

Preliminary Voluntary Sugar Reduction Targets from the National Salt and Sugar Reduction Initiative

The technical comment period is 60 days beginning October 19, 2018 and ending December 17, 2018

Send comments to sugar@health.nyc.gov

Background and Objective

The National Salt and Sugar Reduction Initiative (NSSRI) is a partnership of local, state, and national health organizations convened by the NYC Health Department. Building on an established framework that addressed sodium, the NSSRI is releasing proposed categories and preliminary, voluntary sugar density targets for comment.

The objective of the NSSRI is to promote voluntary, gradual, achievable, meaningful, and measurable reductions in sugar content in packaged foods and beverages. This is because intake of added sugars is associated with increased risk of excess weight, type 2 diabetes, hypertension, stroke, heart disease, and cavities. A food supply lower in added sugar will make it easier for consumers to make healthy choices. Simultaneous with this effort, we will continue to encourage Americans to reduce consumption of added sugar. This includes avoiding sugary drinks. The NSSRI complements a suite of national and local strategies to improve Americans' diets through consumer behavior change, including but not limited to education and policy, such as taxes and point of purchase information.

Category and Target Development

13 proposed food and beverage categories with targets for sugar reduction are available for comment. The categories and targets were developed through an iterative process, which included consideration of which food products contribute most to added sugar intake in the diet, commonly used food categories, similarity between products, and opportunities and technical challenges for sugar reduction. Key aspects of the methodology included:

- 2017 Nielsen sales data was merged with nutrition information from Label Insights and manufacturer websites by Universal Product Code.
- For each category, the sales-weighted mean and distribution were calculated in grams (g) of sugar per 100 g of food for the top 80% of sales volume. The data were weighted by sales in order to reflect population intake and an 80% threshold was chosen to identify products in each category sold in the greatest quantities nationally.
- Preliminary targets were evaluated for feasibility; similar products currently exist below the proposed targets in each category.

Two complementary preliminary targets for each category are available for comment: a sales-weighted mean (SWM) and a maximum upper limit. Both are based on sugar density.

- SWM targets apply to all products in the category. For most categories, the SWM targets are based on a 10% (2022) and 20% (2025) reduction from the category's baseline SWM sugar density; for sugary drinks, targets are based on a 10% (2022) and 40% (2025) reduction.
- Maximum upper limits apply to every individual product in the category. For most categories, the maximum upper limits are set at the 80th (2022) and 60th (2025) percentile of the sales-weighted sugar density distribution of the category; for sugary drinks, the maximum upper limits are set at the 80th (2022) and 40th (2025) percentile.

Companies meet NSSRI targets by demonstrating that the company's products meet *both* the SWM target and the maximum by 2022 and 2025. Companies meet the SWM target by demonstrating that the SWM sugar density of all of the company's products in a specific category is at or below the target by the target year. Companies meet the maximum target by demonstrating that the sugar density of every company's product is at or below the maximum upper limit by the target year.

Targets were drafted with the expectation that companies will meet the proposed targets without increasing non-nutritive sweeteners, saturated fat, calories, or sodium.

Submitting Comments

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- We invite you to share feedback related to the feasibility of these targets for the proposed food categories and any functional or technical challenges you anticipate with meeting the targets.
- This information will only be used to inform NSSRI sugar targets and categories, and any proprietary information that you share will be kept confidential to the extent allowed by law.

Main Packaged Food Category 1: Drinks¹

Packaged Food Category	Category Description Excludes products with 0g sugar.	Baseline 2018 Sales-Weighted Mean g sugar per 100ml	2022 Targets g sugar per 100ml		2025 Targets g sugar per 100ml	
			Sales-Weighted Mean	Maximum	Sales-Weighted Mean	Maximum
1.1 Sugary drinks	Soda, sports drinks, fruit drinks, energy drinks, tea. Excludes unsweetened drinks, 100% juice, and drinks with milk or milk substitute as a first or second ingredient.	8.9	8.0	11.5	5.3	7.9
1.2 Sweetened milk and milk substitute	Sweetened milk and milk substitute including drinks containing milk or milk substitute as a first or second ingredient. Excludes unsweetened milk and plain milk substitute.	8.1	7.2	11.1	6.4	8.8

¹Powdered drink mixes and syrups are included using nutrition information as prepared to the manufacturer's instructions.

