

FOCIS

Canteen Manager's Guide

To

Registered Products Program



December 2003

What are FOCIS Registered Products?

FOCIS Registered Products including the Star Choice Logo, are nationally registered commercial and processed foods which have been tested to meet set levels of fat, salt, sugar and where necessary, calcium, fibre and the type of fat. These levels (nutrient criteria) have been set to identify healthier food choices for school canteens and have been developed by nutritionists and canteen association representatives from States/Territories.

Registered products are designed to reflect the Australian Dietary Guidelines for Children and Adolescents and in some cases they contain approximately half the fat, salt or sugar of their regular counterparts.

However, children need a wide variety of foods daily to meet their nutrition requirements. While registered products may offer a healthier choice than their regular counterparts, the basis of a child's diet and a canteen menu should be provided by "*everyday foods*". These foods should have low to moderate amounts of fat, salt and sugar and include breads and cereal, fruit and vegetables, legumes (dried beans, baked beans), dairy products and meat, fish, chicken, eggs, and nuts/seeds.

"*Occasional foods*", including some registered products can be offered on canteen menus for lunch and recess sales but should not be offered exclusively or replace fresh "*everyday*" food choices.

Some foods could never be registered under this program as they can not be modified to meet the criteria. They may make a diet enjoyable but contribute little to an overall healthy diet, eg confectionery, soft drinks, fried foods and Registered Products are mainly processed foods that meet the FOCIS nutrient criteria. Only products submitted are assessed. FOCIS acknowledges that there are other foods available in the market place that meet the nutrient criteria. The assumption should not be made that a food that is not registered does not meet the criteria.

Why have a Registered Products Program?

The FOCIS Registered Products Program has been developed in response to requests from canteen managers, parent bodies, school councils and staff for guidance about which products are suitable for sale in school canteens.

With the increased promotion of packaged foods in recent years by company representatives, canteen staff and schools are unsure as to the correctness of their healthy foods claims.

The program also encourages food companies to develop healthier products, which are made especially for the school market.

How do I know if a product is a Registered Product?

The easiest way to find out is to refer to your FOCIS Registered Products List which comes with your member newsletter or your canteen association's Buyers Guide. If a product is not listed, it is not registered so we can not guarantee that it is a nutritious product. When companies register they receive a certificate of registration with our FOCIS logo on it, so you could ask to see a copy of this

when a company representative comes to your door with a new product. Remember also to keep an eye out in the new product update section of your member newsletter for descriptions of newly registered products.

How does a company register a product?

Companies can apply to have their products registered with FOCIS or in their State/Territory, if they believe they have a healthy product. The company supplies FOCIS or the School Canteen Association's Nutritionist with the product's nutrient analysis. The Nutritionist then assesses whether the product is a nutritious product by using our FOCIS Nutrient Criteria. If the product passes the nutrient criteria test, then the company is required to pay a fee for registration of the product.

Each year companies are required to pay a renewal fee and confirm that the product has not changed in composition.

Why is a fee charged for product registration?

The fees which FOCIS or School Canteen Associations charge to registered products cover the cost of:

- a) The Nutritionist's time in assessing the product.
- b) The cost of producing and posting the registered product list or Buyers Guide.
- c) The cost of advertising new product updates in your State/Territory newsletter or Buyers Guide.
- d) Administration of FOCIS Registration Office.

Without the support received by way of fees for registration from registered companies, the registered products programs could not be implemented.

Why does the list of FOCIS Registered Products change from time to time?

Products are removed from the list if their nutrient criteria changes, for example when the manufacturer lets us know that they have changed their product formulation and the new formulation no longer meets our criteria. Products are also removed from the list if they fail to pay their renewal fee at the end of June each year. If the company does not pay their renewal fee we have no way of knowing if the formulation of the product is still the same, therefore we can not promote it as a Registered Product.

What is the difference between the Recommended and Registered List?

The recommended product list is different from the registered product list in that it lists foods that canteen associations considers to be healthy alternatives. They are usually fresh foods or unbranded products which do not require testing to meet nutrient criteria, eg breads, milk drinks, salads, fruit and vegetables, and canteen prepared dishes. All these products and more are listed in the Recommended Food list which your canteen association can supply.

Help us recruit new Registered Products

You can play an important role in improving the food supplied to schools. If your school canteen has decided it does not want to buy a product because it is not on the registered or recommended lists, it is a good idea to tell the company representative that you won't take the product because it is not registered or recommended, so you can't be sure it is a nutritious product. Company representatives often go back to their manufacturer and tell them that schools only want their product if it is registered. From schools telling company representatives that they only want registered products, companies will often apply for registration or even reformulate their products to make them healthier.

