

SWAP and HER Guidelines

SUPPORTING WELLNESS AT PANTRIES



We will be talking about...

SWAP

- What is SWAP?
- Goals of SWAP

HER guidelines

- What are HER nutrition guidelines?
- What to look for on the Nutrition Facts label

Implementing SWAP

- Beginning steps
- SWAP Checklist
- Q&A with Berkshire Community College

What is SWAP?

SWAP™ Supporting Wellness
At Pantries



GREEN

Choose often;
low in saturated fat,
sodium and added sugars;
supports health

YELLOW

Choose sometimes;
medium levels of saturated
fat, sodium or added sugars;
can contribute to good health

RED

Choose rarely;
high levels of saturated fat,
sodium or added sugars;
think of as treats;
limited health benefits

Stoplight nutrition system

Promotes healthy food
choices at food banks &
pantries

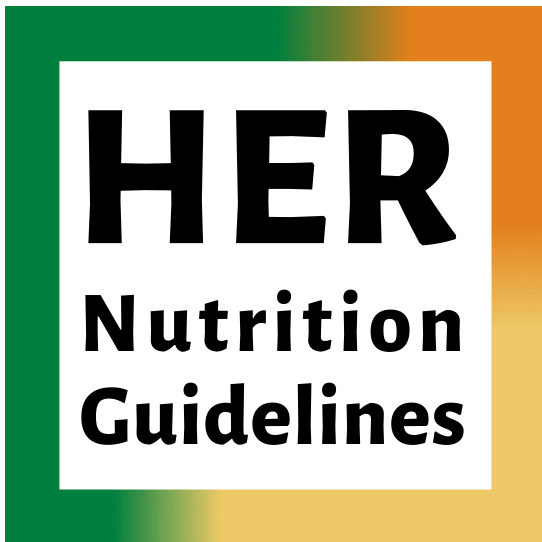
Ranks food based on
nutrients linked with risk of
chronic diseases:

- Saturated fat
- Sodium
- Added sugars



What is SWAP?

- Aligns with the **Healthy Eating Research (HER) Nutrition Guidelines for the Charitable Food System**
- One **national standard** for ranking food **nutritionally** in food banks and pantries
- **Tools and resources** to help food banks and pantries put HER Nutrition Guidelines into action



Nutrition Guidelines for Ranking Charitable Food

Food Category*	Example Products	Choose Often			Choose Sometimes			Choose Rarely		
		Saturated Fat	Sodium	Added Sugars**	Saturated Fat	Sodium	Added Sugars**	Saturated Fat	Sodium	Added Sugars**
Fruits and Vegetables	Fresh, canned, frozen, and dried fruits and vegetables, frozen broccoli with cheese sauce, apple sauce, tomato sauce, 100% juice, 100% fruit popsicle	≤2 g	≤230 mg	0 g	All 100% juice and plain dried fruit			≥2.5 g***	≥480 mg	≥12 g
					≥2.5 g***	231-479 mg	1-11 g			
Grains	Bread, rice, pasta, grains with seasoning mixes	First ingredient must be whole grain AND meet following thresholds:			≥2.5 g***	231-479 mg	7-11 g	≥2.5 g***	≥480 mg	≥12 g
		≤2 g	≤230 mg	≤6 g						
Protein	Animal (beef, pork, poultry, sausage, deli meats, hot dogs, eggs) and plant proteins (nuts, seeds, veggie burgers, soy, beans, peanut butter)	≤2 g	≤230 mg	≤6 g	2.5-4.5 g	231-479 mg	7-11 g	≥5 g	≥480 mg	≥12 g
Dairy	Milk, cheese, yogurt	≤3 g	≤230 mg	0 g	3.5-6 g	231-479 mg	1-11 g	≥6.5 g	≥480 mg	≥12 g
Non-Dairy Alternatives	All plant-based milks, yogurts and cheeses	≤2 g	≤230 mg	≤6 g	≥2.5 g	231-479 mg	7-11 g	≥2.5 g	≥480 mg	≥12 g
Beverages	Water, soda, coffee, tea, sports drinks, non-100% juice products	0 g	0 mg	0 g	0 g	1-140 mg	1-11 g	≥1 g	≥141 mg	≥12 g
Mixed Dishes	Frozen meals, soups, stews, macaroni and cheese	≤3 g	≤480 mg	≤6 g	3.5-6 g	481-599 mg	7-11 g	≥6.5 g	≥800 mg	≥12 g
Processed and Packaged Snacks	Chips (including potato, corn, and other vegetable chips), crackers, granola and other bars, popcorn	None			If a grain is the first ingredient, it must be a whole grain AND meet following thresholds:			≥2.5 g	≥141mg	≥7 g
					0-2 g	0-140 mg	0-6 g			
Desserts	Ice cream, frozen yogurt, chocolate, cookies, cakes, pastries, snack cakes, baked goods, cake mixes	None			None			All desserts		
Condiments and Cooking Staples	Spices, oil, butter, plant-based spreads, flour, salad dressing, jarred sauces (except tomato sauce), seasoning, salt, sugar	Not ranked								
Miscellaneous Products	Nutritional supplements, baby food	Not ranked								

