

SEASONING WITHOUT THE SODIUM

HELPING AFT MEMBERS MAKE TASTY SCHOOL MEALS



ADD FLAVOR

WITHOUT ADDING SODIUM
BY USING SEASONINGS LIKE

Allspice

ANISE

BASIL

BAY LEAVES

BLACK PEPPER

Cayenne Pepper

Celery Seeds

CHILI POWDER

Chives

Cilantro

CINNAMON

CLOVES

Cumin

Dill Weed

Fennel Seeds

GARLIC POWDER

GROUND GINGER

Ground Mustard

Lavender

Lemon Peel

Marjoram

Mustard Seeds

NUTMEG

ONION POWDER

Orange Peel

Oregano

Paprika

PARSLEY

Roasted Peanuts

Rosemary

Sage

Savory (Satureja Herb)

Szechuan Pepper

Tarragon

Thyme

Turmeric

Vinegar



OUR MISSION

The **American Federation of Teachers** is a union of professionals that champions fairness; democracy; economic opportunity; and high-quality public education, healthcare and public services for our students, their families and our communities. We are committed to advancing these principles through community engagement, organizing, collective bargaining and political activism, and especially through the work our members do.

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SPICE IT UP!

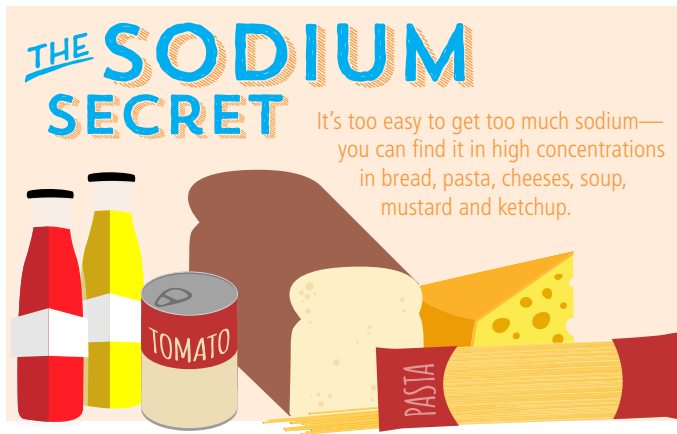
Making flavorful
school foods without
excess sodium



Sodium in our diets

In recommended amounts, sodium helps our bodies maintain a balance of fluids, send messages to and from nerves, and regulate muscles. However, large amounts of sodium put children and adults at risk of high blood pressure and other serious health problems.

Unfortunately, it's too easy to get too much sodium; 9 in 10 Americans consume more than they need. Sodium occurs naturally in vegetables, dairy products, meat and shellfish. It's found in high concentrations in most processed and prepared foods, including bread, pasta, soups and cheeses. And common meal toppings, such as salt, ketchup, mustard, salad dressings and sauces, add even more sodium to our plates.



New rules

The Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010 used recommendations from nutrition scientists to set rigorous guidelines for school meals. Most of the requirements are about meal components—how much fruit, vegetables, protein, grains and dairy our kids should get. One tricky requirement limits sodium.

The new act requires school lunches for students in grades K-5 to contain less than 3,200 milligrams of sodium per week, or an average of 640 milligrams per day. The daily average increases to 710 milligrams for grades 6-8 and 740 milligrams for grades 9-12.

These new sodium limits provide AFT members with a great opportunity to help protect our students' health while modeling lifelong healthy habits.

AFT members at the forefront

AFT food service workers play a crucial role in preparing, serving and promoting fresh, nutritious foods. By seasoning foods without adding sodium, **AFT members can keep meals compliant with the new sodium limits without compromising flavor.** Here are some tips from AFT food professionals who are **reducing sodium in school meals** all across the country:

- Whenever possible, **eliminate packaged and processed foods from the menu.** Preparing whole, fresh foods gives you much more control over all the elements of the meal.
- Many prepackaged spice blends, sauces, dressings and condiments add sodium. Control flavor profiles by **making your own spice blends.** Pay special attention to dried garlic, onion and celery; these are often flavored salt blends. Reach for the plain dried item.
- Try **low-sodium cheese**, or **yeast flakes** as a cheese substitute.
- Allow students to **choose or make their spice blend** to instantly customize lunch.
- **Cut meat from dishes.** Even one day a week helps! Many schools participate in “Meatless Mondays,” for example.
- **Mix a spice blend into avocado, yogurt, mustard or tomato paste to make a sauce.** Alternately, add seasonings to vinegar and oil to create a basic dressing for salads, roasted vegetables and wraps.
- **Citrus “activates” flavors in the same way that salt does.** Start with a few drops of lemon or lime juice. Then get inventive with pineapple, orange and grapefruit juice.

THE SODIUM SHAKEDOWN

FAST FACTS FOR FOOD PROFESSIONALS

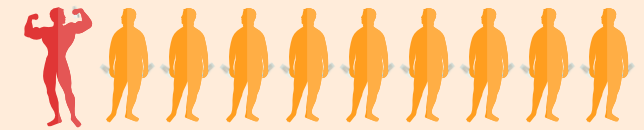


OUR BODIES NEED SODIUM

In recommended amounts, sodium helps our bodies maintain proper fluid balance, send messages to and from nerves, and regulate muscles, but

9 IN 10 AMERICANS

CONSUME TOO MUCH SODIUM.



SODIUM OCCURS NATURALLY

It is found in vegetables, dairy products, meat and shellfish. But it is also found in

HIGH CONCENTRATIONS IN MANY PROCESSED AND PREPARED FOODS AND TOPPINGS,

adding even more sodium to our plates.



SCHOOL LUNCH AND SODIUM

School meals provide an opportunity to promote healthy habits.

THE HEALTHY, HUNGER-FREE KIDS ACT OF 2010 SET LIMITS FOR SODIUM IN SCHOOL LUNCHES:

GRADES K-5
640 mg/day

GRADES 6-8
710 mg/day

GRADES 9-12
740 mg/day



1 = 100 milligrams of sodium