

canteen *fresh*

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Helping canteen managers provide healthy and nutritious meal choices on their canteen menu – proudly brought to you by Sydney Markets!

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'Sandwich' of the Season

CREAMY BANANA, APRICOT & HONEY SANDWICH

Bananas are packed with carbohydrates, the ideal fuel source for keeping children active. They're good for potassium, vitamin C, vitamin B6 and dietary fibre, and contain no fat.

CAVENDISH is the most common banana variety. If using this variety for sandwiches, add a little lemon juice when mashing to prevent browning.

LADYFINGER is a smaller sweeter banana. It's ideal for sandwiches as the flesh does not brown when cut.

GOLDFINGER is a new banana variety with a rich creamy texture and tangy, sweet flavour. Like the Ladyfinger it does not brown when cut.

To make:

- Mash ripe bananas until smooth.
- Spread wholegrain bread with fat-reduced cream cheese. Spoon over mashed banana and sprinkle with chopped dried apricots. Cover with remaining bread, slice and serve.



Healthy Easter eats

Jazz up the canteen menu for Easter celebrations! It's the ideal time to offer healthy, fun food for everyone to enjoy.

Kids can easily be encouraged to purchase snacks and lunches that sound fun as well as being good for them.

Teachers and art departments may also be keen to get their classes involved in decorating the school canteen in the lead up to Easter. Provide a board or display for decorations and paintings.

For Infant school lunch orders use stamped paper lunch bags with a bunny or bilby eating a carrot – little kids will love it!

Try these great Easter menu suggestions:

BANANA CROSS BUNS – Spread sliced Easter buns with strawberry jam and top with sliced banana. The perfect snack food for busy kids, bananas provide ready energy, dietary fibre and potassium.

CRUNCHY EGG ROLL – Mix chopped hard-boiled eggs with finely chopped celery and a little mayonnaise. Pile into the centre of lavash bread, roll up and cut in half to serve. Celery is crunchy and refreshing and provides vitamin C and potassium.

HOPPING GREAT PIZZA – Spread pizza bases with tomato paste then top with chopped fresh pineapple, finely diced capsicum and lean shaved ham. Crack a few eggs on top and bake until eggs have set. Serve warm or cold slices with a napkin. Red capsicum is a rich natural source of vitamin C, having twice as much vitamin C as green capsicum. Red capsicum is also sweeter and is preferred by most kids, however can be replaced by green capsicum which is sometimes more economical.



BUNNY BUN – GREAT FOR INFANT'S SCHOOL

Spread a small multigrain bun or English muffin with salt-reduced peanut butter, pile with grated carrots, sprinkle with sultanas then drizzle with honey.

An excellent source of beta carotene (which the body converts to vitamin A), one medium carrot contributes three times the minimum daily requirement of vitamin A. Carrots also provide vitamin C and are a good source of dietary fibre.

New kids on the block

CATERING FOR KINDERGARTEN & INFANT'S SCHOOL

Starting school can be a huge transition for children. New skills must be learned and responsibility taken for day-to-day activities such as eating and personal hygiene. The new 'big' school schedule can be very demanding for young children, particularly in term 1 and term 2.

Regular intakes of protein, carbohydrate, vitamins and dietary fibre not only influence growth, they provide sustenance for children to stay alert and aid concentration in the classroom. By providing kindergarten and infant school children with a nourishing selection of fresh food, which is also easy for little hands to hold and eat too, children can rapidly develop healthy eating patterns. In addition, kids will feel confident about purchasing food from their school canteen.



TOP SANDWICHES FOR LITTLE KIDS

- Fill a wholemeal English muffin (it's crustless and soft) with mashed avocado, shredded lettuce and shaved ham, cut into quarters and serve
- Lightly spread a wholemeal pita pocket bread with margarine or hommus, add sliced fat-reduced cheese, sliced cherry tomatoes and thinly sliced Lebanese cucumber.

