and advice to schools, caterers, manufacturers and others on improving the standard of school meals. They perform annual surveys, including the latest information on how many children are having school meals in England, how much they cost and how they're being provided⁸².

Context

**Policy
details**

Monitoring food composition for nutrients of concern

No documents were identified.

Monitoring of marketing of unhealthy foods to children

No documents were identified.

Monitoring of nutrition quality of food in schools and early childhood education services

No documents were identified.

There is monitoring of compliance with nutrition standards in ECE facilities. These documents are not made public, and are not compiled in reports.

Monitoring of nutritional quality of food in public sector settings

No policy documents were identified.

**Comments/
notes**

MONIT2 Monitoring nutrition status and intakes

Food-EPI good practice statement

There is regular monitoring of adult and childhood nutrition status and population intakes against specified intake targets or recommended daily intake levels

| | |
|-------------------------------|---|
| Definitions and scope | <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Includes monitoring of adult and child intake in line with Canada's Food Guide and Canadian dietary recommendations- Includes monitoring of adult and child intake of nutrients of concern and non-core/discretionary foods including sugar-sweetened beverages (even if there are no clear intake targets for all of these)- 'Regular' is considered to be every five years or more frequently |
| International examples | <ul style="list-style-type: none">- USA: The National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey (NHANES) is a program of studies designed to assess the health and nutritional status of adults and children in the United States. The survey is unique in that it combines interviews and physical examinations⁸³. The NHANES program began in the early 1960s and has been conducted as a series of surveys focusing on different population groups or health topics. In 1999, the survey became a continuous program that has a changing focus on a variety of health and nutrition measurements to meet emerging needs. The survey examines a nationally representative sample of about 5,000 persons each year. These persons are located in counties across the country, 15 of which are visited each year. |

Context

Federal Context

Federally, Statistics Canada and Health Canada conduct two annual surveys: The **Canadian Community Health Survey (CCHS)** and The **Canadian Health Measures Survey (CHMS)**. The CCHS is a nationally representative health survey conducted annually. The annual component includes one 6-question food frequency screener regarding dietary intake of fruits and vegetables. The Nutrition Focus component of CCHS collects one 24-hour recall from the entire sample, and two recalls among a subset of participants. The Nutrition focus was conducted in 2004, and again in 2015. The CHMS is a biospecimen survey that is conducted biannually. This information is available and considered representative at the provincial level.

Provincial Context

The most recent provincial nutrition survey in NS was conducted in 1990, and has since been discontinued.

Policy details

No policy documents describing monitoring of nutrition status in NS were identified.

Comments/notes

MONIT3 Monitoring Body Mass Index (BMI)

Food-EPI good practice statement

There is regular monitoring of adult and childhood overweight and obesity prevalence using anthropometric measurements

| | |
|-------------------------------|---|
| Definitions and scope | <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Anthropometric measurements include height, weight and waist circumference- 'Regular' is considered to be every five years or more frequently |
| International examples | <ul style="list-style-type: none">- UK: England's National Child Measurement Programme was established in 2006 and aims to measure all children in England in the first (4-5 years) and last years (10-11 years) of primary school. In 2011-2012, 565,662 children at reception and 491,118 children 10-11 years were measured⁸⁴. |

Context The annual component of CCHS collects self-reported height and weight, while the Nutrition Focus in 2004 and 2015 also collected measured height and weight for most participants.

CHMS collects self-reported height and weight, and physical measures of standing height, sitting height, weight, waist circumference, hip circumference.

Policy details No provincial monitoring of BMI was identified.

Comments/ notes

MONIT4 Monitoring NCD risk factors and prevalence

Food-EPI good practice statement

There is regular monitoring of the prevalence of NCD risk factors and occurrence rates (e.g. prevalence, incidence, mortality) for the main diet-related NCDs

Definitions and scope

- Other NCD risk factors (not already covered by 'MONIT1', 'MONIT2' and 'MONIT3') include level of physical activity, smoking, alcohol consumption.
- Diet-related NCDs include, amongst others, hypertension, hypercholesterolaemia, Type 2 Diabetes, cardiovascular disease (including ischaemic heart disease, cerebrovascular disease and other diseases of the vessels), diet-related cancers
- 'Regular' is considered to be every five years or more frequently
- May be collected through a variety of mechanisms such as population surveys or a notifiable diseases surveillance system

International examples

- **OECD countries:** Most OECD countries have regular and robust prevalence, incidence and mortality data for the main diet-related NCDs and NCD risk factors.

