Tuckshop Snapshot 2008

A survey of Queensland tuckshops funded by MBF foundation

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Building a healthier community

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Foreword

School tuckshops are important places where students not only access food but also learn about it in a social setting. Those working in promoting the health of children and in tackling childhood obesity have recognised the need to include strategies to improve the nutritional value of tuckshop menus. In Queensland, Education Queensland has introduced *Smart Choices: Healthy Food and Drink Supply Strategy for Queensland Schools.* At the same time, it is vital to recognise that tuckshops need to be viable, small businesses to run sustainably. Many schools rely on the profits provided by their school tuckshops to fund major capital works and school activities.

Since the inaugural *1998 QAST Tuckshop Survey*, much has changed. This new survey not only demonstrates that tuckshops have made significant improvements; it identifies the priorities for future work. The survey also details the differences between school types and highlights the need for tuckshop strategies to be customised to these different settings. The results of this survey will be used by the Queensland Association of School Tuckshops and shared with other support organisations to develop a raft of strategies to assist tuckshop staff in their continued efforts to strive for excellence in the provision of food services to Queensland Schools.

I would like to thank the MBF Foundation for their support of this survey and their continuing interest in the health and wellbeing of Queensland school students.

Lorie Robinson
President
Queensland Association of School Tuckshops

Acknowledgements

The Queensland Association of School Tuckshops (QAST) would like to thank everyone involved with this project, especially Julie Appleton, our Principal Project Officer, for her work throughout the project. QAST also gratefully acknowledges the efforts of the QAST Tuckshop Survey Subcommittee (Barbara Radcliffe, Chris Ogden, Trent Ballard, Elizabeth Still) for their expert advice and assistance in data analysis and reviewing this document, and to Abby Staddon from I-View Pty Ltd for her friendly and efficient service and her patience in answering all our questions.

Special thanks must also go to MBF Foundation, who generously funded this important research.

Most importantly, we must acknowledge and thank the Queensland tuckshop convenors and others who kindly took the time to complete the survey.

EXECUTIVE Summary

Background

In 2008, MBF Foundation provided funding that allowed Queensland Association of School Tuckshops (QAST) to conduct a comprehensive survey of school tuckshops in Queensland. The aim of this survey was to obtain data to assist QAST and other agencies better understand the needs of tuckshops to provide healthy options.

The inaugural QAST survey of Queensland tuckshops was funded by Queensland Health and the Queensland Dairy Authority and conducted in 1998. Since then, there have been many changes for school tuckshops. Probably the largest impact has been the introduction of *Smart Choices: Healthy Food and Drink Supply Strategy for Queensland Schools*[1]*. Smart Choices* provides guidelines for the provision of nutritious foods and drinks in schools.

This setting is unique as the food service is focused on the well being of the students and profit is not necessarily the first priority. There are limitations with determining prices to this sector as parents expect that the tuckshop food would not be priced at the same level as outside food service outlets.

Methods

This survey used a computer assisted telephone interview (CATI) technique to sample 500 tuckshops. The CATI was undertaken by an external consultant with expertise in this area. This method was chosen because the previous mailed survey had a low response rate, primarily due to approximately half of surveys being lost within the school mailing system and not reaching the tuckshop convenor. QAST has also previously found telephone surveys to be a quick and effective way to reach tuckshop convenors.

Prior to the CATI interview, a letter was sent to all schools with a tuckshop requesting the previous year's financial information and a current menu to be faxed to QAST and announcing that someone may be calling for the survey.

Key Findings

The vast proportion of Queensland school tuckshops (83%) were found to be profitable, with an average profit of $11,082. When the data is extrapolated, Queensland tuckshops have estimated total sales of $154 million per annum based on 2007 figures and this figure has increased in real terms since the 1998 survey. Queensland tuckshops make an estimated profit of $16.1 million per annum. The mean percentage profit was10% and this has decreased significantly from 14% in 1998.

In terms of profitability, only half of tuckshop convenors reported that making a profit was important or very important. This highlights the importance of school tuckshops as a service. Making a profit was found to be more important for state schools than for non-government schools. QAST membership is positively associated with higher profit levels. Profit is associated with the size of the school, with high schools making significantly higher profits than primary schools. Profits from tuckshops are generally used to support vital school infrastructure and activities

Seventeen percent of tuckshops made a loss in 2007 and this figure has increased when compared to the *1998 QAST Survey* when 7.2% of tuckshops reported this outcome. The dramatic decrease in the total voluntary hours provided to tuckshops (125 hours/tuckshop/week) and the consequent small increase in average paid hours (4 hours/week) to compensate for this loss may have contributed to this finding as well as the diminishing percentage profits being achieved by the sector.

[1] http://education.qld.gov.au/schools/healthy/food-drink-strategy.html

When asked about menu design, *Smart Choices* and nutrition were considered to be in the top three most important considerations by more than 90% of the convenors. The affordability of food items, customer preferences and the capacity of the tuckshop to prepare items are also important factors in designing menus.
Virtually all government schools report compliance to *Smart Choices*. More than half non-government schools also report compliance without it being mandatory.

Smart Choices has almost eliminated high energy, micro-nutrient poor foods (RED items under *Smart Choic*es) from tuckshop menus. AMBER foods under *Smart Choices* are high in energy, saturated fat or salt and generally low in fibre but may contribute valuable nutrients to the diet. These foods are most prevalent on tuckshop menus despite the recommendations that they should be selected carefully to ensure that they don't dominate the menu. Tuckshop convenors generally underestimate the percentage of AMBER food on their menu, believing their menus to be healthier than they are. Non-government schools have menus with a higher percentage of AMBER items on their menu.

When the best selling items in tuckshops and their menus were considered, there appeared to be a good range of popular healthy main meals available to school students however there is a need for healthy acceptable snack items. The most popular beverages sold in tuckshops are healthy options from the *Smart Choices* GREEN and AMBER categories. A large proportion of popular snack foods fit into the AMBER category.

Having a menu with a greater percentage of healthier food choices (GREEN items under *Smart Choices*) is associated with a greater likelihood that GREEN items will be best sellers. It was interesting to note that the percentage of GREEN items on menus was inversely proportional to the total number of items on the menu.

When responding to questions about equipment and facilities, it was found that the most common appliances in tuckshops in 2008 are microwaves (100%), pie warmers (96%), sandwich presses (94%), ovens (92%), and hotplates (90%). The survey also found that most tuckshops have adequate cooking appliances and that many have very good access to the appliances required to cook fresh foods.

Although the vast majority of tuckshops have a paid convenor working an average of 24 hours per week, 17% of convenors are volunteers. Paid convenors commonly also provide additional voluntary services, with seven hours per week donated by the average tuckshop convenor. Queensland tuckshops still rely on volunteers with the average tuckshop having 15 volunteers. An estimated total for Queensland of 1.5 Million hours per year is provided by volunteers. Even at a pay rate of $10 per hour, this approximates to $15M of voluntary services. The total number of voluntary hours per tuckshop has decreased from 150 hours per week in 1998 to 25 hours per week.

More than a quarter of convenors have been in their position for less that one year. Only 49% of convenors reported receiving orientation and/or training when they first started as convenor.

Large schools and almost all high schools are open five days a week. Friday is the most likely day to be open and thus the best day to contact tuckshop convenors.

Recommendations

1. There is a worrying percentage of tuckshops (17%) that made a loss in the 2007 financial year. This is not surprising given the lack of orientation most staff received and the decrease in volunteer hours. Tuckshop losses produce a large strain on the school communities. There is a need to orientate and provide ongoing professional development to train and retain tuckshop convenors in business management (including price setting) and to support schools struggling to be financially viable. Further strategies to support convenors to recruit, train and retain volunteers are also required.

2. There is an urgent need to address decreasing percentage profits and to provide guidance and training on price setting. The reduction in profits may have come from the large reduction in volunteer hours, an increase in paid convenor hours as well as the majority of tuckshops having merely changed red foods for amber and not preparing much food on site, which is very profitable.

3. It was noted that there is a perception of compliance to Smart Choices that is not matched by the proportion of GREEN and AMBER foods on the menu. Strategies will need to address this misconception and motivate staff to increase the percentage of healthy/GREEN menu items. One easy method of achieving this is to decrease the total number of menu items, by limiting the total number of AMBER items. It was shown that menus with fewer items are more likely to be healthy and there is less competition for GREEN items.

4. Non-government schools report lower rates of compliance to *Smart Choices*, with some schools still having RED foods on the menu. The health of students at these schools is of equal importance and there is a need to develop strategies to support these tuckshops to provide healthy choices.

5. There is a need for an employer resource to provide basic orientation for convenors and volunteers and for annual training for tuckshop staff on a range of topics (e.g. nutrition, food safety, business principles) due to the high turnover of positions. The geographical isolation of a large number of tuckshop convenors means there is a need to explore a range of innovative options around networking, particularly for regional and remote settings.

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1.0 Introduction

In 2008, MBF Foundation provided funding that allowed Queensland Association of School Tuckshops (QAST) to conduct a comprehensive survey of school tuckshops in Queensland. The aim of this survey was to obtain data to assist QAST and other agencies to better understand the needs of tuckshops. This data will be used to plan appropriate support services and thus enhance the provision of safe, healthy and affordable food for children and young people while they are at school. This is the second time such a survey has been conducted.

The inaugural *1998 QAST Tuckshop Survey of* was funded by Queensland Health and the Queensland Dairy Authority and conducted in 1998. The responses to this survey indicated that almost all schools had a tuckshop that served the whole school community, tuckshops were generally profitable and their profits provided substantial support to Queensland schools. The role of the tuckshop convenor was shown to be extremely broad and included managing money and people while providing food for the school community on a regular basis.

Since 1998, there have been many changes for school tuckshops. The availability of volunteers has decreased and there has been an increase in the proportion of schools with paid staff. The tastes of children of 2008 are more cosmopolitan and foods such as wraps and pizza appear on tuckshop menus as often as sandwiches and the ubiquitous pies and sausage rolls. Probably the largest impact to Queensland tuckshops has been the introduction of *Smart Choices: Healthy Food and Drink Supply Strategy for Queensland Schools*[2]*, which was launched in July 2005 and implemented in January 2007. Smart Choices* provides guidelines for the provision of nutritious foods and drinks in schools. See Appendix 1 for a summary of the Smart Choices guidelines. Its implementation is mandatory for government schools. Non-government schools are also encouraged to implement the strategy and model healthy eating practices.

2.0 Methods

The 1998 tuckshop survey was a paper based survey and it was posted to school principals who were asked to forward it to the tuckshop convenor. The response rate for this survey (surveys returned) was approximately 25% of surveys sent, or up to 50%, if the fact that approximately half of convenors contacted subsequently by phone reported that they did not receive the survey, is taken into account. The sample surveyed was deemed to be representative of the school population in Queensland at that time with respect to its distribution of primary, secondary and primary-secondary combined schools and also with respect to government vs non-government schools

The 2008 survey was developed using the 1998 survey as a starting point. Several of the same questions were retained for comparison. New questions were developed to address the issues relevant to tuckshops at the current time (Appendix 2)

A Computer Assisted Telephone Interview (CATI) process was used and the survey was conducted and administered by an independent data collection agency, I-View Pty Ltd[3] in the first school term of 2008. The CATI process was chosen as it is considered to be quick, economical, achieve high response rates, has direct data entry and a computerised survey management system[4]. QAST provided I-View a copy of the QAST database with contact and

[2] http://education.qld.gov.au/schools/healthy/food-drink-strategy.html
[3] I-View: http://www.iview.com.au
[4] Department of Human Services, Victoria (1998) http://www.dhs.vic.gov.au/nphp/catitrg/forum98/dbennett.htm (accessed 18 April 2008)

demographic information for all schools in Queensland where food is regularly supplied. To ensure confidentiality, all schools were given a unique identifier by I-View that was not made available to QAST or any other party. The survey was of 15 minutes duration.

In February 2008, a letter (Appendix 3) was sent to tuckshop convenors in all schools in Queensland that QAST had previously identified as having a tuckshop or selling food by other means to students e.g. P&C provides lunch once a week for sale. This letter informed the convenor about the upcoming survey and requested their participation, if they were phoned. This letter included a request to fax to QAST a copy of their current menu and a fax sheet (Appendix 3) that asked convenors to fax financial information about their total sales (income received before any costs) and their profit or loss (income after expenses have been deducted) in 2007. It was considered that tuckshop convenors may not have this financial information immediately available when phoned, so this fax option gave them an opportunity to provide the information in their own time.

This request resulted in menus and financial information being received from both convenors that were subsequently interviewed in the CATI process and those whose school was not in the CATI sample.

During the CATI interview, convenors were asked if they had faxed to QAST the financial information and menu. If they had already provided this information, they were not questioned further about it. If they had not done so, they were asked to provide the information, if they could be called at another time, or if they could fax back the information as soon as possible. They were also requested to fax their current menu.

Menus received from schools via fax were assessed by QAST staff for the percentage of GREEN items on their menu using the Smart Choices criteria.

Financial information received from convenors and menu assessment information were forwarded by QAST to I-View. This information was then included in the results before the data was de-identified and made available to QAST. Data was provided to QAST as a SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences) file for analysis.

Frequency, cross tabulation and correlations were generated and statistical significance for associations were derived using the chi squared test (two sided) using a probability of less than 0.05 as statistically significant.

3.0 Results and discussion

3.1 Response rate

The target was a sample of 500 schools from a total data base of 1454 of all Queensland schools where food is sold. Call outcomes from the CATI survey are shown in Appendix 4. In all, 809 tuckshop convenors were contacted and 11% of these declined to be interviewed. Five hundred interviews were successfully completed.

A total of 223 schools faxed in menus to QAST and 266 schools provided some sales and/or profit or loss data via CATI or fax. Of the schools selected in the CATI survey, 133 provided menus and 153 provided financial data.

3.2 About the schools

3.2.1 Type of school

Table 1 describes the different categories of Queensland schools that provide food and their contribution compared to the survey population. The survey is representative in terms of the proportion of government to non-government schools and the survey group is similar to the state population for all other categories.

Table 1. Queensland schools that provide food and survey group

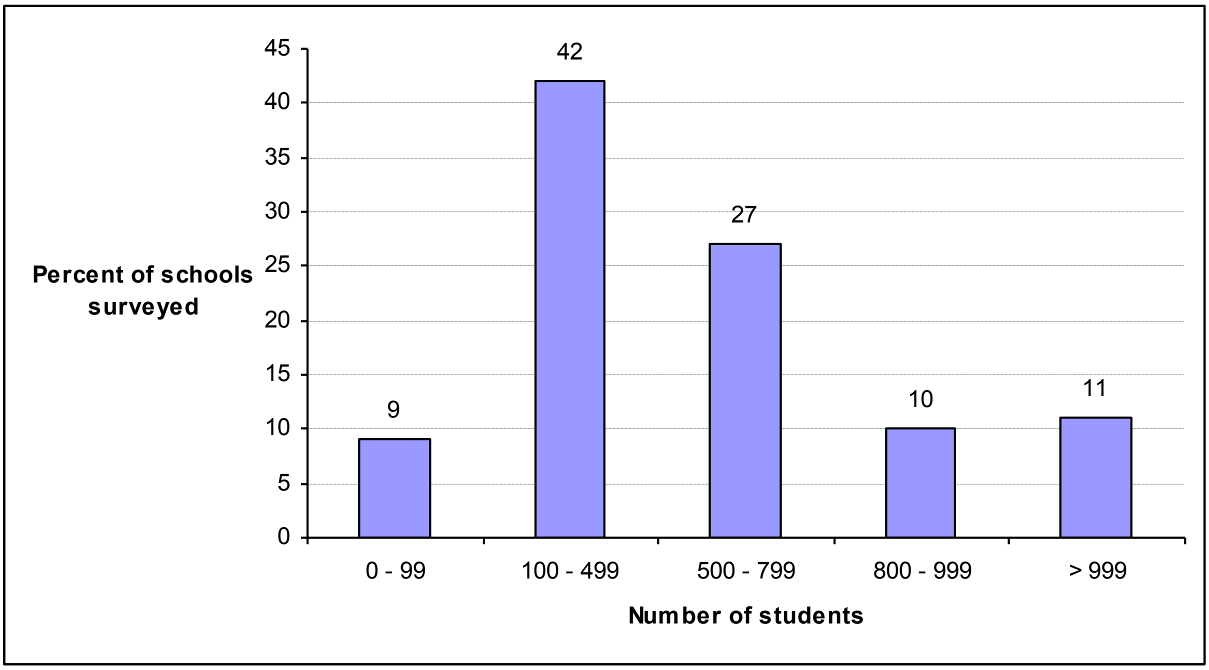
	Queensland Schools that provide food (n=1454)		Survey Group Data (n=500)	
School Type	**Number**	**Percent of population**	**Number**	**Percent of sample**
Primary school	1013	70	314	62.8
Secondary	242	17	112	22.4
Combined	202	13	74	14.8
Government school	1047	74	370	74.0
Non-government school	383	26	130	26.0
Urban (Metropolitan and Regional)	865	59	331	66.2
Rural and Remote	592	41	169	33.8

3.2.2 Size of school

As can be seen from Figure 1, that almost half the schools (48%) surveyed had at least 500 students. The mean size of primary schools was 527, 746 for high schools and 600 for combined schools (P-10 and P-12 schools). Size differences between the groups were statistically significant.

