



FRESH FOOD CHECK LIST

How do you develop a Fresh Food vision for a dining program?

The first step is to understand where you are today. How much of your menu is being made from fresh ingredients and how much is processed, frozen, canned or prepared from ingredients that have undergone some sort of processing? The easiest way to understand this is to take a quick stroll through your storage room, freezer and refrigerator. Take note of what you see. We created this Fresh Food Checklist to help you quickly assess your current program.

Look in your storage room. Do you see...

STORAGE ROOM

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> DRIED HERBS AND SPICES | <input type="checkbox"/> BOXED STOCKS |
| <input type="checkbox"/> PORTION CONTROL PACKETS OF CONDIMENTS, SALAD DRESSINGS, SALT, PEPPER, SWEETENERS | <input type="checkbox"/> BOXED STUFFING |
| <input type="checkbox"/> COOKING OILS AND VINEGARS | <input type="checkbox"/> CANS OF SOUP |
| <input type="checkbox"/> BOTTLED/CANNED BEVERAGES | <input type="checkbox"/> CANNED GRAVIES AND SAUCES |
| <input type="checkbox"/> FLOUR, OATS, OR CORNMEAL | <input type="checkbox"/> CANS OF SALAD DRESSING |
| <input type="checkbox"/> QUINOA, RICE, BULGUR WHEAT, WHEAT BERRIES AND OTHER GRAINS | <input type="checkbox"/> CANNED BEEF STEW OR SPAGHETTI SAUCE |
| <input type="checkbox"/> BOXES OF DEHYDRATED POTATO FLAKES | <input type="checkbox"/> CANS OF PEARS, PEACHES, PINEAPPLES OR OTHER FRUITS |
| <input type="checkbox"/> BOXES OF SCALLOPED OR AU GRATIN POTATOES | <input type="checkbox"/> CANNED MEATS |
| <input type="checkbox"/> CANS OF GREEN BEANS, BEETS, SLICED CARROTS OR OTHER VEGETABLES | |

Look in your freezer. Do you see...

FREEZER

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> FROZEN, PRE-CUT CARROTS, ONIONS, PEPPERS, OR GREEN BEANS | <input type="checkbox"/> FROZEN APPETIZERS |
| <input type="checkbox"/> FROZEN PEAS, CORN, LIMA BEANS & BRUSSELS SPROUTS | <input type="checkbox"/> FROZEN CAKES |
| <input type="checkbox"/> FROZEN VEGETABLE COMBINATIONS | <input type="checkbox"/> FROZEN PIES |
| <input type="checkbox"/> FROZEN BEEF, FISH, CHICKEN OR PORK PORTIONS | <input type="checkbox"/> FROZEN SOUPS |
| <input type="checkbox"/> FROZEN BREADED BEEF, FISH, CHICKEN OR PORK | <input type="checkbox"/> FROZEN BREAD PRODUCTS OR BAKED GOODS |
| <input type="checkbox"/> FROZEN LASAGNAS OR MEATBALLS | <input type="checkbox"/> ICE CREAM |
| <input type="checkbox"/> FROZEN HAMBURGER PATTIES | <input type="checkbox"/> ICE |
| <input type="checkbox"/> FROZEN POT PIES | |

Look in your refrigerator. Do you see...

REFRIGERATOR

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> WHOLE HEADS OF LETTUCE AND CABBAGE | <input type="checkbox"/> FRESH, UNCOOKED BEEF, FISH, CHICKEN OR PORK |
| <input type="checkbox"/> FRESH CARROTS, ONIONS, GREEN PEPPERS & LEEKS | <input type="checkbox"/> MARINATING BEEF, FISH, CHICKEN OR PORK PREPARATIONS MADE IN-HOUSE |
| <input type="checkbox"/> BAGS OF PRE-CUT FRESH VEGETABLES | <input type="checkbox"/> MARINATING VEGETABLE PREPARATIONS MADE IN-HOUSE |
| <input type="checkbox"/> FRESH BEETS AND TURNIPS | <input type="checkbox"/> CHEESES |
| <input type="checkbox"/> BAGS OF PREPARED SALAD MIXES | <input type="checkbox"/> FRESH HERBS |
| <input type="checkbox"/> TOMATOES, CELERY, CUCUMBERS | <input type="checkbox"/> FRESH MELON, APPLES, PEARS, PEACHES AND PINEAPPLES |
| <input type="checkbox"/> MILK, CREAM AND BUTTER | <input type="checkbox"/> ORANGES, GRAPEFRUIT AND OTHER SEASONAL FRESH FRUIT |
| <input type="checkbox"/> FRESH EGGS | <input type="checkbox"/> FRESH LEMONS AND LIMES |