Context

CCHS annual component collects information on self-reported physical activity, smoking and alcohol consumption. CHMS collects physical activity data using accelerometers. CCHS also collects information on self-reported prevalence of being diagnosed with a number of diet-related NCDs including hypertension, diabetes, heart disease and some cancers.

In 2015, NS's first **Population Health Profile** was published, using a core set of health indicators identified by a network comprised of members from the Department of Health and Wellness and each health authority. The report includes 3 sections, including:

- 1) Who We Are
- 2) How Healthy Are We, and
- 3) What Affects Our Health.

The data is primarily from national datasets, and does not include any primary data collection relevant to this indicator⁸⁵.

Policy details

Cancer Care NS on behalf of the Nova Scotia Department of Health and Wellness provides estimates for cancer incidence, prevalence and mortality for all types of cancers, and can be reported specifically for diet-related cancers⁸⁶.

The Diabetes Care Program of Nova Scotia have developed a registry for clinically diagnosed diabetes, and provides surveillance of diabetes cases in NS⁸⁷.

No provincial risk factor monitoring (tobacco, physical activity, alcohol consumption) was identified.

Comments/ notes

MONIT5 Evaluation of major programmes

Food-EPI good practice statement

There is sufficient evaluation of major programs and policies to assess effectiveness and contribution to achieving the goals of the nutrition and health plans

Definitions and scope

- Includes any policies, guidelines, frameworks or tools that are used to determine the depth and type (method and reporting) of evaluation required
- Includes a comprehensive evaluation framework and plan that aligns with the key preventive health or nutrition implementation plan
- The definition of a major programs and policies is to be defined by the relevant government department
- Evaluation should be in addition to routine monitoring of progress against a project plan or program logic

International examples

- **USA:** The National Institutes for Health (NIH) provides funding for rapid assessments of natural experiments. The funding establishes an accelerated review/award process to support time-sensitive research to evaluate a new policy or program expected to influence obesity related behaviours (e.g., dietary intake, physical activity, or sedentary behaviour) and/or weight outcomes in an effort to prevent or reduce obesity⁸⁸.

Context

Policy details

No policies were identified to classify what type of evaluation is required of major programs.

A full evaluation of the Healthy Eating Nova Scotia Strategy was completed, and a final evaluation report is available online⁸⁹.

The **Thrive! plan** identifies a comprehensive evaluation framework as an action item. The logic model is publicly available⁹⁰.

Comments/ notes

MONIT6 Monitoring progress on reducing health inequalities

Food-EPI good practice statement

Progress towards reducing health inequalities or health impacts in vulnerable populations and social determinants of health are regularly monitored

Definitions and scope

- Monitoring of overweight and obesity and main diet-related NCDs includes stratification or analysis of population groups where there are the greatest health inequalities including Indigenous peoples and socio-economic strata
- Includes reporting against targets or key performance indicators related to health inequalities

International examples

- **New Zealand:** All annual Ministry of Health Surveys report estimates by subpopulations in particular by ethnicity (including Maori and Pacific peoples), by age, by gender and by New Zealand area deprivation.

Context

Policy details

No provincial documents regarding monitoring of inequalities were identified.

The Government of NS has not developed a set of indicators or metrics to assess progress on poverty reduction⁹¹.