In 1998, only 37% of schools surveyed had more than 500 students.

Figure 1 Student numbers at schools that completed the survey



3.2.3 Days that tuckshop is open

Fifty-eight percent of tuckshops were open on all school days. Figure 2 shows that when tuckshops are not open every day, three days and one day are the next most frequent number of days for tuckshops to be open. Tuckshops at secondary schools (included with combined secondary-primary schools) are significantly more likely to be open for all school days compared to primary schools (98% vs. 42%). It is likely that high schools are more able to sustain a five day service due to their greater number of students and the greater disposable income of these students when compared to primary school students.

There is a positive association between the school size and the number of days the tuckshop is open. Table 2 shows the percentage of schools with the tuckshop open from one to all five school days.

Figure 2 Number of days tuckshop is open by type of school

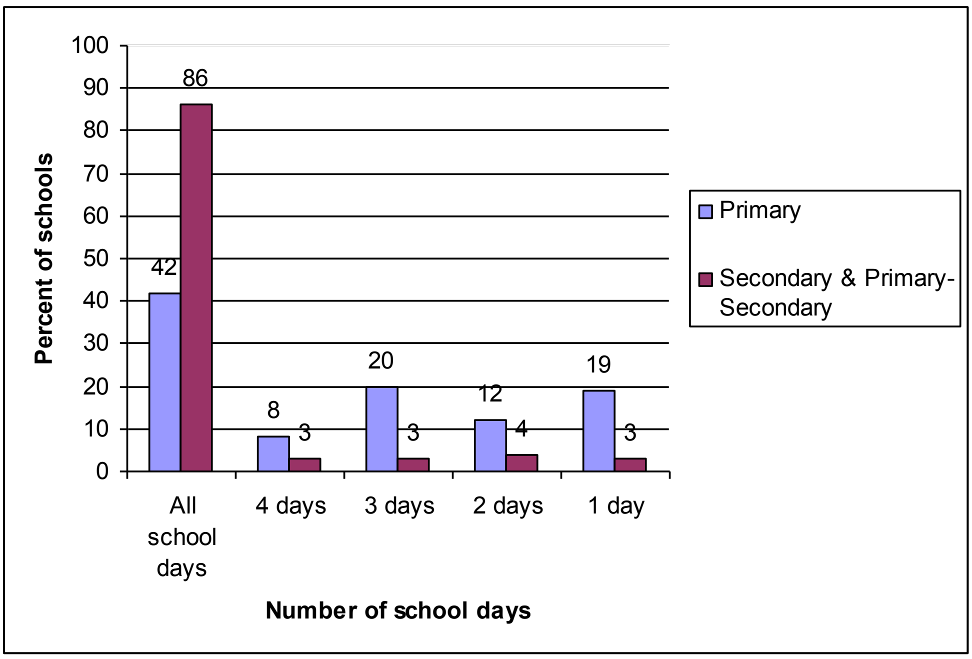


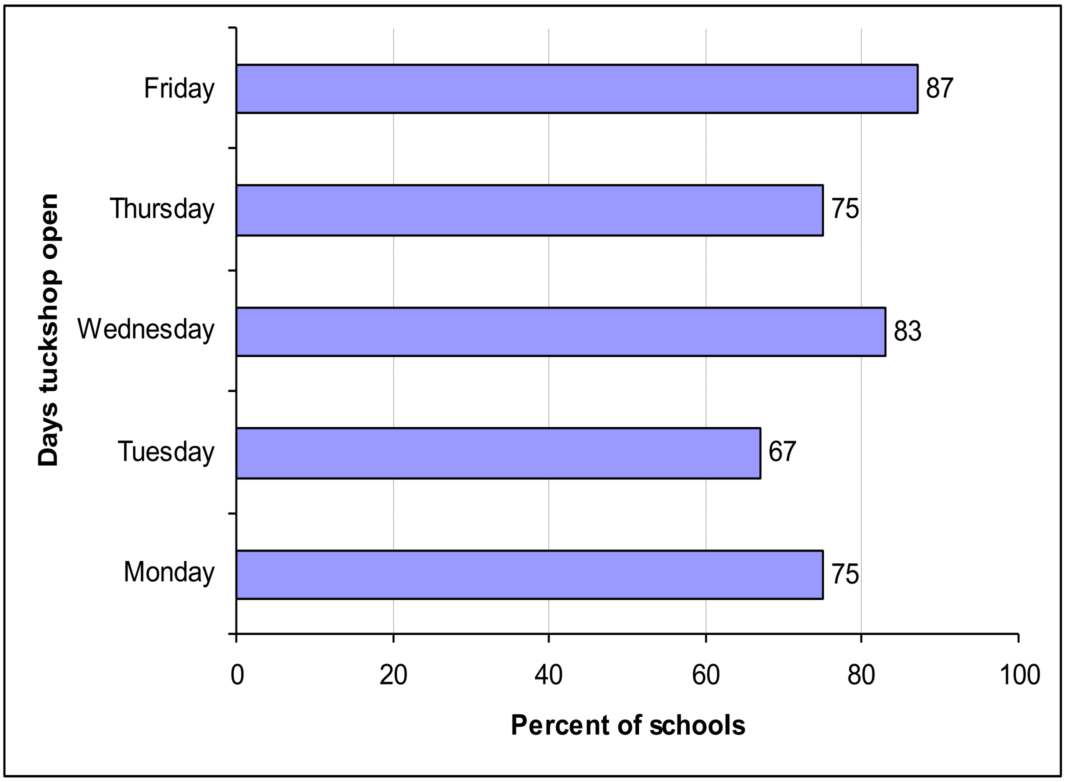
Table 2.Comparison of size of school by number of days open

	Number of students				
Number of days open	**0-99**	**100-499**	**500-799**	**800-999**	**>999**
	Percent of schools in category				
1	**72%**	14%	3%	7%	9%
2	3%	16%	7%	0%	3%
3	3%	19%	15%	13%	3%
4	3%	9%	3%	9%	3%
5	19%	**42%**	**73%**	**72%**	**83%**

*most frequent number of days open for each category is bolded

Schools nominated the days they are open. As can be seen in Figure 3, Friday was the most popular day for tuckshop, with 87% of tuckshops open on this day. Tuesday was the day tuckshops were least likely to be open (67%). No schools surveyed opened on the weekend. This information is important in determining which days to survey tuckshops convenors by phone or hold meetings with them.

Figure 3 Days of the week tuckshop is open



Key Findings:

- Large schools and almost all high schools are most likely to be open five days a week.
- Friday is the day tuckshops are most likely to be open and the best day to contact tuckshop convenors.
- Tuesdays and weekend are the best times for off site events.

3.2.4 Provision of food before and after school

Thirty percent of schools surveyed indicated that they provide a breakfast service for students. Secondary schools are significantly more likely to provide breakfast at school (57% of secondary schools, 35% of combined primary secondary, 18% of primary schools). This is also related to the size of the school as secondary and combined schools are more likely to be larger than primary schools (See Figure 2). Urban and regional schools (37%) are also more likely to provide breakfast than rural and remote schools (15%), while these schools are also more likely to have significantly more students per school than rural and remote schools. Larger schools were significantly more likely to provide breakfast as shown in Table 3.

In both 1998 and 2008 surveys, there was no significant difference between government of non-government sector regarding breakfast provision.

Table 3 Provision of breakfast related to school size (n= 148)

Number of students	Percentage of schools providing breakfast
0-99	7%
100-499	22%
500-799	28%
800-999	39%
>999	57%

Only 5% of surveyed tuckshops sold food after school. There were significant differences relating to school type, with combined primary secondary schools more likely to provide food at this time (15% of schools) than secondary schools (12%) and primary schools (3.2%).

3.2.5 Support for the tuckshop

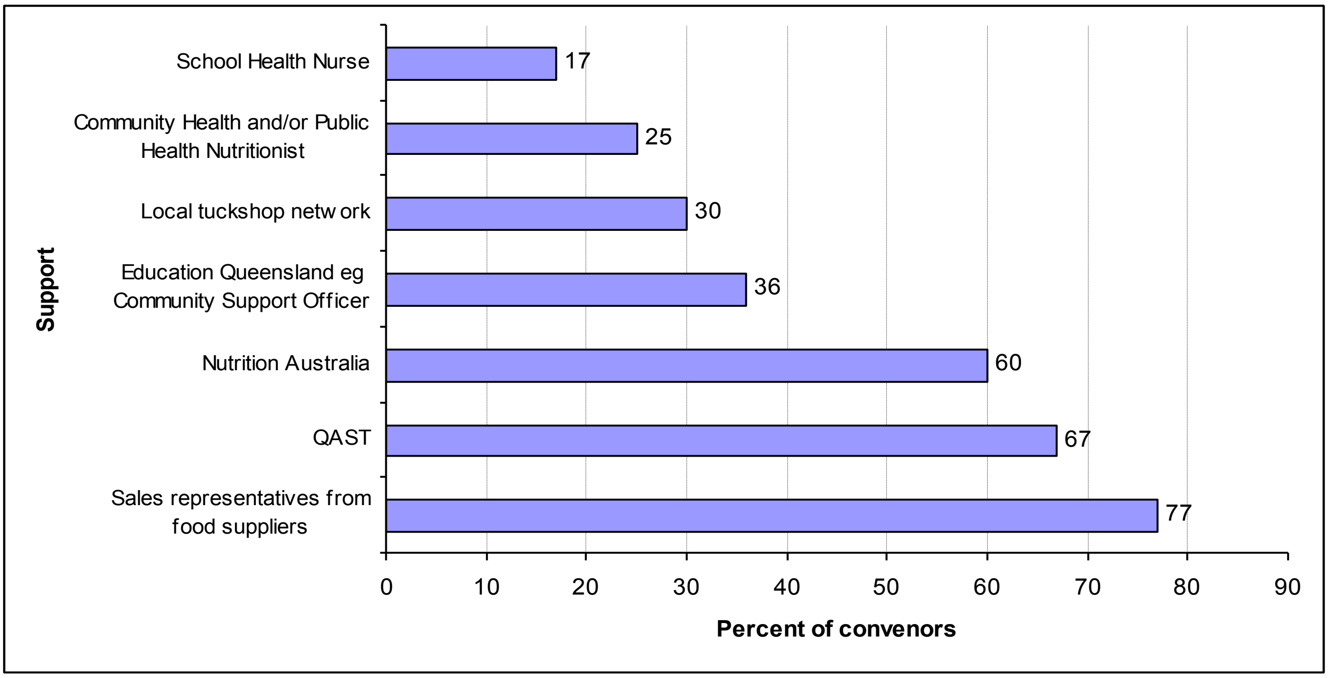
A list of organisations or agencies was read (one by one) to convenors, who were asked if they relied on this particular agency as a source of information and support. A ‘yes’ or ‘no’ answer was requested. Figure 4 shows that sales representatives for food suppliers was the source named most often by convenors (77% of respondents), with QAST selected as the second most common source (67%). As well as the agencies shown in Figure 4, a private consultant or dietitian was named by 9% of convenors. Other sources mentioned (unprompted) were parents/mothers (8%) and the P&C (4%).

This result is concerning as the reliability of information gained from some food suppliers/representatives has been poor to date. It is likely that the reliance on this group by tuckshop convenors has come about as food representatives are the only group who visit the tuckshop on a regular basis. When the information, particularly in relation to Smart Choices, is in conflict with the product being sold there is an opportunity for misleading information to be provided to maintain or promote sales.

It is heartening to see that QAST and Nutrition Australia were the next most commonly used agencies that convenors relied on for support, as we are certain of the validity of information coming from these sources. There is an opportunity for QAST to do more work with convenors to strengthen their ability to determine where a product fits within the Smart Choices strategy and not merely accept information from any source.

QAST can also use this information in their liaison with food suppliers and provide training to new representatives or help the industry develop a code of practice. This could be achieved for example by QAST holding food supplier and manufacturer workshops or forums.

Figure 4 Percentage of Convenors relying on support from agency or organisation



3.3 Tuckshop operation

3.3.1 Importance of making a profit

The level of importance of making a profit for the school was assessed using a five point Likert scale, with one being 'not important at all' and five being 'very important'. Only 16% of respondents thought it was of little or no importance, while 49% thought it was important or very important.

State schools were significantly more likely to report that making a profit was important or very important than non-state schools (56% vs 30%). There was no significant difference between primary schools and secondary schools in their responses.

Key Findings:

- Only half of tuckshop convenors reported that making a profit was important or very important. This highlights the importance of school tuckshops as a service.
- Making a profit is more important for state schools than non-government schools

3.3.2 Policies and procedures

A list of the policies or procedures shown in Table 4 was read out, one by one, to the convenors who indicated 'yes' or 'no' to whether they had written policies for the different topics. Eighty-two percent of convenors reported having written polices or procedures. The most common written policies related to food safety (75% of tuckshops), workplace health and safety (73%), the provision of healthy food (63%) and volunteers (63%).

Five percent of convenors added, without prompting, that they also had a written policy addressing fire/emergency/first aid.

No correlation was seen between pricing policies and size of profit or the existence of policies on volunteers and whether the lack of volunteers was identified as a main issue for the tuckshop convenor. This points to the possibility that the policies aren't being used or have limited impact.

