



NUTRITION
STANDARDS FOR
KA ORA, KA AKO
HEALTHY SCHOOL
LUNCHES PROGRAMME

**NGĀ TIKANGA TAIORANGA MŌ
KA ORA, KA AKO**



Published by the Ministry of Education in October 2022

Nutrition Standards for Ka Ora, Ka Ako | Healthy School Lunches Programme
Mātauranga House
33 Bowen Street
PO Box 1666, Wellington 6011

Crown copyright © 2022

ISBN 978-1-77690-895-0 (Print)
ISBN 978-1-77690-896-7 (Online)

Citation: Ministry of Education. 2022. Nutrition Standards for Ka Ora, Ka Ako | Healthy School Lunches Programme. Wellington: Ministry of Education.

Contents

Ngā ihirangi

2 Acknowledgements

4 Background

- 4 » What is Ka Ora, Ka Ako | Healthy School Lunches Programme?
- 5 » What is the purpose of the Nutrition Standards?
- 5 » Who are the Standards for?
- 5 » How were the Standards developed?

6 Nutrition principles

7 Nutrition Standards for Ka Ora, Ka Ako menus

- 7 » Overview of the Nutrition Standards
- 9 » Meal weight requirements
- 13 » Classifying foods as green, amber and red
 - 13 › Traffic light system
 - 14 › Green, amber and red allowances
 - 14 › Health Star Ratings

15 STANDARDS FOR MEAL COMPONENTS

- 15 » **Vegetables**
- 16 » **Grain foods and starchy vegetables**
- 19 » **Protein foods**
- 22 » **Additional food items**
- 25 » **Menu checklist for lunch providers**
- 27 » Other considerations
 - 27 › Mixed meals or ready-to-eat meals
 - 27 › Special meals
 - 28 › Individual food preferences
 - 28 › Food safety

29 Nutrition tips for lunch providers

31 Glossary

33 References

34 Appendix

- 34 » Appendix 1: Sample menus
- 38 » Appendix 2: Complex dietary requirements



Acknowledgements

Ngā mihi

Takatū mai te ao pari kārangaranga! Karanga te pō, karanga te ao!
 Te karanga i te wānanga o taiao oranga, taiao tuputupu, o taiao tangata e!
 Rarau mai rā e te taonga! He takapou taonga! He takapou kōrero horahia ki te motu nei.
 Uhi! Wero! Haramai te toki! Haumi e! Hui e! Tāiki e!

E āku nui! E āku rahi, e āku piki amokura! E āku kōtore huia! Kei ō koutou nā kāinga, kei ō koutou nā marae, tēnā koutou katoa.

Tēnā koutou i roto i ngā tini āhuetanga o te ao hurihuri nei, me ōna piki, me ōna heke e kōpiopio ana i te whakaaro.

Tēnā koutou me ā tātou mate huhua o te wā. Rātou kua riro atu ki te mātatoru o te pō, ki te pae o Matariki. Takoto mai rā! E okioki! Kua ea te wā ki a rātou!

Tēnā tātou e te hunga e whakaruruhau nei i ngā pae rahi o te mātauranga, e whiriwhiri ana i ngā huarahi tōtika, kia hua ai ōna painga mā ngā tamariki, mokopuna, ngā kura me ngā whānau. Nei rā te mihi maioha ki a koutou.

Kia mihia tonu ngā kura, ngā kaitaka kai, ngā tohunga taioranga me ērā ringa rehe ki te kaupapa o Ka Ora,

Ka Ako. Ko koutou tonu rā te whakatinanatanga mai o te kupu *'ehara taku toa i te toa takitahi, engari he toa takitini!*

Kāti, anei tonu rā tētehi huarahi hou e whāia nei e te kaupapa Ka Ora, Ka Ako – *Ngā Tikanga Taioranga - Ka ora te kaupapa hauora kai ki ngā kura*. Ko tōna whakarite, kia ārahi ai i ngā kaiwhakarato kai, i ngā kura anō hoki e whakarite ana i ngā kai mā ngā ākongā. Ko tōna wawata anō, kia eke ai ēnei tamariki, mokopuna ki ngā taumata o te mātauranga o te rohe, o te motu, o te ao whānui hoki. He mea tuku iho tēnei e ō tātou mātua, e ō tātou tīpuna

Tēnā waihotia mā te rauemi nei e whakaputa, e whakamārama ōna āhuetanga. Ko tā tātou, he rapu, he whai, hei oranga!