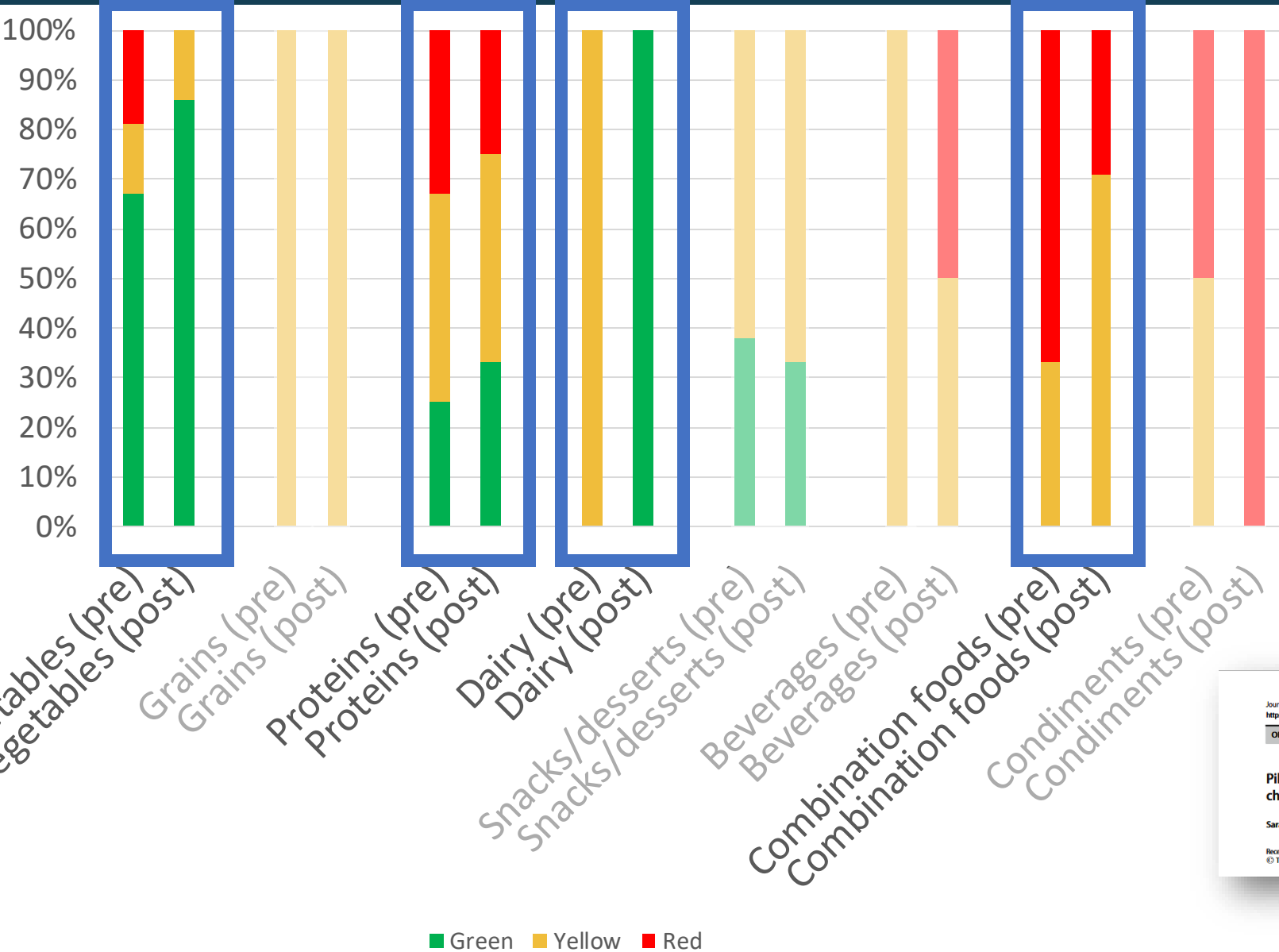
Goals of SWAP



- Increase **supply and demand for healthy food** at food banks and food pantries
- **Categorize food distributed** at food banks and food pantries
- Help **prevent, manage, and reverse chronic diet-related illnesses** associated with food insecurity