Main Packaged Food Category 2: Grain-Based Desserts

Packaged Food Category	Category Description Excludes products with 0g sugar.	Baseline 2018 Sales-Weighted Mean g sugar per 100g	2022 Targets g sugar per 100g		2025 Targets g sugar per 100g	
			Sales-Weighted Mean	Maximum	Sales-Weighted Mean	Maximum
2.1 Breakfast pastries	Donuts, cinnamon rolls, coffee cakes, Danishes, streusel, muffins, pies, breakfast bars and toaster pastries.	27.2	24.5	32.6	21.8	29.9
2.2 Cakes	Cakes, cupcakes, brownies and snack cakes.	39.9	35.9	43.8	31.9	42.2
2.3 Cookies	Filled and unfilled cookies, sandwich cookies, and tea biscuits.	35.6	32.1	41.2	28.5	37.1
2.4 Dry mixes	Dry mixes for cake, cookie, brownies, and muffins.	49.4	44.5	58.2	39.5	50.4

Main Packaged Food Category 3: Dairy-Based and Frozen Desserts

Packaged Food Category	Category Description Excludes products with 0g sugar.	Baseline 2018 Sales-Weighted Mean g sugar per 100g	2022 Targets g sugar per 100g		2025 Targets g sugar per 100g	
			Sales-Weighted Mean	Maximum	Sales-Weighted Mean	Maximum
3.1 Dairy-based and frozen desserts	Ice cream, frozen yogurt, gelato, ice pops, sherbet, sorbet, pudding, and cheesecake.	20.5	18.5	23.9	16.4	21.5

Main Packaged Food Category 4: Candies

Packaged Food Category	Category Description Excludes products with 0g sugar.	Baseline 2018 Sales-Weighted Mean g sugar per 100g	2022 Targets g sugar per 100g		2025 Targets g sugar per 100g	
			Sales-Weighted Mean	Maximum	Sales-Weighted Mean	Maximum
4.1 Sweet candies	Chewy, gummy, and hard candies. Includes caramels, nut rolls, and seasonal sweet candies.	59.3	53.3	71.8	47.4	64.3
4.2 Chocolate candies	Chocolate bars, chocolate candies, filled bars, and seasonal chocolate.	53.6	48.2	59.4	42.9	53.7

Main Packaged Food Category 5: Breakfast Cereals

Packaged Food Category	Category Description Excludes products with 0g sugar.	Baseline 2018 Sales-Weighted Mean g sugar per 100g	2022 Targets g sugar per 100g		2025 Targets g sugar per 100g	
			Sales-Weighted Mean	Maximum	Sales-Weighted Mean	Maximum
5.1 Breakfast cereals	Ready-to-eat cereal, granola, and hot cereal.	27.4	24.7	34.5	21.9	31.1

Main Packaged Food Category 6: Condiments and Toppings

Packaged Food Category	Category Description Excludes products with 0g sugar.	Baseline 2018 Sales-Weighted Mean g sugar per 100g	2022 Targets g sugar per 100g		2025 Targets g sugar per 100g	
			Sales-Weighted Mean	Maximum	Sales-Weighted Mean	Maximum
6.1 Condiments	Ketchup, barbecue sauce, salad dressing, steak sauce, and Asian sauces.	21.8	19.7	35.8	17.5	23.5
6.2 Dessert syrups and toppings	Chocolate and caramel syrups, fruit syrups and spreads, chocolate and hazelnut spreads, marshmallow topping, pancake syrup, and frosting. Excludes 100% maple syrup.	54.3	48.9	59.7	43.5	55.9

Main Packaged Food Category 7: Yogurt

Packaged Food Category	Category Description Excludes products with 0g sugar.	Baseline 2018 Sales-Weighted Mean g sugar per 100g	2022 Targets g sugar per 100g		2025 Targets g sugar per 100g	
			Sales-Weighted Mean	Maximum	Sales-Weighted Mean	Maximum
7.1 Yogurt	Dairy and non-dairy yogurt and yogurt drinks with sweetener. Excludes unsweetened yogurt and yogurt sweetened only with non-caloric sweeteners.	10.5	9.5	13.3	8.4	11.3