

INFORMATION NOTICE – RST 26-01

EXPANDED EXEMPTION ON FOOD AND BEVERAGES

THE RETAIL SALES TAX ACT

Issued: March 2026

Revised: June 2026

This notice provides information regarding the retail sales tax exemption for additional food and beverages for human consumption, effective July 1, 2026. The exemption will apply regardless of packaging or serving size.

The expanded retail sales tax exemption on food and beverages is in addition to the exemption for basic groceries. Refer to Bulletin 029 – Food and Beverages for additional information.

FOOD AND BEVERAGES BECOMING NON-TAXABLE:

Ready-to-Eat Prepared Foods:

- Self-serve sandwiches, soups, rotisserie chickens, samosas and other similar items.
- Vegetable, fruit or gelatine salads sold in prepared form, for example when the dressing is mixed with the other ingredients.
- Platters of desserts, cheese, canapés, pâtés, crudités, cold cuts, fruits or vegetables, frozen shrimp rings, sushi and other arrangements of prepared foods.

Beverages:

- De-alcoholized beer and wine containing 1% or less alcohol by volume.
- Carbonated beverages, including carbonated water whether flavoured or not and carbonated non-alcoholic malt beverages.
- Non-carbonated fruit juice beverages, combination fruit and vegetable beverages or fruit-flavoured beverages that contain less than 25 per cent by volume of a natural or reconstituted fruit juice.
- Fruit flavoured yoghurt beverages that contain less than 25 per cent fruit juice by volume.
- Powdered fruit-flavoured beverage mixes, which require mixing with water and contain little or no actual fruit.

- Non-carbonated beverages, including spring water, drinkable yoghurt and chocolate milk.
- The following items if they have not been issued a natural health product licence by Health Canada:
 - Sports and electrolyte drinks, including their liquid and dry mixes.
 - Caffeinated energy drinks, including their liquid and dry mixes.
 - Ready-to-drink protein beverages.
 - Protein dry mixes including protein sources such as but not limited to pea protein, milk protein, soy protein, whey protein, collagen derived protein, and egg protein.

Baked Goods:

- Cakes, muffins, pies, pastries, tarts, flans, cookies, doughnuts, brownies, graham crackers, croissants with sweetened filling or coating, or similar products when sold in single servings or quantities of less than six items.

Snack Foods:

- Pudding including flavoured gelatine, mousse, flavoured whipped dessert product or any product similar to pudding when sold as single servings.
- Candies, confectionery that may be classed as candy, or any goods sold as candies such as candy floss, chewing gum and chocolate, whether naturally or artificially sweetened, including fruits, seeds, nuts and popcorn that are coated or treated with candy, chocolate, honey, molasses, sugar, syrup or artificial sweeteners.
- Marshmallows and cream sweets.
- Chips, crisps, puffs, curls or sticks, such as potato chips, corn chips, cheese puffs, potato sticks, bacon crisps and cheese curls, or similar snack foods, or popped popcorn and brittle pretzels.
- Salted nuts or salted seeds.
- A mixture of two or more types of nuts, whether salted or not.
- Granola products and bars.
- Snack mixtures that contain cereals, nuts, seeds, dried fruit or any other edible product.

- Ice lollies, juice bars, juice sticks, flavoured, coloured or sweetened ice waters, or similar products, whether frozen or not.
- Ice cream, ice milk, sherbet, frozen yoghurt, trifle, ice cream cake or frozen pudding, non-dairy substitutes for any of these products including any item that contains any of those products, when packaged or sold in single servings or multiples of single servings.
- Fruit bars, rolls or drops or similar fruit-based snack foods.
- Cereal and nut bars.
- Energy or protein bars that have not been issued a natural health product licence by Health Canada.

Retail sales tax does not apply on environmental levies or recycling fees relating to the non-taxable food and beverages.

FOOD AND BEVERAGES SALES REMAINING TAXABLE:

The exemption for additional food and beverages does not apply to sales, including orders received by telephone or online for delivery or pickup, by the following:

- Restaurants, including:
 - Bakeries, food courts, coffee shops, cafeterias, concession stands, food carts and food trucks.
 - Food service locations within grocery stores where the food and beverages cannot be paid at the checkouts normally used for grocery items.
- Licenced premises specified in a liquor service licence issued under The Liquor, Gaming and Cannabis Control Act.
- Cinemas or sports or live entertainment venues where, motion picture films, sports events or live performances are staged, and a price of admission is usually charged.
- Sports or recreational facilities including arenas, golf courses, curling clubs and hunting or fishing lodges.

The exemption for additional food and beverages also does not apply to sales by the following:

- Vending machines.
- Contracts for, or in conjunction with, catering services.

OTHER TAXABLE SALES:

Retail sales tax applies to the following, regardless of where the goods are sold:

- Beverages with an alcohol content greater than 1%.
- dietary supplements, excluding prenatal vitamins, that have been issued a natural health product licence or homeopathic medical number by Health Canada.
- Pet foods.

Refer to Bulletin 030 – Summary of Taxable and Exempt Goods and Services for additional information regarding taxable non-food items.

Should you have further questions or need any clarification, please reach out to staff at our office at the contact information below.

Manitoba Finance
101 - 401 York Avenue
Winnipeg, Manitoba R3C 0P8
Telephone: 204-945-5603
Manitoba Toll-Free: 1-800-782-0318
Fax: 204-945-0896
E-mail: MBTax@gov.mb.ca
Web Site: <https://www.manitoba.ca/finance/taxation/>