Nā te tīma o Ka Ora, Ka Ako

Acknowledgements

Ngā mihi

Acknowledge the night, acknowledge the day

Prepare for a new day, new kaupapa

Taonga – Welcome treasure, and treasure passed down, a treasured kōrero for the motu

Taiao oranga – the natural world

Taiao tuputupu – the growing world

Taiao tangata – the world of people

We acknowledge our chiefs, our leaders at home, on marae. We greet you. We acknowledge the varied circumstances of our time, its successes and challenges and the many thoughts swirling around. We acknowledge this.

We acknowledge those who have passed. Our ancestors, pioneers who have departed to the dense night, the star cluster of Matariki. Rest Well. We remember you.

We acknowledge our leaders who shelter, protect the domain of knowledge, who choose the direct pathway, so our children and students receive the fruits.

To our schools and lunch providers, experts and supporting contributors. You who have embodied the words “ehara taku toa i te toa takitahi, engari he toa takitini!” – *My success is not the success of one, but of many!*

Behold, here is a new pathway, a new way of working for the kaupapa of the Ka Ora, Ka Ako programme. Nutrition Standards! It has been created to guide lunch providers and our schools who prepare school lunches for students.

It has been created in the hope that our students, children will reach the heights of knowledge in whatever they do.

This aspiration has been handed down for generations.

We leave it to the resource to tell its story! Ours is to seek and to find its meaning!

We want to specifically thank the following groups of contributors, reviewers, and testers:

- » Our suppliers who gave feedback, costed, and tested menus
- » Our internal model schools who gave feedback and tested menus
- » The Ministry of Health
- » The National Healthy Food and Drink Environment Network
- » The Heart Foundation
- » Network Communication
- » The Ka Ora, Ka Ako Nutrition Advisory Group

From the Ka Ora, Ka Ako team

Background

He whakamārama

What is Ka Ora, Ka Ako | Healthy School Lunches Programme?

He aha a Ka Ora, Ka Ako?

Food insecurity is a reality for many children in New Zealand, with up to 250,000 facing poverty. Around one in five of our children live in households that struggle to put enough food on the table. In communities facing greater socio-economic barriers, 40 percent of parents run out of food sometimes or often.

Ka Ora, Ka Ako aims to reduce food insecurity by providing a daily nutritious lunch to ākonga (students) at schools and kura facing the greatest hardship. The name Ka Ora, Ka Ako is about being healthy and well in order to be in a good place to learn. 'Ka Ora' means to be satisfied with food, be well, healthy and safe. 'Ka Ako' means to learn.

Research tells us that reducing food insecurity for children and young people:

- » improves wellbeing
- » supports child development and learning
- » improves levels of concentration, behaviour and school achievement
- » reduces financial hardship amongst families and whānau
- » addresses barriers to children's participation in education and promotes attendance at school
- » boosts overall health.



What is the purpose of the Nutrition Standards?

He aha te tikanga ake o ngā Tikanga Taioranga?

Addressing food insecurity involves more than simply filling tummies. It means ensuring food is personally and culturally acceptable, as well as nutritionally adequate. Good nutrition is essential for the healthy growth and development of children and young people. Healthy food affects ākongā behaviour, learning, concentration and energy, as well as physical health. When students eat good food, they find it easier to learn.

At the Ministry of Education we have an obligation to tiaki (safeguard) and manaaki (take care of) ākongā. This includes making sure the food we provide through Ka Ora, Ka Ako supports wellbeing and does not negatively impact health.

