

## Teacher Information

# Fun Food Facts about the Five Food Groups

Food Group	Did you know?
<b>Vegetables and legumes</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Most Australians eat only about half the recommended quantity of vegetables per day.</li> <li>• Vegetables are nutrient dense, low in energy (kilojoules) and a good source of dietary fibre and minerals and vitamins (such as magnesium, vitamin C and folate).</li> <li>• Legumes are the seeds or pods from any bean, pea or lentil.</li> <li>• Legumes are a good source of carbohydrate, fibre, plant protein, B-complex vitamins, iron, potassium, and other minerals.</li> <li>• Slow release of carbohydrates and energy from legumes helps regulate blood glucose levels.</li> </ul>
<b>Fruits</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Most Australians eat only about half the recommended quantity of fruit, but drink far too much fruit juice (½ cup per day is enough).</li> <li>• Consuming fruit instead of juice provides more fibre and less energy (kilojoules) and leaves you feeling fuller longer.</li> <li>• The vitamins, minerals and fibre in fruit help to lower blood pressure and blood cholesterol.</li> <li>• People who eat enough fruit are less likely to suffer heart disease or stroke.</li> <li>• Fruit helps keep gums and skin healthy.</li> </ul>
<b>Grain foods, mostly wholegrain and/or high fibre varieties</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Most Australians eat less than half the recommended quantity of wholegrain foods, and too much refined grain (cereal) food.</li> <li>• The nutrients provided by whole grains include carbohydrates, protein, fibre and a wide range of vitamins and minerals.</li> <li>• Whole grains are very low in fat but contain beneficial polyunsaturated fatty acids and fat soluble vitamin E.</li> <li>• Whole grains keep the digestive system healthy and help prevent constipation and bowel cancer.</li> <li>• Whole grains help to lower blood cholesterol and glucose levels and reduce risk of heart disease and type 2 diabetes.</li> </ul>
<b>Lean meat and poultry, fish, eggs, tofu, nuts and seeds/legumes and beans</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The foods from this food group are 'protein rich' and most Australians have no trouble eating enough each day.</li> <li>• Variety of choices from this group is important to gain nutritional benefits and reduce health risks.</li> <li>• Lean red meat is an excellent source of protein, iron, zinc and vitamin B12 but adults need no more than 100-120g per day.</li> <li>• Foods in this group are an important source of minerals including iron, zinc and iodine, B group vitamins (B12 only from animals), and essential fatty acids.</li> <li>• The iron and zinc in animal foods is more easily absorbed by the body than in plant foods such as nuts, seeds and legumes/beans.</li> <li>• Vitamin C found in fruit and vegetables helps absorption of iron from these non-animal foods.</li> </ul>
<b>Milk, yoghurt, cheese and/or their alternatives (mostly reduced fat)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Most Australians consume only about half the recommended quantity of milk products, but too many full fat varieties.</li> <li>• Reduced fat dairy foods are recommended after the age of 2 years to decrease saturated fat and energy content of the diet.</li> <li>• Reduced fat varieties of milks are not suitable for children under the age of two due to their high energy needs for growth.</li> <li>• Milk foods are a good source of protein, minerals, calcium and vitamins.</li> </ul>