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Dietitians congratulate food producers, caterers and restaurants for improving foods

(Vancouver, BC) British Columbia dietitians are commending food service establishments for their enhanced efforts to improve the nutritional value of food served in schools. Dietitians of Canada is leading a BC Healthy Living Alliance initiative funded by ActNow BC to support the implementation of the *Guidelines for Food and Beverage Sales in BC Schools*.

Companies are modifying recipes to create healthier, kid friendly products. They are increasing nutrients and fibre and decreasing calories, fat, sugar, salt and serving sizes in a number of popular items. "I'm very impressed with the efforts industry is making to learn about the *Guidelines* and make healthier products that taste good and that students will eat", says Karen Birkenhead, Food Guidelines Dietitian at Dial-A-Dietitian. "We're continually adding reformulated products to the Brand Name Food List (www.brandnamefoodlist.ca) that previously could not be sold to students because they were too low in nutrients and too high in calories, fat, sugar and/or salt."

Many baked goods are coming in small instead of extra large sizes and some companies have also modified recipes to reduce or change the type of fat used. Pizzerias are using whole wheat flour, more vegetables and less high fat, high sodium deli-meats, and are reducing portion sizes, as are some sandwich makers. School caterers are learning to boost the nutritional value of meals by including a fruit and/or vegetable along with the main course item.

Healthy eating begins at home and should continue at school, where students eat at least one meal or snack most days of the week. "Government is pleased to see industry working hard to meet the *Guidelines for Food and Beverage Sales in BC Schools*," said Mary Polak, Minister of Healthy Living and Sport. "By improving the nutritional content of food sold in schools we are helping to make healthy choices easier choices for B.C. students."

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“It’s exciting to see vendors and food suppliers supporting BC students to eat better, which in turn supports their learning, health and development”, reports Ruth Hellerud-Brown, Public Health Dietitian. “I look forward to seeing even more tasty and healthy foods on the market.”

“Working with companies to bring healthier food products into schools creates a great ripple effect as reformulated products replace unhealthy options in other markets” said Jean Blake, chair of the BC Healthy Living Alliance.

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Dietitians of Canada represents almost 6,000 dietitians across Canada and is committed to promoting the health and well-being of consumers through food and nutrition. For trusted information on nutrition and healthy eating and to register to receive DC’s regular nutrition updates, visit Dietitians of Canada award-winning website at www.dietitians.ca.

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An initiative of these BC Healthy Living Alliance members