Your school canteen can help by:

- providing wholegrain breads, lavash and pita pocket breads and fruit buns and leaving 'junky' sandwich fillings off the menu
- offering plenty of fresh seasonal fruits
- adding fresh salad vegetables to sandwich fillings where possible
- reducing the range of sugary and fatty foods on offer, particularly fruit juices with added sugar, crisps and sticky fruit bars
- providing quality protein like boiled eggs, lean meats and chicken, canned tuna and salmon and fat-reduced dairy foods

Here are some great suggestions, especially for Kindergarten and Infant's School children for your canteen:

- Cut oranges into quarters, reshape and wrap in plastic wrap or greaseproof paper so the fruit does not dry out.
- Purchase small bananas and trim the stem end so little hands can easily grasp the skin to peel the fruit.
- Provide fruit peeled, deseeded and chopped into bite-size pieces so it's easy to eat – a simple fruit salad is ideal. Leave the skin on apples and pears as it is a good source of dietary fibre.
- Offer wedges of pineapple, rockmelon, pawpaw, small nectarines or plums and seedless grapes with the standard apples and oranges.
- Use mashed avocado as a spread for sandwiches instead of butter or margarine. Avocados are excellent for vitamin C and E, and folate.
- Fresh vegetables like grated carrot, finely sliced celery, sliced cherry tomatoes, shredded iceberg lettuce and thinly sliced cucumber are acceptable to most kids. Use a vegetable peeler to remove the skin on Lebanese cucumbers then slice lengthways into thin strips. Also offer raw vegetables like carrot and celery sticks and salads.

Crunch time

ADDING DIETARY FIBRE TO CHILDREN'S DIETS

Fresh fruits and vegetables along with grains supply plenty of dietary fibre for growing children. Dietary fibre is the indigestible fibrous parts of fruits, vegetables, cereals, beans and pulses which help the body to digest food by stimulating the bowel to move food along the intestinal tract. Dietary fibre is valuable in preventing constipation.

Constipation can make children irritable and uncomfortable which in turn can affect their concentration in the classroom. Cutting out junk food and refined carbohydrates and replacing them with plenty of fresh fruit and vegetables (including raw vegetables) and wholegrain breads and cereals can help prevent constipation.

Dietary fibre also adds bulk and fills you up so you are less likely to snack on fatty foods. Foods that are high in dietary fibre are generally low in fat. Leave the skin on fresh fruits and vegetables where possible to increase the amount of dietary fibre consumed.

Top fruits for dietary fibre:

Apples – *leave the skin on*
Bananas
Berries – *particularly raspberries*
Dates
Grapes
Kiwifruit
Nashi
Oranges
Passionfruit – *with the seeds*
Pears – *leave the skin on*
Pineapple

Top vegetables for dietary fibre:

Beans
Broccoli
Carrots
Peas
Potatoes – *scrub well and leave skin on*
Rhubarb
Spinach
Sweetcorn
Sweet potatoes – *scrub well and leave skin on*



FRUIT SALAD – LOADED WITH DIETARY FIBRE

Combine chopped Gala apples (skin on), Packham pears (skin on), oranges, seedless green grapes and kiwifruit with freshly-squeezed orange juice and the pulp of a few passionfruit. Serve in plastic containers with a spoon. Top with a spoonful of natural yoghurt and a sprinkling of chopped almonds, if desired.

In focus – sweetcorn

COOKING SWEETCORN IN YOUR SCHOOL CANTEEN

Boiling is the easiest way of cooking sweetcorn in your school canteen. For ease of holding in small hands, paddle-pop sticks can be inserted into the cob ends before cooking.

To boil: Place cobs in a large saucepan of boiling water and cook for 5-10 minutes or until kernels are just tender. Sweetcorn does not need boiling for any longer or the kernels will lose their natural juiciness. Do not add salt as this will toughen the kernels.



NUTRITION

Valuable for carbohydrates, sweetcorn contains some vitamin C and folic acid. Sweetcorn is also a good source of dietary fibre and carotenoids that function as an antioxidant in the body.

