

Champs Sports Performance Turkey Burger

University of North Texas

Essay:

The creation of nutritionally optimized menu items for student-athletes requires careful consideration of both performance benefits and palatability. UNT Dining Services grill program at Champs dining hall during football camp introduced an innovative Performance Turkey Burger, designed specifically to provide athletes with a satisfying yet healthier alternative to traditional beef burgers. This initiative demonstrates how thoughtful menu engineering can create options that athletes not only need but actively choose.

The Performance Turkey Burger combines carefully selected ingredients that work synergistically to support athletic performance. Ground turkey serves as the foundation, offering a lean protein base that helps with muscle recovery and maintenance. The integration of sautéed spinach elevates the nutritional profile significantly, as this leafy green enhances the body's absorption of vital nutrients including vitamins A and E, calcium, iron, fiber, and zinc. The addition of oats introduces complex carbohydrates and antioxidants that help reduce inflammation and promote heart health. These ingredients are unified with ground coriander, dill, garlic, onion, and cayenne spice blend, creating a distinctive flavor profile that appeals to not only our athletic population but all students, faculty and staff.

The promotion strategy for the Performance Turkey Burger focuses on education and accessibility. Social posts, digital screens, and clear signage at the grill station highlight the health benefits and customization options available to diners. The burgers are prominently featured during lunch and dinner service, with order forms available at the station to streamline the process. Each 4-ounce patty is cooked to order, allowing athletes to customize their burger according to their specific dietary

needs and preferences. Options include adding cheese for additional protein, eliminating the house-made Clark Bakery bun for a low-carb alternative, or incorporating the patty into a salad for a lighter meal.

The procurement and preparation process has been carefully designed to address both financial and logistical challenges. Ground turkey instead of beef reduces our carbon footprint and costs without compromising nutritional value. The incorporation of oats serves a dual purpose: while enhancing the nutritional profile with complex carbohydrates and fiber, it also reduces the overall cost by decreasing the amount of animal protein required per patty. This smart substitution helps maintain budget efficiency while delivering a satisfying burger.

The success of the Performance Turkey Burger is evident in the consumption patterns observed in Champs dining hall. The burger has achieved remarkable popularity, occasionally outselling traditional beef burgers during peak athletic dining periods. This shift in preference demonstrates that when nutritious options are thoughtfully developed and properly presented, they can become preferred choices rather than merely healthy alternatives.

The Performance Turkey Burger represents a successful intersection of nutritional science, culinary creativity, and operational efficiency. By combining lean protein, nutrient-rich vegetables, and beneficial whole grains, we've created a menu item that supports athletic performance while meeting the taste expectations of all of our campus guests. The program's success demonstrates that with proper ingredient selection, preparation methods, and promotion strategies, it's possible to create nutritious options that athletes actively choose while maintaining operational and financial sustainability.

Log in to nacufs.awardsplatform.com to see complete entry attachments.

PDF

UNT Sports Perf... 2.7 MiB