Table 4 Percent of tuckshops with written policies

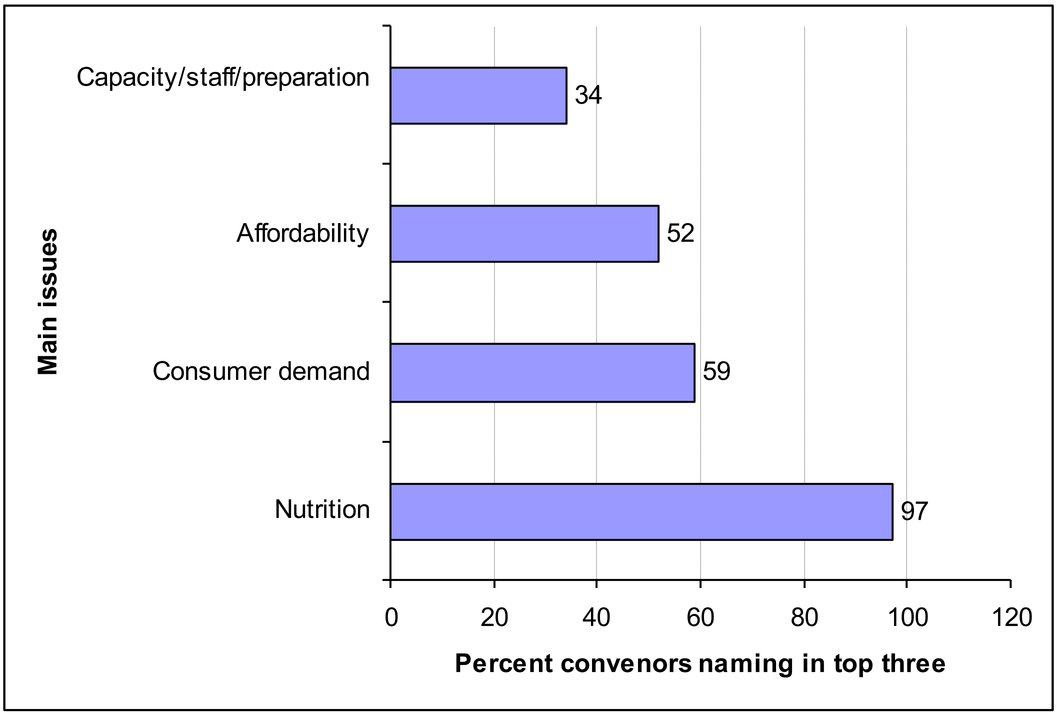
Written policy or procedure	Percent of total sample
Food safety	75
Workplace health and safety	73
Providing healthy food	63
Volunteers	63
Nuts/allergy	46
Pricing	40
Grievances or complaints	37
Staff training	35
Orientation	33

3.4 Food in the tuckshop

3.4.1 Planning tuckshop menus

Convenors were asked to name the top three factors they consider when designing the tuckshop menu. This question was unprompted, so convenors were required to consider their answers without any reference points. The main issues mentioned were grouped into the categories shown in Figure 5. Smart Choices and nutrition were considered to be in the top three most important considerations by more than 90% of the convenors. This is not surprising as the introduction of Smart Choices in the last two years has placed a strong emphasis on healthy food supply in tuckshops. Convenors were also keen to keep tuckshop items affordable for students (52% of tuckshops) and consider what foods students are likely to prefer (59%). The capacity of the tuckshop, number of staff and volunteers and ease of preparation were placed in the top three considerations by 34% of convenors. Other considerations mentioned by fewer than 7% of convenors included food available from suppliers and freshness, while 4% or fewer mentioned variability of equipment or storage available, food safety and hygiene, special dietary requirements and the profitability of food items.

Figure 5 Top three considerations when planning a menu



A similar question was asked of tuckshop convenors in 1998. As the 1998 survey was a paper survey, convenors were given a list of eight possible influences on planning their menu and asked to rank in order of priority. 'Nutrition principles' was ranked first by 44% of convenors and 'What sells' ranked first by 21%. In 1998, the third highest ranking influence was 'Food hygiene'. In comparing the 1998 and 2008 surveys, it can be seen that 'nutrition' and 'what sells' or 'consumer demand' are both high priorities, but food safely and hygiene are considered less important by convenors in 2008. Perhaps that is because the processes for food safety are now well embedded in the everyday planning and working of school tuckshops and are now not considered to be an issue. This is borne out by the fact that 75% of tuckshops with written policies now have a food safety policy (Section 3.3.2) and 53% of convenors have participated in food safety training in the last 3 years (Section 3.7.5).

Key Findings:

- Smart Choices and nutrition were considered to be in the top three most important considerations by more than 90% of the convenors.
- The affordability of food items, customer preferences and the capacity of the tuckshop to prepare items are also important factors in designing menus.
- Consumer demand is the second highest consideration in menu planning therefore is it important for convenors to understand motivators for purchase.

3.4.2 Implementation of Smart Choices

Almost all schools (93%) reported that they had implemented Smart Choices in the tuckshop (see Appendix 1 for description of Smart Choices). Government schools reported significantly higher compliance rates than non-government schools (98% vs. 77%). Implementation of Smart Choices is mandatory in state schools and although it is only recommended for non-state schools, these results show that most non-state schools have also implemented the strategy.

There were significant differences for school type, with primary schools reporting the highest compliance rates (97%) compared to secondary schools (88%) and combined primary and secondary schools (82%). However, when the data from only government schools was analysed, the significant differences relating to school type were no longer seen, with 99% of primary, 96% of combined primary/secondary and 97% of secondary schools reporting compliance. For non-government schools, significant differences remained between school types, with primary schools reporting the highest compliance rates (86% of tuckshops), followed by combined primary and secondary schools (75%), and then secondary schools (58%). This is at odds with the information in section 3.4.6 Assessment of Menus that found that allow schools had removed RED items from there menus, there was an over representation of AMBER foods.

Key finding:

- Virtually all government schools report compliance to Smart Choices. However, over half non-government schools also report compliance without it being mandatory.

3.4.3 Training

Convenors were asked if they felt they needed more training in providing healthy food choices and 29% of convenors indicated that they would like more training on this topic. Those convenors who reported needing training were then asked to nominate their preferred delivery methods of training. Responses are shown in Table 5. It can be seen that the most popular training formats were workshops or seminars, closely followed by regular newsletters. The least popular were on-line or web based but it is interesting to note that 15% of convenors did choose web based training as their first preference. This percentage may increase as computers become a more common tool for use by convenors for other purposes. This percentage was consistent with the percentage of convenors with access to a computer connected to the internet in Table 10.Equipment in Tuckshops.

Table 5 Delivery methods of training ranked as first choice by convenors (n=145)

Type of training	Percent of convenors
Workshops/seminars/presentations	34%
Information in regular newsletters	31%
Printed training manuals and fact sheets	20%
On line/web based	15%

3.4.4 Best selling items

The ultimate goal of nutrition interventions in school tuckshops is not just the offering of healthy food and beverage choices but their acceptance and purchase by children. To gauge the consumer demand for healthy choices, tuckshop convenors were asked (without prompting) to nominate their three best selling main meals, snacks and drinks. Items were then classified as ‘GREEN’, ‘AMBER’ or ‘RED’ using the Smart Choices strategy documents (see Appendix 1). Some items are marked GREEN/AMBER as there was insufficient information on the menu to determine if they were GREEN or AMBER.

A wide variety of foods were nominated. In Tables 6, 7 and 8, these foods and drinks are listed together with their nutrition category using *Smart Choices: Healthy Food and Drink Strategies for Queensland Schools* as a guide (See Appendix 1). For some best selling items, for example pies, pizzas and sandwiches, there were significant differences in the popularity of the item in the different types of school.

It is encouraging to see that the most popular main meals consisted of mainly nutritious foods that can be categorised as GREEN under the *Smart Choices Strategy or contain green recipe items.* Burgers and wraps were the most popular main meals in all types of schools. Sandwiches and rolls were also popular, with rolls being more popular in high schools. Pies were still best sellers in a large percentage of schools and pizzas and were more popular in primary schools.

Table 6 Percentage of tuckshops naming various meal items as one of their three "Best Sellers"

Food item	All tuckshops	Primary Schools	Combined Schools	Secondary Schools	"Smart Choices" Category
All burgers+	41	37	38	47	GREEN/AMBER
Wraps	31	27	32	40	GREEN
Pies*	25	27	12	20	AMBER
Pizza*	21	24	22	13	AMBER/GREEN
Sandwiches*	21	21	15	24	GREEN
Roll eg chicken and gravy/salad*	19	14	20	33	GREEN
Chicken nuggets*	18	26	11	2	AMBER
Hot dogs*	17	20	18	7	AMBER
Toasted sandwiches*	14	17	12	5	GREEN
Pasta dishes*	12	7	20	21	GREEN/ AMBER
Salad	13	10	19	15	GREEN
Lasagne*	13	17	8	5	AMBER
Chicken strips/sticks/kebab/sub/chips	13	11	12	12	GREEN/AMBER
Sausage rolls	8	9	8	5	AMBER
Rice dishes*	7	4	12	11	GREEN/AMBER
Sushi*	3	1	11	5	GREEN
Potato wedges/hash brown/jacket potatoes	3	3	3	2	AMBER
Spaghetti bolognaise/meatballs	2	1	3	5	AMBER/GREEN
Kebabs	2	1	5	4	GREEN
Nachos/tacos/burritos/other Mexican	2	2	3	3	AMBER/GREEN

*significant differences in preference distribution between school types using chi squared test
+ Includes chicken/steak/fish/bacon/egg burgers

Table 7 shows that there is a wide variety of snacks named as best sellers with potato chips (most likely packets of potato crisps) and iceblocks topping the list. Both these snacks are more popular in high schools while popcorn is more popular in primary schools. The most popular snacks are in the AMBER category but fresh fruit/fruit salad is one of the three best sellers in approximately 25% of all schools. A few RED foods have also been nominated as the most popular snacks. This result indicates that increasing the popularity of healthy snacks in tuckshops is an area that requires further work.

Table 7 Percentage of tuckshops naming various snack items as one of their three “Best Sellers”

Food item	All tuckshops	Primary Schools	Combined Schools	Secondary Schools	“Smart Choices” category
Chips/potato gems/potato smiles* #	53	44	64	69	AMBER
Iceblocks*	35	32	31	46	AMBER
Cakes/biscuits/iced cakes	32	32	38	30	AMBER/RED
Fresh fruit/fruit cup/fruit salad	23	24	21	23	GREEN
Muffins	21	24	20	15	AMBER
Yoghurt	15	15	16	16	GREEN/AMBER
Popcorn*	14	19	11	1	GREEN
Sultanas/dried fruit	3	3	6	4	GREEN
Cracker biscuits with dip	9	10	8	6	AMBER
Jelly/jelly cups/custard*	7	9	4	2	RED/AMBER/
Fruit bars	4	5	4	2	AMBER
Noodles/*JJ noodles*	4	5	1	2	AMBER
Slush Puppies/Slushies	3	3	0	4	AMBER
Cheese sticks/cheese and crackers	3	4	4	0	AMBER
Ovalteenies	3	4	2	5	RED
Ice creams	3	3	4	5	AMBER
Pikelet/pancake	3	5	4	0	AMBER
Pretzels*	3	2	0	6	AMBER
Apple slinkies	2	3	1	0	GREEN
Hello Panda	2	2	1	1	RED
Rice crackers/rice cakes	2	3	1	0	GREEN /AMBER
Eucalyptus /fruit/yoghurt lollies	2	2	1	4	RED
Nutella	2	2	3	3	RED
JJs	2	2	1	1	AMBER/RED
Jumpies	2				AMBER/RED
Muesli Bar/yoghurt bar	1	1	0	1	AMBER/RED
Cob of corn	1	1	0	0	GREEN
Vegetables	1	1	0	0	GREEN
Garlic bread	1	2	0	0	AMBER
Chocolate mousse	1	1	1	2	RED
Chocolate	1	1	3	2	RED
Don’t have snacks	1	2	0	1	N/A

*significant differences in preference distribution between school types using chi squared test ($p<0.05$)
Includes packets of potato crisps/chips and hot chips

Table 8 Percentage of tuckshops naming various beverages as one of their three "Best Sellers"

Drink item	**Named as best sellers (%)**	**Category**
Flavoured milk	88	GREEN/AMBER
100% fruit juice	76	AMBER
Plain water	42.6	GREEN
Flavoured water	27.6	AMBER
Shaved ice	17	AMBER
Fruit juice/poppers	4.4	AMBER
Play/Quench etc	4.4	AMBER
Plain milk	4.4	GREEN/AMBER
Fuze	2.6	AMBER
Iced tea	2.6	AMBER/RED
Sports drinks	1.8	RED
Soft drinks	2.2	RED
Smoothies	1	AMBER/GREEN

As shown in Table 8, the most commonly reported in the list of best selling beverages were from the GREEN and AMBER categories. Flavoured milk is the most popular drink sold at tuckshops but it is not possible to tell from this data whether the milk was in the GREEN category (Reduced fat) or AMBER. Soft drinks and sports drinks (RED category) are listed as the most popular drink in only a very few tuckshops.

Key Findings:

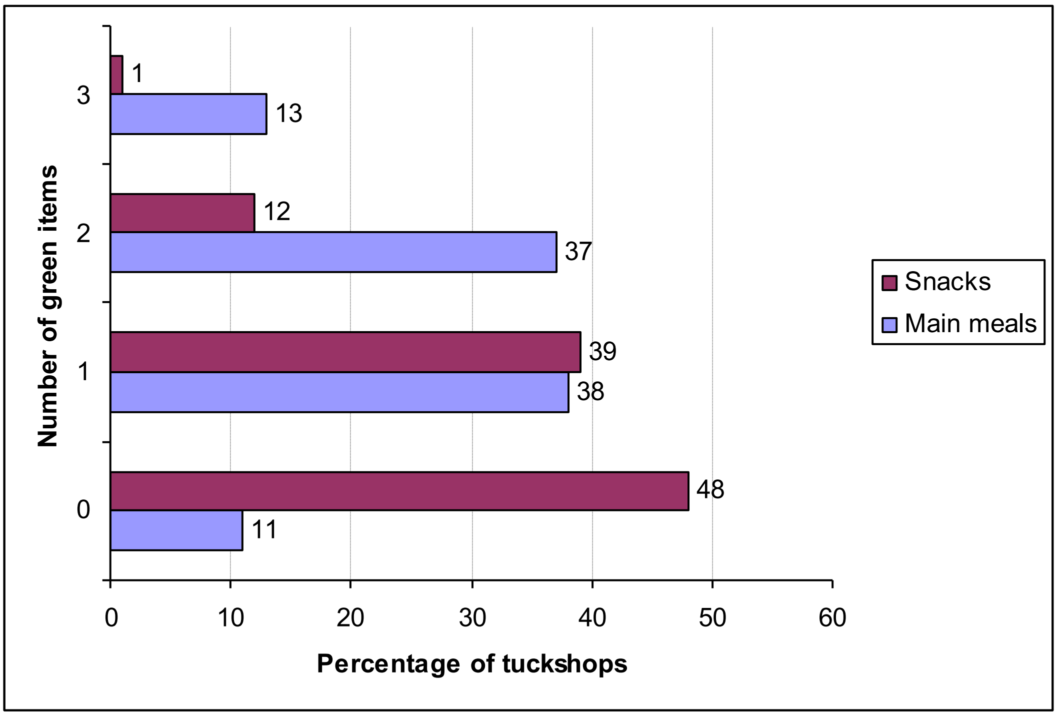
- There is a good range of popular healthy main meals available to school students but this is not so for snacks.
- The most popular beverages sold in tuckshops are healthy options from the *Smart Choices* GREEN and AMBER categories.
- A large proportion of popular snack foods fit into the AMBER category.

3.4.5 Rating of best selling items per tuckshop

Responses were also rated by the number of GREEN items nominated in the list of three best sellers, yielding a score from zero to three for each tuckshop. Figure 6 shows the percentage of school tuckshops where the number of GREEN items in the top three best sellers were rated as a zero, one, two or three for main meals and snacks. Only 1% of tuckshops had three best selling GREEN snacks and almost half (48%) had no GREEN best selling snacks. Main meals do better with only 11% of tuckshops reporting no GREEN items in their top three best sellers but 13% having three GREEN best sellers. It is clear that there is a good range of popular healthy main meals available to school students but this is not so for snacks.

There was no significant association between the number of GREEN main meal items listed as one of the top three sellers and the number of GREEN snack items in this category.