We have developed these Nutrition Standards (the Standards) specifically for Ka Ora, Ka Ako, to promote and safeguard ākongā wellbeing. They will assist Ka Ora, Ka Ako lunch providers to offer nutritious and balanced menus that contribute to the daily needs of ākongā. As ākongā develop preferences for nutritious food through the programme, there is an opportunity to form healthy eating habits that will continue through to adulthood and have positive impacts on their long-term health.

Who are the Standards for?

Mā wai ngā Tikanga?

The Standards are for Ka Ora, Ka Ako lunch providers. They will be used by all lunch providers including external suppliers, iwi and hapū partners, and schools and kura providing their own lunch meals (internal model schools).

*The Standards are specifically for Ka Ora, Ka Ako and do not apply to other meals or food served at school such as canteens and tuck shops. For guidance on provision of food in schools and kura outside of Ka Ora, Ka Ako please refer to the Ministry of Health's **Healthy Food and Drink Guidance - Schools**.*

How were the Standards developed?

I pēhea te āhua o te hanga i ngā Tikanga?

The Standards are informed by the Ministry of Health's **Healthy Food and Drink Guidance - Schools**, tailored to the unique context of Ka Ora, Ka Ako.

The Standards were developed in consultation with the Ministry of Health, lunch providers, schools, kura and nutrition stakeholders.

Nutrition principles

Ngā mātāpono taioranga

The principles of the Nutrition Standards are as follows:

Offer a variety of healthy foods from the four food groups

- » plenty of vegetables and fruit
- » grain foods, mostly wholegrain and those naturally high in fibre
- » milk and milk products, mostly low and reduced-fat
- » legumes, nuts, seeds, fish and other seafood, eggs, poultry (eg, chicken) and/or red meat with fat removed.

Food should be prepared with or contain minimal saturated fat, salt (sodium) and added sugar, and should be mostly whole or less processed.

This means:

- » foods containing moderate amounts of saturated fat, salt and/or added sugar may be available in small portions (eg, some baked goods)
- » no deep-fried foods
- » no confectionery (eg, sweets and chocolate).

Offer only water and unflavoured milk as drink options.

This means:

- » no sugar-sweetened drinks
 - » no drinks containing 'intense' (artificial) sweeteners
 - » no fruit or vegetable juices (including 100 percent juice, no-added-sugar varieties).
-

Nutrition Standards for Ka Ora, Ka Ako menus

Ngā Tikanga Taioranga mō ngā taotaka
Ka Ora, Ka Ako

OVERVIEW OF THE NUTRITION STANDARDS

TIROHANGA WHĀNUI O NGĀ TIKANGA TAIORANGA

There are five main standards that you need to consider when creating your menu.

Compulsory meal components need to be included in every lunch in amounts that meet at least the minimum weight requirements set out in the Standards.

Additional meal components are other food items that may be included in meals. They do not have minimum weight requirements but do count towards the total meal weight.

Weekly menu requirements state the number of times per week you can serve 'amber' processed meats and baked items.

Total minimum meal weights are set for each school year group as a bare minimum standard. The appropriate meal size needed for ākongā to feel full will vary based on how filling the foods are in any given meal. You will need to consider this in menu planning and adjust meal sizes based on ākongā feedback.

Maximum weight allowance for amber items. The Standards classify foods as green, amber and red to reflect how nutritious they are. Meals have a maximum weight allowance for 'amber' foods so that menus are mostly made up of healthier 'green' foods.

