



## Food Sense and the new food guide

**Food Sense** (Grades 4-6) helps students explore and reflect on their daily eating and physical activity habits. They identify food groups in which they personally need to increase servings or variety, which addresses the proportions of foods illustrated on the plate in the new food guide.

The new food guide merges two of the previous food groups (Meat & Alternatives and Milk & Alternatives) into a protein foods category. Another change is the fact that the new guide does not outline the number of servings needed from each category, but rather, illustrates this concept showing how the food categories fill the plate.

We are still awaiting the release of more guidance from Health Canada addressing the amounts and types of foods recommended, as well as guidance for particular stages of life. In the meantime, we can assure you that teaching Food Sense will still help students move in the direction Health Canada recommends.

While dietary needs have not changed much at all\* since the last food guide, the previous guide didn't help people change their eating habits to meet those needs. The new food guide is helping us along this path by more dramatically showing Canadians we need to eat more vegetables and fruits, we need to eat more whole grains, and we need to eat more beans and lentils.

Most people using the previous food guide didn't have the benefit of really learning how their eating habits aligned with the food guide. But students using Food Sense did—and evaluation showed that it worked! Nearly 75% of students completing the Food Sense program were following their plans to improve food group intake on 2 out of the 3 days recorded. This is a remarkable level of behaviour change. One of the most frequent groups students chose to improve was Vegetables and Fruit.

When the complete guidance from Health Canada is released, we will work on updating Food Sense to meet the new guidance. But until then it is certainly worthwhile to continue using Food Sense.

### Still have questions?

**Contact** a nutrition educator! We are more than happy to help you adapt your teaching to the new food guide.

### Where can I get a copy of the new food guide?

Copies of the [food guide snapshot](#) may be downloaded from the [food guide website](#).

Hard copies will be available soon from [hc.publications-publications.sc@canada.ca](mailto:hc.publications-publications.sc@canada.ca)

\*After the release of the previous guide in 2007, dietary recommendations were amended in 2010 calling for an increase in the amount recommended for vitamin D for all ages, and slight adjustments in the calcium recommendations for some age groups.