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**TOWN OF BRIDGEWATER  
HEALTHY EATING IN RECREATION  
AND MUNICIPAL SETTINGS POLICY**

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**Policy No. 75**

Approved: September 10, 2012  
Resolution No.: 12-197

**1. Vision**

Municipal units in Lunenburg and Queens Counties are demonstrating leadership so that all citizens in Lunenburg and Queens Counties have access to and enjoy Healthy Foods in all recreation and municipal settings resulting in healthier communities.

**2. Policy Statement**

In the interest of public health and to promote the health and well-being of the citizens of Lunenburg and Queens Counties, it is the policy of the 6 municipal units to actively encourage and promote recreation and municipal environments that support accessibility and consumption of food and beverages consistent with healthy eating, thereby making the healthy choice, the easy choice.

**3. Goals**

To improve healthy eating in recreation and municipal settings by:

- a) increasing healthy eating choices in recreation and municipal settings;
- b) increasing understanding of healthy eating by food and beverage providers and distributors;
- c) improving the visibility / placement of healthy options;
- d) improving the understanding/ awareness of the users of recreation and municipal programming and facilities of what constitutes healthy eating;
- e) improving commitment to long term change that will have impact for citizens on an ongoing basis;
- f) improving the connections between eating well and recreation, the visual message matches the verbal message (walking the talk);
- g) increasing access to and enjoyment of health-promoting, and safe food and beverages.

**4. Purpose**

- 4.1 Fights against increasing rates of diet related illnesses such as Type 2 diabetes, cancer, heart disease, obesity across Nova Scotia but especially on the South

- Shore.
- 4.2 Supports the momentum that is building around healthy eating across Canada. Research in other recreation settings across the country has been completed and supports this policy.
  - 4.3 Compliments the general goal of municipal recreation programs and settings to improve the quality of life and health of citizens. Offering healthy foods compliments this same notion of improved quality of life and health.
  - 4.4 Demonstrates leadership and role modeling by municipal units.
  - 4.5 Impacts future generations when the policy is enacted. As such, the development and implementation of a healthy eating policy has far reaching impacts beyond that which a program or learning opportunity could provide. (Sustainable change and best practice the policy avenue)
  - 4.6 Demonstrates a collaborative approach to policy development that allows consistency in delivering the message of healthy eating or healthy foods/beverages.
  - 4.7 Moves away from being an environment that creates obesity.
  - 4.8 Supports and promotes athletic performance.
  - 4.9 Compliments the School Food and Nutrition Policy for Nova Scotia Public Schools.
  - 4.10 Provides people with the opportunity to practice eating well.
  - 4.11 Supports chronic disease prevention and childhood obesity prevention strategies.

## **5. Definition of Healthy Eating**

Healthy Eating refers to patterns of eating that, over time, meet individuals' energy and nutrient needs, and that promote health and minimize the risk of nutrition related condition and diseases. Canada's Food Guide to Healthy Eating is the basis for this pattern of eating and includes food and beverages from each of the four food groups, making choices that provide maximum nutritional value most often.

## **6. Scope**

This policy applies to the food and beverages served and sold in the following:

- 6.1 all municipal owned recreation facilities and places
- 6.2 all recreation programs and municipal events, meetings, special events, fundraisers and sales
- 6.3 all municipal workplace wellness programs
- 6.4 all canteens, contracts and vending machines located on municipal properties

This policy does not apply to:

- 6.5 food and beverages brought in for meals and snacks by the employees.
- 6.6 Organizations or individuals who rent space/rooms for special events however, they will be encouraged to follow the policy and offer more healthy food options.
- 6.7 Alcohol is not included in the scope of this policy.
- 6.8 coffee and tea.

## 7. Guidelines

Food and beverages served in recreation and municipal settings will be categorized based on the Food and Beverage Standards from the Nova Scotia Food and Nutrition Policy for Public Schools. The Food and Beverage Standards categorizes foods in the following way:

- 7.1 **Maximum Nutrition:** Food and beverages that are part of the four food groups of Canada's Food Guide to Healthy Eating. These items are high in essential nutrients for healthy development, growth, learning, performance and enjoyment (e.g., vitamins, minerals, protein, carbohydrate, essential fatty acids, fibre, and water) and are low in salt, sugar, sweeteners, and saturated and trans fats. They have undergone little or no processing (e.g. Whole grain breads and cereals, fruits and vegetables, vegetarian pizza made with low fat cheese on whole wheat crust, 100% fruit juice).
- 7.2 **Moderate Nutrition:** Food and beverages that are part of the four food groups of Canada's Food Guide to Healthy Eating. These items contain essential nutrients for growth, learning, and health (e.g., vitamins, minerals, protein, carbohydrate, essential fatty acids, fibre, and water), but are somewhat lower in fibre and higher in fat, salt, sugar, sweeteners, and/or processing (e.g. white breads, apple crisp, vegetarian pizza with regular fat cheese on white crust, oven baked French Fries).
- 7.3 **Minimum Nutrition:** These food and beverages may or may not be from the four food groups of Canada's Food Guide to Healthy Eating. They offer minimal nutritional value; are very high in sugar, fat, salt, caffeine, sweeteners, and/or processing; and tend to replace nutritious foods when available as meals and snacks ( e.g. Pepperoni pizza made with regular cheese and white crust, deep fried French Fries, potato chips, pop, sports drinks).