Figure 6 Percentage of tuckshop nominating GREEN items within their list of three best sellers for main meals and snacks

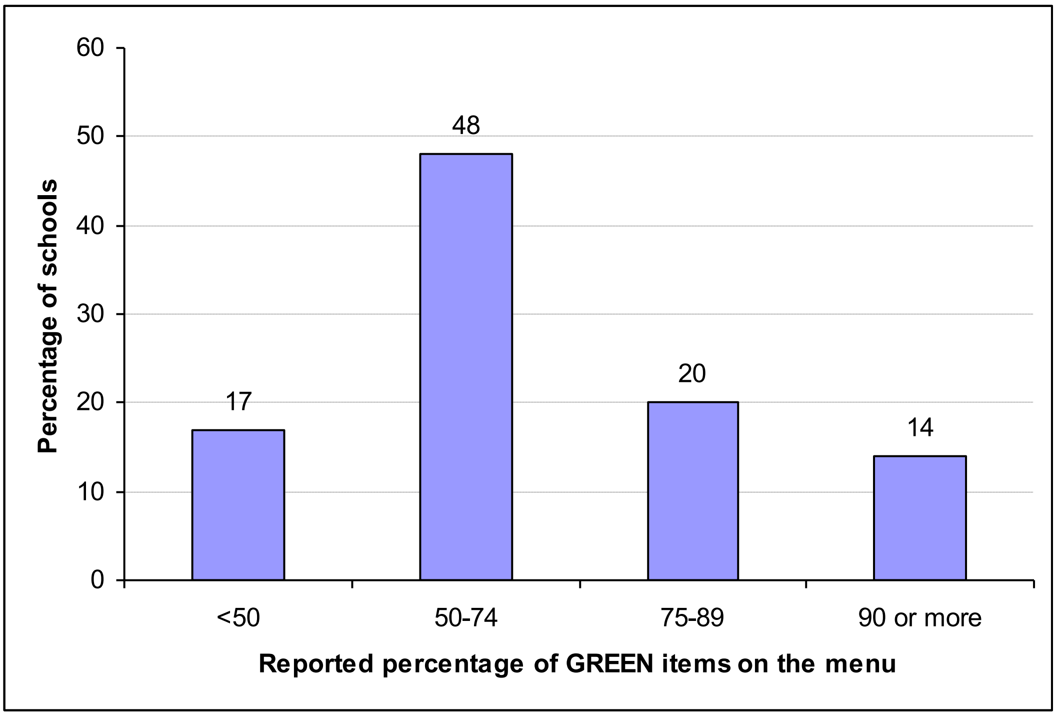


3.4.6 Assessment of Menus

Reported percentage of GREEN items on the tuckshop menu

As part of the CATI survey, tuckshop convenors were asked to estimate the approximate percentage of GREEN items on their school tuckshop menu using the categories from Smart Choices. Figure 7 shows that 83% of convenors reported that their menu contained more than 50% GREEN items, with 14% indicating that their menu consisted of 90% or more GREEN items.

Figure 7 Convenors' assessment of the percentage of GREEN items on their menu



Percentage of GREEN items actually on the tuckshop menu
In the letter introducing the survey, school tuckshops were asked to fax their current menus to QAST. Menus were received from 133 of the 500 schools that responded to the CATI survey and 223 schools in total. These menus were assessed using the Menu Assessment Tool (MAT) guidelines developed by QAST for this purpose (Appendix 5).

From the MAT (n = 223) it can be seen (Figure 8) that only 13% of tuckshops that provided menus actually had more than 50% of GREEN items on their menu. This figure was only 9% for the tuckshops included in the CATI survey (n = 133). There is quite a discrepancy between this result and the convenors' own assessment of the percent of GREEN items on their menus reported earlier, where 83% of convenors reported more than 50% of GREEN items on their menu. This finding indicates that convenors have an inflated estimate of the healthiness of their menus. This may lead to a lack of motivation to invest more resources on improving the nutritional standard of their menu and to attend further training on Smart Choices.

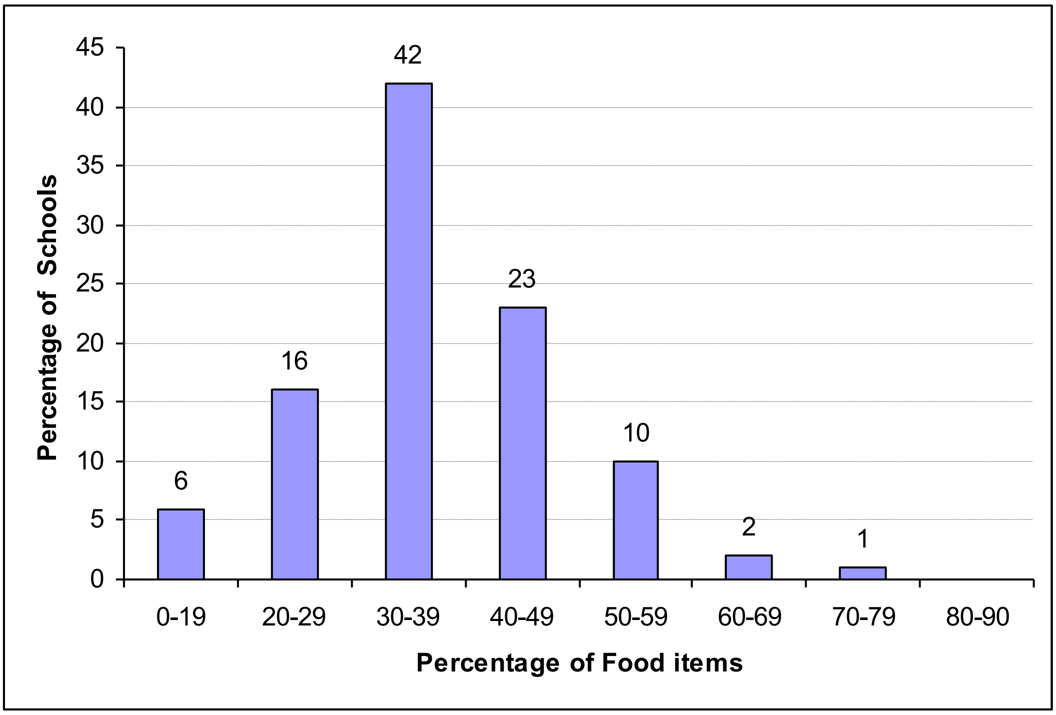
Red Menu Items
Twenty-six percentage of tuckshops that supplied a menu and responded to the CATI survey (n = 133) had at least one RED item on their menu. Of these, 63% were state primary schools and the others non-state schools. No state high schools reported RED items on their menus. Of the menus that showed RED items, 50% had only one RED item. As Figure 8 shows, only 36% of tuckshops had over 40% GREEN items on their menu. Since the percentage of RED is small, this indicates that AMBER items dominate the vast proportion of tuckshop menus.

Other Findings
Having a higher percentage of GREEN items (i.e. >40%) was not associated with the time spent as a tuckshop convenor, whether the school was a primary, secondary or combined school, the presence of a nutrition policy or the level of profit made. A greater percentage of QAST members had more than 40% of GREEN items on their menu compared to non-members but this was not statistically significant (36% vs. 26%).

A trend was seen for tuckshops with a greater percentage of GREEN items on the menu to have more GREEN items reported as best selling meals and snacks. This result was significant when both meals and snacks were considered together, with only 26% of tuckshops with tuckshops with less than 40% GREEN items having more than two items listed in their best selling meals and snacks compared to 43% of tuckshops with more than 40% GREEN items ($p<0.05$). The more green items on the menu the more likely the green items are to sell.

The reported implementation of Smart Choices was not associated with a greater percentage of GREEN items on the menu. It is likely that this is because the focus of Smart Choices so far has been on the removal of RED items from the menu, not the promotion of GREEN items over AMBER choices. This also relates to the finding that attendance at recent nutrition training was not associated with a higher percentage of GREEN items on the menu when compared to tuckshops where no training had taken place.

Figure 8 Percentage of GREEN food items assessed using the MAT (n = 223)



Number of menu items

The MAT also recorded the total number of menu items on each menu (See Appendix 5). The number of items per menu ranged from nine to 137 with an average of 54 items.

There was an inverse relationship between the total number of items on the menu and the percentage of GREEN items offered. For example, a significantly greater proportion of menus with 50% or more GREEN items was found for menus with a total of less than 40 items compared to those with over 70 items (19% of tuckshops vs. 5%).

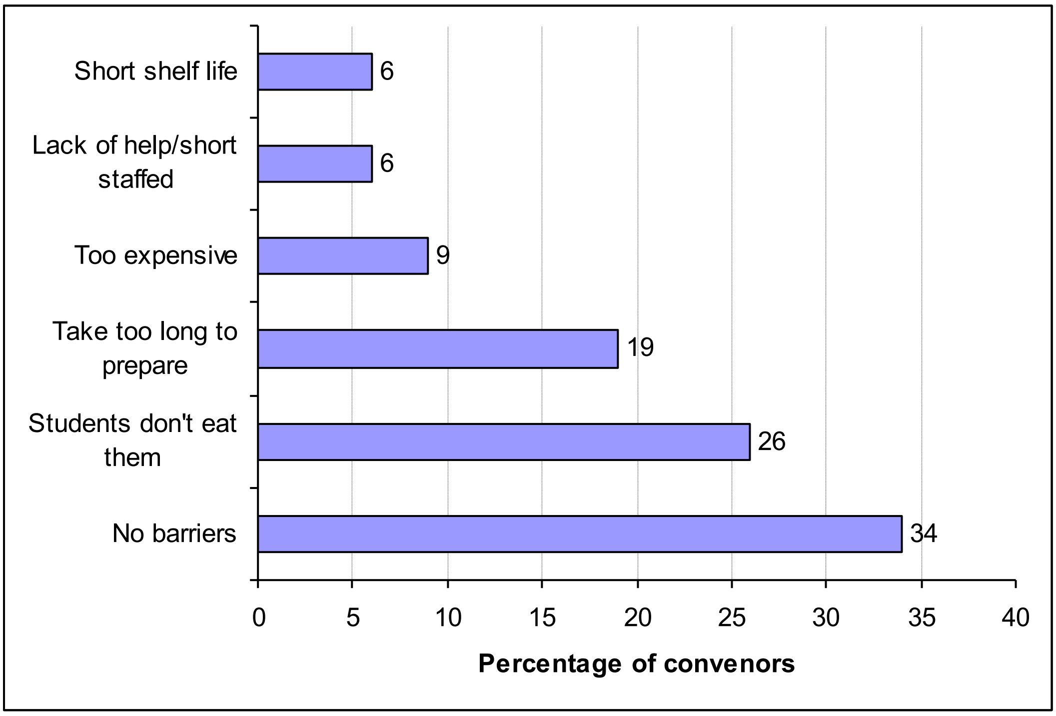
Key Findings:

- *Smart Choices* has almost eliminated RED foods from tuckshop menus. However, AMBER foods still dominate the menu even though there is a perception by tuckshop convenors that GREEN foods dominate.
- Having a menu with a greater percentage of GREEN items is associated with a greater likelihood that GREEN items will be best sellers
- There was an inverse relationship between the total number of items on the menu and the percentage of GREEN items offered; suggesting a simple way to improve the quality of the menu is to reduce the number of items on the menu whilst maintaining the GREEN options.
- Non-government schools have menus with a lower percentage of GREEN items on their menu and further work with these schools is warranted.

3.4.7 Barriers to providing salad or cooked vegetables on the menu

When tuckshop convenors were asked if they intentionally included salads or cooked vegetables in main meal choices, almost all (96%) reported that they did so. When asked, unprompted, for the main barriers to providing salad or cooked vegetables on the menu, 34% of respondents said there were no barriers. The main reasons given as barriers can be seen in Figure 9, with the fact that students don't eat them being perceived as the most common barrier.

Figure 9 Barriers to providing salad or cooked vegetables



3.5 Financial issues

Tuckshops were asked to provide their turnover and profit figures. Figure 10 shows the profit and loss figures for the 259 tuckshops that provided data either by faxing in their details or over the phone in the CATI survey.

Figure 10 Profit and loss figures for Queensland tuckshops for 2007(n=259)

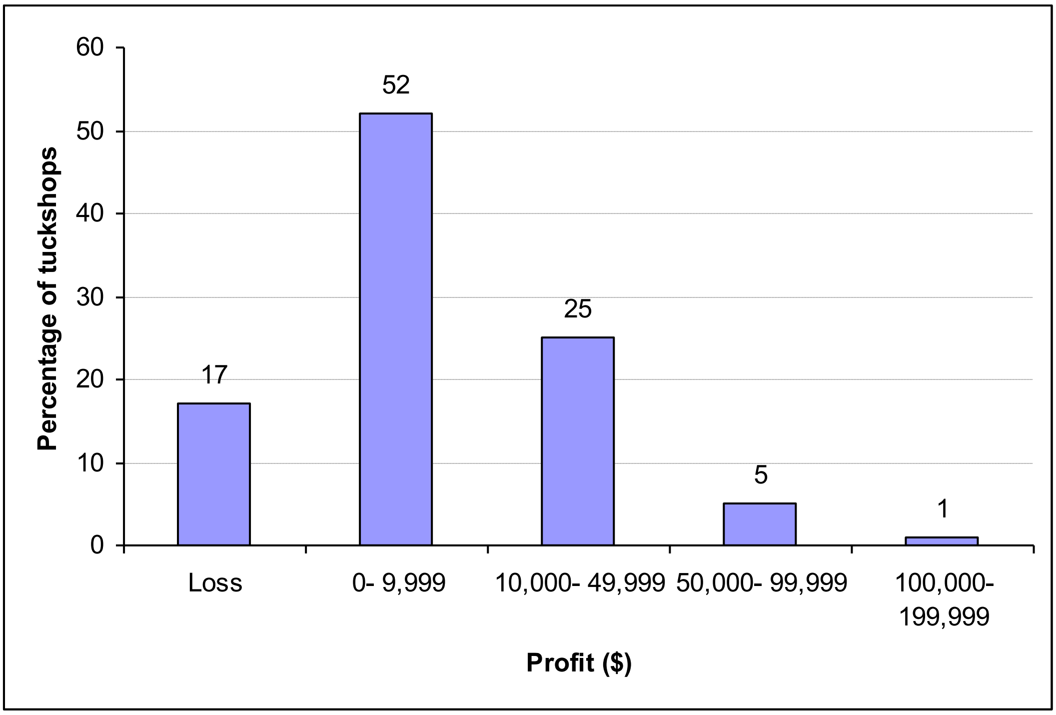


Table 9 Annual sales figures and profit for tuckshops providing financial information for 2007

Statistic	Sales in 2007 ($) (n=253)	Profit in 2007 ($) (n=259)
Mean	$103,254 (+/- $113310)	$11,082 (+/- $20,590)
Range	$80 - $590,612	-$25,595 – $123,437

Sales and profit data are shown in Table 9. From the tuckshops where sales figures were provided (n=253), 31% had a turnover of more than $100,000 with 16% exceeding $200,000 for the year. These figures have increased from those reported in 1998 where 14% also had sales of greater than $100,000 and 3% had sales of greater than $200,000. There was a very wide range of both sales and profit/loss across Queensland tuckshops. If the mean sales figure is multiplied by the total number of schools that provide food (n=1457) the estimated total sales figure for schools tuckshops in Queensland is more than $154 million per annum based on 2007 figures. This has increased from an estimated value of $95 million in 1998. Taking inflation into account this $95 million converts to $124 million in 2007 terms. This indicates that the sales figures for tuckshops have increased by $30 million (24% increase) over the last ten years in real terms and that currently tuckshops are an even greater contributor to the state economy than they were in 1998.

The average profit for 2007 was $11,082 compared to $8,774 found in the *1998 QAST Survey*. When the 1998 figure is translated into 2007 dollars, this equates to $11,406. Thus profit levels per tuckshop have remained approximately the same despite a real growth in turnover. This indicates a decrease in percentage profit over time and may be due to a reticence to raise prices in step with increasing overheads in order to maintain affordability.