Comments/ notes

Policy area: Funding & resources

Food-EPI vision statement: Sufficient funding is invested in 'Population Nutrition' to create healthy food environments, improved population nutrition, reductions in obesity, diet-related NCDs and related inequalities

FUND1 Population nutrition budget

Food-EPI good practice statement

The 'population nutrition' budget, as a proportion of total health spending and/or in relation to the diet-related NCD burden is sufficient to reduce diet-related NCDs

Definitions and scope

- 'Population nutrition' includes promotion of healthy eating, and policies and programs that support healthy food environments for the prevention of obesity and diet-related NCDs
- The definition **excludes** all one-on-one and group-based promotion (primary care, antenatal services, maternal and child nursing services etc.), food safety, micronutrient deficiencies (e.g. folic acid fortification) and undernutrition
- Please provide estimates for the budget allocated to the unit within the Department of Health that has primary responsibility for population nutrition. The 'Population Nutrition' budget should include workforce costs (salaries and associated on-costs) and program budgets for the 2015-16 financial year (regardless of revenue source), reported separately.
- The workforce comprises anyone whose primary role relates to population nutrition and who is employed full time, part time or casually by the Department of Health or contracted by the Department of Health to perform a population nutrition-related role (including consultants or funding of a position in another government or non-government agency). The number of full time equivalent persons in the workforce will be reported in 'FUND4'
- Exclude budget items related to physical activity promotion. If this is not feasible (for example, a program that combines both nutrition and physical activity elements), please highlight where this is the case
- With regards to 'health spending', please provide the total budget of the Department of Health or relevant department/ministry for the 2016-17 financial year

International examples

NOTE THESE ARE EXAMPLES ONLY: NO BENCHMARKS ARE AVAILABLE

- **New Zealand:** The total funding for population nutrition was estimated at about \$67 million or 0.6% of the health budget during 2008/09 Healthy Eating Healthy Action period. Dietary risk factors account for 11.4% of health loss in New Zealand.
- **Thailand:** According to the most recent report on health expenditure in 2012, the government greatly increased budget spent on policies and actions related to nutrition (excluding food, hygiene and drinking water control). Total expenditure on health related to nutrition specifically from local governments was 29,434.5 million baht (7.57% of total health expenditure from public funding agencies), which was ten times over the budget spending on nutrition in 2011. Dietary risk factors account for more than 10% of health loss in Thailand.

Context

**Policy
details**

The overall main estimates of expenditures for NS for 2016-2017 are \$10,145,614,000.

The main estimates for Health in the 2016-2017 budget for NS are \$4,132,209,000.

In addition, Risk Management – Health Promotion receives a budget of \$1,436,000. The function and mandate crosses several health promotion priorities including nutrition, active transportation, injury prevention, tobacco reduction, gambling, cannabis, etc.

**Comments/
notes**

FUND2 Research funding for obesity & NCD prevention

Food-EPI good practice statement

Government funded research is targeted for improving food environments, reducing obesity, NCDs and their related inequalities

Definitions and scope

- Includes the clear identification of research priorities related to improving food environments, reducing obesity, NCDs and their related inequalities in health or medical research strategies or frameworks
- Includes identifying research projects conducted or commissioned by the government specifically targeting food environments, prevention of obesity or NCDs (excluding secondary or tertiary prevention)
- It is limited to research projects committed to or conducted within the last 12 months.
- Excludes research grants administered by the government (including statutory agencies) to a research group where the allocation of a pool of funding was determined by an independent review panel
- Excludes evaluation of interventions (this is explored in 'MONIT5' and should be part of an overall program budget)

International examples

NOTE THESE ARE EXAMPLES ONLY: NO BENCHMARKS ARE AVAILABLE

Australia: The National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC) Act requires the CEO to identify major national health issues likely to arise. The National Health Priority Areas (NHPAs) articulate priorities for research and investment and have been designated by Australian governments as key targets because of their contribution to the burden of disease in Australia. For the 2015-16 Corporate Plan, obesity, diabetes and cardiovascular health are three of these NHPAs.

Thailand: The National Research Council funded more research projects on obesity and diet-related chronic diseases (such as diabetes, cardiovascular diseases and hypertension) in 2014, accountable for almost six times over the research funding in 2013 (from 6,875,028 baht in 2013 to 37,872,416 baht in 2014).

Context

Federal Context

The main research funding for population nutrition in Canada is the Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR). CIHR has funding opportunities for food environment, obesity and NCD research, as well as inequalities, primarily through the Institute for Nutrition, Metabolism and Diabetes and the Institution of Population and Public Health.

