

## LESSON: Food Labels (CA)

### LEARNING OBJECTIVES:

- Define and explain what a Nutrition Facts Table is
- Understand and recognize categories in the Nutrition Facts Table
- Understand and describe what a serving size is and what % Daily Values are
- Effectively read and interpret a basic Ingredients List

### LEVEL:



### MATERIALS:

- Activity Sheet: Level 4 - Matching NFT (CA)
- Activity Sheet: Level 4 - Compare the Products (CA)
- Activity Sheet: Level 4 - How to Read a NFT (CA)
- PowerPoint: Level 4 - Food Labels (CA)
- Quiz: Level 4 - Food Labels (CA)

### LESSON:

**Starter:** The purpose is to introduce the idea of food labelling for grades 7-8. Students can critically consider questions such as: Why do we label and what is the meaning behind food labels?

Bring students together to have them start talking and thinking about these topics.

#### Section 1: What are Food Labels? Why are they Important?

*Ask Class: What is a food label? \*listen to response, build a definition together, recap and compare with the following\**

A food label is a label usually displayed on a food package containing information regarding the nutrition of the food. Other parts of the label include:

- The Nutrition Facts Table
- Nutrition Claims
- Ingredients List
- The Weight of the Food (usually in grams)

Food labels are very important because they help let consumers know what type of ingredients they contain, different health information, and where the food was packaged.

**For Example:** It is important to know if a food was packaged in a facility that uses peanuts. If someone is allergic to peanuts, then they would know to be cautious if purchasing that item.

There are two main labels we use in Canada to let consumers know what the nutrition composition of their food is (*nutrition composition* - the nutrients that make up the food, or what is in the food item). We use the **Nutrition Facts Table** and the **Ingredients List**.

## Section 2: Breaking Down the Nutrition Facts Table

What is the Nutrition Facts Table? It is a table that lists some of the major nutrients in food, and what levels of these nutrients the product contains. It is organized by two categories:

- **Serving Size**
- **% Daily Values**

### What is a Serving Size?

A serving size is the amount of a product that the manufacturer has listed as 1 serving. Different products have different serving sizes.

**For Example:** 1 serving of raw leaf spinach might be 1 cup (*1 fist full*) while 1 serving of cooked leaf spinach might be ½ cup (*1 handful*).

Serving sizes are different for products and different for manufacturers. These serving sizes impact the nutrient values listed in the Nutrition Facts Table.

### Class Activity 1: Looking at the Nutrition Facts Table

Nutrition Facts		Valeur nutritive	
Per 2 tbsp (30 g)		pour 2 cuil. à soupe (30g)	
Calories 45		% Daily Value*	% valeur quotidienne*
Fat / Lipides 3.5 g		5%	
Saturated / saturés 2 g		11%	
+ Trans / trans 0.1 g			
Carbohydrate / Glucides 2 g			
Fibre / Fibres 0 g		0%	
Sugars / Sucres 1 g		0%	
Protein / Protéines 2 g			
Cholesterol / Cholestérol 10 mg			
Sodium 100 mg		4%	
Potassium 0 mg		0%	
Calcium		6%	
Iron		0%	

\*5% or less is a little, 15% or more is a lot  
\*5% ou moins c'est peu, 15% ou plus c'est beaucoup

This is a Nutrition Facts Table (NFT). There are a few sections on the NFT to pay attention to.

1. **Calories:** measured energy in food. This is the amount of energy you get from a food item.
2. **Fat:** measured amount of fat in food. It is healthy to have good fats in your diet because fat is a source of energy, vitamins, and minerals, and it can help our body to function regularly.

The fats we want to try and minimize intake of include: **trans fats** and **saturated fats**. Whatever fat is left over after subtracting the amount of trans and saturated fat is what we often call **unsaturated or healthy fats**. This is the type of fat we want to try and consume more often.

