



Introduction

During 2006, 20 Central Coast primary schools participated in the **Q4 Lunchbox Look Activity**. The results of this activity showed that, on average, lunchboxes of primary school children in participating schools contained:

- A sandwich;
- Adequate serves of fruit; but
- Less than the suggested serves of breads and cereals, vegetables, dairy or lean meats; and
- More than the suggested amount of “sometimes” foods for the entire day!

In addition to this activity, a parent’s survey was conducted to determine which resources parents felt would be most useful. This survey showed that parents were most interested in a list of healthy snack ideas, a guide to help work out the nutritional value of snacks and a healthy lunchbox checklist.

As a result of the Lunchbox Look and the parent’s survey, two resources – “Q4 Go 4 Green School Resource Pack” and the “Q4 Healthy Lunchbox Ideas Star Chart” – were developed.

This year, the Lunchbox Look Activity was repeated in 16 of the 20 primary schools that participated last year. Also, schools were surveyed to determine how useful the resources have been, and whether they have assisted in improving the lunchboxes of Central Coast primary school students.

Overall Lunchbox Look Results – 2007 Schools

The 2007 Lunchbox Look Activity showed that the **average school lunchbox** of Central Coast primary school students contained:

➤ **One serve of fruit**

- This meets the suggested serve of fruit to be included in a lunchbox (1 serve = 1 medium or 2 small pieces)
- The average serve of fruit juice was 0.17 of a serve (1 serve = 1/2 cup / 1 small popper juice (125 ml)

➤ **Almost one serve of breads and cereals**

- This is less than the suggested 2 serves of breads and cereals to be included in a lunchbox (1 serve = 2 slices bread or 3 rice cakes).

➤ **Less than half a serve of vegetables , dairy foods and meat/fish/eggs**

This quantity is well below the suggested

- 1 serve of vegetables to be included in a lunchbox (1 serve = 1 cup salad or ½ cup cooked vegies).
- 1 serve of dairy foods to be included in a student’s lunchbox (1 serve = 1 cup / small carton milk (250 ml) or 2 slices cheese).
- ½ serve of meat/fish/eggs to be included in a student’s lunchbox (1/2 serve = 30g meat or 1 egg).

➤ **Almost two serves of “sometimes” foods**

- The most common “sometimes” foods found in lunchboxes are still chips (23% of total “sometimes” foods) and sweet biscuits, cakes and muffins (19% of total “sometimes” foods).
- “Sometimes” foods represented **49%** of the total energy content of the average lunchbox.
- “Sometimes” foods are not everyday foods. It appears pre-packaged “sometimes” foods are still filling the lunchbox instead of the healthy foods. If they are included in the lunchbox they should be limited to 1 serve or less. (1 serve = 4 plain sweet biscuits or 1 small packet chips (30g))

Overall Lunchbox Look Results – Comparison of 2006 and 2007 Schools

(Please note that analysis of the comparisons between the 2006 and 2007 Lunchbox Looks have been done only in the schools who participated both years. This allows more accurate reporting. For this reason, the 2006 results in this report will be slightly different to the overall results in the report you received last year.)

√ **Fruit and Fruit Juice – great improvements!**

The average serve of **fruit increased** significantly from 2006 to 2007 ($p < 0.001$). The average serve of **fruit juice decreased** significantly ($p < 0.001$) The proportion of classes with **no fruit juice significantly increased** from 2006 to 2007. ($\chi^2 = 3.87$, $df=1$, $p=0.049$)
Whole fruit is a better choice than fruit juice as it is higher in fibre.

