

Increasing Access to Nutritious Foods Using the Healthy Eating Research (HER) Nutrition Guidelines

What are the HER Nutrition Guidelines?

In 2019, Healthy Eating Research (HER), a program of the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, convened a panel of experts in the charitable food system, nutrition, and food policy fields to create clear, specific recommendations for evidence-based nutrition guidelines tailored to the unique needs of the charitable food system.

The new guidelines are a response to food bank requests for a framework that aligns with the latest nutrition guidance and a tracking approach that results in more accurate data. **The goal of these guidelines is to improve the quality of foods in food banks and pantries in order to increase access to and promote healthier food choices for our neighbors in need.**

Why are we using the HER Nutrition Guidelines?

At the Central Pennsylvania Food Bank, we recognize the strong connection between hunger and health. We know that many of the neighbors we serve face the double burden of food insecurity and diet-related chronic diseases. We want to ensure that we provide food that will help support our community's health and wellbeing. We are committed to distributing healthy, nutritious food in our network. To do that, we are adopting a nutrition ranking system called HER Nutrition Guidelines for the Charitable Food System.

What do the Nutrition Rankings mean?



Food that is Green:

- Choose Often
- Low in saturated fat, sodium, and sugar
- Supports health



Food that is Yellow:

- Choose Sometimes
- Medium levels of saturated fat, sodium, or sugar
- Can contribute to good health



Food that is Red:

- Choose Rarely; think of as a treat
- High levels of saturated fat, sodium, or sugar
- Limited health benefits

Unranked Foods: Some food groups like cooking supplies, condiments and baby food are "Unranked" or "Not Ranked" using these guidelines. Some food categories are more challenging to rank because they arrive in large batches of miscellaneous items and are labeled "Assorted – Not Ranked".


How to use the HER Nutrition Guidelines:

The nutrition rankings will be added to our online ordering system, Primarius Web Window (PWW), so you will be able to view which foods are **Green (Choose Often)**, **Yellow (Choose Sometimes)**, and **Red (Choose Rarely)**. By using these nutrition rankings, you can increase the availability of nutritious foods in your programs.

Where to find the Nutrition Rankings in Primarius:

When you are in the Primarius Web Window and view the **Shopping List**, there is a column labeled “Nutrition Description” where the nutrition rankings will be displayed.

To filter the products based on the Nutrition Rankings, click the ☆ to the left of “**Nutrition Description**” column heading. You’ll find the options in the Primarius HER Nutrition Ranking Key below and can sort inventory products based on the selected nutrition ranking.



[Home](#)[Orders](#)[Agency Pickup](#)[Grants](#)[Statistics](#)[Other Agency Info](#)

Order Ref #

Item Count: Total Weight: Purchase Cost: Service Fees: Total Cost:

Search: ☐ Free Food Only

Ref

Product

★ Storage

Packing

★ Nutrition Description

★ Type

[97516](#)

PUR VEG PINTO BEANS (24)15 oz

Dry

(24)15 oz

1-Green - Choose often

27 VEGETAI

[97554](#)

PUR VEG BLACK BEANS (24)15 oz

Dry

(24)15 oz

1-Green - Choose often

27 VEGETAI

[97194](#)

PUR FRU APPLE SAUCE UNSWEETENED (12)23 oz

Dry

(12)23 oz

1-Green - Choose often

10 FRUITS

[97407](#)

PUR HELPERS CHEESY TUNA

Dry

(24)5.3 oz

1-Green - Choose often

06 COMPLE
PURCHASE

[BP0021](#)

BPK PUR VEG CORN WHOLE KERNAL (6)4 pack

Dry

(6)4 pack

1-Green - Choose often

27 VEGETAI

[CR106](#)

PUR PRO EGGPLANT

Refrigerated

BULK

1-Green - Choose often

28 PRODUCE

[CR119](#)

PUR PRO MANGOES

Refrigerated

9 lb tray

1-Green - Choose often

28 PRODUCE

[BT91040](#)

PNM ALMONDS NATURAL WHOLE SHELL USDA (100907)

Dry

(12)2 lb

1-Green - Choose often

23 PROTEIN

[97394](#)

PUR DAI MILK 2% (QUARTS)

Refrigerated

(16)Quarts

1-Green - Choose often

07 DAIRY F

[97392](#)

PUR VEG NAVY BEANS (24)15 oz

Dry

(24)15 oz

1-Green - Choose often

27 VEGETAI

[CR199](#)

PUR PRO RUTABAGA

Refrigerated

BULK

1-Green - Choose often

28 PRODUCE

[CR220](#)

PUR PRO AVOCADO

Refrigerated

BULK

1-Green - Choose often

28 PRODUCE

[96914](#)

PUR CME MEAL TRAYS CHICKEN CREOLE (24)7 oz

Dry

(24)7 oz

1-Green - Choose often

06 COMPLE
PURCHASE

Primarius HER Nutrition Ranking Key:

0 - Not Yet Ranked

1 - Green (Choose Often)

2 - Yellow (Choose Sometimes)

3 - Red (Choose Rarely)

4 - Unranked (Condiments, Cooking Staples, Baby Food)

5 - Assorted, Not Ranked: Salvage/Reclamation

6 - Non Food: Paper produces/Pet food/Etc.

If you have any questions about the HER Nutrition Guidelines or want to know how you can use these nutrition guidelines in your programs, please contact **Erika Siracusa, Nutrition Education Coordinator** at esiracusa@centralpafoodbank.org