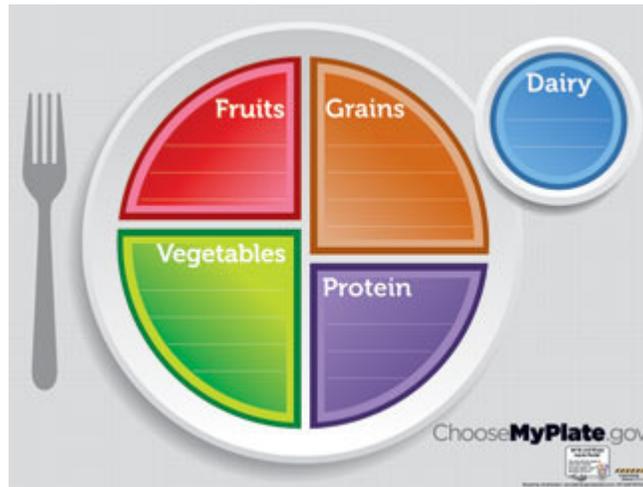


Hardee Is Meeting New Nutritional Standards



The Hardee County School Nutrition Department is implementing the new changes in school nutrition mandated by the USDA's National School Lunch and Breakfast programs. These new standards are a response to Public Law 111-296, The Healthy, Hunger Free Kids Act of 2010. This legislation marked the most comprehensive changes to school nutrition in more than a generation. The law required the USDA to update school meal nutrition standards over a three year period to reflect the most current dietary science and to combat childhood obesity. The new standards make changes including but not limited to the following:

- Ensuring students are offered both fruits and vegetables every day of the week
- Substantially increasing offerings of whole grain-rich foods
- Offering only fat free or low-fat milk varieties
- Limiting calories based on the age of children being served to ensure proper portion size
- Increasing the focus on reducing the amounts of saturated fats, trans fats, and sodium.

Additionally Hardee Schools implement "Offer vs Serve" system. Instead of being served a pre-made plate, students can choose among options of what they want as long as they take at least 3 of 5 food components offered. One of the choices selected must be at least a $\frac{1}{2}$ cup serving of the fruit or vegetable component or a $\frac{1}{2}$ cup total serving of both fruit and vegetable. If $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of fruit is selected, the student must select the full required daily serving of the vegetable component for it to be counted as meeting that component. The five food components are:

1. Fruits
2. Vegetables
3. Grains
4. Meats/meat alternates (m/ma) and
5. Fluid milk.

The USDA designed the new rule around the recommendations from a panel of experts brought together by the Institute of Medicine - a gold standard evidence-based health analysis group. The new standards were also updated to reflect the key changes from the 2010 Dietary Guidelines for Americans - the Federal Government's benchmark for nutrition.