What did you find in your storage room...

If you found any of the following items, it should be a signal to you that it's time to consider a dining program upgrade. All of these items, require considerable processing and often come with added sodium, preservatives and other artificial ingredients that would never be added when meals are made from scratch using fresh ingredients.

- Boxes of dehydrated potato flakes
- Boxes of scalloped or au gratin potatoes
- Cans of green beans, beets, sliced carrots or other vegetables
- Boxed stocks
- Boxed stuffing
- Cans of soup
- Canned gravies and sauces
- Cans of salad dressing
- Canned beef stew or spaghetti sauce
- Cans of pears, peaches, pineapples or other fruits
- Canned meats

What did you find in your freezer...

Most contract foodservice operations have a freezer that is packed with a wide assortment of items, from pre-cut, pre-portioned convenience items to fully prepared and frozen meals. The use of frozen, processed food and ingredients compromises flavor and degrades nutrition. At Unidine, the freezer is a lonely place where you will usually find only ice and ice cream. If you found any of the following items in your freezer, they signal real opportunities for improvement.

- Frozen vegetable combinations
- Frozen beef, fish, chicken or pork portions
- Frozen breaded beef, fish, chicken or pork
- Frozen lasagnas or meatballs
- Frozen hamburger patties
- Frozen pot pies
- Frozen appetizers
- Frozen cakes and pies
- Frozen soups



Unidine's chefs work with fresh ingredients to deliver nutrition, flavor and a memorable dining experience.



A typical Unidine freezer.



If your freezer looks like this, **you do not have a fresh food program!**

What did you find in your fridge...

At Unidine, the refrigerator bursts with color, flavor and aroma from crates of fresh produce and herbs. Our approach preserves nutritional content and flavor. Cuttings from fresh produce, herbs and meats are used to make the stocks that flavor our soups, sauces and gravies. This approach reduces waste and controls costs while delivering an enjoyable dining experience.



A typical Unidine fridge.

Keeping in mind that fresh produce is seasonal and regional, you are not necessarily going to find everything listed here at any given time. Throughout the season, the items will change. Fresh asparagus and strawberries in the spring. Farm fresh local zucchini and eggplants in the summer. Fresh local apples and butternut squash in the fall. Here's a general sampling of what you are likely to find in a Unidine refrigerator.

- Whole heads of lettuce and cabbage
- Fresh carrots, onions, green peppers, and leeks
- Fresh beets and turnips
- Tomatoes, celery, cucumbers
- Fresh eggs, milk, cream, butter and cheeses
- Fresh, uncooked beef, fish, chicken or pork
- Marinating vegetable preparations made in-house
- Marinating beef, fish, chicken or pork preparations made in-house
- Fresh herbs
- Fresh melon, apples, pears, peaches and pineapples
- Oranges, grapefruit and other seasonal fresh fruit

Develop your Vision

Use the completed Fresh Food Checklist as you develop a new vision for your dining program. The Fresh Food Checklist is part of our complete Fresh Food Toolkit. Unidine Toolkits for [Hospitals and Healthcare Facilities](#), [Corporate](#) and [Senior Living & LTC Dining](#) are designed to help you assess your current dining program, educate your internal stakeholders and assemble information that will be useful as you build a new vision for your dining and catering program and consider your options in the marketplace.

If you would like to learn more about Unidine's commitment to deliver a fresh approach to customized culinary experiences, contact us at [1.877-UNIDINE \(864-3463\) x4288](tel:1877-UNIDINE), or freshthinking@unidine.com