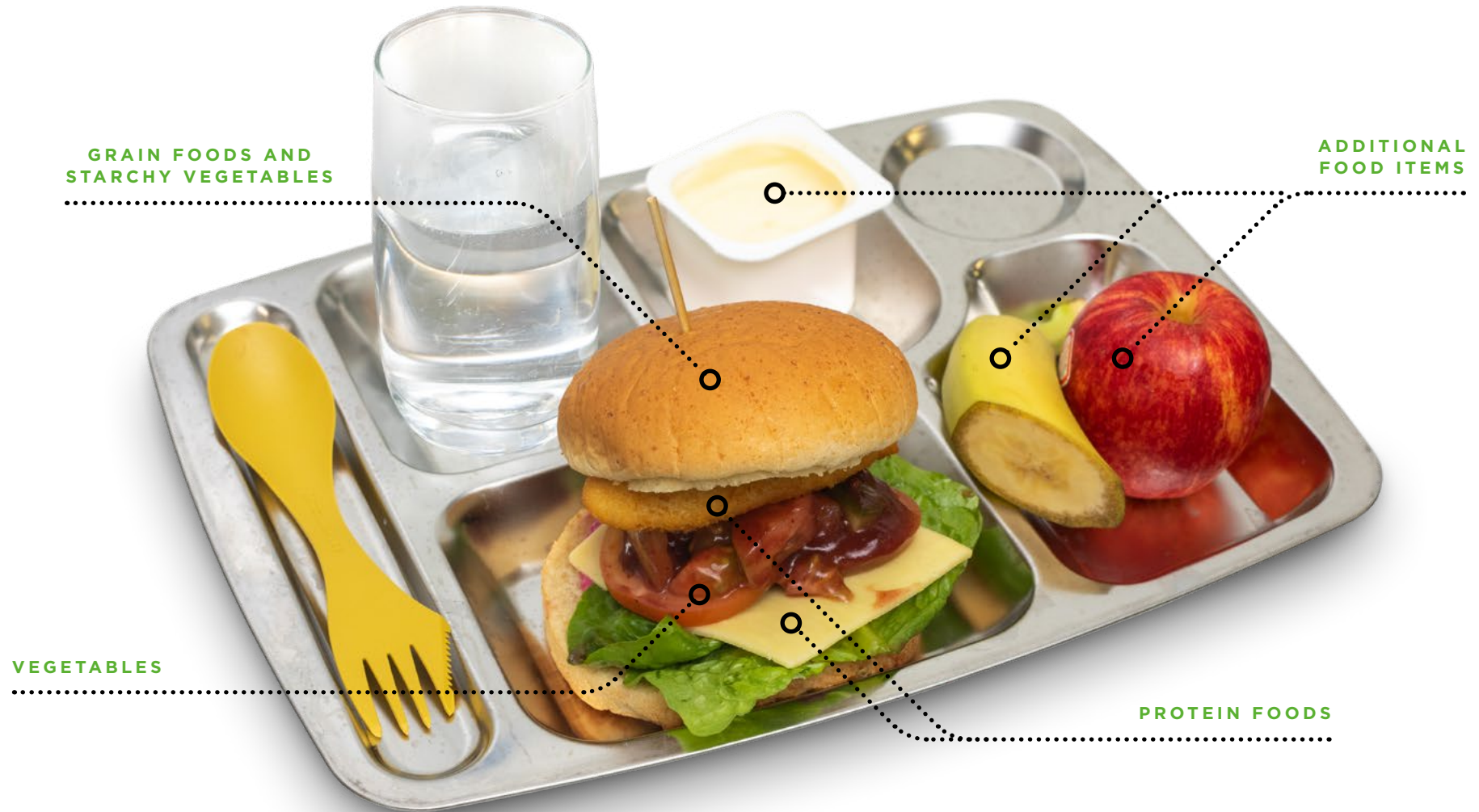
Meal components Ngā wāhanga kai

Compulsory meal components *with minimum weight requirements*

- Grain foods and starchy vegetables
- Vegetables
- Protein foods

Additional meal component *no minimum weight requirements*

- Additional food items



MEAL WEIGHT REQUIREMENTS NGĀ WHAKARITENGA TAUMAHA KAI

Lunches must meet the following weight requirements for each school year group:

MINIMUM TOTAL MEAL WEIGHTS	YEARS 0-3	180g
	YEARS 4-8	240g
	YEARS 9+	300g

MAXIMUM AMBER ITEM WEIGHTS	YEARS 0-3	60g
	YEARS 4-8	75g
	YEARS 9+	100g

VEGETABLES

YEARS 0-3

50g cooked



Just under ½ cup mixed vegetables

OR

25g salad



Just under ½ cup

YEARS 4-8

60g cooked



About ½ cup mixed vegetables

OR

30g salad



About ½ cup

YEARS 9+

70g cooked



Just over ½ cup mixed vegetables

OR

35g salad



Just over ½ cup

MEAL WEIGHT REQUIREMENTS NGĀ WHAKARITENGA TAUMAHA KAI

GRAIN FOODS AND STARCHY VEGETABLES

YEARS 0-3

30g



About 1 slice
of bread

YEARS 4-8

60g



About 2 slices
of bread

YEARS 9+

90g



About 3 slices
of bread

For rice, pasta, noodles and starchy vegetables, aim to use at least 50% more than the required minimum weight, for example:

	45g	90g	135g
Rice, pasta, noodles	$\frac{1}{4}$ C 	$\frac{1}{2}$ C 	$\frac{3}{4}$ C 
Roast kumara/potato (2cm cubes)	$\frac{1}{3}$ C 	$\frac{2}{3}$ C 	1 C 
Mashed potato	$\frac{1}{4}$ C 	$\frac{1}{2}$ C 	$\frac{3}{4}$ C 

PROTEIN FOODS**YEARS 0-3**

30g for meals where more than half the protein food is **ANIMAL-BASED**



Just under ½ cup shredded chicken

OR

45g for meals where more than half the protein food is **PLANT-BASED**



About ⅓ cup cooked beans

YEARS 4-8

40g for meals where more than half the protein food is **ANIMAL-BASED**



About ½ cup shredded chicken

OR

60g for meals where more than half the protein food is **PLANT-BASED**



Just over ⅓ cup cooked beans

YEARS 9+

50g for meals where more than half the protein food is **ANIMAL-BASED**



Just over ½ cup shredded chicken

OR

75g for meals where more than half the protein food is **PLANT-BASED**



About ½ cup cooked beans

ADDITIONAL FOOD ITEMS No minimum weight requirements**EDIBLE WEIGHTS**

Minimum weights include only the edible portion of food served to students, e.g. the flesh of a banana and not the skin, or the flesh of cooked chicken and not the bones.

COOKED WEIGHTS

If cooked food is served as part of the meal, minimum weights apply to the cooked food, not the raw ingredient e.g. the cooked potato weight in a potato salad not the raw potato weight before cooking.



Menu:
Mon - Chicken Setae w Cole slaw & Roti
Tues - beef w ch...
Wed - Currie...
Thur - Asian...
Fri - Tany...

Jobs to be done
Sanitize
Clean

Beef
10 Box Chick Meat
20 Box Garb Aoli
600 pack Beef
700 pack Burger
8 Box of edam Stee ch
6 Box of Eggs ready to
1 Box mixed Edam ch
1 Box of a sauce
6 lms milk

Veg non - veg
30 Kg Colelaw mix
700 roti wholemeal
20 Kg Macaron
20 Kg Tom
2 Kg Bellonm
5 Kg Carrots
5 Kg Spring onms
2 Kg Carrotan

CLASSIFYING FOODS AS GREEN, AMBER AND RED

TE WHAKARŌPŪ I NGĀ KAI HEI KAKARIKI, KOWHAI ME TE WHERO

Traffic light system

Pūnaha rama toru

The Standards use a traffic light colour-coding system to classify foods based on their nutritional value. This is a practical way to identify healthier options to include in menus. The table below describes what types of foods typically fall into each colour classification.

GREEN



- » Good source of nutrition
- » Mainly everyday foods that provide essential nutrients for the body
- » Mostly whole and less processed
- » Generally lower in saturated fat, salt and added sugar

AMBER



- » Some nutritional value
- » Best eaten occasionally and in smaller amounts
- » Can enhance flavour and add variety to a meal and menu
- » Often more processed
- » Generally contains moderate amounts of saturated fat, salt and added sugar

RED



- » Poor nutritional value
- » Often highly processed
- » Generally high in saturated fat, salt and added sugars



Green, amber, and red allowances

Ngā whakaaetanga kakariki, kōwhai me te whero

The Standards have set allowances for each colour classification to ensure that healthier menus made up of mostly green foods are offered to ākonga. These allowances are:



Green items need to make up most of a meal



Amber items have a maximum weight allowance per meal



Red items cannot be included in meals.