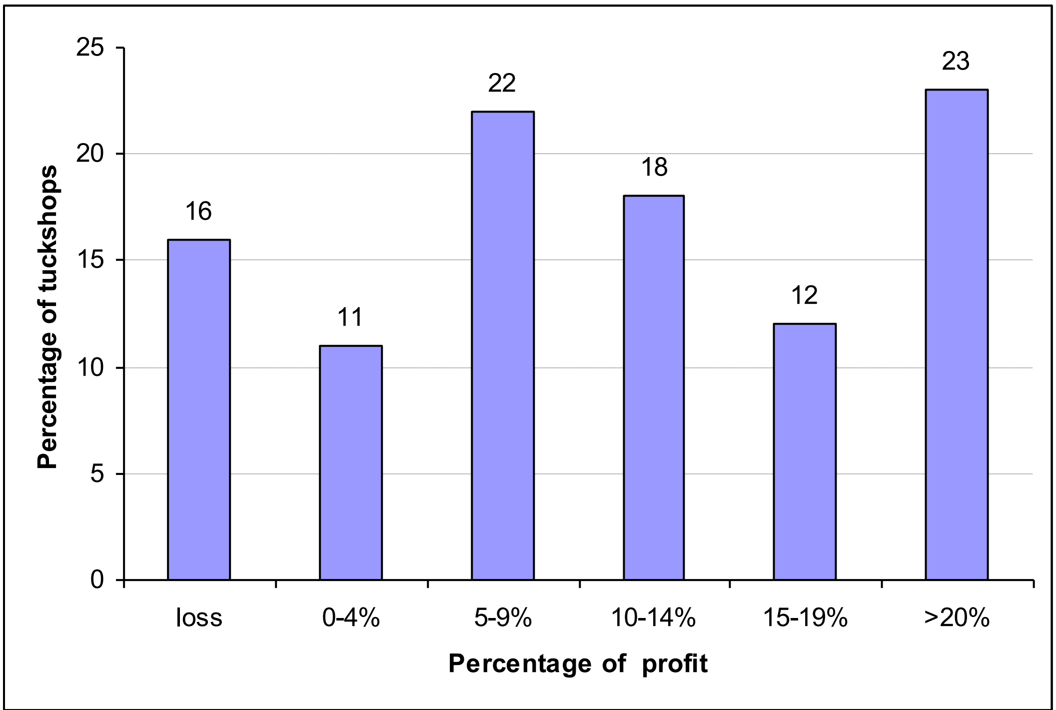
If the profit figures are similarly extrapolated for the state using the average profit gained from this survey, the result is a total profit of $16.1 million dollars.

Seventeen percent of tuckshops made a loss. Although this is a relatively small percentage, lack of profitability of a tuckshop is likely to lead to its closure or to the dismissal of tuckshop staff. It also results in the need for parent bodies or schools to subsidise the enterprise, using funds raised by other means.

Analysis done on the data received from convenors that responded to the CATI survey (n=133) indicated a significant positive correlation between profit and student number (p=0.01). There were also significant differences between profit levels for different school types with primary schools having a mean profit of $5,320 (range: -$9,547 - $46,440), $33,852 for secondary schools (range: -$6,743 - $44,000), and $9,246 for combined primary and secondary schools (range: -$11,231 - $123,437). There was no relationship between profit when government and non-government schools were compared. No associations were found between percentage profit and school type or size. The stated importance of making a profit was not associated with differences in total or percentage profit.

QAST membership was significantly associated with profit levels, with 49% of QAST members achieving over $10,000 profit compared to 21% of non-QAST members.

Figure 11 Loss and percentage profit for 2007 (n= 236)



Some tuckshops did not provide all the data requested and only provided turnover or profit or loss data so it was not possible to report a percentage profit on all tuckshops that sent in financial data. Figure 11 illustrates that there is a wide range of outcomes for tuckshops from a loss for 16% of the tuckshops that sent in financial data to more than 20% profit for 23% of tuckshops. The mean percent profit was approximately 10%. This is significantly lower than the figure found in the *1998 QAST Survey* of 14%.

Key findings:

- The vast majority of Queensland school tuckshops are profitable (83%).
- Profit is associated with the size of the school, with high schools making significantly higher profits than primary schools.
- QAST membership is associated with higher profit levels.
- Queensland tuckshops have estimated total sales of $154 million per annum based on 2007 figures and this figure has increased in real terms since the 1998 QAST Survey.
- Queensland tuckshops make an estimated profit of $16.1 million per annum. The average profit per tuckshop is $11,082 and profits levels per school have remained stable since the *1998 QAST Survey*.
- The mean percentage profit was10%. The percentage profit has significantly decreased since 1998 from 14%.

3.6 Tuckshop facilities

3.6.1 Comparison of 2008 with 1998 data

In the 2008 survey, convenors were asked if they had the following equipment in their tuckshop. Where a similar item was on the list in 1998, the percent of tuckshops that had that particular piece of equipment is also shown in the Table 6. The table indicates that facilities have generally improved in tuckshops.

The most common appliances in tuckshops in 2008 were a microwave (99.8%), pie warmer (96.4%), sandwich press (93.6%), oven (91.6%), and hotplates (90.4%). The next group of common appliances were coloured chopping boards (73%), electric frypan / wok (60.6%), toaster (54.2%) and food processor (53.6%). As these questions were not asked in 1998 the results can not be compared, however it is fair to say that this data shows that most tuckshops have adequate cooking appliances and that many have very good access to the appliances required to prepare foods on site.

Although, at first glance, the table may imply that adequacy of fridge and freezer space may have decreased in the decade between surveys, this is not so. The wording of the questions about fridge and freezer space was changed slightly in the 2008 survey to provide a different outcome. In 1998, convenors were asked it they had a fridge and if they had access to a freezer, while in 2008 they were asked if they had **adequate** fridge space and **adequate** freezer space. In 1998, almost all tuckshops had a fridge and access to a freezer (98%) but in 2008, 94% of convenors reported that they have adequate fridge space and 96% have adequate freezer space.

It is interesting to note that the equipment used in relation to Food Safety has increased in prevalence. The ownership of thermometers/ temperature gauges has increased from 25% in 1998 to 81% currently. There has also been an increase in gloves and aprons since the 1998 survey.

Facilities generally have improved with 96% of tuckshops having adequate preparation surfaces in 2008. Double sinks and hand washing sinks have both increased since the previous survey from 76% to 89% for double sinks and from 30% to 90% for separate hand washing sinks. This could be explained by some refurbishment work in tuckshops since the previous survey.

In terms of storage space, there has been a slight increase with the most dramatic change being the prevalence of a cold room which has jumped from 5% in 1998 to 23% currently.

It is heartening to see that the workplace health and safety in schools has continued into the tuckshops as most (92%) tuckshops have a displayed evacuation plan, and nearly all (99%) have a fire extinguisher and 85% have a first aid kit. These questions were not asked in the 1998 survey.

An office area now appears in 44% of tuckshops in 2008 as compared with 14% in 1998, 16% now have access to the internet in the tuckshop and personal lockers has remained about the same at 18%. Air conditioning and fans have greatly increased with air conditioning increasing by 75% and fans by 87% since the 1998 survey.

Key Finding

- The most common appliances in tuckshops in 2008 are microwaves (100%), pie warmers (96%), sandwich presses (94%), ovens (92%), and hotplates (90%).
- This survey has found that most tuckshops have adequate cooking appliances and that many have very good access to the appliances required to prepare foods on site.

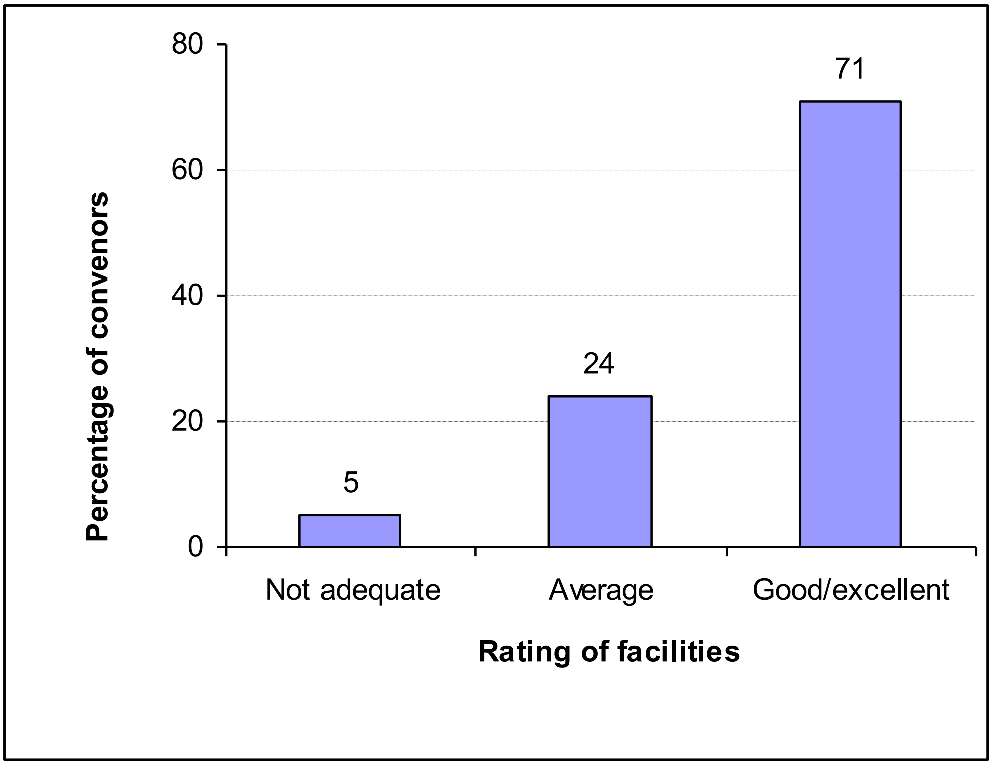
Table 10 Equipment in tuckshops

Item	Percentage of tuckshops (2008)	Percentage of tuckshops (1998)
Equipment related to food hygiene		
Thermometers/temperature gauges	81.2	25.4
Aprons	91.4	84.8 (combined with gloves)
Gloves	97.2	84.8 (combined with aprons)
Hats/caps	31.4	Not available
Suitable surfaces for food preparation	96	Not available
Water access	99.6	93.7
Double sink	88.6	76.4
Separate handwashing sink	90.4	29.8
Dishwasher	13	Not available
Fly screens	79.4	71.2
Equipment related to food storage		
Adequate storage for dried goods	96.4	93.2
Adequate fridge space	94.2	98.2 (have a fridge)
Adequate freezer space	96.2	98.2 (freezer access)
A cold room	22.8	5
Glass display cabinets	42	30.9
Equipment related to occupational health and safety		
Displayed evacuation plan	92.2	64.9
Fire extinguisher	99	86.9
First aid kit	85.4	Not available
Equipment related to staff wellbeing and efficiency		
An office area	43.6	14.7
Computer with internet access	16.2	Not available
Air conditioning	56.6	14.4
Ceiling or wall mounted fans	65	8.2
Lockers for personal belongings	18.2	17
Appliances		
Blender	47.4	Not available
Oven	91.6	Not available
Deep fryer	12	Not available
Food processor	53.6	Not available
Hotplates	90.4	Not available
Microwave	99.8	Not available
Pie warmer	96.4	Not available
Sandwich press	93.6	Not available
Toaster	54.2	Not available
Electric fry pan/wok	60.6	Not available
Shaved ice machine	16.8	Not available
Coloured chopping boards	73	Not available

3.6.2 Rating of facilities

Convenors were asked to rate their tuckshop facilities from 'not adequate' to 'excellent'. The responses have been collapsed into three categories and Figure 12 shows that although most convenors (71%) rate their facilities as 'good' or 'excellent', there are still approximately 30% that are seen to be only 'average' or 'not adequate'.

Figure 12 Convenors' rating of tuckshop facilities



Maintenance of facilities
Only 31% of tuckshop convenors reported that they have a budget for maintenance or replacement of equipment and facilities. However, 33% percent have applied for a grant for facilities or equipment in the last three years and it is heartening to know that 86% of these grant applications were successful. There were also still 6% pending where the outcome was still unknown. This indicates that if schools do apply for a grant for maintenance or replacement of tuckshop facilities or equipment, they have a high chance of being successful.

There have been a variety of grants available in the last few years for tuckshops wishing to upgrade their facilities. Most of these grants are not specific to tuckshops. It is disappointing that only 33% of schools have applied for these grants in relation to the tuckshop. There are many other sectors of the school that vie for the opportunity to apply for these grants and it appears that tuckshops may not be the first priority. QAST need to continue to market the grants availability and the success rate in relation to facility upgrades. At the same time, it is good business practice to put aside funding for maintenance of facilities and appliances and not rely solely on ad hoc government funding.

3.7 Tuckshop staff

3.7.1 Number of paid and volunteer staff and their workload

Paid staff

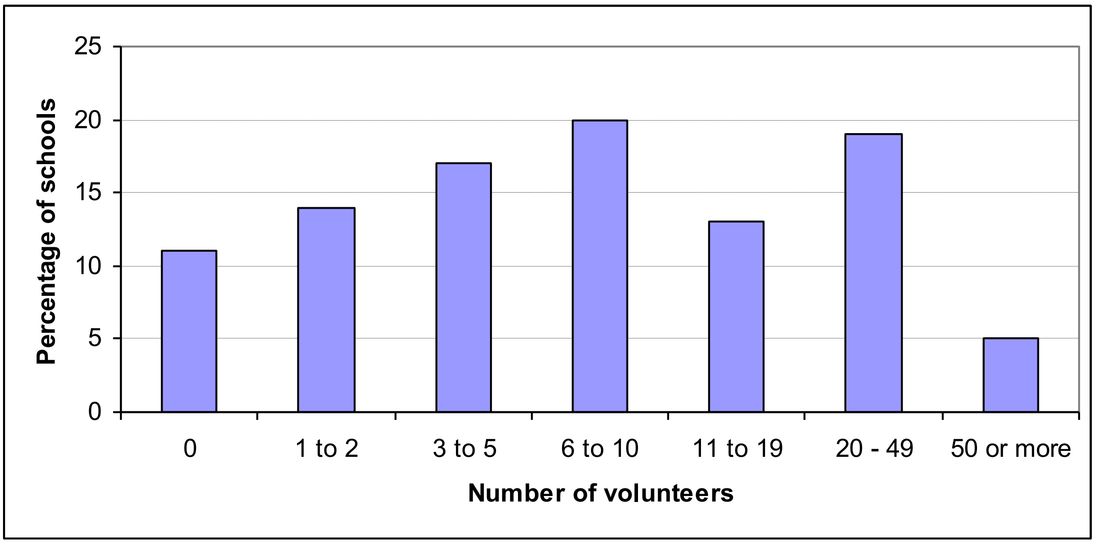
Around three quarters of responding tuckshops (73%) had one convenor, with 21% having two. The average number of paid convenor hours per tuckshop per week was 24.4, with a range of 0 – 122 hours. This figure has increased since the *1998 QAST Survey* from an average of 20 hours. Seventeen percent of tuckshops had an unpaid convenor. The average number of voluntary hours per week per tuckshop by paid convenors was seven hours, with a range of 0 – 50 hours. This figure is identical to that found in 1998. The majority of tuckshops (66%) did not have additional paid staff.

Volunteers

The average total number of volunteers at each tuckshop was 15. The mean number of volunteer hours per week per tuckshop was 25 hours. When this figure is extrapolated to the 1457 schools that sell food, this equates to a total of 1,457,000 hours per year for Queensland. Even at the Queensland minimum pay rate of $14.50 per hour, this approximates to $21M of unpaid work.

The profile of volunteering has changed since the 1998 QAST Survey when the average number of volunteers was 10, working an average of 15 hours per week each, with a decrease in the average total voluntary hours per tuckshop of 125 hours per week.