SWAP Results



+11%



-7%



McKee et al. (2021),
Cooksey Stowers et al. (2022)

HER Guidelines

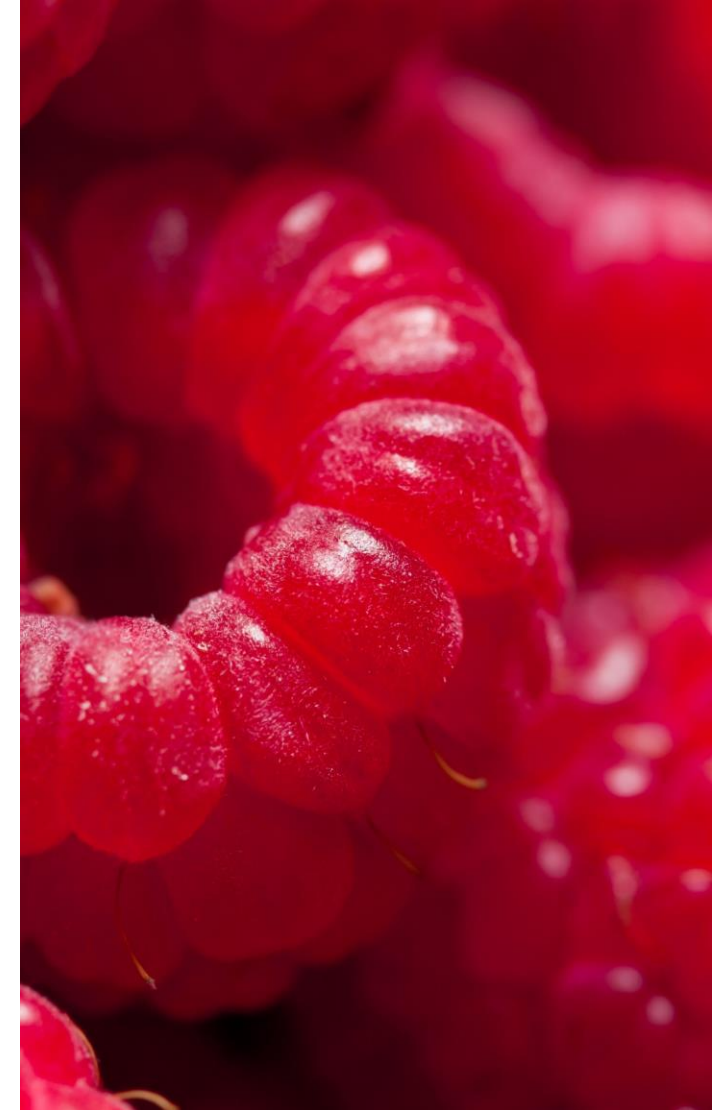
Healthy
Eating
Research



Robert Wood Johnson
Foundation

HER **Nutrition** **Guidelines**

- Developed by a panel of nutrition experts, including food bank staff
- 11 categories
- 3 levels of ranking
- Ranks based on 3 nutrients
 - Except: grains, condiments, cooking staples



