

canteen fresh

For more Fruit and Veg information, check out the Fresh for Kids internet site at www.freshforkids.com.au

Time to veg out...

We all know that we should be eating more vegetables – Australian Dietary Guidelines recommend 5 serves of vegetables each day. To reach that goal we need to eat vegetables for snacks and at lunch, not only for the evening meal. By including a range of fresh vegetables on your canteen menus, you can help children make healthy food choices and attain their 5 vegetable serves on school days.

Vegetables are packed with natural goodness, and provide plenty of essential vitamins for very few kilojoules. Research confirms that people with the highest intake of vegetables and fruit have the lowest rate of heart disease and cancer.

TOP VEGETABLE CHOICES

Quick and easy to prepare, nutritious vegetables can easily be added to your canteen menus. Choose crunchy carrots, crisp celery, cucumbers, snow pea and alfalfa sprouts and a selection of leafy greens. In late summer and autumn, rich red tomatoes, yellow, orange and red capsicums, sweet corn and little button mushrooms are top choices.

Offer a range of fresh vegetable-based salads – change options daily so kids don't become bored. Cool and refreshing, salads are easy to eat and digest, and make a refreshing change to everyday sandwiches for lunch. Include crisp leafy greens and crunchy salad vegetables on your sandwich fillings and also provide vegetable sticks in raw vegetable snack packs for recess and lunch.

Terrific vegetable ideas:

Crunchy carrot, chicken & sultana salad (pictured)

Toss lots of shredded carrot (speedy shredders are available from Asian grocers) with cooked shredded chicken



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

meat and sultanas. Drizzle with a mixture of fresh orange juice and honey. Serve in small plastic containers.

Veg-out salad cups (pictured)

Combine chopped Lebanese cucumber, halved cherry tomatoes and sliced celery in small cups with cubes of reduced fat tasty cheese – serve with a few low-fat crackers or a small bread roll if desired.

Raw energy veggies & dip

Arrange carrot and celery sticks, strips of yellow and red capsicums, cherry tomatoes and button mushrooms in disposable plastic cups. Add a small pot of reduced fat dip or a wedge of cheese.

Greek Salad

Toss tomato wedges with chopped Lebanese cucumber, capsicum, flat-leaf

parsley and reduced fat feta cheese, and olives.

Vegetable noodle salad

Combine cold cooked hokkien or thin noodles, shredded carrot, celery, snow pea sprouts, diced capsicum with a ready-made mild satay or reduced fat dressing.

PROMOTION TIP: Include this vegetable noodle salad in a Dragon Meal Deal for Chinese New Year in February.

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Delicious fruit snacks

It's peak time for a stunning range of mouth-watering fresh fruit. Early in Term 1, summer fruits are in good supply and the first of the season's crisp apples and juicy pears arrive to market. Quality and flavour are premium; it's the ideal time to include lots of healthy fresh fruit on your menus.

The Australian Guide to Healthy Eating*, a federal government initiative, recommends the following fruit serves per day; 4-7 years olds – 1 serve, 8-11 year olds – 1 serve and 12-18 year olds – 3 serves. Offering fruit in your canteen supports this initiative.

WHY IS FRUIT GOOD FOR YOU?

As well as being naturally healthy and sweet, fruit is virtually fat free. It's rich in powerful antioxidants and important vitamins such as vitamin C, lycopene, beta-carotene and folate. Fruit also provides beneficial dietary fibre for a healthy digestive system.

Many fruits have a low Glycemic Index (GI). This means the carbohydrate in the fruit takes longer for the body to digest – making a person feel full and satisfied for longer.

THE PICK OF THE CROP

Ripened in the sun, freshly-harvested pineapple and juicy melons like watermelon, honeydew melon and rockmelon are bursting with flavour at this time of year. Make the most of the season's succulent stone fruits including mangoes, nectarines, peaches and plums. Grapes are plentiful and there's a bumper supply of ultra-juicy Valencia oranges and energizing bananas.

Snap up plump strawberries and blueberries while they're in abundance, and before the season ends in early autumn. Freshly-harvested apples and pears are arriving - choose Gala, Jonagold and Jonathon apples, Williams pears and nashi.

Kids will enjoy these colourful and delicious fresh fruit snacks...



FRESH FRUIT JELLIES

Half fill small disposable plastic cups with diced rockmelon, small seedless grapes and chopped hulled strawberries (or use a combination of other seasonal fresh fruits excluding pineapple which is not suitable, as it contains an enzyme which prevent jellies from setting). Pour a jelly mixture over the fruit and refrigerate for 4-5 hours or overnight until set.