BUYING

Sweetcorn is available all year round but it is at its best in warmer months.

The fresher the sweetcorn, the sweeter the flavour. Select sweetcorn with fresh-looking light green husks. Check the kernels before purchasing, these should be plump and yellow and spurt a milky juice when pressed with your fingernail.

STORING

The natural sugars in sweetcorn rapidly convert to starch after harvesting which mean sweetcorn loses its sweetness every day it's stored. It's best to use cobs as soon after purchasing as possible.

Leave the husks on and store sweetcorn in the fridge in sealed plastic bags.

PREPARING

Strip the husks down and remove the thread-like silks. Trim ends and cut into desired lengths or leave cobs whole.

Pick a Piece – fresh fruit & vegies on the counter

Make your fresh fruit and vegetable display a feature. Display fresh fruit and vegetables directly on your serving counter to attract kids and tantalise their taste buds!

Fresh fruit and vegetables make the ideal healthy snack as they have little or no fat, provide energy-yielding carbohydrates, natural sugars and dietary fibre, in addition to valuable nutrients.

To protect their health, children aged 5-12 years should eat at least 2 or 3 serves of fruit and at least 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 counts as a serving size.

Top fruits for this time of year:

- Apples
- Williams, Howell & Packham pears
- Bananas
- Wedges of rockmelon and honeydew melon
- Valencia oranges
- Fresh pineapple wedges
- Nashi pears
- Small bunches of seedless sultana grapes

School canteen produce buying guide February to April

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 when planning your canteen menus.

When ordering from your greengrocer, be sure to stipulate the quality and size of the fresh produce you require, especially for fresh fruit for the canteen counter, which should be easy for kids to pick up and eat.

Inspect your fresh fruit and vegetable order on delivery and ensure that it looks, smells and feels good – it's important to offer the season's best.

If possible, schedule a regular chat with your greengrocer before you place your order to ensure you know what's best market value.

Vegetables

- Avocados – Reed & Shepherd until March then choose Fuerte
- Beans – green, snake & flat
- Broccoli
- Capsicum – kids prefer red variety
- Celery
- Cucumbers – Lebanese & Telegraph
- Eggplant
- Lettuce – all varieties
- Mushrooms – available all year round
- Peas – snow peas are great raw

- Potatoes
- Pumpkin
- Spinach
- Sweetcorn – see In focus on page 3
- Sweet potato
- Tomatoes – a good range available
- Watercress
- Zucchini

Fruit

- Apples
- Bananas
- Berries – season ends in March
- Grapes – choose seedless varieties
- Kiwifruit
- Limes – add a squeeze of juice to fruit salad
- Melons – Casaba, Honeydew, Rockmelon and Watermelon
- Nashi – a variety of pear
- Nectarines – late season varieties until March
- Oranges – Valencia
- Papaya
- Passionfruit – add to fruit salads or mix with yoghurt
- Pawpaw – add to fruit salad
- Peaches – late season varieties until March
- Pears
- Pineapple
- Plums

Meal Deals

Apples at a Glance

Crunching into an apple after a meal may help reduce the instances of tooth cavities. Apples increase the flow of saliva which reduces tooth decay by lowering the level of bacteria in the mouth. In addition, apples provide dietary fibre, energy-giving carbohydrate and some vitamin C.



Megabite Apple Brain Food

- Tuna, celery & mayonnaise sandwich
- Crunch time fruit salad



Tamara Tomato Tasty Meal

- Tomato & cheese pita pocket bread
- Carton yoghurt with a plum



Summa Strawberry Hot Deal

- Avocado & ham muffin
- Strawberry & orange fruit salad
- Carton vanilla fruché



Oscar Orange Sporting Fuel

- Creamy banana & honey roll
- Wedge of cheese
- Quartered Orange



Captain Capsicum Hero Meal

- Wedge hopping great pizza
- Banana cross buns



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