

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

Time to go green with avocados

Avocados are packed with vitamin E, a powerful antioxidant that helps protect body cells by keeping the membranes around cells in a healthy state. They do contain fat, but it is 'good' unsaturated fat that can assist the body to absorb some vitamins and other protective plant nutrients.

Buying, ripening and storing

The most common varieties are Shepard, Hass, Reed and Fuerte.

Choose a selection of avocados at different stages of ripeness so they don't all ripen at the same time. Ripe avocados will yield to gentle pressure around the stem.

Firm avocados will take 2-4 days to ripen fully. Leave them at room temperature and out of direct sunlight to ripen. To speed the process, place avocados in a brown paper bag with a banana or an apple. Once they're ripe, store avocados in the fridge and use within 2 days.

Preparing

Using a sharp knife, cut an avocado right around lengthways through to the seed. Take the avocado in both hands and simply twist to separate the halves. Remove the seed and slice or mash the flesh. Once cut, avocado will brown so brush or drizzle with lemon juice to prevent this occurring.



Quick & easy avocado ideas

Avocado & cottage cheese muffins

Top split multigrain or wholemeal English-style muffins with cottage cheese, mashed avocado and a halved cherry tomato.

Avocado & crispy bacon bun

Team creamy avocado with grilled lean bacon (it can be served cold) on a wholemeal flat bun. Simply delicious!

Avocado, chicken & mayo wrap

Spread flat bread with chunky mashed avocado. Top with shredded chicken mixed with a little mayonnaise. Roll up and serve.

Avocado salsa

Roughly chop avocados and mix with lime or lemon juice and chopped cherry tomatoes. Serve with corn chips, crackers or wedges of Lebanese flat bread.

Canteen Fresh...

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

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BLACKBOARD SPECIAL

Crunch & Munch Turkish sandwich

This great combination of crunchy salad vegetables, ham and hummus on Turkish bread will appeal to kids of all ages. Creamy hummus complements the flavours of the salad vegetables and keeps the sandwich moist.

For a senior student/teacher option, add a little tabouli salad just before topping with hummus.

NUTRITION: Rich red tomatoes are a top source of lycopene, a valuable antioxidant.

Crisp Ice-berg lettuce and alfalfa sprouts provide a refreshing crunch and contribute beta carotene and folate.

TO MAKE: Top halved, sliced Turkish bread or Turkish bread rolls with shredded Iceberg lettuce. Top with sliced tomato (it's important to place the tomato between the lettuce and ham to prevent the bread from becoming soggy). Top with shaved ham, alfalfa sprouts and a dollop of hummus. Cover with remaining bread, wrap and serve.

Team this sandwich with a banana for a nourishing meal deal.

Ensure you use ripe tomatoes at room temperature (not straight from the fridge) for maximum flavour.



Fruit is beaut!

Kids love fruit salads all year round, so always include a fruit salad on your canteen menus. Chopped ready-to-eat fruit is always more popular than whole fruit that requires peeling. Fresh fruit salad is colourful so it appeals to kids and it's also quick and easy to eat.

As well as being naturally healthy and sweet, fruit is virtually fat free. It's rich in beneficial antioxidants and vitamins and also provides dietary fibre for a healthy digestive system.

Change the fruit salad mix regularly

At this time of year, there's an abundance of delicious seasonal fruit which is perfect for fresh fruit salad. Change the fruit salad mix often for colour and flavour variations. Include at least 4 fruits from this list in your fruit salad;

- > Crisp new season apples like Gala and leave the skin as it provides fibre;
- > Imperial mandarins segments;
- > Bananas;
- > New season Navel oranges. Remove all the bitter white pith and chop the fruit;
- > Green and gold kiwifruit;
- > Juicy sun-ripened pineapple;
- > Crunchy nashi and like apples and pears leave the skin on;
- > Packham pears.

Drizzle your fruit salad with lime or lemon juice. Juicy Tahitian limes are in peak supply right now and their juice prevents fruit like bananas, apples and pears from discolouring.



Coleslaw basics

It's the ideal time to make your own coleslaw! Packed with nutritious vegetables, it's very economical and quick to prepare. Most kids, especially teenagers, really enjoy it.

Basic Ingredients

Cabbage

Savoy, Chinese (Wong Bok) or Red cabbage is ideal for coleslaw.

