Adding Whole or 2% Milk Planning Checklist

New England Dairy

Schools can now serve milk at all fat levels, flavored and unflavored, in all meal programs and may exclude saturated fat from milk when calculating weekly averages to meet the guidelines. See this USDA-FNS Final Rule for details.

Use this checklist to decide whether to expand your milk options to include whole and/or 2% milk.

1. Determine interest in your district.

- ☐ Visit at least one local grocery store and note which milk fat levels the store stocks. Stores typically stock the milk options customers buy most often. If the dairy case features more whole or 2% milk, families in your area may prefer those options at home.
- ☐ Survey parents with questions such as:
  1. What kind of milk do you serve your children at home?
  2. What do your children say about the milk we serve at school?
  3. What type of milk would you like our school to serve?
- ☐ Host a taste test to learn which milk options students prefer.
  - You will find a taste test guide on page two.



2. Contact your processor or distributor to ask whether they offer whole and/or 2% milk, then add those options to your bid.

- Many processors and distributors already supply whole or 2% milk to institutions such as universities and hospitals.

3. Reach out to New England Dairy for support.

- Apply for a grant to purchase a new milk cooler.
- Use our administrator handout to explain the change and build support.
- Share our parent handout with facts about whole & 2% milk.
- Announce the expanded milk options to your community using our social media post template.
- Contact your New England Dairy representative for free posters and/or bulk milk magnets.



Adding Whole or 2% Milk Taste Test Guide

New England Dairy

Letting students taste test new options gives them a voice before menu changes are made. Student feedback can improve participation, increase acceptance of healthier choices, reduce food waste, and help programs use resources wisely. Follow these steps to determine which milk choices are preferred by your students.

1. Select the milk

Choose two milk samples to compare (example: Whole vs.1% or 2% vs. Fat-Free milk). Keep milk refrigerated and cold until ready to serve.

2. Prepare the samples

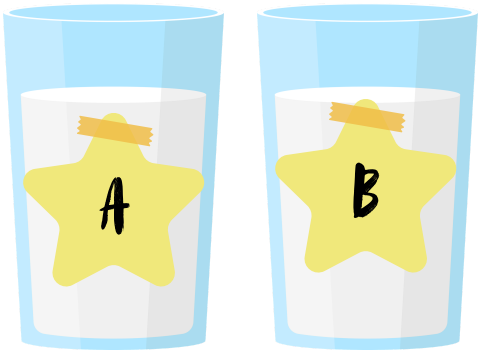
Pour each milk into identical small cups labeled only with a letter or number (Example: A and B) so participants do not know which milk is which.

3. Distribute the samples

Give each participant one sample of each milk and a small item for voting, such as a bead, chip, or popsicle stick. After tasting both samples, participants place their item in the container labeled with their milk choice.

4. Taste and vote

Ask participants to taste both samples and vote for their choice based on flavor and overall preference.



5. Reveal the results

After voting, reveal which milk matched each label and share the overall results with participants.

6. Discuss the results (if appropriate)

Ask participants if they were surprised by their preferred milk or if the results differed from what they expected.

For additional tips on hosting student taste tests, see the taste test resources page of our website.