HER Guidelines

Food Category*	Example Products	Choose Often			Choose Sometimes			Choose Rarely		
		Saturated Fat	Sodium	Added Sugars**	Saturated Fat	Sodium	Added Sugars**	Saturated Fat	Sodium	Added Sugars**
Fruits and Vegetables	Fresh, canned, frozen, and dried fruits and vegetables, frozen broccoli with cheese sauce, apple sauce, tomato sauce, 100% juice, 100% fruit popsicle	≤2 g	≤230 mg	0 g	≥2.5 g***	231-479 mg	1-11 g	≥2.5 g***	≥480 mg	≥12 g
Grains	Bread, rice, pasta, grains with seasoning mixes	First ingredient must be whole grain AND meet following thresholds:			≥2.5 g***	231-479 mg	7-11 g	≥2.5 g***	≥480 mg	≥12 g
		≤2 g	≤230 mg	≤6 g						
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Dairy	Milk, cheese, yogurt	≤3 g	≤230 mg	0 g	3.5-6 g	231-479 mg	1-11 g	≥6.5 g	≥480 mg	≥12 g
Non-Dairy Alternatives	All plant-based milks, yogurts and cheeses	≤2 g	≤230 mg	≤6 g	≥2.5 g	231-479 mg	7-11 g	≥2.5 g	≥480 mg	≥12 g
Beverages	Water, soda, coffee, tea, sports drinks, non-100% juice products	0 g	0 mg	0 g	0 g	1-140 mg	1-11 g	≥1 g	≥141 mg	≥12 g
Mixed Dishes	Frozen meals, soups, stews, macaroni and cheese	≤3 g	≤480 mg	≤6 g	3.5-6 g	481-599 mg	7-11 g	≥6.5 g	≥600 mg	≥12 g
Processed and Packaged Snacks	Chips (including potato, corn, and other vegetable chips), crackers, granola and other bars, popcorn	None			If a grain is the first ingredient, it must be a whole grain AND meet following thresholds:			≥2.5 g	≥141mg	≥7 g
					0-2 g	0-140 mg	0-6 g			
Desserts	Ice cream, frozen yogurt, chocolate, cookies, cakes, pastries, snack cakes, baked goods, cake mixes	None			None			All desserts		
Condiments and Cooking Staples	Spices, oil, butter, plant-based spreads, flour, salad dressing, jarred sauces (except tomato sauce), seasoning, salt, sugar	Not ranked								
Miscellaneous Products	Nutritional supplements, baby food	Not ranked								

How were these limits determined?

Defining Limits for Key Nutrients



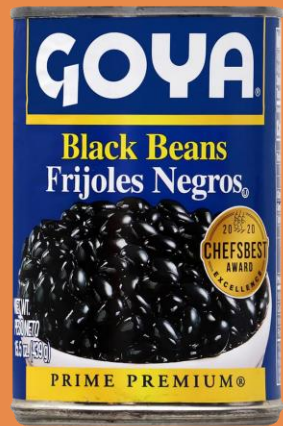
Health experts discussed appropriate limits for key nutrients of concern, considering the purpose and the category of foods



The background of the slide is a close-up photograph of green plant life. It features several large, vibrant green leaves with prominent, intricate vein patterns. Interspersed among the leaves are several long, slender green seed pods, each containing a row of small, dark, oval-shaped seeds. The lighting is soft, highlighting the textures of the leaves and pods.

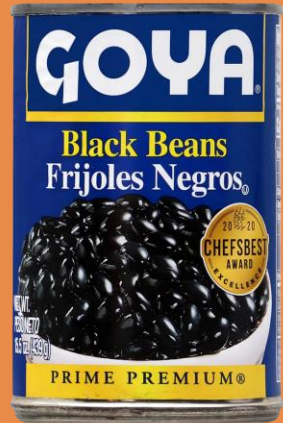
Why is this important?

Why is this important?



Which can had reduced sodium?

Why is this important?