Health Canada and PHAC have some opportunities for funding the Grants and Contributions, etc., which are provided on a case-by-case basis.

Provincial Context

The **Nova Scotia Health Research Foundation** (NSHRF) was created under the **Health Research Foundation Act** in 2000, with a goal of assisting, collaborating on and funding individuals in health research across NS.

Policy details

The NSHRF Population Health research priorities include:

- Changing demographics
- Factors that contribute to inequities (income, education, race, culture, literacy, etc.)
- Issues specific and unique to marginalized populations in NS
- Disease prevention
- Mental health

They do not specifically include NCDs, obesity, or food/nutrition; however, they do have a focus on inequities.

DHW has funded several cycles of provincial participatory food costing to determine the cost and affordability of a basic nutritious diet for various household scenarios. The latest report can be viewed here: http://foodarc.ca/wp-content/uploads/2017/03/2016_Food_Costing_Report_LR_SPREADS.pdf

**Comments/
notes**

FUND3 Health promotion agency

Food-EPI good practice statement

There is a statutory health promotion agency in place, with a secure funding stream, that includes an objective to improve population nutrition

| | |
|-------------------------------|---|
| Definitions and scope | <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Agency was established through legislation- Includes objective to improve population nutrition in relevant legislation, strategic plans or on agency website- Secure funding stream involves the use of a hypothecated tax or other secure source |
| International examples | <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Australia: The Victorian Health Promotion Foundation (VicHealth) was the world's first health promotion foundation, established by the Victorian Parliament as part of the Tobacco Act of 1987 (for the first 10 years through a hypothecated tobacco tax) through which the objectives of VicHealth are stipulated. VicHealth continues to maintain bipartisan support. |

Context

Provincial Context of the structure of the public health system in NS

The Government of NS did a major re-design of health and health promotion in 2015 and 2016. Prior to 2015, the **Department of Health and Wellness** set provincial priorities. The Public Health Branch of the Department had 5 main divisions for priority areas:

- Healthy communities
- Healthy development
- Environmental health
- Population Health assessment and surveillance
- Communicable disease prevention and control.

The Public Health Leadership Team (made up of 5 Public Health Directors from each of the public health units, the Chief Public Health Officer, Regional Medical Officers of Health) sets collective provincial priorities for public health. District Health Authorities were responsible for implementing the programs.

This structure no longer exists because of health system re-design, which created the Provincial Health Authority as of April 1, 2015 (compared to 9 district health authorities). As of April 1, 2016, the Department of Health and Wellness was developed. As part of health system re-design, the NS Department of Health and Wellness has a renewed focus and commitment to health promotion with the creation of the new Health Promotion Branch within the department. Public Health is now housed within the Nova Scotia Health Authority, as is much of the responsibility for healthy eating policies.

**Note that this is not meant to be rated, but is provided for information only.*

Policy details

There is no statutory health promotion agency in NS.

Comments/ notes

Policy area: Platforms for Interaction

Food-EPI vision statement: There are coordination platforms and opportunities for synergies across government departments, levels of government, and other sectors (NGOs, private sector, and academia) such that policies and actions in food and nutrition are coherent, efficient and effective in improving food environments, population nutrition, diet-related NCDs and their related inequalities

PLATF1 Coordination mechanisms (national, state and local government)

Food-EPI good practice statement

There are robust coordination mechanisms across departments and levels of government (national, state and local) to ensure policy coherence, alignment, and integration of food, obesity and diet-related NCD prevention policies across governments

