



Increasing vegetable consumption during snack breaks among Australian school children – April 2026

FAST FACTS:

- 95% of Australian children do not meet the recommended daily vegetable intake.
- School fruit and vegetable provisioning interventions implemented internationally typically increase fruit consumption but have a limited impact on vegetable intake.
- No such provisioning programs currently exist in Australia, highlighting the need to develop and evaluate systems-based models that increase both fruit and vegetable consumption.

BACKGROUND:

- Most Australian children do not eat enough vegetables and only a small proportion of their vegetable intake occurs at school.
- In schools with existing fruit and vegetable break programs, parents predominantly provide fruit rather than vegetables, and students from lower socio-economic areas are less likely to bring either.
- Increasing vegetable snacking at schools provides a significant opportunity to increase vegetable intake, particularly for children in areas of socio-economic disadvantage.

AIMS:

- To assess opportunities for introducing vegetable snacking in primary schools and explore implementation models that respond to socio-economic inequalities.
- To evaluate whether a 'vegetable and fruit provisioning' intervention increases students' vegetable intake and is feasible and acceptable for educators.

METHOD:

- A systematic literature review will examine international evidence on the effect of school fruit and vegetable provisioning interventions on students' vegetable intake.
- A 6-week trial in primary schools located in lower socio economic areas of Western Sydney will test a vegetable and fruit provisioning intervention, evaluating its feasibility, acceptability and impact on students' vegetable and fruit intake.
- Interviews with key stakeholders will identify barriers and facilitators to vegetable consumption during snack breaks and inform future provisioning models and implementation pathways.

POTENTIAL IMPACT:

- The project will generate practical evidence and learnings on school-based vegetable and fruit provisioning models to inform future programs and policies aimed at improving children's intake and promoting more equitable access to fresh produce in primary schools.
- Findings will offer guidance on business models, implementation barriers and enablers, and recommendations for broader implementation and scale-up of school-based vegetable and fruit programs in Australia.

PROJECT CYCLE:

2025 - 2027

PARTNERS AND SUPPORTERS:

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