

Vermont Child Nutrition Programs

VT Seasonal Cycle Menus

Menu Planning and Menu Production Sheet Tool

INSTRUCTIONS

How the Tool Works: The Meal Planning Tool contains formulas to evaluate whether the daily and weekly requirements for all meal components are met. The Tool is designed to assist with menu planning and will generate a production sheet from the information entered during menu planning. Look at the tabs at the bottom of the page. There is a Weekly Menus tab where you will enter all items planned for the week. Next there are tabs leading to a Menu Planning Tool for each age/grade group. The correct grade group must be used since the minimum and maximum amounts vary. Until adequate amounts for each component are entered, No will appear in the “Meets Daily Requirements” or “Meets Weekly Requirements” rows. The tool does not evaluate whether the nutrient standards for calories, sodium, and saturated fat are met, and cannot evaluate whether the serving size information entered is correct. The calculations are made based on information entered by the school. If incorrect information is entered, the results will not be accurate.

Using the Tool:

1. Enter the Menu:

- a) Click on the tab named “Weekly Menus”. At the top of the page enter the date range this menu is for in the space next to “Menu for the Week of”.
- b) Next, under each day of the week, enter all lunch menu items that are planned for that week, including milk and condiments. You may want to enter both the food item and recipe/product number in the spaces.

2. Evaluate Menus/Use the Menu Planning Tool:

- a) Click on the tab for the appropriate age/grade group at the bottom of the page – “K-8”, or “9-12”.
- b) The information entered previously for “Week of” and “Menu Item” has been pulled forward to the appropriate days on the Menu Planning Tool pages.
- c) Starting with Monday, enter the serving size/utensil for each of the menu items.
- d) Next, enter the component contributions for each menu item under the appropriate component headings. For example, if serving a hamburger on a bun that credits for 2 M/MA and 1.5 G/B, enter 2 under the M/MA column and 1.5 under the G/B column across from that menu item.
- e) For vegetables, enter the amount that menu item contributes to each vegetable subgroup. The “Total Veg” column will calculate based on the amounts entered for each subgroup.
- f) As components are entered, the tool evaluates whether the daily requirements are being met. In the “Meets Daily Requirements” row, under each component column, a No will appear if the daily requirements have not been met. This will change to a Yes once the requirements for that component have been met.

g) Repeat steps c-f for the rest of the days in the week.

h) The Tool adds up the weekly totals as information is entered each day and will evaluate whether or not the weekly requirements have been met. At the bottom of the page, in the “Meets Weekly Requirements” row, under each component column, a No will appear if the weekly requirements have not been met. This will change to a Yes once the requirements for that component have been met.

i) If there are multiple age/grade groups in your school, repeat steps a-i for each age/grade group being served.

3. Generate Production Records:

a) Click on the tab for the appropriate age/grade group – “K-8 Production Records or “9-12 Production Records”.

b) Menu Items, Serving Size/Utensil, Component Contributions, Daily Lunch Component Totals, and Weekly Lunch Component Totals are all generated from previously entered information.

c) At the top of each Production Record, fill in any additional information available prior to production including:

- Date

- Preparation Site

- Does the school participate in offer vs. serve (OVS)? If so, for which grades?

- Are free seconds available?

- How many meals are planned for this age/grade group?

- HACCP Process # for each of the menu items planned.

d) Additional notes to production staff may also be entered on the right hand side of the production record.

e) Production records are now ready to print. The Tool is set up to print one day’s production record per page. This form should be placed in the kitchen to inform production staff which items to prepare, how much to prepare, and the amounts of components each item contributes.

f) Production staff should then fill in the Temperatures, Amount Prepared, Amount Leftover, Production Notes, and Meals Served columns while preparing the meal and during service.

g) After service, the production records should be kept on file for 3 years including the current year.