Savoy cabbage known as the 'king' of cabbages has crinkled, loose, green leaves and a mild flavour. Chinese cabbage is also mild in taste and has pale green leaves. It is a popular choice for kids. Red cabbage has a mellow flavour and is a vibrant addition to coleslaw.

Remove and discard the tough outer leaves. Halve the cabbage if required. Trim and discard its central core and separate the leaves. Wash and dry leaves. Trim thick white stems if necessary then finely shred the leaves.

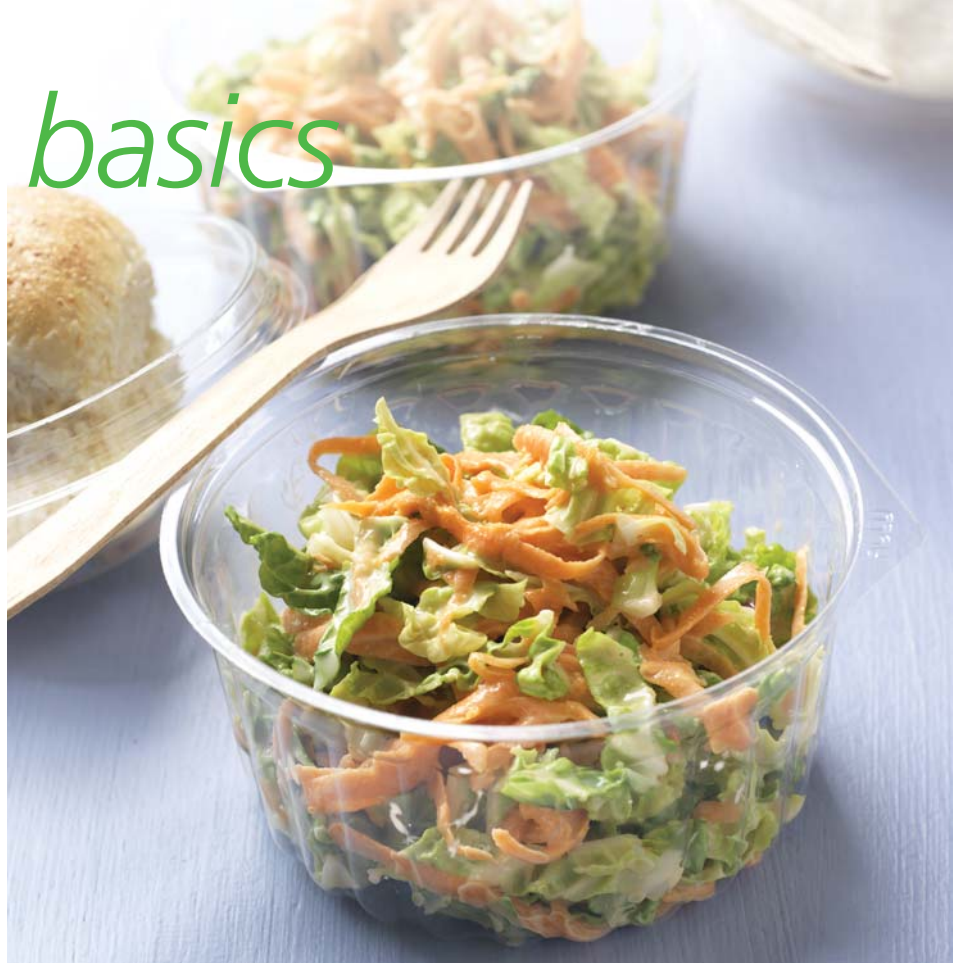
Carrots

For natural sweetness add a good quantity of carrot to your coleslaw. About 2 medium grated carrots are required per small cabbage. Peel carrots with a vegetable peeler or scrub with a soft brush before grating.

Onions

Mellow-flavoured white onions give coleslaw a smooth flavour that's not too strong for kids. Add about ½ - 1 whole onion per 1 small cabbage.

Peel the onions and grate finely using a grater.



To make classic coleslaw

- Wash, trim and shred the cabbage.
- Place cabbage in a large bowl.
- Add grated carrots, grated or very finely chopped onion and reduced fat coleslaw dressing. Season with salt and pepper to taste. Toss until well combined. Refrigerate for 1-2 days in an airtight container.

Popular variations

- Add finely sliced green onions.
- Add thinly sliced celery.
- Use red onion instead of white onion.
- Use a combination of red and green cabbage.