- | | |
|-------------------------------|--|
| Definitions and scope | <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Includes cross-government or cross-departmental governance structures, committees or working groups (at multiple levels of seniority), agreements, memoranda of understanding, etc.- Includes cross-government or cross-departmental shared priorities, targets or objectives- Includes strategic plans or frameworks that map the integration and alignment of multiple policies or programs across governments and across departments- Includes cross-government or cross-departmental collaborative planning, implementation or reporting processes, consultation processes for the development of new policy or review of existing policy |
| International examples | <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Finland: The Finnish National Nutrition Council is an inter-governmental expert body under the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry with advisory, coordinating and monitoring functions. It is composed of representatives elected for three-year terms from government authorities dealing with nutrition, food safety, health promotion, catering, food industry, trade and agriculture³².- Malta: Based on the Healthy Lifestyle Promotion and Care of NCDs Act (2016), Malta established an inter-ministerial Advisory Council on Healthy Lifestyles in August 2016 to advise the Minister of Health on any matter related to healthy lifestyles. In particular, the Advisory Council advises on a life course approach to physical activity and nutrition, and on policies, action plans and regulations intended to reduce the occurrence of NCDs. The prime minister appoints the chair and the secretary of the Advisory Council, while the ministers of education, health, finance, social policy, sports, local government, and home affairs appoint one member each³².- Australia: There are several forums and committees for the purpose of strengthening food regulation with representation from New Zealand and Health Ministers from Australian States and Territories, the Australian Government, as well as other Ministers from related portfolios (e.g. Primary Industries). Where relevant, there is also representation from the Australian Local Government Association. |

Context All provinces and territories are part of the Federal, Provincial, Territorial Group on Nutrition. This group includes representatives from all provincial governments and territorial governments departments of health, or the department responsible for health, and meets quarterly.

**Policy
details**

At the provincial level, the Government of NS, under the leadership of the Department of Health and Wellness, has endorsed the **Thrive! A Plan for a Healthier Nova Scotia**. This is a whole-of-government strategy, with a specific focus on the use of policy to improve the healthfulness of the food environment.

**Comments/
notes**

PLATF2 Platforms for government and food sector interaction

Food-EPI good practice statement

There are formal platforms between government and the commercial food sector to implement healthy food policies

Definitions and scope

- The commercial food sector includes food production, food technology, manufacturing and processing, marketing, distribution, retail and food service, etc. For the purpose of this indicator, this extends to commercial non-food sectors (e.g. advertising and media, sports organisations, land/housing developers, private childcare, education and training institutes) that are indirectly related to food
- Includes established groups, forums or committees active within the last 12 months for the purpose of information sharing, collaboration, seeking advice on healthy food policies
- Includes platforms to support, manage or monitor private sector pledges, commitments or agreements
- Includes platforms for open consultation
- Includes platforms for the government to provide resources or expert support to the commercial food sector to implement policy
- Excludes joint partnerships on projects or co-funding schemes
- Excludes initiatives covered by 'RETAIL3' and 'RETAIL4'

International examples

- **UK:** The UK 'Responsibility Deal' was a UK government initiative to bring together food companies and non-government organisations to take steps (through voluntary pledges) to address NCDs during 2010-2015. It was chaired by the Secretary of State for Health and included senior representatives from the business community (as well as NGOs, public health organisations and local government). A number of other subgroups were responsible for driving specific programs relevant to the commercial food sector.

Context

Policy details

No policy documents specific to industry interaction were identified.

Representatives from the Food Sector could contribute to open consultations available on Department websites, when applicable.

Comments/ notes

PLATF3 Platforms for government and civil society interaction

Food-EPI good practice statement

There are formal platforms for regular interactions between government and civil society on food policies and other strategies to improve population nutrition

Definitions and scope

- Civil society includes community groups and consumer representatives, NGOs, academia, professional associations, etc.
- Includes established groups, forums or committees active within the last 12 months for the purpose of information sharing, collaboration, seeking advice
- Includes platforms for consultation on proposed plans, policy or public inquiries
- Excludes policies or procedures that guide consultation in the development of food policy (see 'GOVER3')

International examples

- **Brazil:** The National Council of Food and Nutrition Security (CONSEA) is a body made up of civil society and government representatives, which advises the President's office on matters involving food and nutrition security⁹². CONSEA is made up from one-third government and two-thirds non-government executives and workers. It is housed in and reports to the office of the president of the republic. It is responsible for formulating and proposing public policies whose purpose is to guarantee the human right to healthy and adequate food. There are also CONSEAs at state and municipal levels that deal with specific issues, and responsible for organising CONSEA conferences at their level. CONSEAs are charged to represent Brazilian social, regional, racial and cultural diversity at municipal, state or national level. The elected politicians in Brazil's parliament formally have the power to challenge and even overturn proposals made by CONSEA. In practice, it is most unlikely that any Brazilian government, whether of the left or right, would wish to do so, partly because of the constitutional status of the CONSEA system, and being so carefully representative of all sectors and levels of society, it remains strong and popular.

