

Dear Members,

As we reflect on the past year at QAST, it is both a privilege and a pleasure to present this report. Our organisation is built on the commitment and enthusiasm of our members and staff and it is your engagement that drives our success.

This year, we welcomed 86 new members, bringing our total membership to 358. Attracting new members remains a challenge as many tuckshops are juggling tight budgets, competing priorities, and increasing operational pressures. With rising costs and limited volunteer capacity, many school communities are finding it difficult to prioritise new memberships, even when they recognise the value QAST provides.

Despite these challenges, QAST continues to provide high-quality services and support through our:

- Menu Health Checks, Tuckshop Tune-Ups and Phone Advisory Service
- Comprehensive suite of resources, templates and guides
- Tuckshop Network Meetings that foster connection and shared learning
- Widely accessed website offering practical tools and information
- Engaging communication channels, including Facebook and Instagram, and regular newsletters
- Delivery of accredited and non-accredited training, including Food Safety Supervisor, Safe Food Handlers, Healthy Menu Planning, Volunteer Management and our new Tuckshop Management Course.

QAST highlights for 2025 included:

- **Welcoming new team members**, with Keryn O'Neill joining as Executive Officer and Naomi Blines commencing as Project Manager.
- **Developing and launching the new Tuckshop Management Course**, expanding our professional learning offerings for tuckshop staff and volunteers.
- **Active involvement in the FOCIS National Roundtable**, advocating for increased resourcing for school canteens and a consistent national approach to regulation and compliance, resulting in significant media coverage across Australia.
- **Returning to regional travel for the first time in several years**, with staff visiting Hervey Bay and Bundaberg. Up to 8,000 students stand to benefit from the insights gained through tuckshop training and networking delivered during these visits.
- **Delivering a standout 2025 Recipe of the Year competition**, which generated substantial positive media attention for school tuckshops. The winner announcement was attended by Premier David Crisafulli and Minister for Education, John-Paul Langbroek.
- **Securing a two-year contract with Health and Wellbeing Queensland** to continue delivering the Healthier Tuckshops Program.

- **Contributing to the second A Better Choice Conference**, where QAST representatives Keryn and Naomi were invited speakers.
- **Participating on the Advisory Committee** guiding the transition from Smart Choices to A Better Choice.
- **Strengthening relationships with Education Queensland**, including active discussions regarding future funding opportunities.
- **Presenting at the 2025 School Business Managers Association Queensland Conference**, with both Keryn and Naomi sharing QAST insights and expertise.
- **Maintaining a strong media presence**, with extensive coverage on issues such as the Labor Government's Free Lunch election commitment, tuckshop closures, Recipe of the Year, and the ongoing tuckshop vs. lunchbox debate.
- **Celebrating Karen's 20-year milestone with QAST**, recognising her long-standing contribution to the organisation and its members.
- **Delivering another successful Tuckshop Day**, celebrated widely across Queensland in recognition of the dedication of tuckshop staff and volunteers.

On top of this, our training programs continue to serve as the heart of our organisation. Over the past year, we have completed:

- Food Safety Supervisor Course – 10 courses held with 62 participants
- Convenor Course – 1 course held with 7 participants
- Tuckshop Management Course – 5 courses held with 28 participants
- Safe Food Handlers Course – 297 completions
- Healthy Menu Planning – 44 completions to date
- Tuckshop Management Course – 23 completions to date

The QAST website has continued to be a valuable source of information for Queensland schools, with over 30,000 unique, active users across the year. Our tuckshop recipes have been highly sought after, with over 27,354 total views, with our resources attracting close to 15,000 total downloads.

QAST continues to grow and value our key partnerships, including:

- Health and Wellbeing Queensland. Together we delivered the Healthier Tuckshops program and worked together on media activities.
- Queensland Department of Education – housing and communication.
- Working on the A Better Choice Advisory Committee along with HWQld, Department of Education and Nutrition Australia Queensland.
- Being a part of the executive committee of FOCIS.
- Working with the Institute of Social Sciences Research (UQ) for evaluation of QAST activity.

Looking ahead, our priorities for the coming year include:

- Expanding our membership reach and welcoming more tuckshops that share our commitment to healthier, more sustainable operations.
- Enhancing and refining our programs, guided by member feedback and the evolving needs of school communities.
- Deepening our partnerships with key organisations to increase our influence and deliver greater value to members.
- Growing our regional presence to better support tuckshops across Queensland.

I would like to acknowledge our wonderful staff throughout 2025:

- Keryn O'Neill, Executive Officer
- Naomi Blines, Project Manager
- Chrissy Buzzard, Communications Manager
- Karen Tobin Administration Manager
- Natalie Farrugia, Training Officer

I would like to extend my sincere thanks to our dedicated Executive and Management Committee members, as well as our valued volunteers. Your commitment and hard work have been central to our success this year. And to our members, thank you for your continued support and engagement – your involvement strengthens our community and helps drive meaningful change. Together, we truly are making a difference.

I would also like to extend a heartfelt thank you to two of our long-standing Management Committee Members, Barbara Radcliffe and Lorie Robinson, who after 23 years and 22 years respectively are retiring for their positions. Their leadership, passion, wisdom and unwavering dedication have made them both, in every sense, **tuckshop legends**. I wish them joy and fulfilment in their next chapters.

In closing, I am excited about the future of QAST. With the continued support and engagement of our members, we can achieve our mission and create an even stronger tuckshop community. Thank you for being an essential part of our journey.

Warm regards,



Madonna Jardine
QAST President