



# The Traffic Light System in Schools

In accordance with the ACT Public School Food and Drink Policy 2015, the provision and sale of all food and drinks in ACT Public Schools must meet the *National Healthy School Canteens: Guidelines for healthy foods and drinks supplied in school canteens 2013 (NHSCG)*.

The NHSCG apply to food and drinks sold in the canteen as well as any food and drinks sold or provided through other school activities, such as school events, catering, fundraising and more.

The NHSCG are consistent with the recommendations for children and young people in the Australian Dietary Guidelines 2013.

The NHSCG use a **traffic light system** to categorise foods and drinks according to their nutritional value and levels of energy, saturated fat, fibre, sugar and salt.

The aim is to have available mostly **GREEN** food and drink items every day in the school. **AMBER** food and drinks items should be selected carefully and **RED** items are not recommended. Factsheets are available on each of the **GREEN**, **AMBER** and **RED** categories and provide examples of different food types in each category.

Schools should '**GREEN** up' **AMBER** items where possible. Refer to the *Green Food and Drink Items* factsheet for ideas of how to **GREEN** food and drinks.

### Encourage and promote **GREEN** food and drinks

These food and drinks:

- Are the best choice for a healthy school canteen, at school community events and recommended for lunches provided from home
- Should be available every day and should be the main choices on the canteen menu and at school events
- Contain a wide range of nutrients
- Are generally low in saturated fat and/or sugar and/or salt

### Do not let **AMBER** food and drinks dominate available foods and keep serve sizes small

These food and drinks:

- Contain some valuable nutrients
- Contain moderate amounts of saturated fats and/or sugar and/or salt
- If eaten in large amounts may increase the amount of energy (kilojoules) being consumed

### **RED** food and drinks should not be available at school, with limited exemptions described in the *ACT Public School Food and Drink Policy 2015*

These food and drinks:

- Should not be sold in a healthy school canteen
- May be sold at occasional fetes, fundraisers and school events no more than twice per term
- Are not recommended as suitable foods and drinks to bring from home
- May contain excess energy (kilojoules), saturated fat and/or sugar and/or sodium and are low in fibre

# Resources to understand and implement The NHSCG Traffic Light System

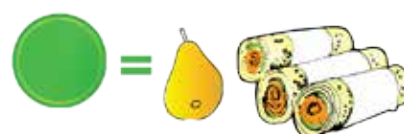
## For Parents and Carers, Teachers and The School Community

Factsheets are available on each of the **GREEN**, **AMBER** and **RED** categories and provide examples of different food types in each category. There are also Factsheets and Frequently Asked Questions on a variety of other topics that help to apply *The Traffic Light System*. They cover practical matters such as: school lunchboxes and fundraising activities, and list useful resources to support the health of children and young people.

## For Canteen Operators

Factsheets are available on each of the **GREEN**, **AMBER** and **RED** categories and provide examples of different food types in each category. There are many additional resources available to support canteens to implement the NHSCG. These are available from the website below, and include:

1. Guidelines book
2. Posters
3. Quick reference, pocket guides and calculators
4. 2013 updates in line with the release of the Australian Dietary Guidelines



[www.health.gov.au/internet/main/publishing.nsf/Content/phd-nutrition-canteens](http://www.health.gov.au/internet/main/publishing.nsf/Content/phd-nutrition-canteens)

## User guide to *The National Healthy School Canteen Guidelines*

The User Guide is specifically for the ACT and will be a step by step guide to understand and apply the NHSCG. This resource is being developed by ACT Health in consultation with school users and will be available in term 2, 2015. For updated information go to [www.health.act.gov.au/freshtastes](http://www.health.act.gov.au/freshtastes).

## Training and support to understand and implement the NHSCG

The following services work together to provide training and support for ACT schools to implement the NHSCG:



### 1. **Fresh Tastes: healthy food at school**

*Fresh Tastes* is a free and optional service available to any school in the ACT. The service can help schools implement the *ACT Public School Food and Drink Policy 2015* and the NHSCG by providing a range of resources, training, advice and assistance. *Fresh Tastes* is provided by ACT Health with the support of the wider ACT Government and local community and business organisations to ensure healthy food at school can be sustained in the long term. ACT schools are invited to get involved by contacting *Fresh Tastes*.

Schools will have access to whole school community traffic light workshops.

Email: [freshtastes@act.gov.au](mailto:freshtastes@act.gov.au)

Ph: 02 62051452

[www.health.act.gov.au/freshtastes](http://www.health.act.gov.au/freshtastes)



### 2. **ACT Nutrition Advisory Service**

Schools will be able to access support, advice, education, training and workshops to assist them to implement the NHSCG. The service will also undertake nutritional analysis of food and drinks, menu reviews and audits of food and drinks supplied in food outlets, canteens and vending machines. This service will be available from 2015 for four years.

### 3. Nutrition Australia ACT

Canteen Fresh ACT is a Fresh Tastes service provided by Nutrition Australia ACT for all ACT school canteens to help them practically implement the NHSCG. Canteen Fresh ACT support includes small group training for canteen managers, telephone and email advice, and newsletters.

Email: [act@nutritionaustralia.org](mailto:act@nutritionaustralia.org)

Ph: 02 6162 2583

[www.nutritionaustralia.org/act](http://www.nutritionaustralia.org/act)

### 4. Healthy Kids Association NSW/ACT

All school canteens can access recipes and a range of resources on running a canteen from the Healthy Kids Association website. Healthy Kids Association members can access menu reviews, telephone advice, business advice and a Healthy Kids magazine. The annual membership fee is \$99.

### Related Factsheets

- **GREEN**, Food and Drink Items
- **AMBER** Food and Drink Items
- **RED** Food and Drink Items
- Resources for Canteens

### References

*National Healthy School Canteens: Guidelines for healthy foods and drinks supplied in school canteens, updated 2013* [www.health.gov.au/internet/main/publishing.nsf/Content/phd-nutrition-canteens](http://www.health.gov.au/internet/main/publishing.nsf/Content/phd-nutrition-canteens)

*Eat for Health, Australian Dietary Guidelines 2013* [www.eatforhealth.gov.au](http://www.eatforhealth.gov.au)

