

Putting Calories on Menus



A national consultation on putting calories on menus found the vast majority of consumers in Ireland (over 95%) want calorie information on menus!

Showing calorie content of foods and drinks for sale helps people to make healthier choices. People who report using calorie information tend to make lower calorie food choices. In addition, there is evidence that calorie menu labelling creates a demand for healthier options - including smaller portion sizes. For these reasons, calorie menu labelling has potential to improve the health of your workforce.

Why put calories on menus?

- Over 95% of consumers in Ireland want calories on menus.
- Helps to promote healthy eating and therefore fuels a healthier and more productive workforce.
- Enables staff to make informed decisions.

Get Calories on Menus in 6 Steps To Achieve our Silver/Gold Criteria

1. Display calories on the **hot lunch menu** (Silver Award) or **all menus** (Gold Award) in line with the [HSE Calorie Posting Policy](#).
2. **Standardise recipes and portions.** Consider how best to standardise portion sizes for all food options as well as how to standardise utensil sizes (e.g. ladle sizes, dish sizes, etc). Catering team education/briefings on portion sizes and following recipes are essential.
3. **Set up nutritional analysis software** for calculating calories. One way is to use the free MenuCal tool (menucal.fsai.ie) designed especially for caterers in Ireland.
4. **Agree on a set date to go 'live'** with calories on menus.
5. **Display calorie information clearly**, for each portion or meal, at the 'point of choice' for the customer. This can be a menu board, printed menu, chalk board or display tag, etc.
6. **Help staff 'make sense' of calories** on menus - by providing information on how many calories people need in a day.

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Our Three Keys to Success

- **Build awareness** of calorie posting and the benefits with catering team, staff and visitors.
- **Set realistic timeframes and goals.** Allow time to standardise recipes, standardise portions, train catering staff and develop a communication plan with a view to informing staff and visitors.
- **Calorie information must be provided** for all standard food and drink items, i.e. items on sale for at least 30 days of the year that remain the same each time they are made.



	Calories	
	meal	
Platter	450	Hot Cakes
Hot Cakes	600	Hot Cakes
Hot Cakes	580	Big Breakfast
Big Breakfast	660	Deluxe Breakfast
Deluxe Breakfast	560	Breakfast
Breakfast	570	

There is evidence from other countries that shows calorie menu labelling can positively affect consumer food choices.

And remember if you want further information ...

Just follow the Food Safety Authority of Ireland's step-by-step guide to calories on menus at www.fsai.ie.