

Key Factors in Successful Menu Production

1	Review each week's menu at least one week ahead of time.
2	Gather recipes for the week's menu. Check yield amounts and adjust recipes as needed. Consult previous production records to determine planned amounts.
3	Communicate with teachers, front office staff, principals, and team members in order to factor in field trips, special events, or other school-based situations that may impact meal counts.
4	Check food component crediting in each daily menu and recipes to be sure to meet targets and plan serving sizes properly.
5	List products needed for each week's menu according to meal component. Prepare order one week in advance.
6	Look for products/ingredients that are repeated or repurposed within a 7-day period so that you are sure to have enough. Note this on the menu and on planning sheets.
7	Check all inventory before placing orders.
8	Check CN Label on all pre-made products to determine serving size for planned crediting accounts and purchase quantities. Avoid pre-made products with no CN label.
9	Prepare a Weekly Planning Sheet and print daily production records prior to the start of the week.
10	Identify all ingredients to be prepared ahead for each menu item/recipe. Include tasks such as thawing, washing, peeling, cutting, and opening in lists of do-ahead jobs/tasks.
11	Note USDA, DoD, and local foods needed for each week. Consider special deadlines for ordering these products.
12	Vegetable items in the VT AOE Seasonal Cycle Menus can be prepared from fresh or frozen/canned. Consider using fresh vegetables as often as production schedules will allow. When using fresh product, this can be noted on the menu for added value to consumers. The decision to use fresh or frozen product should represent efforts to balance production requirements, availability, nutritional value, taste and quality.