For Example: Using the table above, we can determine the amount of unsaturated fat in this product by subtracting the 2.0g of saturated fat and the 0.1g of trans fat from the total amount of fat which is 3.5g.

$$3.5\text{g} - 2.0\text{g} - 0.1\text{g} = 1.4\text{g}$$

Therefore, this product contains 1.4g of unsaturated fat or what is also known as *healthy fat!*

3. **Carbohydrates:** another source of energy. Carbohydrates help our bodies to function throughout the day.
4. **Proteins:** proteins are a source of energy and they help to maintain our body's muscles and bones. Proteins also help our bodies to grow.

Ask Class: What can we do when comparing products with different serving sizes?

For Example: If we have two brands of cereal, Cereal A and Cereal B, but the serving size of Cereal A is 1 cup and the serving size of Cereal B is  $\frac{3}{4}$  cup, how can we compare their nutrient values?

Class Activity 2: Compare the Nutrition Facts Tables

**Cereal A**

Nutrition Facts		Valeur nutritive	
Per 1 cup (55 g) pour 1 tasse (55 g)			
<b>Calories</b> 200		% Daily Value*	% valeur quotidienne*
Fat / Lipides 1g	2%		
Saturated / saturés 0.2g	1%		
+ Trans / trans 0g			
Carbohydrate / Glucides 45g			
Fibre / Fibres 6g	24%		
Sugars / Sucres 9g	0%		
Protein / Protéines 6g			
Cholesterol / Cholestérol 0mg			
Sodium 200mg	8%		
Potassium 0mg	0%		
Calcium 0mg	2%		
Iron 0mg	50%		
*5% or less is a little, 15% or more is a lot *5% ou moins c'est peu, 15% ou plus c'est beaucoup			

**Cereal B**

Nutrition Facts		Valeur nutritive	
Per pour $\frac{3}{4}$ tasse (29g)			
<b>Calories</b> 110		% Daily Value*	% valeur quotidienne*
Fat / Lipides 1.5g	2%		
Saturated / saturés	2%		
+ Trans / trans 0g			
Carbohydrate / Glucides 23g			
Fibre / Fibres 0g	8%		
Sugars / Sucres 9g	0%		
Protein / Protéines 2g			
Cholesterol / Cholestérol 0mg			
Sodium 160mg	7%		
Potassium 0mg	0%		
Calcium 0mg	10%		
Iron 0mg	30%		
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1. Which cereal has more calories?
2. Which cereal has less fat?
3. Which cereal has more iron?

## Answers

1. **For Cereal A**, 1 cup has 200 calories. **For Cereal B**,  $\frac{3}{4}$  of a cup has 110 calories. In order to compare the number of calories in the two cereals, we need them to have the same serving size. To do this we can divide **Cereal A** by 4 to view the number of calories for  $\frac{1}{4}$  of a cup and then we can multiply this value by three to see the calories for  $\frac{3}{4}$  of a cup.

**A:**  $200\text{cal} \div 4 = 50\text{cal} / \frac{1}{4} \text{ cup} \times 3 = 150\text{cal} / \frac{3}{4} \text{ cup}$

**B:**  $\frac{3}{4} \text{ cup} = 110\text{cal}$

Therefore, **Cereal A** has more calories with **150** calories for  $\frac{3}{4}$  of a cup compared to **Cereal B** only having **110** calories for  $\frac{3}{4}$  of a cup.

2. **Cereal A** has less fat per serving because it has less grams of fat for a larger serving size.
3. **For Cereal A**, 1 cup has 200 calories. **For Cereal B**,  $\frac{3}{4}$  of a cup has 110 calories. In order to compare the amount in the two cereals, we need them to have the same serving size. To do this we can divide **Cereal A** by 4 to view the amount of iron for  $\frac{1}{4}$  of a cup and then we can multiply this value by three to see the amount of iron for  $\frac{3}{4}$  of a cup.

**A:**  $1 \text{ cup} = 50\% \text{ iron} / 4 = 12.5\% \text{ iron} / \frac{1}{4} \text{ cup} \times 3 = 37.5\% \text{ iron} / \frac{3}{4} \text{ cup}$

**B:**  $30\% \text{ iron} / \frac{3}{4} \text{ cup}$

Therefore, **Cereal A** has more iron with **37.5%** of your daily iron for  $\frac{3}{4}$  of a cup compared to **Cereal B** only having **30%** of your daily iron for  $\frac{3}{4}$  of a cup.

