

ADJUSTING SEASONING IN RECIPES FOR SCHOOL SITES

Taste preferences vary from student to student and from school to school. The amount of MS Spice Blends, herbs, and spices in MRS Recipes can be increased to meet student flavor preferences in a school. MS Spice Blends as well as herbs and spices listed in the box at right do not add calories, fat, saturated fat or sodium to recipes and can be increased without changing the nutritional analysis of the recipe. For videos on using the MS Spice Blends, visit www.mrs.mde.k12.ms.us.

Some guidelines to follow:

- Prepare a small quantity (such as 50 servings) for adjusting seasoning.
- Increase seasonings in small amounts. Remember that a little goes a long way and that flavors develop during cooking and holding times.
- Record the changes in quantities or seasonings added on the recipe.
- Involve students in the testing, as their taste preferences may be different from adults.
- If larger quantities of the item are prepared, seasonings may require further adjustment. Always taste items before placing on the line for service.

School Food Service Managers should work with their School Food Service Administrator and other staff to discuss adjustments made to recipes.

PREPARING MRS RECIPES IN SCHOOL KITCHENS

MRS recipes have been adapted from many sources. When MRS recipes are prepared in your school's kitchen, the yield may vary from that stated in the recipe. The following are possible reasons for different yields:

- *Equipment*—The equipment used to prepare the recipe varies from district to district and from school to school. Differences in yield may result when food items are prepared in a steamer in one site and in a combi-oven or a steam kettle in another site. The cooking temperature of the equipment may be higher or lower than indicated on the front panel of the equipment. Also, more or less liquid may evaporate while cooking, depending on the type of equipment.
- *Staff*—Staff members preparing recipes may interpret instructions differently or prepare the recipe using different methods. For instance, in some schools, water is added to ground meat being browned and in other schools no water is used. Also, an item may be cooked covered or uncovered.
- *Cooking Time*—Food items may be cooked longer than the suggested cooking time. Meat and poultry items may have a lower volume and may yield fewer servings. Rice and pasta items may have a greater volume and yield more.
- *Measured Instead of Weighed*—An ingredient was measured instead of weighed. Weights are indicated as ounces and pounds. Volume measures are indicated in fluid ounces, gallons, quarts, pints, cups, tablespoons and teaspoons.
- *Advance Preparation*—The food item may be prepared several hours before and held until time for service. This will decrease the yield of products that are served by volume, such as chili or spaghetti.
- *Ingredient Substitutions*—Ingredient changes, such as substituting a canned item for a frozen item or differences in the brand of products, can cause a different yield.
- *Portions*—Portions are based on level portion tools. If the employee serves mashed potatoes with a heaping #8 scoop, the recipe yield will be less. Observe and coach staff members on correct serving procedures.
- *Servings*—As the number of servings prepared increase, the yield may decrease. When increasing a recipe for the first time to a large number, such as 600 servings or more, observe the line to determine if forecasted quantities were enough.
- Number of students actually served an item can be difficult to determine.

Spice blends, herbs, and spices can be added without increasing the amount of calories, fat, saturated fat, or sodium:

MISSISSIPPI SPICE BLENDS

MS Creole Spice Blend
MS Italian Spice Blend
MS Southwest Spice Blend

TRADITIONAL HERBS & SPICES

Basil	Onion powder
Bay leaves	Oregano
Chili powder	Paprika
Cinnamon	Pepper, cayenne
Cumin	Pepper, black
Garlic powder	Pepper, white
Italian seasoning	Sage
Mustard, ground	Thyme
Nutmeg, ground	

When an item prepared does not yield the correct amount, review all points listed to determine the cause and if it can be corrected. If you decide that the yield is not as anticipated, indicate on the recipe so when the food item is served again, the number of portions can be increased. Discuss these points with your School Food Service Administrator. The nutrients of the recipe may need to be recalculated.