Health Star Ratings

Ngā Whakatauranga Whetu Hauora

The Health Star Rating (HSR) is used in the Standards to set green, amber and red criteria for some food categories. The HSR is a voluntary front-of-pack labelling system that rates the overall nutritional profile of packaged food and assigns it a rating from ½ a star to 5 stars. It provides a quick, easy, standard way to compare similar packaged foods. When comparing similar foods, the more stars, the healthier the choice.

Foods are given their HSR based on their nutrients, ingredients, and the amount of energy they provide. Ratings can be calculated by entering nutrition information into a '**Health Star Rating calculator**'. Foods get more stars if they are higher in healthy nutrients (protein, fibre, and calcium in some cases) and ingredients (fruits, vegetables, nuts or legumes) and lower in saturated fat, sugar and sodium (salt).



Standards for meal components

Ngā Tikanga mo ngā wāhanga kai

VEGETABLES

HUAWHENUA MĀNGARO-KORE

The vegetables category includes all vegetables except those classed as starchy vegetables (potato, kūmara, taro, cassava). Starchy vegetables are grouped with grain foods (see page 16). The vegetables category includes carrots, sweet corn, broccoli, capsicum, tomatoes, cucumber, green beans, leafy vegetables etc. They are packed with vitamins, minerals and fibre providing the body with a range of health benefits.

Minimum weight requirements

There are different weight requirements for cooked and salad vegetables. Salad vegetables are any vegetables that are served in a salad, sandwich, roll or wrap eg lettuce, spinach, cucumber, corn, tomato and avocado. Salad vegetables also include raw vegetables served as a side such as carrot and celery sticks. When serving salad vegetables, the weight requirement is half that of cooked vegetable weight.

COOKED VEGETABLES		
YEARS 0-3	YEARS 4-8	YEARS 9+
50g	60g	70g

SALAD VEGETABLES		
YEARS 0-3	YEARS 4-8	YEARS 9+
25g	30g	35g

Green, amber and red classifications

VEGETABLES

GREEN

» Fresh, frozen or canned (drained)



RED

» Deep-fried



GRAIN FOODS AND STARCHY VEGETABLES

KAI PATA ME NGĀ HUAWHENUA MĀNGARO

Grain foods include bread products, rice, pasta, noodles and other grains. Starchy vegetables are those vegetables that are most often used like grain foods, as the carbohydrate part of a meal. Starchy vegetables include potato, kūmara, taro and cassava. Grain foods and starchy vegetables offer energy, fibre, vitamins and minerals to provide fuel for learning and play.

Minimum weight requirements

YEARS 0-3 30g	YEARS 4-8 60g	YEARS 9+ 90g
-------------------------	-------------------------	------------------------

For **rice, pasta, noodles and starchy vegetables**, aim to include **at least 50 percent more** than the minimum weight. This increase is advised because when these foods are cooked, they absorb a lot of water and so provide less energy compared to similar amounts of bread products and crackers.



Green, amber and red classifications

RICE, PASTA, NOODLES AND OTHER GRAINS

GREEN



- » Pasta, rice, noodles and other grains (eg spaghetti, unflavoured noodles, vermicelli, soba, quinoa, oats, buckwheat, rye, polenta, couscous)

AMBER



- » Flavoured rice, pasta and noodles with an HSR of at least 3.5

RED



- » Flavoured rice, pasta and noodles with an HSR of 3 or less

BREAD PRODUCTS AND CRACKERS

GREEN



- » Bread products that are wholegrain, multigrain, wheatmeal and wholemeal with at least 3g of fibre per 100g
- » Crackers with an HSR of at least 3.5

AMBER



- » White bread products
- » Bread products that are wholegrain, multigrain, wheatmeal and wholemeal with less than 3g of fibre per 100g
- » Crackers with an HSR of 3