MELON KEBABS

Thread chunks of peeled rockmelon and honeydew onto paddle-pop sticks. Chill until ready to serve.



FRUIT SALAD CUPS

Make a daily fresh fruit salad – it's always popular. Drizzle the chopped fruit with fresh Valencia orange juice and the pulp of a few passionfruit. Spoon into plastic disposable cups and chill until ready to serve. Simple to prepare, healthy and delicious.

FROZEN FRUIT POPS

Soak thick slices of just-ripe banana in orange juice for a few minutes (this prevents discolouration). Thread the banana, diced fresh pineapple and small whole strawberries onto paddle-pop sticks. Freeze for 4 hours or until ready to serve. Serve frozen.

* Dietary Guidelines for Children and Adolescents in Australia – a guide to healthy eating.

Top tips & great ideas for seasonal fruit & vegies

ROCKMELON

TOP TIPS: Buy whole rockmelons that feel heavy for their size. Best tasting rockmelons have a fragrant aroma.

GREAT IDEA: Nothing beats a chilled wedge of melon; it's refreshing, thirst-quenching and colourful. Chill rockmelon in the fridge on the day of serving. Cut into wedges and remove seeds, place on a tray and serve with a paper napkin to catch the juice.

GRAPES



TOP TIPS: Purchase seedless grape varieties such as small green Thompson Seedless (often sold as sultana grapes), Ruby seedless or Flame seedless grapes.

GREAT IDEA: Pack small bunches of washed and chilled grapes in small plastic bags. Chill until ready to serve.

VALENCIA ORANGES

TOP TIPS: Don't let green skin on Valencia oranges deter you from purchasing – greening skin occurs as a natural part of the ripening process. It does not affect their quality or flavour.

GREAT IDEA: Freeze quartered Valencia oranges in an airtight container. Sell over the counter at recess and lunchtime – a great way for kids to chill out on very hot days!

CELERY

TOP TIPS: Refresh limp celery by placing the trimmed stalks in a container of iced water in the fridge for 2-3 hours.

GREAT IDEA: Spread small sticks of crisp celery with reduced fat peanut butter or a reduced fat dip like hommus.

Super foods –

a snapshot look at TOMATOES

Tomatoes are a top source of vitamin C and contain lycopene, an antioxidant that gives tomatoes their red colour. The deeper their colour, the higher their content of lycopene. Research is indicating that lycopene is very beneficial, and may help reduce the risk of heart disease and certain types of cancer.

BUYING TOMATOES

Choose from common, vine-ripened, Roma (also known as egg tomatoes) and little mini Roma and cherry tomatoes.

Allow 3-7 days for your tomatoes to fully ripen and develop their flavour and colour. Leave tomatoes in a single layer, at room temperature and out of direct sunlight. Store ripe tomatoes in the fridge.

When buying cherry and grape tomatoes by the punnet, check the underside of the punnet and avoid squashed tomatoes.

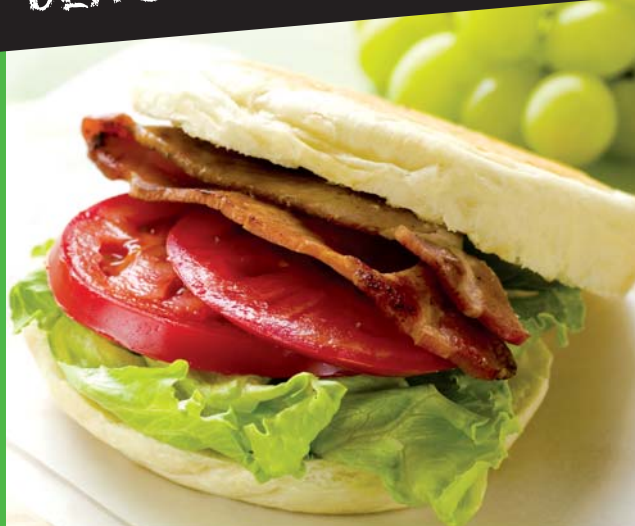
TOMATO SANDWICHES

Tomatoes go well with nearly every sandwich filling. When adding sliced tomato to sandwiches, arrange the tomato between fillings so it doesn't come in contact with the bread – this prevents the bread from becoming soggy.



Tomato, turkey and cheese sandwich.