410 mg



135 mg



135
mg



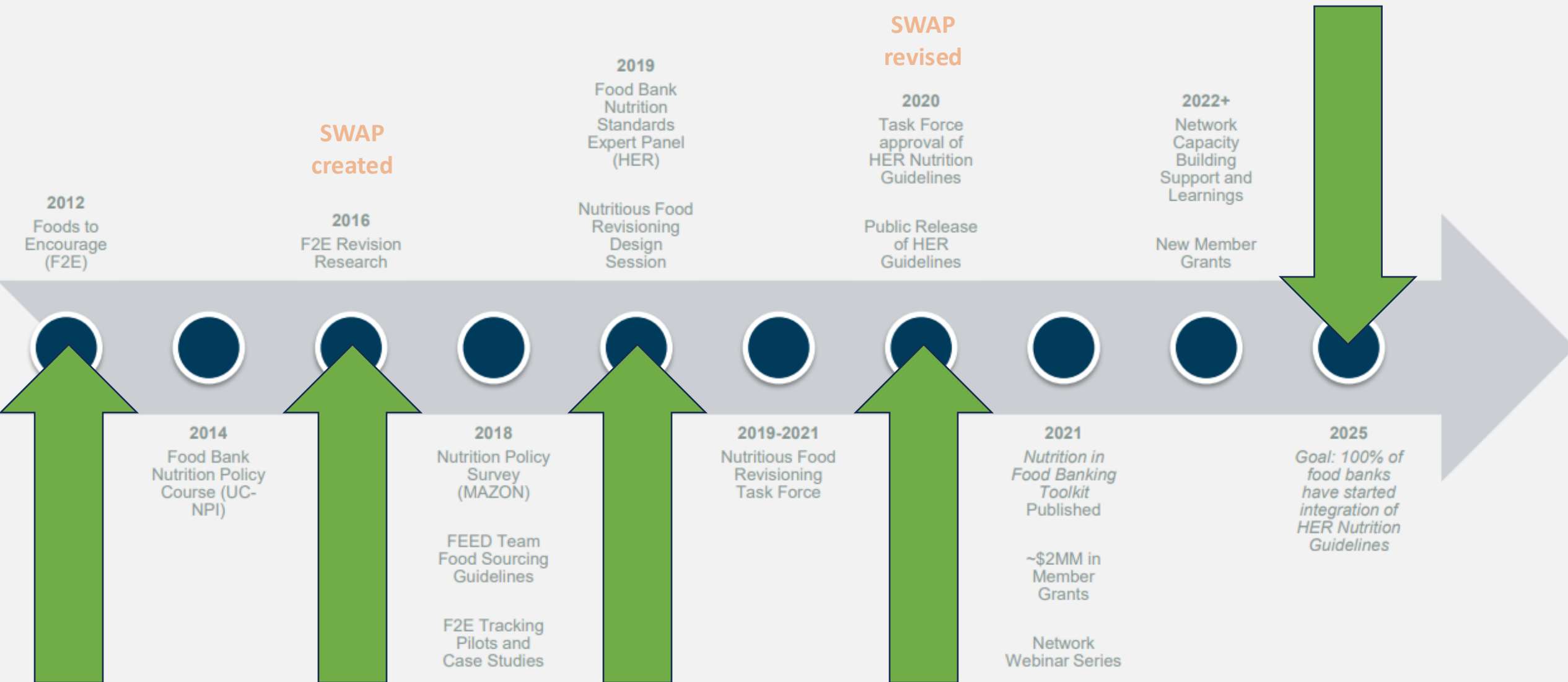
460
mg

Why is this important?

- Supports health
 - **Over half** of households who visit food pantries have a member with **high blood pressure** and **one-third** have a member with **type 2 diabetes**
- Fast
 - Stoplight colors faster to identify than reviewing full nutrition facts panel
- Easy to understand
 - Does not require ability to read English for pantry clients
- Easy to implement
 - Does not require nutrition expertise to rank foods



Timeline of SWAP/HER



Beginning steps

When food arrives at the pantry, have a designated area for the food to be stored until staff or volunteers can sort and rank it.

1. Sort
2. Rank
3. Shelf



1. Sort

Determine which food group the item belongs in:

- Fruits and Vegetables
- Grains
- Protein
- Dairy
- Non-Dairy Alternatives
- Miscellaneous Items (Baby food, supplements, etc.)
- Desserts
- Condiments/Cooking Staples
- Processed/Packaged Snacks
- Beverages
- Mixed Dishes (e.g., soup)

Organize into bins or boxes to make it easier to keep track of items



2. Rank

Using the SWAP guidelines, look at the nutrition label for:

- Saturated Fat
- Sodium
- Added Sugars

Compare with the SWAP nutrition guidelines and rank based on food group

Nutrition Facts	
8 servings per container	
Serving size	2/3 cup (55g)
Amount per serving	
Calories	230
% Daily Value*	
Total Fat 8g	10%
Saturated Fat 1g	5%
Trans Fat 0g	
Cholesterol 0mg	0%
Sodium 160mg	7%
Total Carbohydrate 37g	13%
Dietary Fiber 4g	14%
Total Sugars 12g	
Includes 10g Added Sugars	20%
Protein 3g	
Vitamin D 2mcg	10%
Calcium 260mg	20%
Iron 8mg	45%
Potassium 235mg	6%
<small>* The % Daily Value (DV) tells you how much a nutrient in a serving of food contributes to a daily diet. 2,000 calories a day is used for general nutrition advice.</small>	

Reading a label

Nutrition Facts

8 servings per container

Serving size 2/3 cup (55g)

Amount per serving

Calories **230**

% Daily Value*

Total Fat 8g **10%**

Saturated Fat 1g **5%**

Trans Fat 0g

Cholesterol 0mg **0%**

Sodium 160mg **7%**

Total Carbohydrate 37g **13%**

Dietary Fiber 4g **14%**

Total Sugars 12g

Includes 10g Added Sugars **20%**

Protein 3g

Vitamin D 2mcg **10%**

Calcium 260mg **20%**

Iron 8mg **45%**

Potassium 235mg **6%**

* The % Daily Value (DV) tells you how much a nutrient in a serving of food contributes to a daily diet. 2,000 calories a day is used for general nutrition advice.