Context

Policy details

Consultations in the Government of NS are decided at the discretion of the Department.

No provincial policy documents were identified outlining requirements for public consultation by government officials.

Comments/ notes

Policy area: Health-in-all-policies

Food-EPI vision statement: Processes are in place to ensure policy coherence and alignment, and that population health impacts are explicitly considered in the development of government policies

HIAP1 Assessing the health impacts of food policies

Food-EPI good practice statement

There are processes in place to ensure that population nutrition, health outcomes and reducing health inequalities or health impacts in vulnerable populations are considered and prioritised in the development of all government policies relating to food

- | | |
|-------------------------------|--|
| Definitions and scope | <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Includes policies, procedures, guidelines, tools and other resources that guide the consideration and assessment of nutrition, health outcomes and reducing health inequalities or health impacts in vulnerable populations prior to, during and following implementation of food-related policies- Includes the establishment of cross-department governance and coordination structures while developing food-related policies |
| International examples | <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Slovenia: Undertook a HIA in relation to agricultural policy at a national level. The HIA followed a six-stage process: policy analysis; rapid appraisal workshops with stakeholders from a range of backgrounds; review of research evidence relevant to the agricultural policy; analysis of Slovenian data for key health-related indicators; a report on the findings to a key cross-government group; and evaluation⁹³. |

Context

Policy details No policy details were identified.

Comments/notes

HIAP2 Assessing the health impacts of non-food policies

Food-EPI good practice statement

There are processes (e.g. HIAs) to assess and consider health impacts during the development of other non-food policies

Definitions and scope

- Includes a government-wide HiAP strategy or plan with clear actions for non-health sectors
- Includes policies, guidelines, tools and other resources that guide the consideration and assessment of health impacts prior to, during and following implementation of non-food-related policies (e.g. HIAs or health lens analysis)
- Includes the establishment of cross-department or cross-sector governance and coordination structures to implement a HiAP approach
- Includes workforce training and other capacity building activities in healthy public policy for non-health departments (e.g. agriculture, education, communications, trade)
- Includes monitoring or reporting requirements related to health impacts for non-health departments

International examples

- **Australia:** Established in 2007, the successful implementation of Health in All Policies (HiAP) in South Australia has been supported by a high level mandate from central government, an overarching framework which is supportive of a diverse program of work, a commitment to work collaboratively and in partnership across agencies, and a strong evaluation process. The government has established a dedicated HiAP team within South Australia Health to build workforce capacity and support Health lens Analysis projects⁹⁴. Since 2007, the South Australian HiAP approach has evolved to remain relevant in a changing context. However, the purpose and core principles of the approach remain unchanged. There have been five phases to the work of HiAP in South Australia between 2007 and 2016: 1) Prove concept and practice emerges (2007-2008), 2) Establish and apply methodology (2008-2009), 3) Consolidate and grow (2009-2013), 4) Adapt and review (2014) and 5) Strengthen and systematise (2015-2016).
- **Finland:** Finland has worked towards a Health in All Policies (HiAP) approach for over the past four decades⁹⁵. In the early 1970s, improving public health became a political priority, and the need to influence key determinants of health through sectors beyond the health sector became evident. The work began with policy on nutrition, smoking and accident prevention. Finland adopted HiAP as the health theme for its EU Presidency in 2006.

Context

Thrive! A Plan for a Healthier Nova Scotia: A policy and environmental approach to healthy eating and physical activity (Thrive! plan) was developed in 2012 by the Department of Health and Wellness as the province's childhood obesity prevention strategy. The plan focuses on the environmental factors that influence diet and activity levels⁸.

Policy details

One action in the **Thrive! plan**⁸ is to:

"Embed health impact assessment in public health legislation. As part of the Public Health Renewal process, government is working to develop comprehensive public health legislation. A health impact assessment will strengthen this legislation".

Comments/ notes

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