BLACKBOARD SPECIAL



B.L.T. (Bacon, lettuce & tomato) roll

This café-style roll is sure to be a popular choice on your menus. The crisp shredded lettuce and grilled lean bacon adds crunch and the rich red sliced tomato is packed with colour, nutrients and flavour.

For a B.L.A.T. roll – add an avocado option; simply spread the roll with mashed avocado (add a little lemon juice to prevent discolouration).

NUTRITION: Tomatoes are rich in vitamin C and valuable lycopene (*see Super Foods – Tomatoes in this issue*). Iceberg lettuce provides a refreshing crunch, contains beta carotene, and contributes fibre and folate. Lean bacon is a source of protein. If adding avocado, it's rich in beneficial mono-unsaturated fats which help to reduce cholesterol and provides vitamins A, C and E, plus folate.

TO MAKE: Use lean short-cut bacon, grill the bacon for 2-3 minutes on each side or until crisp, or pan-fry in a non-stick frying pan. Drain the bacon on paper towel before adding to the roll. Top halved hi-fibre rolls with shredded Iceberg lettuce, then add sliced tomato and finish with grilled bacon. Drizzle with a little reduced fat mayonnaise if desired. Cover with remaining bread, wrap and serve.

In focus – watermelon

TO BUY:

Watermelon is picked ripe and ready to eat. Select firm whole watermelon with unblemished skin. They should feel heavy for their size and give slightly when pressed around the stem.

If cut, select watermelon with even-coloured, vibrant-pink flesh. Seedless varieties are available.

TO STORE:

Melons are picked ripe and ready to eat. Keep whole watermelon in a cool, well-ventilated place. Use within 2 weeks. Once cut, cover watermelon with plastic wrap and store in the fridge. Use within 2 days.



TO PREPARE:

Simply cut into wedges as desired, or remove the rind and chop the flesh.

NUTRITION:

Watermelons are low in kilojoules and provide vitamin C and folate.

WATERMELON IN YOUR SCHOOL CANTEEN:

Chill out with watermelon! When the heat is on, freeze pureed watermelon in small (50ml) plastic shot cups for an iced snack and sell chilled wedges of watermelon over the canteen counter.

School canteen seasonal produce buying guide

February to April

Use this guide when ordering and buying produce. Choosing fruit and vegetables in peak season and supply means you're getting the best value for your money.

Top tips for buying fresh produce:

- Stipulate the quality, size and ripeness (if applicable) of the fresh produce you require. Fruit to sell over the canteen counter should be easy for kids to pick up and eat.
- Inspect your fresh produce order on delivery. Ensure that fruit and vegetables meets your expectations for freshness and quality.
- Ensure you promptly unpack and store your fruit and vegetables for optimum freshness.

VEGETABLES

- Avocados (Reed & Shepard until March then choose Fuerte)
- Beans
- Broccoli
- Capsicum – kids prefer the red ones
- Celery
- Cucumbers – Lebanese are ideal
- Eggplants
- Lettuce
- Mushrooms – available all year round
- Peas – snow peas are great raw
- Potatoes

- Pumpkin
- Spinach – use baby leaves on sandwiches
- Sweetcorn – serve corn on the cob
- Sweet potatoes
- Tomatoes – top at this time of year
- Watercress
- Zucchini

FRUIT

- Apples – see In Focus inside
- Bananas
- Berries – season ends in late March
- Grapes – choose seedless varieties
- Kiwifruit
- Limes – use instead of lemon juice on fruit salad
- Mangoes – early in Term 1
- Melons – Honeydew, Rockmelon and Watermelon
- Nashi – freshly harvested in February
- Nectarines – late season varieties until March
- Oranges – Valencia
- Papaya
- Passionfruit – add to fruit salads
- Pawpaw – add to fruit salads
- Peaches – late season varieties until March
- Pears – Howell, Williams & Packham varieties
- Pineapples
- Plums

Meal Deals

Tamara Tomato Tasty Meal

- BLT (Bacon, lettuce & tomato)
- Banana



Summa Strawberry Hot Deal

- Tuna salad sandwich
- Strawberry and yoghurt cup



Oscar Orange Sporting Fuel

- Banana, sultana and cream cheese sandwich
- Orange & melon fruit salad



Megabite Apple Brain Food

- Chicken, tomato and cheese wrap
- A crisp Gala apple



Captain Capsicum Hero Meal

- Crunchy chicken, capsicum and lettuce roll
- Fresh fruit jelly



Bazza Banana Break

- Creamy Banana and Honey Roll
- Crunch time fruit salad



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