Saturated fat

Sodium

Added sugar

Serving sizes

A

Nutrition Facts

8 servings per container

Serving size 2/3 cup (55g)

Amount per serving

Calories 230

% Daily Value*

Total Fat 8g 10%

Saturated Fat 1g 5%

Trans Fat 0g

Cholesterol 0mg 0%

Sodium 160g 7%

Total Carbohydrate 37g 13%

Dietary Fiber 4g 14%

Total Sugars 12g

Includes 10g Added Sugars 20%

Protein 3g

Vitamin D 2mcg 10%

Calcium 260mg 20%

Iron 8mg 45%

Potassium 240mg 6%

*The % Daily Value (DV) tells you how much a nutrient in a serving of food contributes to a daily diet. 2,000 calories a day is used for general nutrition advice.

B

Nutrition Facts

2 servings per container

Serving size 1 cup (255g)

Calories

Per serving
220

Per container
440

% DV*

% DV*

Total Fat

5g

6%

10g

13%

Saturated Fat

2g

10%

4g

20%

Trans Fat

0g

0g

Cholesterol

15mg

5%

30mg

10%

Sodium

240mg

10%

480mg

21%

Total Carb.

35g

13%

70g

25%

Dietary Fiber

6g

21%

12g

43%

Total Sugars

7g

14g

Incl. Added Sugars

4g

8%

8g

16%

Protein

9g

18g

Vitamin D

5mcg

25%

10mcg

50%

Calcium

200mg

15%

400mg

30%

Iron

1mg

6%

2mg

10%

Potassium

470mg

10%

940mg


20%

* The % Daily Value (DV) tells you how much a nutrient in a serving of food contributes to a daily diet. 2,000 calories a day is used for general nutrition advice.

Assigning rank

Categorize into the color ranking


- If all nutrient levels fall within one color, the food is categorized by that color
- If nutrient levels fall within multiple colors, categorize by the least encouraged color (red or yellow)



SWAP Guide

Supporting Wellness At Pantries

Food Category	Choose Often			Choose Sometimes			Choose Rarely		
	Saturated Fat	Sodium	Added Sugars*	Saturated Fat	Sodium	Added Sugars*	Saturated Fat	Sodium	Added Sugars*
Fruits and Vegetables	≤2g	≤230mg	0g (≤10g for Total Sugars)	100% juice and plain dried fruit are yellow.			≥2.5g	≥480mg	≥12g (≥24g for Total Sugars)
Grains	First ingredient must be whole grain AND meet following thresholds:			≥2.5g	231-479mg	1-11g (13-23g for Total Sugars)	≥2.5g	≥480mg	≥12g
Protein	≤2g	≤230mg	≤6g	2.5-4.5g	231-479mg	7-11g	≥5g	≥480mg	≥12g
Dairy	≤3g	≤230mg	0g (≤12g for Total Sugars)	3.5-6g	231-479mg	1-11g (13-23g for Total Sugars)	≥6.5g	≥480mg	≥12g (≥24g for Total Sugars)
Non-Dairy Alternatives	≤2g	≤230mg	≤6g	≥2.5g	231-479mg	7-11g	≥2.5g	≥480mg	≥12g
Beverages	0g	0mg	0g	0g	1-140mg	1-11g	≥3g	≥141mg	≥12g
Mixed Dishes	≤3g	≤480mg	≤6g	3.5-6g	481-599mg	7-11g	≥6.5g	≥600mg	≥12g
Processed and Packaged Snacks	None			If a grain is the first ingredient, it must be a whole grain AND meet following thresholds: 0-2g 0-140mg 0-6g			≥2.5g	≥141mg	≥7g
Desserts	None			None			All desserts are red		
Condiments and Cooking Staples	Unranked. Examples include salad dressing, sauces (except tomato sauce), jelly, syrup, oils, flour, sugars.								
Misc. Products	Unranked. Examples include baby food, nutritional supplements, protein powders.								



Connecticut Foodshare
Institute for Hunger Research & Solutions

Supporting Wellness at Pantries (SWAP)™

This tool was revised in 2020, with funding provided by Healthy Eating Research (HER), a national Program of the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, to align with the HER Nutrition Guidelines for the Charitable Food System.

Healthy Eating Research

Please see Instruction tab below for a step-by-step guide for using this tool.

Rank foods using SWAP™ by entering the name, food group and nutrition information from the food label.

