



DOC's Nutritional Guidelines and Commissary Services

Federal Nutritional Guidelines

According to DOC, its master menu is developed according to the Dietary Guidelines for Americans, as established by the [U. S. Department of Health & Human Services](#) and the [U.S. Department of Agriculture](#) (USDA) Dietary Reference Intakes (DRI) as established by the [National Academy of Sciences](#), Institute of Medicine, Food and Nutrition Board. (DRI are nutrient reference values intended to serve as a guide for good nutrition and provide the scientific basis for the development of food guidelines in both the United States and Canada. These nutrient reference values cover more than 40 nutrient substances and are specified on the basis of age, gender, and life stage.)

Services, with input from the DOC food service managers and DOC food service supervisors, and are reviewed and approved by a registered dietitian.

According to the department, the menu planners consider nutritional adequacy, inmate preferences, food costs, physical layout, equipment cost, variety in method of preparations, and other relevant factors to good dietary practice. The planners also consider food flavor, texture, temperature, appearance, and palatability.

Connecticut Department of Corrections (DOC)

DOC follows federal nutritional guidelines at all correctional facilities under its jurisdiction, including youth facilities (see sidebar). Additionally, the department develops menus and sets daily caloric levels generally based on the inmates' gender and age. The department also runs a commissary service that monitors food's nutritional value.

Menus

DOC develops specific menus for male, female, and youth offenders. The department also participates in the USDA Child Nutrition Program, and meets all the National School Breakfast and School Lunch nutritional requirements as applicable.

The menus are developed by the DOC Director of Food

The department also provides menus that are developed for special therapeutic needs and menus that consider religious restrictions.

Daily Calories

According to DOC, the number of calories served to an inmate each day varies according to the inmate's age and gender. Table 1 summarizes DOC's 2016 master menu. Inmates older than the maximum age in the table receive a similar number of calories per day but older inmates are more likely to require a medical diet.

Table 1: DOC's 2016 Master Menu

Male Inmates		Female Inmates	
Age	Calories per day	Age	Calories per day
16-21	2,800-3,000	16-25	2,800-3,000
21-50	2,600-2,800	25-55	2,200-2,400

Source: DOC

Commissary Services

DOC provides commissary services to offenders in all its correctional facilities.

The Association of State Correctional Administrators recently conducted a 50-state survey on "Commissary Sensible Alternatives." The survey asked whether sensible food selections are provided by correctional facilities across the country. In its response to that survey, DOC stated that healthy selections are made available through its inmate commissary. The commissary is run by the department and the items for sale are purchased from a single vendor. In the survey, the department indicated that its determination that a menu option is "more healthy" is based on a variety of comparative factors which include salt and fat content, type of carbohydrate, gluten content, and other dietary factors. The department stated that sometimes an item might not be particularly healthy, but merely "more healthy" than a similar alternative item on the menu. For example, a small candy bar might be considered a "more healthy" option if there is also a larger candy bar on the menu.

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DOC's Webpage on [Nutrition and Food Services](#)

"Food Service in Prisons," OLR Report [2010-R-0502](#)

