



# Oregon Youth Authority

Issue Brief

January 2015

## Nutrition services for youth in OYA close custody

**10**

Number of OYA close-custody facilities

**650**

Approximate number of youth offenders OYA supervises in close custody

**550**

Approximate number of youth offenders OYA supervises in community residential treatment and foster care settings

**450**

Approximate number of youth offenders OYA supervises who live independently or at home in communities

**323**

Total Funds, in millions of dollars, allocated to OYA in 2013-2015

**88**

Approximate percent of OYA's budget spent locally in facilities and communities

### Overview

- ▲ OYA maintains a centralized system of food services management that improves the quality and cost-effectiveness of foods provided to youth.
- ▲ All meals and snacks provided to youth in close custody meet USDA guidelines.

### Ensuring adequate nutrition

The Oregon Youth Authority serves approximately 2,800 meals and snacks daily to youth offenders in its 10 close-custody facilities. Nutritious meals are critical to youths' healthy physical, mental, and intellectual development, and to their ability to participate in treatment and education activities.

The agency's food services operations are supervised by a registered dietitian with a graduate degree in food systems management and more than 30 years' experience in food service operations. She is responsible for delivering consistent, nutritious menus within budgetary constraints that meet U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Child Nutrition Programs guidelines.

### Supporting youth reformation

Research shows that good nutrition helps children and adolescents focus and learn better. Within OYA's facilities, appropriate nutritional support helps youth focus on required treatment and education. A good breakfast is especially important because it reduces the likelihood of mood swings, distraction, and lethargy, any of which can interfere with learning and treatment.

### Meeting varied dietary requirements

OYA's menus reflect the needs of adolescents ages 15-18 who are experiencing a final growth spurt. Menus also reflect the differing dietary and caloric needs of females and males in that age range.

The key to supporting youth in close custody is to serve nutrient-dense foods (such as fresh fruits and vegetables) and to avoid empty-calorie items such as

## Oregon

### Youth Authority

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#### Mission

The Oregon Youth Authority protects the public and reduces crime by holding youth offenders accountable and providing opportunities for reformation in safe environments.



#### Vision

Youth who leave OYA will go on to lead productive, crime-free lives.



#### Core Values

Integrity  
Professionalism  
Accountability  
Respect



#### Director

**Fariborz Pakseresht**



#### Deputy Director

**Joe O'Leary**



#### Key Service Areas

Business Services  
Community Services  
Facility Services  
Health Services  
Information Services  
Treatment Services

potato chips and sodas. OYA uses portion control to ensure calorie content is appropriate for both genders and all age groups.

All close-custody facilities take into consideration youths' food allergies and make menu adjustments for youth with special dietary needs due to illnesses, dental issues, or conditions such as diabetes. Each facility also meets religious dietary needs and preferences for vegetarian meals.

For example, for Muslim, Jewish and other youth who do not eat pork products, non-pork equivalents such as turkey may be substituted. The Islamic fasting month Ramadan is accommodated by preparing sack lunches that observant youth may eat during the allowed period between dusk and dawn. Dietary restrictions also are accommodated for youth observing other holidays with specific dietary requirements. Special meals that reflect cultural food preferences are incorporated into the menu cycle.

### Meeting strict nutritional standards

OYA participates in the National School Breakfast, School Lunch and After-School Snack programs. These National Child Nutrition Programs provide reimbursements for meals served and make available USDA-purchased commodities for those enrolled in the program. OYA earns credit for the meals it serves and can use these credits to purchase commodity foods.

Breakfasts contain an average of 450-600 calories and less than 640 mg of sodium. Saturated fat is restricted to less than 10 percent of calories and trans fats to zero. Each breakfast includes a minimum of one cup of fruit, and all grains served for breakfast are rich in whole grains.

Lunches contain an average of 750-850 calories and less than 1,420 mg of sodium. Saturated fat is restricted to less than 10 percent of calories and trans fats to zero. Vegetables are divided into five specific groups (red/orange, dark green, starchy, legumes, and other), with a minimum number of servings of each group provided throughout the week.

Dinner menus use a meal pattern very similar to the lunch pattern to ensure high quality, nutritious, and balanced meals. The focus continues to be on providing the appropriate number of calories to support adolescent and young adult growth, while providing whole grain products, fresh fruits and vegetables, minimal sodium, and low-fat dairy and meat items.

Each close-custody facility has a kitchen manager who is charged with food preparation and ensuring food quality and safety, generating food and supply orders, and supervising staff and youth working in the kitchen.

Centralized menus ensure foods meet the nutritional needs of youth, incorporate variety, and meet budgetary requirements. Although OYA uses centralized menus, kitchen managers may vary and customize menus by substituting food items of similar nutritional content.