

Lunches Consumed From School Are the Most Nutritious



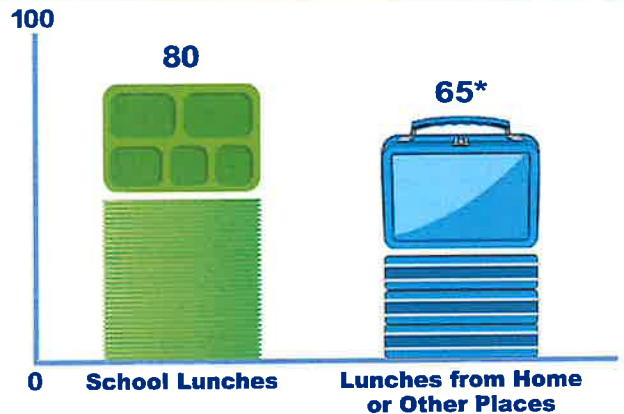
The Healthy Eating Index (HEI) assigns scores to meals based on how consistent they are with the Dietary Guidelines for Americans.

Higher scores indicate higher nutritional quality.



The HEI includes a total score and separate scores for different components of a healthy diet.

Average Total HEI Scores of Lunches Consumed by Students

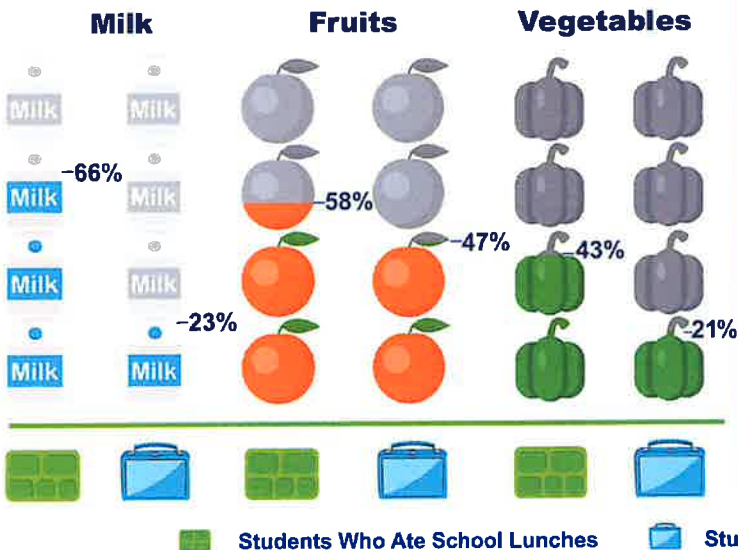


Lunches consumed by school lunch participants and nonparticipants in school year 2014-2015.

*Difference between school lunches and lunches from home or other places is statistically significant.

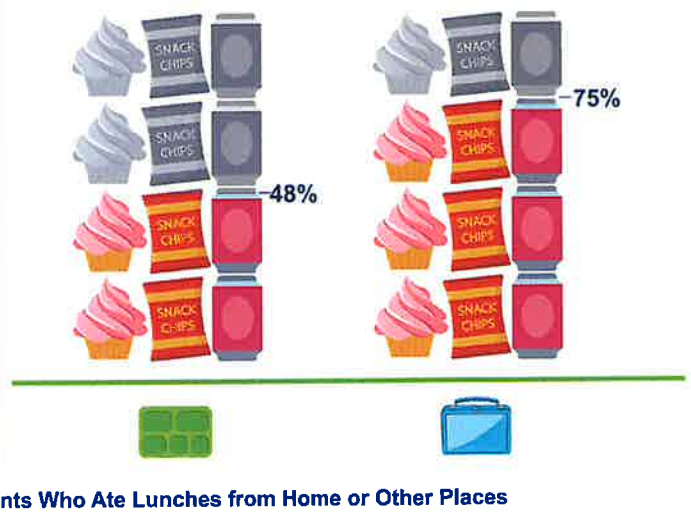
Students who ate school lunches were more likely to consume milk, fruits, and vegetables at lunch than students who ate lunches from home or other places.

Percentage of students consuming...



Students who ate school lunches were less likely to consume desserts, snack items, and non-milk beverages at lunch.

Percentage of students consuming... Desserts, snacks, non-milk beverages



The analysis included all foods and beverages consumed at lunch. Students who ate school lunches may also have consumed foods or beverages from home or other places. All of the differences between students who ate school lunches and students who ate lunches from home or other places are statistically significant.

Findings are from the School Nutrition and Meal Cost Study, which was conducted by Mathematica. The study provides information about a broad array of topics, including the food and nutrient content of school meals, the costs of school meals, the food environments in schools, and the contribution of school meals to children's overall diets. Detailed reports, other infographics, webinars, and a video of key study findings are available at: <https://www.fns.usda.gov/school-nutrition-and-meal-cost-study>.