Figure 13 Number of volunteers



Key findings:

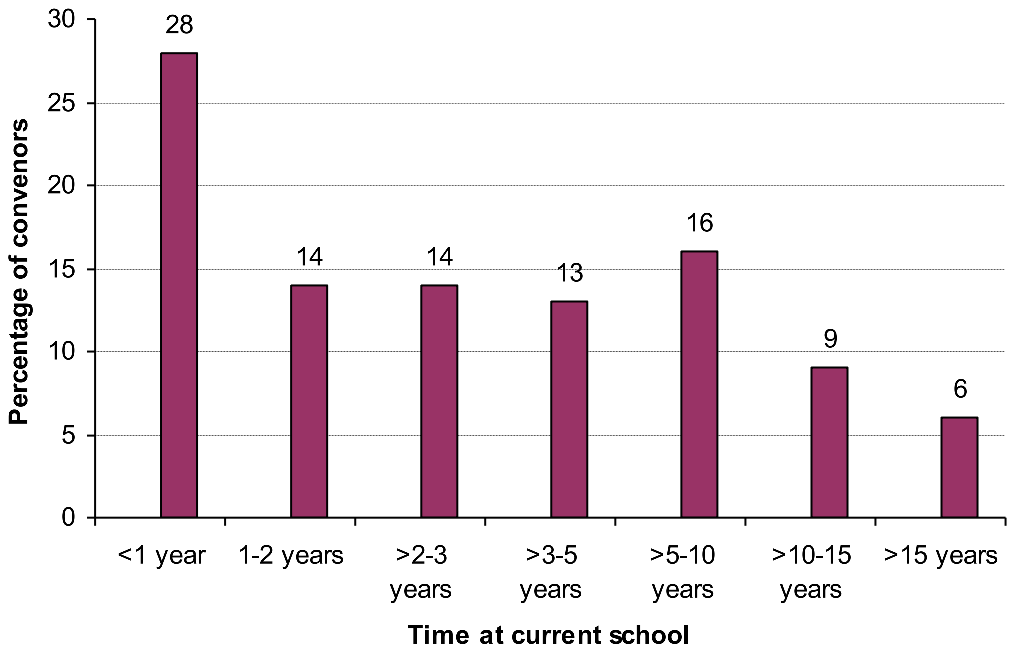
- Although the vast majority of tuckshops have a paid convenor, 17% of convenors are volunteers
- A voluntary component of seven hours per week is donated by the average tuckshop convenor. This has implications in regard to actual pay rates and employment contracts
- Queensland tuckshops rely on volunteers with the average tuckshop having 15 volunteers.
- The total of number of volunteer hours per tuckshop has decreased from 150 hours per week in 1998 to 25 hours per week.
- An estimated total for Queensland of 1,457,000 hours per year is provided by volunteers. Even at a pay rate of $14.5 per hour, this approximates to $21M of unpaid work.

3.7.2 Time as convenor at this school and at any school

Figure 14 shows that more than a quarter of convenors have been in their position for less than one year.

Most have been in their position for between one and three years, and 44% of convenors have been at their current school for more that three years. Some convenors are long time employees and 9% have been in their position for 10 to 15 years while 6% have been there for more than 15 years.

Figure 14 Time as convenor at current school



Key Finding

- More than a quarter of convenors have been in their position for less that one year.

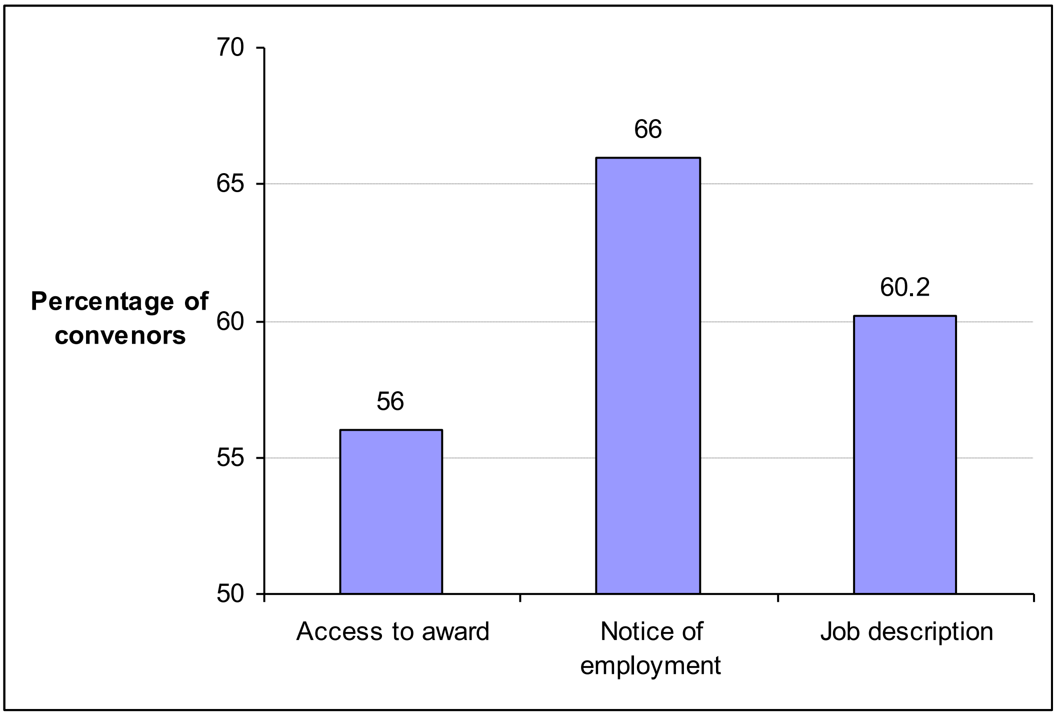
3.7.3 Employment documentation

Figure: 15 shows that 56% of convenors reported that they have access to the award that covers their working conditions and pay located in the tuckshop. Sixty-six percent of convenors and other paid staff reported having a written letter of appointment or an employment agreement, with 91% of this group having a a job description (ie 60% of total survey participants). Ideally convenors should have access to all three of these documents. The job description should include reference to award documents.

Quote from a tuckshop convenor:

“But (we) should be part of a body like the teachers. We provide a service to the school. Without us, the kids who are dropped off at six o’clock in the morning would not get their breakfast. They would not survive without us.”

Figure 15 Employment documentation

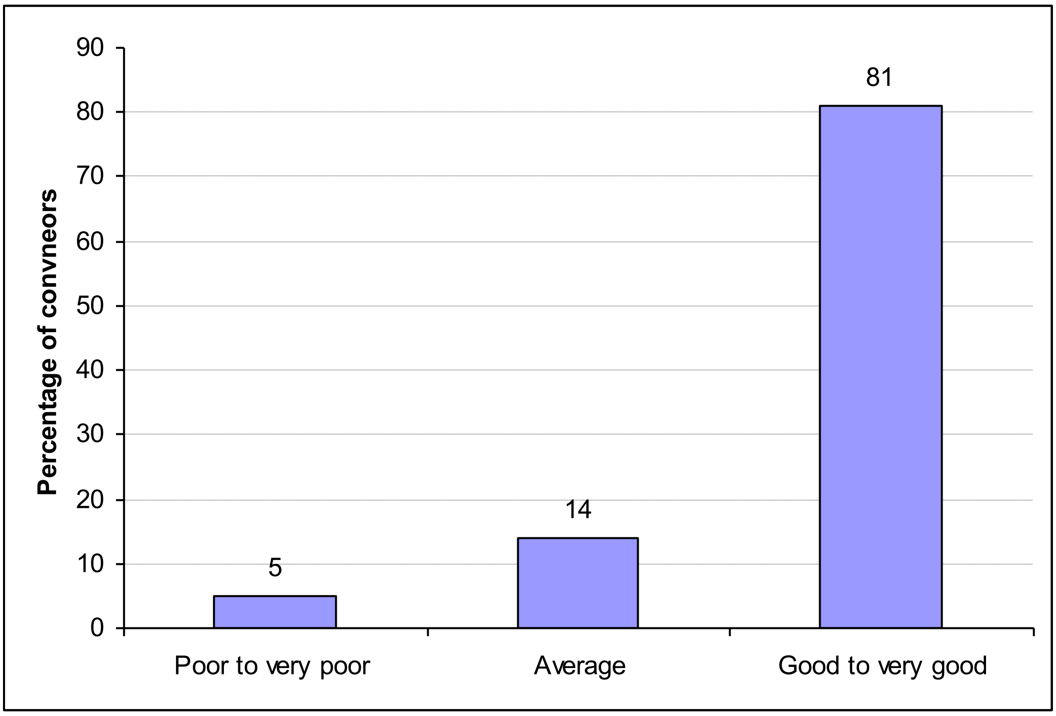


3.7.4 Satisfaction with employment conditions

It can be seen from Figure 16 below that a large proportion of convenors rate their employment conditions as ‘Good’ or ‘Very Good’. Only 5% rate their conditions as ‘Poor’ or ‘Very poor’. Again it must be taken into account that only staff who are happy with their employment conditions are retained in the industry. Another recognised indicator of employment satisfaction is retention rates. Figure 14 shows that 42% of tuckshop convenors surveyed had been employed for two year or less. This figure indicates an extremely high turnover of staff.

It should be considered that satisfaction with working conditions by survey participants does not necessarily mean that work conditions are of an acceptable industry standard. Low expectations and lack of education regarding appropriate conditions may colour this response. It also needs to be appreciated that those who are unhappy with workings conditions voluntarily (or involuntarily) exit the industry and that only those who are willing to accept the existing conditions accept employment in the first place.

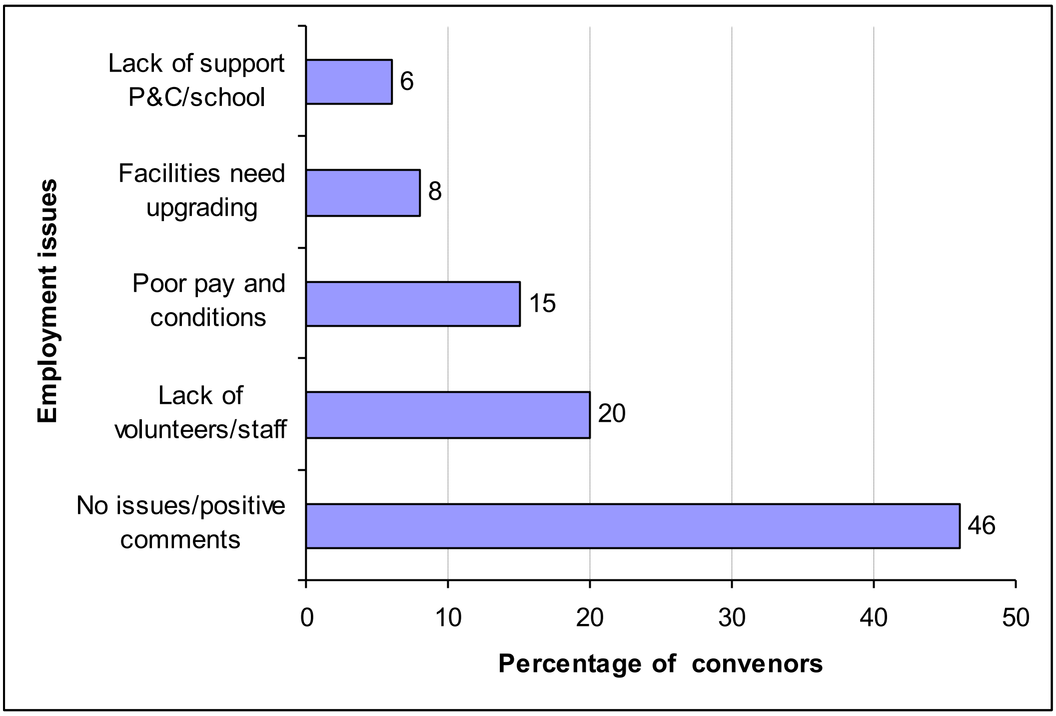
Figure 16 Assessment of employment conditions by tuckshop convenor



After rating their employment conditions, convenors were asked an open ended question about the main issues around employment conditions. Figure 17 shows that 46% reported no issues or made positive comments about their employment conditions. The biggest issue for 20% of convenors was the lack of volunteers or additional paid staff. Poor pay and conditions, the state of the tuckshop facilities and the lack of support from the P&C and the school staff were also issues for some convenors.

The current award for tuckshop convenors is $16.08 per hour. This is an equivalent pay to level 1 shop assistant. When the responsibilities of managing a voluntary workforce, managing stock, food preparation, handing money and associated documentation are considered, the pay is patently inadequate.

Figure 17 Employment issues



Quote from a tuckshop convenor:

"The pay. We have huge responsibilities for little pay. There is a lack of understanding from the administration of what goes on - what is actually done. Lack of appreciation for the work we do at the school and a lot of it is unpaid. Taken for granted."

3.7.5 Experience, networking and training

Only 49% of convenors reported receiving orientation and/or training when they first started as convenor, indicating that there is a need for an employer resource to provide basic orientation for convenors and volunteers.

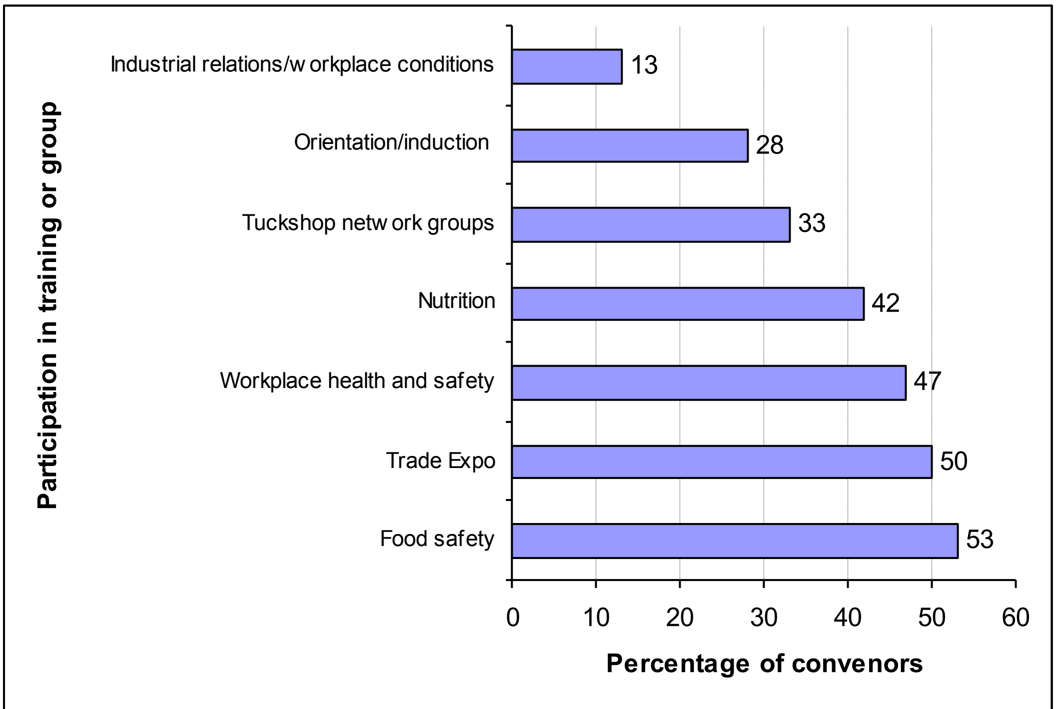
Ninety-two percent of convenors indicated that they have had some relevant experience that has helped with their work as a tuckshop convenor; however seventy percent of this was experience volunteering in a tuckshop. Other useful experience mentioned was in training in hospitality, catering experience and food operations.

Figure 18 shows the percentage of convenors who have participated in the selected types of training, meetings or groups **in the last three years**. Orientation rates are very low, especially if the previous convenor was not available for a handover. It would be beneficial to develop stronger networks as being a convenor can be a very isolated position.