Schools with a fruit break recorded a significantly greater average serve of fruit. ($p < 0.01$)

√ **Sometimes Foods – on the way down, but still a long way to go.**

The average serve of **sometimes food decreased significantly** from 2006 to 2007 ($p = 0.003$) **Chips** are still the most common sometimes food in the lunchbox - as a proportion of the sometimes foods, chips has remained the same over the past 2 years. ($\chi^2 = 0.03$, $df=1$, $p=0.85$) The average serve of most of the sometimes foods including chips, sweet biscuits and cakes, confectionery and muesli bars have all significantly decreased. ($p < 0.05$) The average serve of savoury biscuits has significantly increased. ($p = 0.01$)

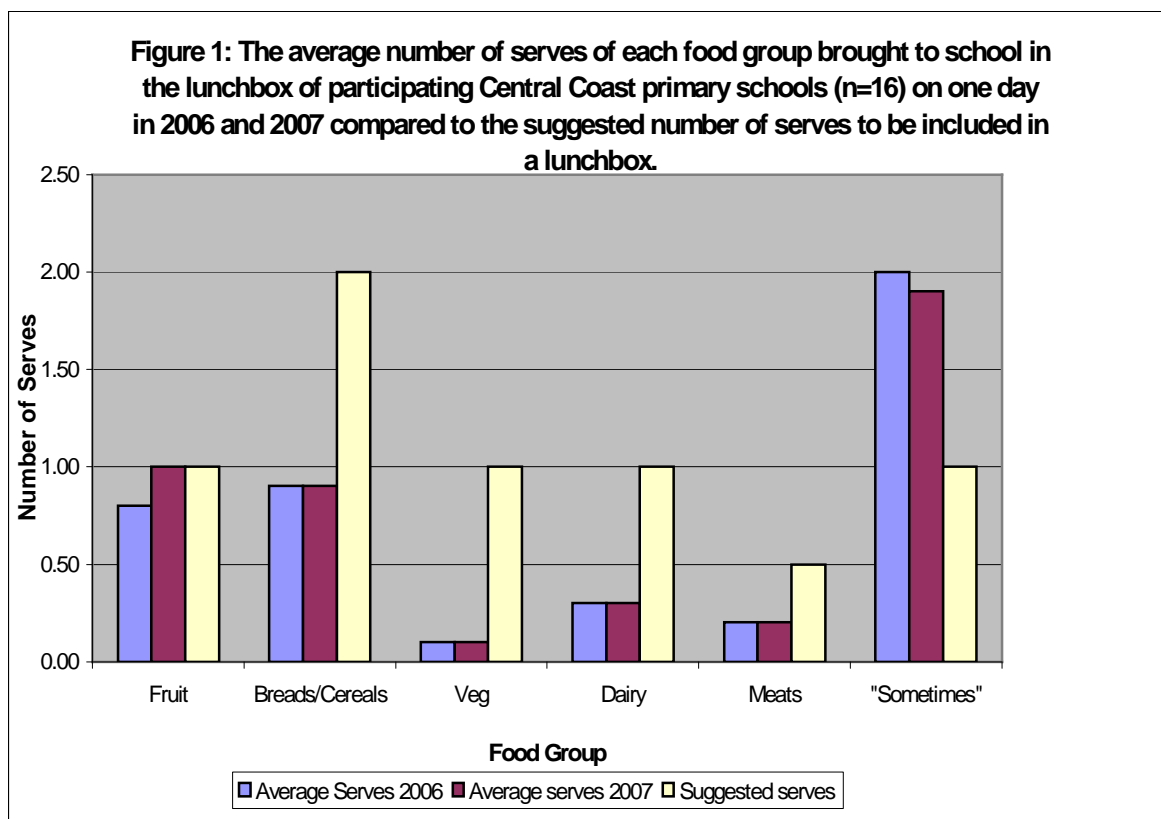
x **Breads and Cereals, Meats and Dairy Foods – Still too low.**

The average serve of these food groups **did not significantly change** from 2006 to 2007. The serves are well below the suggested serves for a school lunchbox.

x **Vegetables – Low and getting lower.**

The average serve of **vegetables decreased significantly** from 2006 to 2007. ($p < 0.001$) **The proportion of classes with no vegetable serves remained the same from 2006 and 2007.** ($\chi^2 = 0.84$, $df=1$, $p=0.36$)

Figure 1 below shows the comparison of the 2006 and 2007 Lunchbox Look results with the suggested minimum serves for a primary school lunchbox.



NB. The maximum number of "sometimes" foods to be included in a lunchbox is 1. It is suggested 0-1 serves be included.