

canteen fresh

For more Fruit and Veg information, check out the F and V for ME internet site at www.fandvforme.com.au



Helping canteen managers provide healthy meal choices in their school canteen – proudly brought to you by Sydney Markets!

‘Sandwich’ of the Season

This terrific ‘sandwich’ is light (great in warm weather) and loaded with crunchy raw vegetables. Most kids enjoy cream cheese (use reduced fat) and when teamed with carrot, celery, sultanas and sprouts, kids get plenty of flavour and fibre. Chicken is an excellent source of protein and is low in fat.

For high school children and teachers, you can substitute reduced-fat cream cheese with hommus, if desired.

The wholemeal pita pocket bread makes a change from everyday sliced bread, provides carbohydrate and is also low in fat. Pita pocket bread is a great ‘container’ for the filling making lunch easy to eat.

Crunchy chicken pita pockets

To make:

- Spread the inside of wholemeal pita pocket bread with reduced-fat cream cheese.
- Add grated carrot, finely sliced celery, a sprinkling of sultanas and diced cooked chicken meat.
- Add alfalfa sprouts (or shredded Iceberg lettuce) and season with pepper, if desired. Cut in half and serve.

Older kids may enjoy the addition of fruit chutney or sweet chilli sauce.



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In focus – leafy salad greens

NUTRITION

All lettuces provide folate and fibre. The darker green the leaf, the higher the content of valuable antioxidants (studies show that antioxidants may have a protective effect on body cells). Rocket supplies beta carotene (vitamin A) and watercress is an excellent source of vitamin C.

BUYING

Leafy salad greens are available all year round and supplies are best from spring through to autumn.

Hydroponic salad greens are sold with their roots on or as loose-leaf salads. Choose bright, crisp greens without signs of wilting, slime or brown patches. A whole lettuce should be firm and feel heavy for its size.

STORING

Never store salad greens next to bananas, apples, pears and melons. These fruits release a natural gas (ethylene) that will cause salad greens to deteriorate rapidly.

Loose leaf salad greens are best stored unwashed, in a plastic bag in the fridge. Rinse whole lettuce and remove the root and core before storing. Use loose leaves within 2 days and whole lettuce within 4-5 days.

PREPARING

All salad greens should be thoroughly washed in cold running water and dried before serving. For extra crisp leaves, spin washed salad greens in a salad spinner then transfer to a dry, clean tea towel. Pat dry with paper towel, gently roll up and leave in the fridge for about 1 hour.

TOP GREENS FOR THE SCHOOL CANTEEN



Iceberg lettuce – (common lettuce) crisp and versatile with a mild flavour. New varieties have frilled leaves. Roll a filling in the larger leaves.



Rocket – distinct tasting leaves. Toss torn leaves onto a pizza topping also great on cheese or egg sandwiches (more popular for teenagers).



Cos lettuce – crisp elongated leaves with a sweetish flavour. Used in Caesar salad.



Watercress – slight peppery-flavour. Some kids and teachers will enjoy. Teams well with thinly sliced roast beef on sandwiches.



Butter & mignonette lettuce – small soft leaves with a mild flavour. Green and red varieties are available. Great for kids.



Mesclun – a mix of young lettuce leaves can include chervil, rocket, chicory, baby beet and dandelion leaves. Convenient and no wastage.

10-top purchasing tips

- ▶ Revive limp **celery** stems by placing stems upright in a jug of water in the fridge for 2-3 hours or until crisp.
- ▶ **Bananas** are harvested green and ripened under controlled temperatures. Choose bananas by the bunch at different stages of ripeness so that they do not all ripen at once. To speed up the ripening process, store bananas in a brown paper bag.
- ▶ Like bananas, buy **tomatoes** at different stages of ripeness. Tomatoes will take from 3-7 days to fully ripen at room temperature. Do not store in the fridge.
- ▶ Choose firm, plump, full-coloured **cherry** and **grape tomatoes**. Check the underside of punnets and ensure tomatoes are dry and not squashed.
- ▶ For optimum flavour, select **mangoes** with a fragrant aroma that are plump and well-coloured.
- ▶ **Grapes** do not ripen once picked so they should be sweet when you purchase them. Seedless grapes such as Thompson Seedless are ideal for kids.
- ▶ Avoid hard **peaches** with a green colour around the stem. This fruit may have been picked too early and may lack flavour. Choose plump, well-coloured fruit with a fragrant aroma for best eating.
- ▶ Do not store **cucumbers** with fruit in the fridge. The natural gas given off by fruit will cause cucumbers to soften quickly.
- ▶ Select **rockmelons** with a sweet aroma and a pronounced 'netting' on the skin. Background colour should be beige to golden and not green as this indicates that the fruit is under-ripe.
- ▶ Buy red or yellow **capsicums** as they are the sweetest. Select firm capsicums with glossy, unwrinkled skin.

Action-packed pizza

Pizza can be made in a flash and with fresh vegetable toppings make a great change to everyday sandwiches.

At lunch, kids need a protein boost to get them through the afternoon when biorhythms are naturally low. By teaming lean meat, eggs and reduced-fat cheese with fresh vegetables on pizza toppings, kids can enjoy a healthy 'take-away' lunch that covers all the food groups.

MAKE AND FREEZE PIZZA

Pizzas can be made in advance and kept covered with plastic wrap in the fridge for 1 day or placed in sealed freezer bags and frozen for up to 3 months.

An extensive range of ready-made pizza bases are available. Many have a good shelf-life (especially those pizza bases that are vacuum-packed). Alternatively, foccacia and wholemeal pita bread can be used for a pizza base.

A large pizza base (with a topping) will serve 4-6. In the infant's canteen, cut the pizza into small squares rather than wedges so the pizza is easy to eat. Serve pizza on a paper napkin.