Queensland is the most geographically dispersed state so innovative strategies such as email groups and teleconferencing will be needed to develop stronger networks that include rural and remote convenors. Over 80% of convenors have participated in P&C meetings so there could be a role for the P&C to facilitate such networks.

It is interesting to note that only 42% reported attending nutrition training when there was a concerted effort throughout Queensland to train tuckshop staff in the implementation of Smart Choices. This may also explain the dissonance between perceived and actual 'healthiness' of tuckshop menus reported earlier. Many tuckshop network meetings were also dedicated to inform staff about Smart Choices.

Figure 18 Participation in training in the last three years



Seventy-eight percent of convenors reported that they have accessed all the training they require, but the other 22% reported that there is some training that they or the other tuckshop staff have not been able to attend.

Initial analysis indicates that there is no correlation between the length of time individuals have been a convenor and having a need for more training.

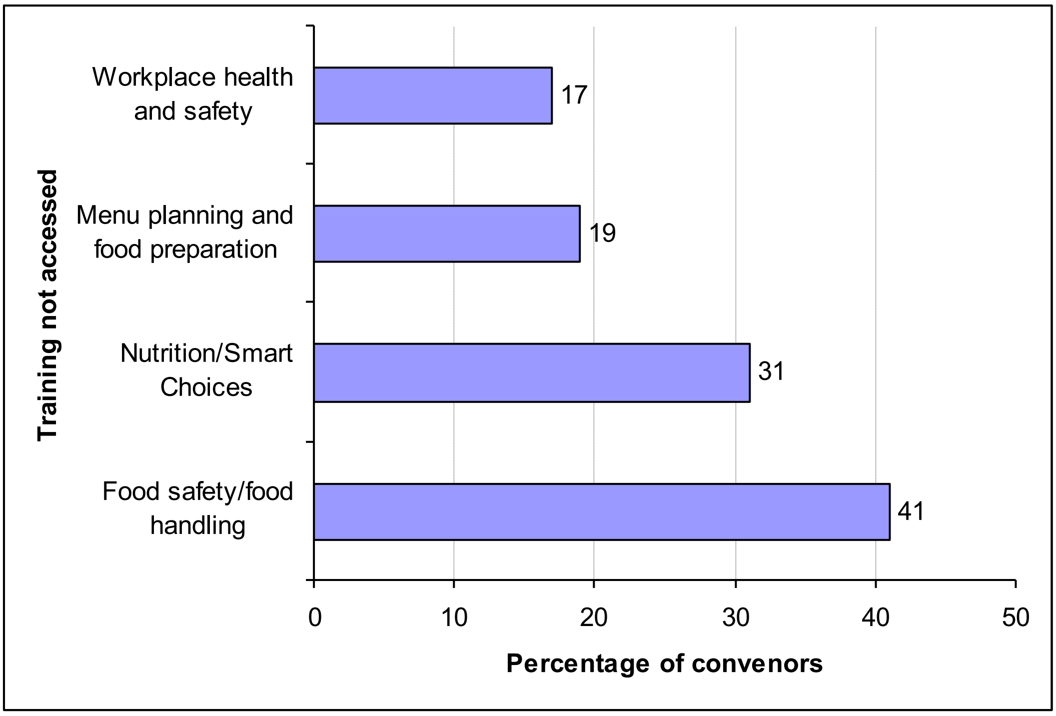
Figure 19 shows that 41% of convenors who indicated that there was training they had not been able to attend, would like training in food safety, 31% in nutrition, 19% in menu planning and food preparation and 17% requested workplace health and safety training. Fewer that 10% nominated business management training as an area of need and a small number stated they would like to have a training opportunity like the expo closer to their home town so they could easily attend.

Given the turnover of tuckshop convenors reported previously, it is clear that customised training on a broad range of topics needs to be offered on an annual basis across the state to ensure that Queensland tuckshops remain safe, profitable and able to supply healthy food choices.

Key findings:

- Only 49% of convenors reported receiving orientation and/or training when they first started as convenor. There is a need for an employer resource to provide basic orientation for convenors and volunteers.
- Because of the geographical isolation of a large number of tuckshop convenors, there is a need to explore a range of innovative options around networking, particularly for regional and remote settings.
- Annual training for tuckshop staff is required due to the high turnover of positions.

Figure 19 Training requested



Conclusion

This survey has demonstrated that tuckshops have become much healthier in terms of food quality and better resourced with equipment in the ten years since the first survey. Smart Choices has almost eliminated high energy, micro-nutrient poor foods (RED items) from the menus, however still has work to do so that many reflect the Australian Dietary Guidelines.

Healthy snack items are still under represented on most tuckshop menus. There was an inverse relationship between the percentage of GREEN items on the menu and the total number of menu items. Tuckshop convenors generally underestimate the percentage of AMBER foods on their menus, believing their menus to be healthier than they are.

It is interesting to note that more than a quarter of convenors had been in their position for less than one year. Less than half the respondents reported receiving any orientation or training on commencement of their employment. It is not surprising that approximately one in five tuckshops reported making a loss for the 2007 financial year.

The majority of tuckshops do make a profit, and it was shown that QAST members were more likely to make a profit of $10,000 or more than non-QAST members. If reported profit levels are extrapolated for the state, tuckshops in Queensland provided a total profit of $16.1 million dollars.

Non-government schools report lower rates of compliance to Smart Choices, with some schools still having RED foods on the menu. The health of students at these schools is important and there is a need to support these tuckshops to provide healthy choices.

The provision of healthy, viable food services in Queensland schools is most likely to occur when the tuckshop is a QAST member, has a well oriented and trained convenor and a menu with a reduced number of total items that are prepared using the equipment in the tuckshop.

Limitations

Selection bias is a major limitation of many surveys. In this case, there was a high response rate, with only 6% of tuckshop convenors declining to be involved. Therefore it was unlikely that significant selection bias was introduced.

The major limitation of the survey was that the information was self reported. This needs to be considered especially when interpreting data relating to sensitive issues such as employer relations and work conditions, finances, and compliance with Smart Choices. To cross check whether tuckshop staff would over report the healthiness of their menus, convenors were asked to send in copies of their menus.

Of the 500 respondents to the CATI survey, only 133 tuckshops provided menus (27%) and 153 (31%) provided financial data. It is likely that a greater proportion of menus that tuckshop convenors perceived would comply with Smart Choices were provided, especially by state schools where implementation is mandatory. It is also likely that tuckshops in financial difficulty were less likely to report their data. If this was the case, it is expected that Smart Choice compliance rates and profits are actually overestimates of the situation statewide. The smaller number of tuckshops sending menus and financial data also reduced the likelihood of finding statistically significant associations between menu quality, financial data and other survey data.

Recommendations

1. There is a worrying percentage of tuckshops (17%) that made a loss in the 2007 financial year. This is not surprising given the lack of orientation most staff received and the decrease in volunteer hours. Tuckshop losses produce a large strain on the school communities. There is a need to orientate and provide ongoing professional development to train and retain tuckshop convenors in business management (including price setting) and to support schools struggling to be financially viable. Further strategies to support convenors to recruit, train and retain volunteers are also required.

2. There is an urgent need to address decreasing percentage profits and to provide guidance and training on price setting. The reduction in profits may have come from the large reduction in volunteer hours, an increase in paid convenor hours as well as the majority of tuckshops having merely changed red foods for amber and not preparing much food on site, which is very profitable.

3. It was noted that there is a perception of compliance to Smart Choices that is not matched by the proportion of GREEN and AMBER foods on the menu. Strategies will need to address this misconception and motivate staff to increase the percentage of healthy/GREEN menu items. One easy method of achieving this is to decrease the total number of menu items, by limiting the total number of AMBER items. It was shown that menus with fewer items are more likely to be healthy and there is less competition for GREEN items.

4. Non-government schools report lower rates of compliance to *Smart Choices*, with some schools still having RED foods on the menu. The health of students at these schools is of equal importance and there is a need to develop strategies to support these tuckshops to provide healthy choices.

5. There is a need for an employer resource to provide basic orientation for convenors and volunteers and for annual training for tuckshop staff on a range of topics (e.g. nutrition, food safety, business principles) due to the high turnover of positions. Due to the geographical isolation of a large number of tuckshop convenors, there is also a need to explore a range of innovative options around networking, particularly for regional and remote settings.

Appendix 1

Smart Choices: Healthy Food and Drink Supply Strategy for Queensland schools.

Summary

Smart Choices - summary

The Education Queensland Smart Choices strategy was released in July 2006. This strategy requires food and drink supplied at schools to adhere to strict criteria regarding nutrient quality and density and introduced the concept of GREEN, AMBER and RED [5] foods.

RED foods can be supplied on 'RED occasions' only twice per term across the whole school environment including for example fundraising events, school swimming club and classroom rewards.

The Smart Choices food and drink spectrum is as follows:

GREEN. 'Have plenty'
Encourage and promote these foods and drinks.

GREEN food and drinks:

- Are excellent sources of important nutrients
- Are low in saturated fat and/or added sugar/and or salt
- Help to avoid an intake of excess energy (kilojoules or calories)

GREEN foods and drinks included in this category are based on the five food groups of the Australian Guide to Healthy Eating. They should be actively promoted as being the best choices.

- Breads, whole grain breakfast cereals eg wheat biscuits, rice, pasta, noodles
- Fruit, including frozen, canned and dried
- Vegetables and legumes
- Reduced fat milk, yoghurt, cheese
- Lean meat, poultry, fish, eggs nuts and legumes
- Plain water

AMBER 'Select carefully'
Do not let AMBER foods and drinks dominate the choices and avoid large serving sizes.

These foods and drinks:

- Have some nutritional value
- Have moderate amounts of saturated fat and/or added sugar and/or salt
- Can, in large serve sizes, contribute excess energy (kilojoules or calories)

AMBER foods are mainly processed foods that have some sugar and salt and/or fat added to them. They should be supplied in smaller quantities than the GREEN foods and should not be actively promoted.

- Full fat milk, yoghurt, cheese and other milk products
- Fruit juices – no more than 250 mls
- Refined and processed breakfast cereals
- Processed meats
- Some savoury commercial products eg lasagne, pizza, low fat pies, spring rolls (check the nutrition labels)
- Spreads
- Some snack food bars
- Cakes, muffins and sweet biscuits – un-iced and small serves (check labels)

---

[5] Education Queensland, Smart Choices. http://education.qld.gov.au/schools/healthy/food-drink-strategy.html . Accessed 23 October 2007.

- Ice-creams – not coated in chocolate (light varieties or check labels)

RED 'Occasionally'
RED foods and drinks are to be supplied no more two occasions per term.

These foods and drinks:
- Lack adequate nutritional value
- Are high in saturated fat and/or sugar/and or salt
- Can contribute to excess energy (kilojoules or calories)

RED foods are the 'occasional foods'
- Sugar and artificially sweetened drinks
- Confectionary and lollies
- Deep fried food
- Savoury snack food eg crisps and chips
- Ice-creams – chocolate coated
- Cakes, muffins and sweet biscuits – iced, chocolate chips etc, cream filled and large serve sizes

Appendix 2

Tuckshop Snapshot 2008 - CATI survey

Tuckshop Snapshot 2008 - - CATI

This survey is directed to the Tuckshop convenor at each school
If any school does not have a canteen, they do not need to complete the survey.

Introduction to telephone interview

Call to general school number

A. **Hello, my name is ……………… I'm calling on behalf QAST. I would like to speak to the tuckshop convenor. Could you please put me through to the tuckshop?**

1 Put through to the tuckshop convenor – Go to B
2 Tuckshop convenor is not in today – go to call back screen
3 The school does not have a tuckshop/ or the tuckshop is now closed – record as …
4 Put through to tuckshop but no answer or answer machine – call school number back:

Hello, I just called and was put through to the tuckshop, however, there was no answer. Do you know if the tuckshop convenor is in today?

1 Yes – **Could you please put me through to the tuckshop again, thank you**
2 No – **ask for next day the convenor will be in and log as call back**

Some campuses may ask which tuckshop convenor you want to speak to if more than one tuckshop on the campus. In theses cases, request to speak with the secondary school campus tuckshop convenor.

B. **Hello, my name is ……………… I'm calling on behalf of QAST. Am I speaking with the tuckshop convenor?**

If yes, skip to C
(INTERVIEWER: If no, ask "Could I please speak with the tuckshop convenor")

1 Tuckshop convenor is not in today [get details about when to call back]
2 Tuckshop convenor is busy/not able to come to the phone/not in at the moment/wants to call back - (INTERVIEWER: ask for a suitable time to call back)

C. **As I said, my name is [INSERT NAME]. QAST is speaking to a number of tuckshop convenors throughout Queensland to find out more about their tuckshops.**

Your tuckshop has been selected at random to take part in this survey.

Information about this survey was sent to the canteen managers. a couple of weeks ago

All responses will be confidential and any information provided is protected by strict Commonwealth and State privacy laws. You are free to not answer any questions or to end the interview at any time. This interview should take around 15 minutes depending on your answers. I'll try and make it as quick as I can. Are you happy to continue?

(INTERVIEWER: If respondent says no, ask "Is that because the time is inconvenient? I would be happy to call you back at a suitable time"

1 Agreed to interview
2 Agreed to interview but suggested a call-back
3 No, refused interview

If (ans = 1) skip to
If (ans = 2) skip to appointment log screen
If (ans = 3) skip to refusal log screen (details why refused?)

Information about the school tuckshop

1. What days are your tuckshop open?
   - ☐ All school days
   - ☐ Monday
   - ☐ Tuesday
   - ☐ Wednesday
   - ☐ Thursday
   - ☐ Friday
   - ☐ Saturday
   - ☐ Sunday

2. Does the tuckshop serve breakfast/?
   - ☐ Yes
   - ☐ No

3. Is the tuckshop open when school finishes?
   - ☐ Yes
   - ☐ No

4. When designing the canteen menu, what are the top three things you consider?

Do not read out
Probe fully
Multiple response

- ☐ Nutrition, Smart Choices, healthy options
- ☐ Number of volunteers or staff available
- ☐ Equipment, facilities or storage available
- ☐ What sells best, what students like
- ☐ Don't know / Can't say
- ☐ Affordability
- ☐ The amount of profit that it makes
- ☐ Food safety/hygiene
- ☐ Ease of preparation
- ☐ What food we can get from suppliers

- ☐ Other (please state)____

5. I will now read out a list of organisations or support people. Can you tell me who you rely on for information and support regarding the tuckshop?

Read out one by one. Probe for a 'yes' or 'no' response to each

Firstly, for information and support regarding the tuckshop, do you rely on…

☐ Queensland Association of School Tuckshops (QAST)
☐ Local tuckshop network meetings
☐ Nutrition Australia
☐ School health nurses
☐ Education Queensland (eg Community Participation Officer)
☐ Community Health and/or Public Health Nutritionist (Queensland Health)
☐ Private consultant or dietitian
☐ Sales reps from food suppliers
☐ Anyone else? If yes, who?________________________

Policies and procedures

6. On a scale of 1 to 5 with 1 being 'not important at all' and 5 being 'very important' how important is it for the tuckshop to make a profit for the school?

