

## Sugar Reduction Targets from the National Salt and Sugar Reduction Initiative

Please contact [sugar@health.nyc.gov](mailto:sugar@health.nyc.gov) with any questions.

### 1. Background and Objective

The National Salt and Sugar Reduction Initiative (NSSRI) is a partnership of local, state and national health organizations convened by the New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene. Building on an established framework that addressed a reduction of sodium in processed foods, the NSSRI is releasing sugar reduction targets. Industry was invited to share feedback to help inform category and target development.

The objective of the NSSRI is to promote gradual, achievable and meaningful 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. Today's public health landscape demonstrates that addressing diet-related disease remains critical, even during a public health emergency like COVID-19. Diet-related health conditions, such as diabetes and heart disease, can increase the risk of severe illness from COVID-19, emphasizing the importance of working to create a healthier food supply.

A food supply lower in added sugar will make it easier for consumers to make healthy choices. Due to their lower calorie requirements and higher relative intake of added sugars, children could benefit the most from a reduction of sugar in food and beverages.

Simultaneous with this effort to shift the food supply, 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 approaches.

### 2. Category and Target Development

Targets for sugar reduction are included below for fifteen food and beverage categories. The categories and targets were developed through an iterative process. This included consideration of the foods and beverages that contribute most to added sugar intake in the diet, commonly used food categories, similarity between products, opportunities and technical challenges for sugar reduction, and feedback from the food and beverage industry.

Key aspects of the methodology:

- 2017 Nielsen sales data was merged with nutrition information from Label Insight and manufacturer websites by Universal Product Code to build the NSSRI Packaged Food and Beverage Database.
- For each category, the sales-weighted mean (SWM) and distribution of sugar density were calculated in grams (g) of sugar per 100 g of food (or 100 milliliters [mL] of liquid) for the top 80% of sales volume; the data were weighted by sales to reflect population intake.
- Targets were evaluated for feasibility; in each category there are products currently sold that are below the targets.
- Preliminary targets were shared with the food and beverage industry in fall 2018, and feedback was collected via two comment periods. Comments were considered and informed updates to the targets, which are included in the tables below.

#### *Sales-Weighted Mean Targets*

SWM targets (see section 4) use the metric of sugar density (grams of sugar per 100 g of food or per 100 mL of beverages).

- SWM targets apply to the sales-weighted average of all products in the category.
- For most categories, the SWM targets are based on a 10% (2023) and 20% (2026) reduction from the category's baseline SWM sugar density. For sugary drinks, targets are based on a 10% (2023) and 40% (2026) reduction.

### 3. Next Steps

#### Company Participation

Companies have the option to publicly commit to meeting the SWM target in any category by 2023 and/or 2026 and be publicly recognized for their commitment. Alternatively, companies may also consider using the targets to inform internal processes and decision making as it relates to marketing, reformulation, and research and development of new and existing products. Companies meet the target by demonstrating that the SWM sugar density of all products in a specific category is at or below the target by the end of the target year.

Targets were drafted with the expectation that companies will meet the proposed targets without increasing saturated fat, calories, sodium or refined carbohydrates as part of the reformulation to reduce sugar. We advise companies to consider existing and new scientific research and regulations to determine the appropriate use of low and no calorie sweeteners and recommend avoiding use of low and no calorie sweeteners in products marketed to or commonly consumed by children.

#### Additional Strategies for Sugar Reduction

Companies are encouraged to employ complementary strategies to reduce availability of added sugar in the food supply and reduce consumption. This may include:

- Encouraging consumers to switch to unsweetened versions of products (e.g. unsweetened yogurt), or unsweetened alternative products (e.g. seltzer), that do not contain low and no calorie sweeteners.
- Decreasing portion sizes for single-serving products.
- Meeting Guidance Maximums, which are suggested upper limits for sugar density of products in each category (see section 4).
  - For most categories, the Guidance Maximums are set at the 80th (2023) and 60th (2026) percentile of the sales-weighted sugar density distribution of the category. For sugary drinks, the Guidance Maximums are set at the 80th (2023) and 40th (2026) percentile.
  - Companies do not need to commit to meeting the maximums, but they are encouraged to utilize the guidance values for new product development and product reformulation.

