



# PURCHASING





# Product Selection

## Menu Items / Product List

When choosing the right products, your guiding principle should be to give your customers the appropriate choice, amount, and quality products for the dollars they spend, but also keeping their safety in mind. **It is important to have a varied selection of popular products, but it is also important to offer items that can cater to those with food allergies (e.g. nut or peanut butter, gluten), different food preferences (e.g. vegetarian, vegan, etc.) or prefer healthier food options.** As a best practice per Centers for Disease Control and Prevention guidance, Little League encourages selecting products that are not shareable and come in already pre-packaged boxes or bags for safer distribution and consumption.

## The pricing of your items will also be determined by:

- Actual product cost and markups
- Associated preparation costs
- What customers will want/feel they should pay
- Ease of making change (e.g. charging \$1 instead of 95¢)
- Helpful pricing tip: price items twice as much as what you paid for them
- If you are considering testing a new menu items for the upcoming season, buy those new items in smaller quantities earlier in the season. This will allow you to test how well a product will sell before making a commitment.



## Consumer Purchasing Habits

Before making any purchases, review the season's schedule with your League Board of Directors to identify when the season begins, when it ends, and how many games/tournaments are being played. When and what times scheduled events/games will take place are other factors to consider. It is important to pay close attention to weeknights vs. weekends, as the weekends, and even tournaments should your league host those, will likely be busier. Also, think about the time of year. Those in colder climates may want to have more hot beverages available for the beginning of their seasons and scale down accordingly as the weather gets warmer.

Based on each of the timing factors, do your best to calculate an estimated sales volume and use this number to guide your purchases. Additionally, it would be helpful to multiply the number of participants per team playing by the estimated number of spectators per participant to gauge your peak traffic periods. As previously mentioned, please remember to take into consideration those in your league with food allergies, different food preferences, and the health conscious.

**If possible, conduct a league-wide survey before the season begins that asks questions about food preferences, and the overall offerings to be available in your concession stand.**

## Purchasing Factors

**When purchasing product for your concession stand, consider shopping at large-scale retailers where there is a variety of product to choose from and/or bulk retailers to assure you are receiving competitive prices for the items you need. There are however, a number of factors to consider when determining how much product to purchase:**

- Type of product
- Storage needs and space
- Refrigeration needs and space
- Frequency of replenishment
- Spoilage level (do not purchase any food past "Sell-By," "Use-By," or other expiration dates)
- Volunteer donations
- Cost saving practices

**As a Concession Manager, you will be required to keep track of your expenses. We understand that you may not be able to control how much your customers buy, but you can control your costs, so it is important to keep a close eye on the following:**

- Sourcing product from a low-cost provider and don't be afraid to ask for product donations
- Products with spoilage prevention packaging
- Volunteers breaking the rules (e.g. volunteers giving items away for free)
- Slow days/hours with low sales
- There will be many elements in the concession stand that will either be difficult to control or out of your control but controlling your associated costs should be a priority.

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