1_______________2_______________3_______________4______________5
Not important at all   Very important

7a. Does your tuckshop **have written policies or procedures?**

☐ Yes
☐ No

If yes in 7a ask 7b
7b. Which topics are included in the policies and procedures? Firstly, do you have a written policy for…?
Read out one by one – probe for a 'yes' or 'no' response to each:

☐ Providing healthy food
☐ Nuts/allergy
☐ Food Safety
☐ Volunteers
☐ Pricing
☐ Orientation
☐ Staff training
☐ Workplace health and safety
☐ Grievance or complaints
☐ Other - If yes – what topic?____________________

Tuckshop facilities
8. I will now **read out a list** of facilities that you might have in your tuckshop. Please tell me if you have these in your tuckshop or not
Read out one by one. Probe for a 'yes' or 'no' response

☐ Thermometers and/or temperature gauges
☐ Aprons
☐ Gloves
☐ A displayed evacuation plan
☐ Adequate storage for dry goods
☐ A double sink
☐ Air conditioning
☐ Adequate fridge space
☐ Glass display cabinets
☐ Fire extinguishing equipment
☐ A first aid kit
☐ Water access
☐ Adequate freezer space
☐ A separate hand washing sink
☐ Fly screens
☐ An office area
☐ A computer with internet access
☐ A cold room

- ☐ Ceiling or wall mounted fans
- ☐ Lockers for personal belongings
- ☐ Hats/caps
- ☐ Suitable surfaces for food preparation
- ☐ Suitable floor surfaces
- ☐ A dishwasher

9. Please tell me the food preparation and cooking equipment that is available in the tuckshop. **Read out each one.**

Does your tuckshop have…?

- ☐ A blender
- ☐ An oven
- ☐ A deep fryer
- ☐ A food processor
- ☐ Hotplates
- ☐ A microwave
- ☐ A pie warmer
- ☐ A sandwich press
- ☐ A toaster
- ☐ An electric fry pan/wok
- ☐ A shaved ice machine
- ☐ Coloured chopping boards

10. On a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 being 'not adequate' and 5 being 'excellent' how would you rate your tuckshop facilities?

1_______________2_______________3_______________4______________5
Not adequate   Excellent

11. Do you have a budget for maintenance or replacement of equipment?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ Don't know

12a. Has your tuckshop applied for a grant for facilities or equipment in the last three years?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ Don't know

If yes in 12a ask 12b
12b. Were you successful?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ Pending

Food in the tuckshop

13. Which of the following describes how your school has implemented Smart Choices? Please remember that this isn't a government survey and the information provided is strictly confidential.

I am going to read out four options. Please tell me which <u>one</u> applies.

- ☐ RED foods are available at school events and frequently in the tuckshop
- ☐ Smart Choices is in the tuckshop only but not elsewhere
- ☐ Smart Choices is implemented fully – across the whole school with only two RED occasions per term
- ☐ We have not implemented Smart Choices at all

14a. Do you think you need more training in providing healthy food choices in the tuckshop?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

If yes ask 14b

14b. If yes, which one of the following would suit you best?

Read out all the options and ask which they prefer

- ☐ Information in regular newsletters
- ☐ Workshops/seminars/presentations
- ☐ On line/web based training
- ☐ Printed training manuals and fact sheets

I'm now going to ask three questions to find out what are the best selling food and drinks at the tuckshop. This will be about **main meals**, **snacks** and **drinks,** including slushees**.**

Do not prompt further, unless they have trouble coming up with three foods in each category

15a. What are your three **best selling** main meals in the tuckshop

- ☐ Sandwiches
- ☐ Toasted sandwiches
- ☐ Roll eg salad/chicken and gravy
- ☐ Wraps
- ☐ Pies
- ☐ Chicken nuggets
- ☐ Sausage rolls
- ☐ Sushi
- ☐ Burgers
- ☐ Lasagne
- ☐ Pasta dishes
- ☐ Rice dishes
- ☐ Quiche
- ☐ Pizza
- ☐ Kebabs
- ☐ Salad
- ☐ Hot dog
- ☐ Soup
- ☐ Hot chips
- ☐ Other fried foods
- ☐ Other _______________

15b. What are your three **best selling** snacks?

- ☐ Muffins
- ☐ Cakes/biscuits/iced cakes
- ☐ Fruit bars
- ☐ Cob of corn
- ☐ Fresh fruit
- ☐ Popcorn
- ☐ Other _______________
- ☐ Iceblocks
- ☐ Yoghurt
- ☐ Chips
- ☐ Cracker biscuits with dip
- ☐ Sultanas

15c. What are your three **best selling** drinks?

- ☐ 100% fruit juice
- ☐ Soft drinks
- ☐ Plain milk
- ☐ Flavoured milk
- ☐ Carbonated fruit drink
- ☐ Iced tea
- ☐ Plain water
- ☐ Flavoured water
- ☐ Shaved ice drinks
- ☐ Other ___________

16. Does the tuckshop menu intentionally include salad or cooked vegetables in main meal choices?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

17. What do you perceive to be the main barriers to providing salad or cooked vegetables in the tuckshop?

Do not prompt – there may be more than one answer

- ☐ Too expensive
- ☐ Short shelf life
- ☐ Kids don't eat them
- ☐ Take too long to prepare
- ☐ Can't get them
- ☐ Other ____
- ☐ None

18. Approximately what proportion of the food and drink **on the menu** in the tuckshop is in the GREEN category, using Smart Choices?

_______________%

- ☐ Don't know

Tuckshop staff

19. For the following questions, can you please tell me the number of staff in each position , the total number of paid and unpaid hours they work each week.

Read out each staff category and then the headings of each column – one by one.

Staff	**Number of staff in this position**	**Total hours per week**	
		Paid hours	**Unpaid hours**
Convenor			
Paid staff (not convenor)			
Volunteers			

20. In the tuckshop, do you have access to the award that covers your working conditions and pay?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ Don't know

21a. Do the convenor and other paid staff at your tuckshop have a written letter of appointment or employment agreement?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

If yes ask 21b.
Does it include a job description?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

22. On a scale of 1 to 5 with 1 being ‘very poor’ and 5 being ‘very good’ how would you rate the employment conditions of the tuckshop convenor at your school?

1_______________2_______________3_______________4_______________5
Very poor Very good

23. What are the main issues? ____

24. How long have you been the tuckshop convenor in this school?

____ Years
____ Months

25. Altogether, how long have you been a convenor in any school?

____ Years
____ Months

26. Do you have any relevant experience that has helped with your work as a tuckshop convenor? For example, previously volunteered in tuckshop.
Do not prompt

- ☐ No
- ☐ Previous volunteer in the tuckshop
- ☐ Hospitality training
- ☐ Catering experience
- ☐ Food operations
- ☐ Home Economics
- ☐ Small business experience
- ☐ Sales/marketing experience
- ☐ Other (please state) ___________________________

27. In which of the following have you participated in the last three years?

Read out one by one

- ☐ Food safety groups/training
- ☐ Workplace health and safety training
- ☐ Nutrition seminars
- ☐ Workplace conditions/industrial relations seminars/training
- ☐ Food/trade expo
- ☐ Tuckshop network groups
- ☐ P&C meetings
- ☐ Orientation/induction training

28. Did you receive orientation and/or training when you first started as a convenor?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

29a. Is there any training that you feel you and/or the staff need but have not been able to attend?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

If yes ask 32b.
29b. What would you and the other staff like training in?

____

Other information

30. What is the best way to communicate with you in your role as tuckshop convenor?

Single response

- ☐ Email to the tuckshop
- ☐ Email to personal account
- ☐ Email to P&C
- ☐ Mail to P&C
- ☐ Mail to school
- ☐ Phone to the tuckshop
- ☐ Phone to the school
- ☐ Other ____________

Financial issues and pricing

31. Do you feel confident in setting prices for your menu?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

You have been asked some questions about financial matters in the letter that told you about this survey, along with a fax back form. Have you sent it back?

1. Sent back both financial information and current menu (skips to thank you & close)
2. Sent back financial information only (skips to reminder re faxing current menu, then thank you & close)
3. Sent back current menu only (continues on to text and Q32)
4. Have not sent back any information (continues on to text and Q32)
5. Did not receive any information about this study (skips to send fax & arrange convenient call back time)

The following two questions are about the turnover and the profit or loss the tuckshop makes. We are asking these questions so we understand the financial contribution tuckshops makes to schools. In a similar survey to this one, conducted in 1998, the average net profit was 14.3% and we would like to see if this has changed..
Do you know:
32. The total sales figure (turnover) for the tuckshop (income received from sales before any costs) in 2007? $_____________

33. Also, what was the net profit or loss for the tuckshop ($ after expenses have been deducted) in 2007?

Profit $__________________________ Loss $_________________________

If you don't know this now, could you please fill in and fax back the form or could we ring you back at another time?

(If necessary: If you didn't receive the letter from QAST about the survey and also asking for this information, I can fax it to you now.)

Thank very much you for your time.

Appendix 3

Introductory letter to all Queensland schools that sell food

Qast and Canteens
Queensland Association of School Tuckshops Inc

www.qast.org.au

Dear Canteen Manager,

This letter is to let you know that Queensland Association of School Tuckshops (QAST) will be conducting a telephone survey of a sample of Queensland government and non-government school canteens in March. Please see the attached sheet for all the details of the survey.

As part of this survey, we would like to find out about the turnover and the profit or loss your tuckshop made in 2007 so we can understand the financial contribution tuckshops makes to schools. In a similar survey to this one, conducted in 1998, the average net profit was 14.3% and we would like to see if this has changed. We realise that you may not know this information off the top of your head if you are called at random, so we are asking that you fill in the attached Fax back form and fax it back to QAST before 7 March. If you do not have access to this information, you may need to ask your P&C for the details.

Also, so we can see how school tuckshop menus have changed over the last ten years, we are collecting information about each school's menu. We are asking all canteen managers to please fax their current tuckshop menu with the attached fax back sheet. If you prefer to post this information and your menu, the address at QAST is: PO Box 1756, Coorparoo DC, Qld 4151

All financial information will be strictly confidential and will be combined to produce an average figure for all schools. No school will be directly identified.

The information gathered in this survey will help ensure that Queensland canteens are well equipped and able to provide healthy, safe and affordable food for school students.

Thank you for showing you care by being involved in this survey.

Yours sincerely

Lorie Robinson
President
QAST

Queensland Association of School Tuckshops
Canteen Survey 2008

In March 2008, the Queensland Association of School Tuckshops (QAST) will be conducting a survey of Queensland government and non-government school canteens to quantify changes in the sector over the nine year period since its previous survey held in 1998. Funded by the MBF Foundation, the data gathered will provide up-to-date information about the types of food services operating in schools, their equipment, rationale for menu design, profit levels and training needs. This information will be used to inform future work in school canteens relating to the provision of safe, healthy and affordable food.

The objectives of the survey are:

- To determine the factors that impact on successful promotion of healthy foods to students in this setting
- To identify the characteristics of schools that have achieved success in promoting healthy foods
- Determine the links between profitability and the provision of healthy food choices
- To determine the training and resource needs of the school canteen sector.

Canteens will be selected randomly from a sample to participate in the survey, to be conducted in March 2008 via a brief telephone interview with the school's canteen convenor or manager at a suitable time to minimise disruptions to daily canteen operations. Consent to participate in the survey will also be sought prior to the interview beginning and all data collected will be treated with the utmost confidentiality. Information gathered on individual schools will not be reported without prior consent from the school's administering body.

If you would like to discuss your school canteen's participation in this survey or have any queries please contact one of the project staff.

Julie Appleton
Senior Project Officer, QAST
Ph: 3324 1511
Email: julie@qast.org.au

Chris Ogden
Executive Services Manager, QAST
Ph: 3324 1511
Email: chris@qast.org.au

About the Queensland Association of School Tuckshops
QAST is a small, active non-government organisation with over 700 member tuckshops, established to promote and support school canteens. Areas examined by the survey include how food is supplied and sold, menu design considerations, policies and procedures, facilities, and financial, staffing and training issues.

About The MBF Foundation
The MBF Foundation is a charitable institution set up by MBF to support and manage important health initiatives for the community using a portion of MBF Group's investment income each year. Projects undertaken encompass three key areas – wellness and obesity, supporting healthy ageing and keeping healthcare affordable.

FAX COVER

To: Qld Association of School Tuckshops Inc

Phone: 3324 1511
Fax: 3847 8655

From: (Canteen manager)
School:
Fax No:

Date:
Total no. of pages:

Subject: **Financial information and menu**

1. The total sales figure (turnover) for the tuckshop (income received from sales before any costs) in **2007**:

$_____________

The net profit or loss for the tuckshop ($ after expenses have been deducted) in **2007**:

Profit $_________________________

Loss $________________________

Please also include current menu as extra pages in this fax.

Thank you

Appendix 4

CATI call outcomes

CATI call outcomes

Call Outcomes	Number	Percentage	Contacted
Number not called/not dialled	279	19%	Not contacted
Telecom Message/Number not connected	50	3%	Not contacted
Declined to participate	91	6%	Declined
Number Engaged	1	0%	Not contacted
No Answer	21	1%	Not contacted
Answering Machine	9	1%	Not contacted
Completed Interviews	500	34%	Interview
Call back another time/soft appointment	164	11%	Potential interview
Hard appointment	54	4%	Potential interview
Non-qualifier - Away for duration of survey	73	5%	Not available
Non-qualifier - No tuckshop at school	188	13%	Not available
Non-qualifier - Respondent not known	16	1%	Not available
Non-qualifier - Language difficulties	1	0%	Not contacted
Residential Number	6	0%	Not contacted
Dead number - have called more than 5 times with no outcome	1	0%	Not contacted
Total	**1454**	**100%**	

Total number convenors spoken to (potentially available for interview)	**809**	**55%**	
Total number schools contacted	**1086**	**75%**	

Appendix 5

Menu Assessment Tool

Menu Assessment Tool Guidelines

The following guidelines can be used to ensure consistent assessment of menus and clarify assessment of items where existing criteria are not sufficient.

What counts as one menu item?

- Each item listed with its own price counts as one menu item each time it appears. This also applies to:
  - specials available only on certain days
  - repeated items ie counted as one item every time it appears on the menu
  - meal deals ie the whole meal deal is counted as one menu item.

  Condiments or sauce sold as an extra item are not counted.

  For example, each of the following menu items would count as one item for assessment:

Juice 600ml (apple, orange, tropical)	$2.00
Juice 300ml (apple, orange, tropical)	$1.30
Apple juice 600ml	$2.00
Orange juice 600ml	$2.00
Orange juice 300ml	$1.30
Sandwich (jam, honey or vegemite)	$2.00
Sandwich (ham or salad)	$2.50
Quiche and salad	$3.50
Garlic bread (Mon & Tues only)	$0.80
Friday Meal Deal (Burger, milk & fruit)	$5.00

  The following would not be assessed using this tool

Tomato sauce	$0.20
Extra mayo	$0.20

Assessing stand alone menu items

- Menu items containing a single component are assessed using the Smart Choices criteria
- Where there is doubt between AMBER or RED as to where a menu item fits (eg the description is not sufficient or brand name is not known), the benefit of the doubt is given and the item is rated as AMBER

  Eg. Icy cool frozen treat AMBER
  Custard and jelly AMBER
- Where there is doubt between GREEN or AMBER as to where a menu item fits, the item is rated as AMBER. If it is indicated that the item is made on site it is escalated to GREEN.

  Eg. Potato Pie AMBER
  Lasagne AMBER
  Plain milk AMBER
  Frozen yoghurt AMBER
  Spaghetti Bolognaise (home made) GREEN
  Steamed dim sim AMBER
  Nachos AMBER
  Vegetable pastie AMBER

Assessing menu items made up of more than one product

- Menu items listed that include a salad or vegetable item in the description are escalated to GREEN. **This over rides all other guidelines.**

Eg.		
	Sandwich (ham, cheese and tomato)	GREEN
	Beef and vegetable stirfry	GREEN
	Chicken nugget salad wrap	GREEN

- Menu items that include two or more GREEN items are considered GREEN

Eg.		
	Chicken[green] and gravy[amber] roll[green]	GREEN
	Sandwich[green] (Chicken[green] and cheese[amber])	GREEN
	Sandwich[green] (ham[amber] and cheese[amber])	AMBER

Assessing meal deals

- Meal deals must contain a GREEN main meal item or two or more other GREEN items using the methods above to be assessed as GREEN overall. The whole meal deal counts as one menu item only.
- If a meal deal contains a RED item the whole meal deal is RED.

Common RED items
- Hello Pandas
- Jelly sticks
- Jelly drops