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Miemus

Your Key to Effective Menu Planning
for the New Meal Pattern

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Advantages of Cycle Menus
> save time
> allow menu planners to
offer a variety of menu
selections.
> control food costs


Cycle Menus are your key to effective menu planning for the New Meal Pattern. With the additional documentation that is required to assure compliance with the New Meal Pattern, cycle menus will help you save time and make the paper work process easier, allowing you more time to prepare great meals for the students.

A cycle menu is a series of menus that is repeated over a specific period of time, such as 4 weeks.

The menu is different each day during the cycle.

And, At the end of the cycle, the menu is repeated.

Using cycle menus in school nutrition has many advantages Cycle menus save time and allow menu planners to offer a variety of menu selections. Cycle menus can control food costs in a number of ways.

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## Control Food Costs.



## Save time and labor costs.

- Cycle menus save time in gathering information, planning menus, developing specifications, and costing.
- Purchasing procedures are standardized and take less time. - A standard grocery list for a cycle menu helps prevent extra orders, saving you time.
- As menu items are repeated, staff members become more familiar with the recipes and more efficient in producing them.
- The time you save by using cycle menus can be used for nutrition education and training.


## Cycle menus can help control food costs.

- It is easier to project the right amount of product to purchase when you have previous production records for menus.
- Cycle menus make it easier to buy regularly used items in bulk.
- Cycle menus can also help you take advantage of seasonal foods.

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Cycle menus reduce storage costs.

- Since cycle menus help project the right amount of product to purchase, they help keep stock at appropriate levels.


## Cycle menus reduce food waste.

- As menus are prepared repeatedly, it is easier to project how much of each menu item you will need to make.


## Here are some Steps for Planning Cycle Menus

1. Gather menu planning resources, such as recipes, product information and the National School Lunch Program Meal Pattern requirements.
2. Decide on the length of the cycle. The cycle menu should be at least 3 weeks to promote variety.
3. Plan the main dishes first.

- Try to include a different main dish for each day of the cycle.
- Vary the meat/meat alternate from day to day. For example, serve Vegetable Beef Soup on
Monday, Fish Nuggets on Tuesday, and Chicken and Rice on Wednesday.


#### Abstract

4. Add foods to go with and complement the main dish. Check the New Meal Pattern requirements to be sure all requirements have been met.


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Let's take a look a what this could look like.
We have collected all the documentation for crediting all of the main dishes that we plan on using. We are using recipes with Appendix A, MPFS, CN Labels along with the Food Buying Guide.
Then week by week - not day by day we begin to plan the menu by choosing a variety of entrees that make a week's menu. Be sure to check that each week has the correct balance for the weekly minimums and maximums for grains and meat/meat alternates.
Then take a look at the total monthly menu for balance and variety.

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- Include a variety of foods.
- Include familiar foods as well as new foods
- Include different shapes, colors, textures,
tastes, and temperatures of food.
- Balance higher-cost and lower-cost foods throughout the week.
- Along with the traditional menu items, try something new!

The next step is to add all of the additional items to make each days menu reimbursable and to meet the weekly requirements for the vegetable sub-groups.
Add milk to your menu defining the choices that are available.
Be sure to follow the basic principles of good menu planning. (Go to next slide)

Remember basic meal planning guidelines.

- Include a variety of foods. Try not to repeat the same main dish in a menu cycle.
- Include familiar foods as well as foods that may be new to students.
- Include different shapes, colors, textures (soft, crunchy), tastes (sweet, salty, spicy, mild) and temperatures of food.
- Balance higher-cost and lower-cost foods throughout the week.
- And along with the traditional menu items, try something new at least once in every cycle.
(Go back to previous slide and take a look to see if this menu planner followed the meal planning guidelines)

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## Tips

- Vary the preparation methods in a day's menu so equipment will not be overloaded.
- Consider the season
- Include raw and cooked vegetables.
- Include a variety of foods so students get a wide range of nutrients.
- Consider when fresh foods will arrive and how long they will last.
- Consider delivery times and storage capacities of freezers and refrigerators


The next step is to add all of the additional items to make each days menu reimbursable and to meet the weekly requirements for the vegetable sub-groups.
Add milk to your menu defining the choices that are available.
Be sure to follow the basic principles of good menu planning. (Go to next slide)

Remember that cycle menus can be flexible to allow variations for holidays, seasonal fruits and vegetables, special items, and the use of USDA Foods (Commodity)

Here are some tips for successful Cycle Menus

- Vary the preparation methods in a day's menu so equipment, such as ovens, will not be overloaded.
- Consider the season and include foods that are in season.
- Include raw and cooked vegetables.
- Include a variety of foods so students get a wide range of nutrients.
- Consider when fresh foods will
arrive and how long they will last.
- Consider delivery times and storage capacities of freezers and refrigerators.

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## Samples of Cycle Menus

Mensus that Nove
http://education.ohio.gov/GD/Templates/Pages/ODE/ODEDetail.aspxPpage=3\&TopicRel ation $10=828 \&$ ContentID $=131143 \&$ Content $=132509$

Menus that Move is a set of seasonal cycle menus to help schools serve tasty meals that Mit within the United States Department of Agriculture's (USDA) new meal guidelines. Each seasonal cycle menu contains five weekly menus that have been
entered into the USDA Menu Certification Worksheet and meet both the required me components and also nutrient standards that have been entered into a USDA-approved component
software.
http://mmw.nationaldairycouncil.org/SiteCollectionDocuments/child nutrition/n
utrition in schools/Sample School Lunch Menu K-5.pdf


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