

Considerations for Purchasing Foodservice Software

Adapted from Considerations for Purchasing Foodservice Software by Jean Lloyd, MS, Title VI Consultant



Foodservice software for SNP programs may be classified as:

- Nutrient analysis software
- Foodservice production software
- Program implementation software

These software programs often are sold separately, may or may not communicate well with each other, and vary significantly in ease of use and price.

When determining whether to purchase computer software, you need to make sure you know why you want to buy it, how you will use it (for example, nutrient analysis to meet state requirements or how to better schedule deliveries), what functions you want it to have, and who will be using it.

Considerations

Before you decide on any purchase, contact the company to talk with a representative, ask for a free trial, and use the software for at least one week or more to determine its acceptability. Some companies have telephone numbers, other companies simply have email addresses and so may not be as responsive.

Some of the software listed below is used in various other countries in addition to the United States. Some companies listed have state-of-the-art nutrient analysis software designed for restaurant use (national chain restaurants), food company use for food labeling, healthcare use, gyms, personal trainers, or dietitians to use for individuals. Software for individual nutrition use only (by dietitians, fitness trainers, individuals) has been excluded, as it may not be useful to SNP programs unless they are doing individual nutrition counseling.

Although this document reviews some of nutrient analysis software, it is wise to conduct your own software research. Some of the software is inexpensive and as a result may not provide much, other software is expensive and may provide capabilities you do not need.

This summary includes considerations for buying nutrient analysis software (this listing is adapted from an article in Today's Dietitian, as well as comments from individuals who have used nutrient analysis software):

1. Price: Can you negotiate a bulk discount if several tribes or villages come together to buy the same software? What is the yearly cost? Are there additional costs for updates, or are updates included in the annual cost?
2. Licensing: How many computers can the software be loaded on?
3. General information
4. Nutrient database, completeness
5. Foods in database: Does it contain the foods commonly used in your recipes? Can you request that foods be added to the database, especially traditional or indigenous foods?
6. Identification of common allergens in the foods
7. Ability to input and modify recipes, scaling up or down
8. Internet related features
9. Sorting foods by nutrient content
10. Query capabilities
11. Recipe management
12. Meal management, meal planning
13. Report features
14. Analysis features
15. Back up and restoration
16. Technical support, responsiveness to inquiries, responsiveness for support
17. Ease of use
18. Graphic presentations, customizable printouts
19. Compatibility with other systems, devices, etc. used by the agency
20. References of people to call.

A more [detailed list of considerations](#) is available from NutriBase 20, a software manufacturer that provides a comparison chart of their product compared to others. It is suggested that you read the longer article first before purchasing software, but also do your own independent assessment of your needs. Another web source of information is Sourceforge, which provides information on software products, including a comparison of the top [nutrition analysis software](#). You may also want to talk with other State Units on Aging or your local Area Agency on Aging about nutrient analysis software to determine their experience.

Some food suppliers have proprietary software that is pre-loaded with items they sell. The software may also be customizable to a greater degree than commercial software. Check with your suppliers if you are in the market for software.

Comparison of Nutrient Analysis Software

Software/Company	Orientation	Nutrient Analysis	Recipe Database	Food Production & Inventory Control Capabilities	Technical Support	Other Features	Contact Information
Computrition	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Health care • Hospital • Food service 	✓	✗	✓	✓		Email: info@computrition.com Phone: 800- 222-4488
Food Processor Nutrition Analysis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nutritionists • Dietitians • Restaurants • Educational Facilities 	✓	✓	✗	✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extensive dietary analysis • Recipes • Menu analysis • Food labeling • Supplements • Free recipe & ingredient downloads 	Email: sales@esha.com Phone: 503-585-6242
Mealsuite	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Health care • Dietitians • Senior living communities 	✓	✓	✗	✓		Phone: 800-383-1999

Software/Company	Orientation	Nutrient Analysis	Recipe Database	Food Production & Inventory Control Capabilities	Technical Support	Other Features	Contact Information
Menusano	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Food service • Restaurants • Hospitality • Labeling 	✓	✓	✗	✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Free trial • Recipe costing • Recipe development 	Email: sonia.couto@menusano.com Phone: 866-640-2345
Nutribase 20 Professional Software	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Health care • Food industry 	✓	✓	✗	✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Free demo 	Email: support@nutribase.com Phone: 480-603-8359
Nutritics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dietitians • Health care • Individual 	✓	✓	✓	✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Costing • Food ordering • Menu management 	Email: sales@nutritics.com Phone: 650-278-4418
NutritionistPro	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Food service • Dietitians • Health care • Food labeling 	✓	✓	✓	✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Video • Training • Some features • Yield • Recipe analysis • Cycle menus 	Email: sales@axxya.com Phone: 800-709-2799, 425-999-4350

Software/Company	Orientation	Nutrient Analysis	Recipe Database	Food Production & Inventory Control Capabilities	Technical Support	Other Features	Contact Information
Nutrium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dietitians • Health care • Private practice • Primarily individual appointments • Telehealth 	✓	✓	✗	✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Free demo 	Email: info@nutrium.io
EGS Calcmenu, Europe & Asia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Restaurants • Health care • Nursing Homes 	✓	✓	✓	Unknown	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No U.S. or Canadian dealers 	Email: info@eg-software.com

Foodservice Management Software

Software/ Company	Orientation	Nutrient Analysis	Recipe Database	Food Production & Inventory Control Capabilities	Technical Support	Other Features	Contact Information
Agilysys Eattec	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hospitality • Management • Food service • Procurement • Inventory • Forecasting • Recipe management 	✓	✗	✓	✓		Email: sales@agilysys.com Phone: 800-327-7088
Cbord Horizon Software	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Health care • Hospitals • Residential Senior Living • K-12 	✓	✓	✗	✓		Contact form online at https://www.cbord.com/contact-cboardsales
Kitcat Software for Kitchens	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commercial kitchens • Retirement homes • European Meals on Wheels 	✓	✓	✗	✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Input recipes • Recipe creation • Menu planning flexibility • Food supply and ordering storage, and accommodations for special diets 	Email: info@esopro.com Phone: 503-608-3601

Program Management Software

Software/ Company	Orientation	Other Features	Contact Information
ServTracker	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Congregate meals • Home-delivered meals • Home care • Senior centers • Adult day care • Managed care 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scheduling • Funding sources • Employee scheduling • Volunteers • Membership • Activity attendance • Reporting • Bar codes, touch screen, mobile apps 	Email: service@accessiblesolutions.com Phone: 800-886-2818
Stillwater Express Solutions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Congregate meals • Home-delivered meals • Home care • Adult day care • Transportation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scheduling • Routes • Kitchen orders • Volunteer 	E-mail: SESInfo@StillwaterExpress.com Phone: 800-595-8245