Food Name	Food Group	Saturated Fat (g)	Sodium (mg)	Sugar (g)	Rank
ABC Creamy Peanut Butter	Protein	2.5	140	3	Yellow
Solid White Tuna (Bumblebee)	Protein	0	140	0	Green
Fruit, mixed in light syrup	Fruits and Veges - Added Sugars	0	15	11	Yellow
Spaghetti sauce (Ragu mushroom)	Fruits and Veges - Added Sugars	0	470	10	Yellow
Chunky beef stew (Castleberg's)	Mixed Dishes / Combo Meals	6	970	4	Red
Dairy Pure 2% reduced fat milk	Dairy - Total Sugars	3	110	12	Green
Ground coffee	Beverages	0	0	0	Green
Rice- Gulf Pacific Brown Rice	Grains: Whole Grain	0	10	0	Green
Yogurt	Dairy - Total Sugars	0	55	16	Yellow

Trix

Whole Grain
First Ingredient

THIS CEREAL CONTAINS
12^g
WHOLE GRAIN PER SERVING

Potassium	3,500mg	375g
Total Carbohydrate	300g	30g
Dietary Fiber	25g	

Ingredients: Whole Grain Corn, Sugar, Corn Meal, Corn Syrup, Canola and/or Rice Bran Oil, Salt, Trisodium Phosphate, Red and Other Colors

Food Category*	Example Products	Choose Often			Choose Sometimes			Choose Rarely		
		Saturated Fat	Sodium	Added Sugars**	Saturated Fat	Sodium	Added Sugars**	Saturated Fat	Sodium	Added Sugars**
Grains	Bread, rice, pasta, grains with seasoning mixes	First ingredient must be whole grain AND meet following thresholds:			≥2.5 g***	231-479 mg	7-11 g	≥2.5 g***	≥480 mg	≥12 g
		≤2 g	≤230 mg	≤6 g						

Foods that are Green

- All fresh fruits and vegetables
- Whole eggs
- Whole grain bread, pasta, tortillas
- Brown rice
- Skim, 1%, and 2% milk
- Plain water, coffee, and tea



Foods that are **Yellow**

- 100% fruit juice
- Regular “white” bread, pasta, tortillas
- White rice
- Whole milk
- Most peanut butter (no added sugar)
- Plain dried fruit such as raisins



Foods that are Red

- Desserts like ice cream, cookies, cake
- Candy
- Most processed/packaged snacks
- Regular soda and juice drinks



Foods that are NOT RANKED

- Condiments like salad dressing and sauces
- Cooking staples like flour, sugar, oil, spices
- Baby food
- Nutritional supplements