The Nova Scotia Food and Nutrition Policy for Public Schools has been in place since 2006 in Nova Scotia and is now familiar to the majority of children, youth and their parents in our communities. The Food and Beverage Standards are available at [http://www.ednet.ns.ca/healthy\\_eating/](http://www.ednet.ns.ca/healthy_eating/).

## 8. Implementation Schedule

### 8.1 Year 1 and 2

- a) Food provided in all recreation and municipal settings will be comprised of 50% maximum, 30% moderate and 20 % minimum nutrition foods.
- b) Review contracts with beverage and vending companies.

### 8.2 After Year 2

- a) Evaluate and review progress with policy implementation, review successes and lessons learned as well as considerations for ongoing implementation with the view to lower the number of minimum foods in the next phase of policy implementation.
- b) Prepare to increase the amount of maximum foods you are providing.

### **9. Healthy Eating Promotional Pricing**

Thoughtful pricing strategies have been shown to improve the intake of healthy foods when they are priced in a manner that makes them accessible to the majority of the population. Therefore, promotional pricing shall be considered, to ensure healthy foods are priced competitively with unhealthy foods.

### **10. Placement**

The placement or visibility of foods increases the likelihood that those foods will be chosen. Priority space should be given to healthy food and beverages as defined by the Maximum Nutrition list (e.g., counter-top refrigerators, placement of fruits and vegetables at eye level).

### **11. Portion Sizes**

It is important that the portion sizes offered reflect and support healthy eating behaviors. Large portions (e.g., “super-size”) not only provide more calories, but also studies show that when people are served larger portions, they also eat more food. Appropriate portions of food and beverages will be served and sold. Super-sized portions are not appropriate to serve or sell.

Refer to Canada’s Food Guide to Healthy Eating for information related to portion sizes, available here: <http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/fn-an/food-guide-aliment/index-eng.php>.

### **12. Nova Scotia Produce and Products**

Nova Scotia produces an abundance of produce and products. Buying food that is grown and produced within the province supports Nova Scotia agriculture and business and means that more money remains in the community. Locally grown, fresh food is often more nutritious if it is used shortly after harvest. When possible, municipal and recreation settings serve local, seasonal food and beverages that are harvested, produced or manufactured in Nova Scotia.

### **13. Environmental Sustainability**

Municipalities in Lunenburg and Queens Counties have demonstrated leadership regarding environmental sustainability. As such, municipal recreation programs and facilities are encouraged to continue, as well as find new ways, to reduce consumer and food waste and to support recycling and composting options.

As well they are encouraged to support energy-saving practices for food programs (e.g., energy-saving equipment such as fridges and stoves that meet the EnerGuide standard).

Where ever possible recreation programs, facilities and municipal buildings are encouraged to use alternatives to serving and selling bottled water.

### **14. Food Safety**

Foods prepared, served and sold needs to be handled safely to prevent the spread of food-borne illness and disease. Food safety education will provide the knowledge necessary to promote safe food handling when food is being served to the public. Hand washing is a simple and effective way to reduce the spread of food-borne illnesses.

## **15. Beverages**

Energy Drinks (i.e. Red Bull Energy Drink®, SoBe Adrenaline Rush®, Hype Energy Drink®, Red Dragon Energy Drink®, YJ Stinger®, etc.)

Health Canada does not recommend the use of energy drinks (not to be confused with sports drinks such as Powerade or Gatorade) for children nor for consumption to coincide with physical activity. Therefore, energy drinks will not be served or sold at recreation and municipal settings and recreation programs and facilities.

**Please Note:** Beverages in the Minimum Nutrition category include sports drinks, regular and diet pop, and any fruit drink that is not 100% fruit juice.

## **16. Fundraising**

Fundraising organized by and through municipal and recreation programs and settings will focus primarily on Non Food items. When food is used as part of a fundraiser the food provided shall comply with the policy as outlined.

Fundraising can be complementary to the health of the community that supports them when non-food or healthy food and beverage options are chosen. Fundraising with healthy food and beverages or non-food items provides another opportunity to support nutrition messages.

## **17. Special Events**

### **17.1 Municipal organized special events**

Shall adhere to the policy as outlined in this document.

### **17.2 Community group operated special events**

Special events that are organized by communities groups will be encouraged to follow the leadership example set by the Municipality and work towards providing more healthy food options at these community events.