RED



- » Fried bread
- » Croissants
- » Iced buns
- » Crackers with an HSR of 2.5 or less

STARCHY VEGETABLES (eg potatoes, kūmara, taro, green banana and cassava)**GREEN**

- » Fresh starchy vegetables (eg 'home-made' wedges, mashed potato, baked potato)
- » Products with an HSR of at least 3.5 (eg wedges, fries, hash browns, potato flakes, pan-fried rosti, vegetable fries)

AMBER

- » Products with an HSR of 3 (eg wedges, fries, hash browns, potato flakes)

RED

- » Products with an HSR of 2.5 or less
- » Deep fried starchy vegetables

BAKED ITEMS (eg muffins, scones, sweet loaf, biscuits)**GREEN**

- » Savoury baked items with no added salt containing either wholemeal flour, wholegrains (eg oats) or vegetables

AMBER

- » Savoury baked items with added salt
- » Sweet baked items containing either wholemeal flour, wholegrains (eg oats), fruit or vegetables

RED

- » Baked items that include confectionary, icing or chocolate

Baked items classified as amber can be served up to twice a week

PROTEIN FOODS NGĀ KAI PŪMUA

Protein foods help the body grow and repair and provide other key nutrients such as iron in red meat.

Protein foods are either sourced from plants (plant-based) or from animals (animal-based). Animal-based protein foods include beef, pork, lamb, fish, seafood, poultry, processed meat, eggs and cheese. Plant-based protein foods include legumes, nuts, seeds, and plant-based meat alternatives.

Minimum weight requirements

MEALS WHERE MORE THAN HALF THE PROTEIN
FOOD IS **ANIMAL-BASED**

YEARS 0-3

30g

YEARS 4-8

40g

YEARS 9+

50g

MEALS WHERE MORE THAN HALF THE PROTEIN
FOOD IS **PLANT-BASED**

YEARS 0-3

45g

YEARS 4-8

60g

YEARS 9+

75g

Plant-based protein foods generally contain less protein than animal-based products. Therefore, the minimum weight requirement for plant-based protein foods is greater than that for animal-based.



Green, amber and red classifications

LEGUMES (eg lentils, chickpeas, roasted or flavoured legumes, red kidney beans, split peas) *Excludes hummus*

Refer to 'Fats, oils and spreads' category for hummus

GREEN



- » Plain, dried and canned legumes
- » Flavoured legumes with an HSR of at least 3.5 (eg soup mix)

AMBER



- » Flavoured legumes with an HSR of 3

RED



- » Legumes with an HSR of 2.5 or less

NUTS AND SEEDS

Note: nut and seed butters have separate criteria - refer to 'Fats, oils and spreads' category.

GREEN



- » Roasted or raw nuts and seeds with no added salt or sugar

AMBER



- » Salted nuts and seeds in a portion size of up to 30g

RED



- » Salted nuts and seeds in a portion size greater than 30g
- » Coated nuts and seeds (sugar, chocolate, candy or yoghurt)
- » Nuts and seeds with confectionery

MEAT, FISH & SEAFOOD (eg chicken, turkey, beef, lamb, pork, fish, seafood)

GREEN



- » Fresh and frozen meat, fish and seafood
- » Red meat with visible fat removed
- » Lean mince (eg prime or premium)
- » Processed meat* and crumbed fish with an HSR of at least 3.5
- » All canned fish

AMBER



- » Processed meat*, crumbed fish or seafood with an HSR of 2, 2.5 or 3 in a portion size of up to 50g

Processed meat* classified as amber can be served up to twice a week

RED



- » Processed meat* and fish with an HSR of 1.5 or less
- » All luncheon and sausages
- » Red meat with visible fat

* *Examples of processed meat include smoked chicken, smoked fish, salami, pepperoni, ham, bacon, corned beef, pastrami, cured meat products (eg roast beef), chicken nuggets, schnitzel, pre-prepared meatballs and meat patties.*

PLANT-BASED MEAT ALTERNATIVES (eg falafel, tofu, vegetable-based patties, vegetarian sausages, plant-based 'meats')**GREEN**