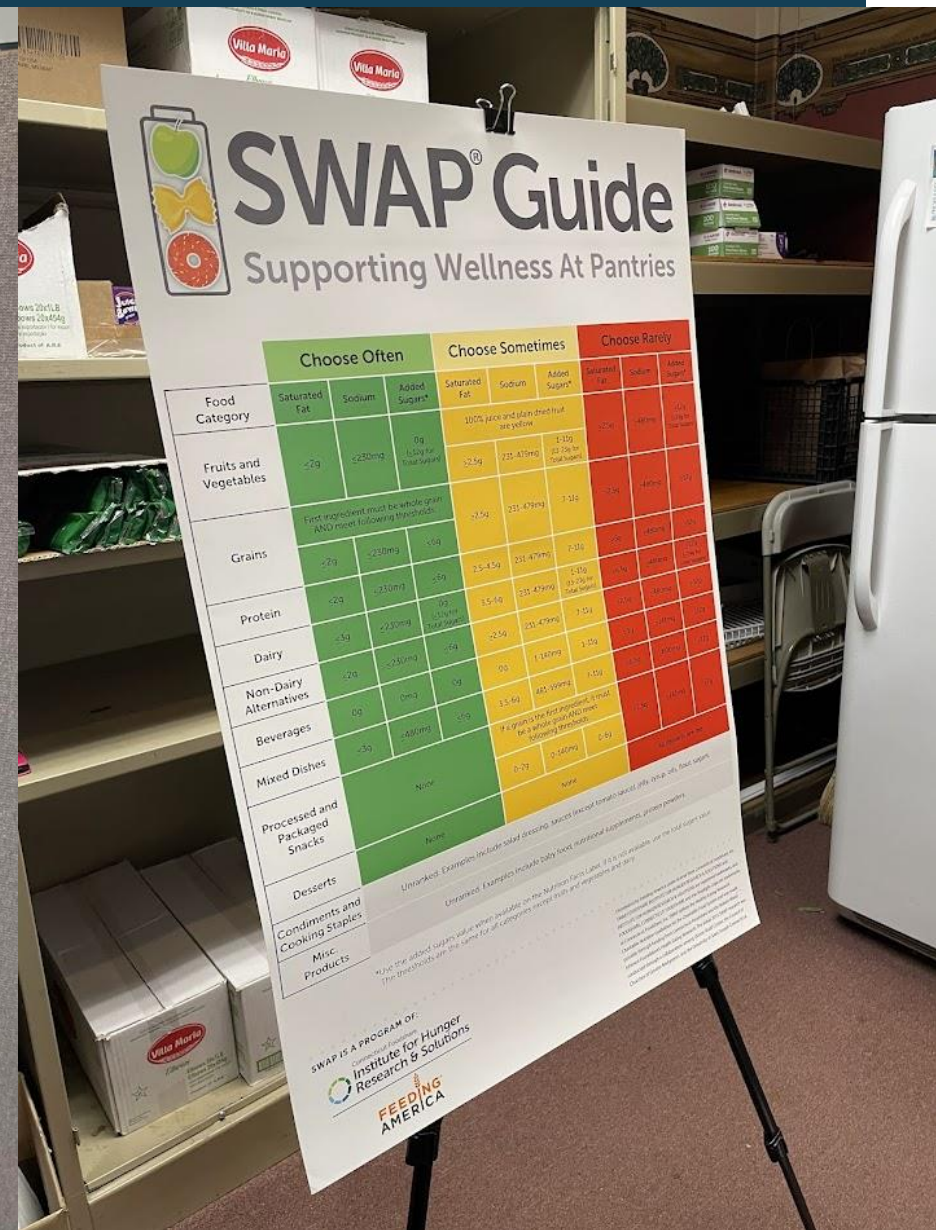
3. Shelf

Place the food on the designated shelves using shelf tags and signage for choose often, sometimes, and rarely or by colors

To order SWAP materials like shelf tags or informational posters: **SWAPmaterials.org**



The image displays three photographs of a food pantry environment where the SWAP Guide is being implemented. The left photograph shows a green shopping cart in the foreground and a SWAP poster in the background. The poster features a green apple icon and the text 'SWAP Supporting Wellness At Pantries'. The middle photograph shows a SWAP poster with a yellow bow tie icon and the text 'SWAP Supporting Wellness At Pantries'. The right photograph shows a SWAP poster with a red donut icon and the text 'SWAP Supporting Wellness At Pantries'. The poster includes a table with food categories and their corresponding SWAP scores (Green, Yellow, Red) and a list of food items with their SWAP scores.



Shelf tags



**CHOOSE
OFTEN**
ELIJA
FRECUENTEMENTE



**HEART
HEALTHY**
CORAZÓN
SALUDABLE



**CHOOSE
RARELY**
ELIJA CON POCA
FRECUENCIA



**CHOOSE
SOMETIMES**
ELIJA A VECES



BRING YOUR
BAG.

TRAJIGA SU
BOLSA
DE PAPEL O DE
PLASTICO

POU 430002106

205000560

405003762 (X 5 BINS)

279001518

279000837

400001505

205000560

410000018 (POU)

410001122





SWAP Checklist



It takes a lot of time and commitment to convert to using the SWAP system and sustain it over time



Do you have commitment from the director and staff to promote healthy foods?



Is there a champion staff or volunteer member who will be in charge of the SWAP system?



Is there a steady group of volunteers to help sort and rank foods?



Is there enough space to sort the food and then rank it by color?



SWAP Questions for Meghan Donnelly, Berkshire Community College

- How does SWAP look at your site?
- What have you learned?
- Do you like it? Would you recommend it to other pantries?
- Challenges?
- Anything you would tell someone who is just beginning?



Additional Resources

SWAP resources from FBWM

<https://www.foodbankwma.org/member-agencies/training-resources/>

HER Guidelines

<https://healthyeatingresearch.org/research/healthy-eating-research-nutrition-guidelines-for-the-charitable-food-system/>

UConn Rudd resources for HER Guidelines

<https://uconnruddcenter.org/her-guidelines/>

Feeding America Nutrition in Food Banking Toolkit

https://www.feedingamerica.org/sites/default/files/2023-07/Nutrition-in-Food-Banking-Toolkit-v2_Final.pdf



Thank you!

Contact:

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OF WESTERN MASSACHUSETTS

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