#### Monitoring Progress

The NSSRI Packaged Food and Beverage Database will be updated to monitor nutrient and ingredient content of packaged foods and beverages over time. The database will be used to track progress against the 2023 and 2026 SWM targets and Guidance Maximums, in addition to complementary strategies, such as switching consumers to unsweetened products and decreasing portion sizes. Using the database, progress can be assessed at the company level, category level, or across all 15 categories.

For additional information, please refer to the question and answer document, glossary, comment and response document or visit [nyc.gov/health/nssri](http://nyc.gov/health/nssri). Questions can be addressed via email or meeting. Please contact [sugar@health.nyc.gov](mailto:sugar@health.nyc.gov).

### 4. Sales-Weighted Mean Targets

#### Main Packaged Food Category 1: Drinks<sup>1</sup>

Packaged Food Category	Category Description Excludes products with 0 g added sugar. <sup>2</sup>	Baseline 2018 Sales-Weighted Mean g sugar per 100 mL	Sales-Weighted Mean Targets g sugar per 100 mL	
			2023	2026
<b>1.1 Sugary drinks</b>	Soda, sports drinks, fruit drinks, energy drinks, tea. Excludes 100% juice and drinks with milk or milk substitute as a first or second ingredient.	8.9	8.0	5.4
<b>1.2 Sweetened milk<sup>3</sup></b>	Drinks containing milk as a first or second ingredient.	6.0	5.4	4.8
<b>1.3 Sweetened milk substitute<sup>4</sup></b>	Flavored drinks containing milk substitute as a first or second ingredient.	3.7	3.3	2.9

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

<sup>2</sup>Definition of added sugar is consistent with the definition used by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA)

<sup>3</sup>Includes a sugar allowance of 4 g sugar per 100 mL for dairy products in which milk is the first ingredient and 2 g sugar per 100 mL for products in which milk is the second ingredient.

<sup>4</sup>Includes a sugar allowance of 2 g sugar per 100 mL for plant-based milk substitutes.

### Main Packaged Food Category 2: Grain-Based Desserts and Snack Bars

Packaged Food Category	Category Description Excludes products with 0 g added sugar.	Baseline 2018 Sales-Weighted Mean g sugar per 100 g	Sales-Weighted Mean Targets g sugar per 100 g	
			2023	2026
2.1 Breakfast pastries	Donuts, cinnamon rolls, coffee cakes, Danishes, streusel, muffins, pies, and toaster pastries.	27.2	24.5	21.7
2.2 Cakes	Cakes, cupcakes, brownies and snack cakes.	39.9	35.9	31.9
2.3 Cookies	Filled and unfilled cookies, sandwich cookies and tea biscuits.	35.6	32.1	28.5
2.4 Dry mixes	Dry mixes for cake, cookies, brownies and muffins.	49.4	44.5	39.6
2.5 Granola and Snack bars	Granola bars, cereal bars, breakfast bars, yogurt bars and protein bars.	27.1	24.4	21.7

### Main Packaged Food Category 3: Refrigerated and Frozen Desserts

Packaged Food Category	Category Description Excludes products with 0 g added sugar.	Baseline 2018 Sales-Weighted Mean g sugar per 100 g	Sales-Weighted Mean Targets g sugar per 100 g	
			2023	2026
3.1 Refrigerated and frozen desserts	Ice cream, frozen yogurt, gelato, ice pops, sherbet, sorbet, and pre-made pudding and gelatin. Excludes pudding and gelatin dry mixes.	20.7	18.7	16.6

### Main Packaged Food Category 4: Candies

Packaged Food Category	Category Description Excludes products with 0 g added sugar.	Baseline 2018 Sales-Weighted Mean g sugar per 100 g	Sales-Weighted Mean Targets g sugar per 100 g	
			2023	2026
4.1 Sweet candies	Chewy, gummy, and hard candies. Includes caramels, nut rolls and seasonal sweet candies.	59.2	53.3	47.4
4.2 Chocolate candies	Chocolate bars, chocolate candies, filled bars and seasonal chocolate.	53.6	48.2	42.9

### Main Packaged Food Category 5: Breakfast Cereals

Packaged Food Category	Category Description Excludes products with 0 g added sugar.	Baseline 2018 Sales-Weighted Mean g sugar per 100 g	Sales-Weighted Mean Targets g sugar per 100 g	
			2023	2026
5.1 Breakfast cereals	Ready-to-eat cereal, granola and hot cereal.	27.4	24.7	22.0