References:

FOCIS Registered Products Program Guide
WASCA, Star Choice Registered Products Program
TSCA, Cool Canteen Registered Products Program
Community Nutrition Unit Tas. G.P.'s Manual
NSWSCA Newsletter article

What to sell in the school canteen

Everyday foods – Most suitable foods for school canteens

(Beware the peanut butter and nuts)

Vegetables

- **Corn on the cob**
- **Vegetable soups** e.g. pumpkin, corn, and tomato
- **Mini Salad packs, tabouli, coleslaw**
- **Salad** filled rolls, pita, sandwiches and foccaccia
- **Pizzas** topped with **tomato, mushroom, capsicum** or **roasted vegetables**
- **Celery boats** – with cream cheese or peanut butter
- **Toasted Baked Bean Sandwiches**
- **Filled jacket potatoes**- reduced fat cheese or yogurt topping
- **Vegetable and dip packs**
- **Spinach Ravioli** and **Tomato** based sauce
- **Cabbage rolls** filled with rice
- **Vegetable frittata and fritters**
- **Baked potatoes** – use reduced fat cheese or yoghurt as a topping

Fruit

- **Fresh or frozen fruit**-small sizes
- **Grapes, watermelon slices**
- **Fruit salad packs**
- **Frozen mashed fruit** served in cones
- **Banana or berry smoothies**
- **Pineapple** on pizzas and in sandwiches
- **Dried fruits** in muffins
- **Trail packs** –dried fruit and nut mixes
- **Sultana packs**
- **Frozen bananas** on a stick
- **Freshly curled apple slices**
- **Toasted apple or banana sandwiches** with cinnamon
- **Fruit kebabs**
- **100% fruit juices**

Breads and Cereals

- **White, wholemeal, multigrain, rye**
- **Pita, mountain bread, wraps, foccaccia, English muffins, rolls**
- **Toasted Sandwiches, muffins, crumpets, raisin bread**
- **Fruit buns and raisin bread**
- **Pikelets, plain fruit scones, low fat fruit muffins**
- **Cheese rolls**
- **Garlic and herb breads**
- **Damper**
- **Plain popcorn, crisp breads, rice cakes**
- **Wheat biscuits, water crackers**

Noodles or rice stir fry

- **Pasta and rice salads**
- **Hot pasta dishes**
- **Lasagne**, meat sauce with added beans and vegetables
- **Risotto**
- **Burritos** – low fat meat, kidney beans, salad and yoghurt
- **Tacos** – kidney beans, lean meat, tuna or salmon with salad and reduced fat cheese and yoghurt

Dairy Foods

- **Milk drinks**
- **Fruit and milk smoothies**
- **Tubs of yoghurt**
- **Yoghurt** as a **topping** on fruit salads, jacket potatoes or souvlaki
- **Yoghurt** in home made dips
- **Cheese and biscuit packs**
- **Cheese** in sandwiches etc
- **Hot cheese rolls**
- **Cream cheese** in celery boats
- **Frozen yoghurt in a cone**
- **Cheese sauce** on vegetables
- **Cheese cubes, sticks, slices, triangles**
- **Choose reduced fat varieties** where possible

Meat & meat alternatives

- **Lean meat/skinless chicken** in rolls & sandwiches
- **Tinned fish** and salad packs
- **Hummus** as a dip or spread
- **Whole eggs**
- **Eggs** in sandwiches
- **Baked beans** in toasted sandwiches
- **Or** in jacket potatoes
- **Burgers**- lean **beef, chicken, fish or lentil** burgers with plenty of salad
- **Lean meat, chicken or canned tuna** on pizzas
- **Savoury mince** and salad filled tacos or jacket potatoes
- **Stir fries, casseroles**

Water, plain mineral waters, 100% fruit juice and milk drinks are the recommended drinks to be sold in canteens.

Occasional foods - not available every day the canteen is open

Products in this category do provide some nutritional benefits but are mostly high in fat sugar and/or salt. For example -

- Regular pies, pasties, sausage rolls, quiches, hot dogs, cocktails, pizza, lasagne contain protein but also added fat and salt.
- Regular ice cream contains calcium but is also quite high in fats, salt and added sugar.
- Sweet fruit based snack foods such as cakes, muffins, and bars contain some fibre but are also high in fat, salt and sugar.

These foods are convenient on a canteen menu but should not replace the everyday items.

With the introduction of registered products, companies are now modifying products to reduce the fat, sugar and/or salt content. Many of these registered products can be offered on a restricted basis (ie not everyday the canteen is open, not available at recess etc) to complement your menu.

Foods not recommended - least suitable for canteen sale

These foods are of low nutritional value and/or high in fat, sugar and or salt and are therefore not in line with the 'Australian Dietary guidelines for Children and Adolescents'.

The regular sale or promotion of these products through the school canteen is not recommended

High fat foods

- **Sausages such as cabana, salami**
- Fried foods

Chocolate or carob items

- Foods coated in or containing chocolate or carob
- Chocolate spreads

Cakes and biscuits with high fat and sugar content

- Donuts, slices, cream cakes, cream buns, meringues

Snack foods with high fat and salt content

- Include potato crisps, corn chips, extruded savoury lines and similar flavoured products

Foods and drinks with high sugar content or artificially sweetened

- Fruit flavoured drinks, soft drinks, flavoured mineral waters, cordials, ice confection, lollies, syrups, hundred and thousands, toffee apples and confectionary bars.

