



Restaurant/Retail FAQs

UC Berkeley Food & Beverage Choices Policy Frequently Asked Questions

✓ Q: When does the Food and Beverage Choices policy take effect?

The policy is effective as of January 1, 2019.

✓ Q: Why is UC Berkeley implementing the Food and Beverage Choices policy?

A nutrition policy on the Berkeley campus is one of the most effective environmental strategies to address obesity, prevent diabetes, and improve the diet and health outcomes of the campus population. Health education alone—in the absence of change to the food environment—does not produce lasting behavioral change.

✓ Q: Don't healthy foods cost more?

Contrary to popular belief, no. A USDA study found that when cost of food was assessed on the basis of average portion size, fruits, vegetables, grains, and dairy foods are less expensive than most protein foods and foods high in added sugars, sodium, and/or saturated fat.

✓ Q: Are unhealthy foods banned?

No, this policy intends to increase accessibility to healthy food and beverages choices rather than taking away choices.

✓ Q: Will this affect sales?

Actually, when healthy options increase, sales have been shown to increase. For example, in a 2017 study by Laroche et al., when a variety of healthier items were added to the concession stand, 77% of students purchased healthier foods and revenue and satisfaction increased.

✓ Q: What if the policy drives more business off campus?

With so many choices on campus, along with a growing demand for healthier options, and ease of location, business should not be lost to restaurants off campus. As a leader in the community, UC Berkeley is proud to initiate this policy and help guide community members towards making healthier choices.

✓ Q: Why shouldn't we focus on education so people can just make the right choices?

Most people have a general understanding of which foods are healthy, but when they are readily available and habit-forming, unhealthier options can be very difficult to resist. We know from research that health education alone, in the absence of environmental change, does not produce lasting changes in health behaviors.

✓ Q: What are some easy items to add to menus?

Whole grain breads for sandwiches, a basket of whole fruit by the register, side salads, fruit cups, sparkling water, oatmeal with nuts and dried fruit, or mini portions of desserts.