Create a 'pizza meal deal' and include a carton of low-fat yoghurt and a piece of fresh fruit and a fresh juice for the ultimate school lunch.

A pizza takes about 15 minutes to cook in a very hot (240°C) oven.



SENSATIONAL PIZZA TOPPINGS

Italian Pizza

Spaghetti sauce (spread thickly over pizza base), sliced button mushrooms and grated tasty cheese.

E.T.C. Pizza

Tomato paste, diced tomato, finely diced red capsicum and eggs (simply crack the eggs directly onto the pizza topping before cooking the pizza).

Summer Sizzle Pizza

Halved ripe red and yellow cherry tomatoes, finely diced red capsicum, flaked tuna and grated mozzarella cheese.

Hawaiian Pizza

Tomato paste, diced fresh pineapple, lean diced ham, crumbled ricotta cheese (add a few torn rocket leaves for teenagers and/or teachers).

Festive & fun canteen specials

As Term 4 winds up for the year end, it's time to offer some fun food in the school canteen. Go festive and get into the holiday spirit! Decorate the canteen (possibly in conjunction with the art department) and include blackboard 'specials' on the menu.

Here are some fabulous menu ideas:



YOGHURT STRAWBERRY WHIP

Roughly chop fresh strawberries and place into a bowl with a good sprinkling of caster sugar. Gently stir to combine and set aside for 30 minutes.

Stir thick natural yoghurt through the strawberries and spoon into cups. Top with a sliced strawberry to serve.

BANANA PANCAKE BON-BONS

Spread ready-made pancakes with honey, sprinkle with ground cinnamon and add a sliced banana (brushed with lemon juice to prevent browning) in the centre. Roll and secure with a piece of colourful ribbon and serve.



RAINBOW RICE PAPER ROLLS

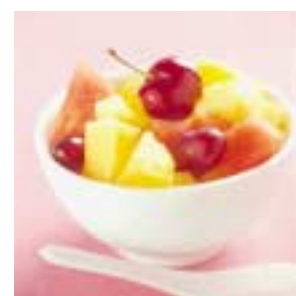
Rice paper is cheap and available from Asian food stores and super-markets, simply dip into warm water before using. Fill rice paper with sliced avocado, grated carrot, thinly sliced celery sticks and finely grated fresh beetroot (squeeze to remove excess liquid). Roll up and serve.

SAUSAGE SUBMARINES

Great for a fund-raising sausage sizzle! Fill a small French bread roll with a cooked beef sausage, sliced tomato, shredded iceberg lettuce and tomato sauce.

FESTIVE FRUIT SALAD

Mix diced watermelon, rockmelon, oranges, pineapple and seedless grapes with fresh orange juice. Serve topped with a plump cherry.



Pick a Piece – fresh fruit on the counter

Fresh fruit makes the perfect healthy snack. Fruit is low in fat, provides carbohydrate, natural sugars and fibre, in addition to valuable nutrients.



To protect their health, children aged 5-12 years should eat 2 or 3 serves of fruit and 3 serves of vegetables per day, increasing to at least 3 serves fruit and 4 serves fresh vegetables per day as teenagers. One medium piece of fruit or ½ cup cooked vegetables is a serving size.

Make your fresh fruit display a feature! Have your fruit displayed directly on the serving counter to attract kids and to tantalise their taste buds!

At this time of year include these fruits:

- Sundowner and Lady Williams apples
- Bananas
- Cup of fresh strawberries and some blueberries
- Wedges of rockmelon and watermelon
- Valencia oranges
- Fresh pineapple wedges

School canteen produce buying guide October to December

Buy fresh fruit and vegetables in their natural season and be guaranteed of quality and value.

Use this chart to help you decide what to purchase before ordering or to plan your canteen menus. Be sure to stipulate the size (especially for fruit, that should be easy for kids to pick up and eat) and the quality that you expect with your produce order. Inspect fresh fruit and vegetables on delivery and ensure that it looks, smells and feels good – it's important to choose the season's best.

Vegetables

- Asparagus
- Beans
- Capsicum
- Celery
- Cucumbers
- Lettuce (see In Focus on page 2)
- Onions (green and spring)
- Peas (snow peas are great raw)
- Spinach
- Sweetcorn (from November)
- Tomatoes
- Watercress (see In Focus on page 2)
- Zucchini

Fruit

- Apricots (from December)
- Avocados (mash with lemon juice)
- Bananas
- Berries (strawberries, blueberries, mulberries (October/November)
- Cherries (from December)
- Mangoes (from November)
- Melons (honeydew, rockmelon and watermelon)
- Oranges (Valencia)
- Papaya
- Pawpaw (add to fruit salad)
- Peaches (from December)
- Pineapples



The 'Fresh for Kids' Program and the Sydney Markets wishes you and your staff a very Merry Christmas and safe holiday.

Meal Deals

Tomatoes at a glance

Tomatoes are high in vitamin C, beta carotene (which the body converts to vitamin A) and potassium. They also contain a carotenoid called lycopene, which is a potent protective antioxidant. Ripen tomatoes at room temperature out of direct sunlight.



Tamara Tomato Tasty Meal

- Wedge of E.T.C. pizza
- Carton low-fat yoghurt
- Rockmelon & strawberry fruit salad



Summa Strawberry Hot Deal

- Avocado and chicken sandwich
- Festive fruit salad and yoghurt



Oscar Orange Sporting Fuel

- Ham and salad roll
- Valencia orange salad
- Banana flip drink



Megabite Apple Brain Food

- Bread roll with a boiled egg, cheese and raw vegetables
- Lady Williams apple



Captain CapsicumHero Meal

- Wedge summer sizzle pizza
- Banana pancake roll
- Vanilla yoghurt



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