### Main Packaged Food Category 6: Condiments and Toppings

Packaged Food Category	Category Description Excludes products with 0 g added sugar.	Baseline 2018 Sales-Weighted Mean g sugar per 100 g	Sales-Weighted Mean Targets g sugar per 100 g	
			2023	2026
6.1 Condiments	Ketchup, barbecue sauce, salad dressing, steak sauce and Asian sauces.	21.8	19.7	17.5
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	43.4

### Main Packaged Food Category 7: Yogurt

Packaged Food Category	Category Description Excludes products with 0 g added sugar.	Baseline 2018 Sales-Weighted Mean g sugar per 100 g	Sales-Weighted Mean Targets g sugar per 100 g	
			2023	2026
7.1 Yogurt <sup>5</sup>	Dairy and non-dairy yogurt and yogurt drinks.	6.5	5.9	5.2

<sup>5</sup>Includes a sugar allowance of 4 g sugar per 100 g for dairy yogurt and 2 g sugar per 100 g for non-dairy yogurt substitutes.

## Guidance Maximums

Main Packaged Food Category	Packaged Food Category	Category Description Excludes products with 0 g added sugar.	Category Maximum g sugar per 100 g or 100 mL	
			2023	2026
1: Drinks <sup>6</sup>	<b>1.1 Sugary drinks</b>	Soda, sports drinks, fruit drinks, energy drinks and tea. Excludes 100% juice and drinks with milk or milk substitute as a first or second ingredient.	11.5	8.0
	<b>1.2 Sweetened milk<sup>7</sup></b>	Drinks containing milk as a first or second ingredient.	8.7	6.5
	<b>1.3 Sweetened milk substitute<sup>7</sup></b>	Flavored drinks containing milk substitute as a first or second ingredient.	4.8	4.2
2: Grain-Based desserts and snack bars	<b>2.1 Breakfast pastries</b>	Donuts, cinnamon rolls, coffee cakes, Danishes, streusel, muffins, pies and toaster pastries.	32.7	29.9
	<b>2.2 Cakes</b>	Cakes, cupcakes, brownies and snack cakes.	43.7	42.2
	<b>2.3 Cookies</b>	Filled and unfilled cookies, sandwich cookies and tea biscuits.	41.2	37.1
	<b>2.4 Dry mixes</b>	Dry mixes for cake, cookies, brownies and muffins.	58.2	50.8
	<b>2.5 Granola and Snack Bars</b>	Granola bars, cereal bars, breakfast bars, yogurt bars and protein bars.	32.1	29.1
3: Refrigerated and frozen desserts	<b>3.1 Refrigerated and frozen desserts</b>	Ice cream, frozen yogurt, gelato, ice pops, sherbet, sorbet, and pre-made pudding and gelatin. Excludes pudding and gelatin dry mixes.	23.9	21.5
4: Candies	<b>4.1 Sweet candies</b>	Chewy, gummy, and hard candies. Includes caramels, nut rolls and seasonal sweet candies.	71.8	63.8
	<b>4.2 Chocolate candies</b>	Chocolate bars, chocolate candies, filled bars and seasonal chocolate.	59.4	53.7
5: Breakfast cereals	<b>5.1 Breakfast cereals</b>	Ready-to-eat cereal, granola and hot cereal.	34.5	31.2
6: Condiments and toppings	<b>6.1 Condiments</b>	Ketchup, barbecue sauce, salad dressing, steak sauce, and Asian sauces.	35.8	23.5
	<b>6.2 Dessert syrups and toppings</b>	Chocolate and caramel syrups, fruit syrups and spreads, chocolate and hazelnut spreads, marshmallow topping, pancake syrup and frosting. Excludes 100% maple syrup.	59.8	55.9
7: Yogurt	<b>7.1 Yogurt<sup>7</sup></b>	Dairy and non-dairy yogurt and yogurt drinks.	9.3	7.3

<sup>6</sup>Powdered drink mixes and syrups are included using nutrition information as prepared to the manufacturer's instructions.

<sup>7</sup>Includes the following sugar allowances: 4 g sugar per 100 mL for dairy products in which milk is the first ingredient; 2 g sugar per 100 mL for products in which milk is the second ingredient; 2 g sugar per 100 mL for plant-based milk substitutes; 4 g sugar per 100 g for dairy yogurt; and 2 g sugar per 100 g for plant-based yogurt substitutes.