Serving suggestions for coleslaw

- Serve small plastic cups of coleslaw topped with a few crispy noodles.
- Team coleslaw with a barbecued sausage on a roll. Great for a fund-raising sausage sizzle or barbecue lunch day.
- Add coleslaw to sandwich, wrap and roll fillings. It teams especially well with ham, chicken and tuna.
- Toss shredded cooked chicken and chopped cherry tomatoes through coleslaw for an easy salad.

Warming snacks for recess

As the weather cools, it's the perfect time to include healthy warm snacks on your recess menu.

These quick ideas featuring fresh vegetables or fruit are sure to be popular.

Hot garlic & tomato bread *(pictured)*

Halve baguette bread lengthways. Spread with a mixture of crushed garlic and butter or margarine. Wrap in foil and heat until hot. Open and place tomato slices on baguette. Slice and serve.

Warm muffins with avocado

Heat wholemeal or whole grain muffins in a pie oven. Split and spread lightly with vegemite. Top with a dollop of mashed avocado and serve.

Pikelets with banana

Warm pikelets in a pie oven. Light drizzle with honey and top with sliced banana.

Cup of veggie soup

Serve cups of warm pumpkin, vegetable and noodle or minestrone soup in heatproof disposable cups with lightly buttered bread triangles or small dinner bread rolls.



In focus – bananas



To buy: Cavendish and Lady Finger are the most popular banana varieties. Also look for the new Goldfinger banana, it's a cross between a Lady Finger and an Asian banana.

As a banana ripens, its skin colour changes from yellow-green to golden-yellow with black or brown markings. Black or brown markings on the skin develop as a natural part of the ripening process. Buy bananas at different stages of ripeness so they don't all ripen at once. For eating within a few days, select bananas with yellow-green skin.

To store: Leave at room temperature out of direct sunlight until golden yellow and fully ripe. Ripe bananas can be stored in the fridge but their skin will blacken – this does not affect their flavour. Use refrigerated bananas for smoothies.

To prepare: Fuss free – simply peel! If adding to fruit salads or other dishes, drizzle cut banana with lemon or lime juice to prevent the flesh from discolouring.

Nutrition: Bananas have a creamy texture, sweet flavour and no fat. They're an excellent source of vitamins B6 and vitamin C – one banana provides a third of your daily vitamin C requirements. A good source of potassium and containing some iron and folate, bananas make a healthy snack for growing kids.

Bananas in your school canteen

- > Include bananas in meal deals
- > Add banana to fresh fruit salads
- > Make banana and yoghurt cups
- > Serve bananas over the counter at recess and lunch
- > Top fruit buns, pikelets or crumpets with sliced banana
- > Freeze peeled bananas (brushed with lemon juice) on a paddle-pop stick for a delicious iced treat.

Meal Deals

Tamara Tomato TASTY MEAL

- Cheese, tomato & Iceberg lettuce roll
- Fresh fruit jelly



Summa Strawberry HOT DEAL

- Crunch & Munch Turkish sandwich
- Strawberry, banana & yoghurt cup



Oscar Orange SPORTING FUEL

- Ham & salad roll
- Orange & kiwifruit salad



Megabite Apple BRAIN FOOD

- Avocado, chicken & lettuce sandwich
- Pink Lady apple
- Carton of reduced fat milk



Captain Capsicum HERO MEAL

- Cream cheese, capsicum & salad wrap
- Fresh fruit salad



Bazza Banana BREAK

- Banana, honey & cream cheese roll
- Quartered orange



What's in season

SEASONAL PRODUCE BUYING GUIDE

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

VEGETABLES

Beans
Beetroot
Broccoli
Cabbage
Carrots
Celery
Mushrooms
Onions
Parsnips

Potatoes
Pumpkin
Silverbeet
Spinach
Sweet potatoes
Tomatoes
Turnips
Zucchini

FRUITS

Apples
Avocados
Bananas (See In Focus)
Custard Apples
Dates
Kiwifruit
Grapefruit
Lemons
Mandarins

Melons
Nashi
Oranges
Pears
Papaya
Pawpaw
Pineapple

Canteen Fresh is produced by



PO Box 2 Sydney Markets NSW 2129
Phone: (02) 9325 6830 Fax: (02) 9325 6288
Email: freshforkids@sydneymarkets.com.au



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