

Agency Express Nutrition Color-Coding Criteria Reference

What is a Nutrition Color-Coding Criteria system?

The criteria is designed to help promote healthy food choices at food banks and food pantries. It uses red, yellow, and green to highlight the healthiest options on Agency Express. Food insecurity is linked to higher rates of obesity, diabetes, hypertension and other chronic diseases. These chronic diseases can be prevented, managed, and reversed through the foods we eat.

Why is this important?

To create an easy to understand nutrition criteria to categorize the food offered on Agency Express. The Food Bank evaluated purchased, USDA, and donated product as available.

Color-Coding:

The nutrition criteria is based on limiting the distribution of items containing high amounts of saturated fat, sugar, and sodium. The coding is designed to help food bank and food pantry staff identify what foods are nutritious for clients. This criteria is consistent with Feeding America’s “Foods to Encourage,” with the aim of increasing the consumption of fruits and vegetables, whole grains, lean proteins, and low-fat dairy foods (Feeding America, 2013).

Basic Color-Coding Criteria:

GREEN: choose often = foods that are low in saturated fat, sodium and sugar, which is classified as a nutritional and healthy diet.

YELLOW: choose sometimes = foods that have medium levels of saturated fat, sodium, and sugar, which is classified as (just okay) not quite a healthy or unhealthy diet.

RED: choose rarely = foods that have high levels of saturated fat, sodium and sugar, which is classified as an unhealthy diet.

<input type="checkbox"/>	1133	306810	Ramen Noodles - Chicken Flavor	CS	4.10	0.00	24/3 oz	RED: Choose rarely	5	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	372	306606	Ravioli with Meat	CS	18.11	0.00	24/15 oz	YELLOW: Choose sometimes	25	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	100	U100372	Red Kidney Beans (USDA)!	CS	0.00	0.00	24/15 oz		23	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	155	323120	Refried Beans - Non Fat	CS	13.39	0.00	24/15oz	YELLOW: Choose sometimes	26	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	95	324070	Rice - Long Grain Wild	CS	16.12	0.00	24/1LB	GREEN: Choose often	26	<input type="checkbox"/>

To learn more about the criteria, visit the Partner Agency Resources page on Agency Express.

*For any questions, please contact our Health and Nutrition Programs Manager, Jessica Ghafil at jghafil@rfo.org or 405-600-3169.