## **What are % Daily Values?**

Percent Daily Values represent what amount (or percent) of a nutrient is listed in the Nutrition Facts Table. The percentage is based on a total daily need calculation out of 100% for a 2,000-calorie diet.

*For Example:* A nutrient may be listed as 5 grams in the Nutrition Facts Table, but it may be ranked as 25% of your Daily Value. The percentage helps to explain the number of grams of a nutrient in your diet.

These % Daily Values can help you to gauge how much nutritional value a food item holds. A food with 15 grams of fat might not seem like a lot by itself, but next to the % Daily Value chart it stands at 30% of your daily intake of fat. It is important to read both the weight (grams/milligrams) and the % Daily Value of an item to get a greater understanding of how much of that nutrient can be found in that food item.

### Class Activity 3: Understanding % Daily Values

Nutrition Facts Valeur nutritive	
Per 1 bar ( 30 g ) pour 1 barre ( 30 g )	
<b>Calories 130</b>	<b>% Daily Value*</b> <b>% valeur quotidienne*</b>
Fat / Lipides 6 g	10%
Saturated / saturés 3 g	16%
+ Trans / trans 0 g	
Carbohydrate / Glucides 13g	
Fibre / Fibres 3 g	12%
Sugars / Sucres 13g	0%
Protein / Protéines 0 g	
Cholesterol / Cholestérol 0 mg	
Sodium 3 mg	13%
Potassium 0 mg	0%
Calcium 0 mg	2%
Iron 0 mg	8%
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If you eat this product, you will consume 3 grams of fibre.

1. What does this mean when compared to your % Daily Values?
2. Is this a good amount of fibre?

\*Use the description: 5% or less is a **little**, 15% or more is a **lot** to help decide whether this product has high or low amounts of a nutrient.

### Answers

1. This means you will get approximately 12% of your daily fibre intake eating this product.
2. Yes, this is a good amount of fibre because it is more than 5%, but it is not a lot because it is less than 15%.

### **Section 3: How to Read an Ingredients List**

The Ingredient List is a list of all the ingredients used in a product. It is organized by weight, meaning ingredients used more are listed first, and ingredients used the least are listed at the end. Ingredients are separated by a black dot to keep items in order. When an ingredient is made up of multiple items, the different sources will be listed in brackets.

For Example: Seasoning (sugar, salt) because both sugar and salt are different sources of seasoning.

Ingredient lists can also have a '**contains list**'. This section lists key allergens (*allergens* - common foods that trigger allergies) which the product may contain. Some of the most common allergens in Canada include: eggs, milk, soy, peanuts, mustard, fish, and sesame seeds.

For Example: Contains: Wheat • Egg • Soy

This label is extremely important for people who have allergies because it allows them to identify foods they cannot eat. This is a part of Canada's Food Safety policies!

### Class Activity 4: Reading an Ingredients List

Using the table below, answer the following questions:

1. Which is the most used ingredient?
2. Which ingredient is used the least?
3. Are there any key allergens in this product? If so, which one?

**Ingredients:** Tomatoes, Water, Tomato paste, Sugar (brown sugar, sugar), Sodium, Spices

**Contains:** MAY CONTAIN PEANUTS

### Answers

1. Tomatoes
2. Spices
3. Yes, the product may contain peanuts. An individual allergic to peanuts should be cautious when consuming this product. Instead, try looking for products made in a peanut-free facility.

### **Summary: Wrap-up and Take-Home Points**

We have talked about the different parts of a food label today and why labels are so important! They allow us to see what ingredients are in a product and what amounts of different nutrients a food item may have. Try peeking at some Nutrition Facts Tables and Ingredients Lists at your next trip to the grocery store! You might be surprised what you find!

*\*Educators Note: For further facilitation, use the assigned quiz to recap the key concepts and test knowledge learned in this lesson.*

Adapted from Health Canada

### **REFLECTION NOTES:**