- » Products with an HSR of at least 3.5 and containing at least 6g of protein per 100g

AMBER

- » Products with an HSR of 3 and containing at least 6g of protein per 100g

RED

- » Products with an HSR of 2.5 or less

EGGS**GREEN**

- » Eggs

CHEESE**GREEN**

- » Low or reduced-fat cheese (eg Edam, reduced-fat Cheddar, Lite Cottage Cheese, Lite Cream Cheese, reduced fat Feta)
- » Cheese naturally lower in fat (eg Mozzarella, Parmesan, pizza cheese blend, Swiss, Ricotta, cottage cheese, Paneer)

Cheese can be served in a portion size of up to 40g

AMBER

- » Full-fat cheese (eg Tasty, Colby, Cheddar, Mild, cream cheese, standard cheese blend, Feta) and processed cheese slices

Cheese can be served in a portion size of up to 40g

RED

- » Cheese in a portion size greater than 40g

ADDITIONAL FOOD ITEMS

NGĀ TŪEMI KAI TĀPIRI

These are other food items that may be included in meals in addition to compulsory meal components. They do not have minimum weight requirements but count towards the total meal weight.

If you choose to include additional meal components, prioritise milk and milk products and fruit as these provide important nutrients to support growing ākonga.

Green, amber and red classifications

MILK AND MILK PRODUCTS (eg milk powder, UHT milk, cream, evaporated milk, sour cream, yoghurt, dairy food, custards)

Excludes cheese

GREEN



- » Lite or low-fat cow's milk
- » Standard or full-fat cow's milk
- » Yoghurt, custard and dairy food with an HSR of at least 3.5

AMBER



- » Yoghurt, custard and dairy food with an HSR of 3
- » Cream or sour cream in a portion size of up to 15g
- » Lite sour cream

RED



- » All flavoured milks (eg chocolate milk)
- » Yoghurt, custard and dairy food products with an HSR of 2.5 or less
- » Cream or sour cream in a portion size of greater than 15g
- » Frozen desserts (eg ice cream)



ALTERNATIVES FOR MILK AND MILK PRODUCTS**GREEN**

- » Plant-based yoghurts with an HSR of at least 3.5
- » All unflavoured plant-based milks are categorised as green

AMBER

- » Plant-based yoghurts with an HSR of 3
- » Dairy-free cheese in a portion size of up to 40g

RED

- » Plant-based yoghurt with an HSR of 2.5 or less
- » All flavoured plant-based milk
- » Cheese alternatives in a portion size greater than 40g

FRUIT**GREEN**

- » Fresh or frozen Fruit
- » Canned fruit in juice (drained)
- » Stewed or cooked fruit with no added sugar

AMBER

- » Dried fruit with no added sugar in a portion size of up to 30g (*as a side or an ingredient in baking, snack balls or fruit and nut mix*)

RED

- » Fruit in jelly
- » Dried fruit in a portion size greater than 30g
- » Compote, fruit puree and canned fruit in syrup
- » Fruit juice

COOKING SAUCES (eg pasta sauce, stir-fry sauce)**GREEN**

- » Vegetable-based cooking sauces (eg tomato passata, tomato pasta sauce, bolognese sauce, butter chicken style sauce)

AMBER

- » Other meal-based cooking sauces (eg white sauce, cheese sauce, stir-fry sauce, pasta bake sauce)
- » Asian sauces (eg teriyaki)
- » Soy sauce in a portion size of up to 2.5ml (½ tsp)
- » Coconut milk
- » Coconut cream in a portion size of up to 15ml

RED

- » Coconut cream in a portion size greater than 15ml

TABLE SAUCES AND DRESSINGS (eg tomato sauce, dressings, mayonnaise, gravies, chutney)**AMBER**

- » Gravy in a portion size of up to 40g
- » All table sauces and dressings

**FATS, OILS AND SPREADS****GREEN**

- » Marmite, vegemite, nut butters, hummus, tahini
- » Oils and spreads rich in mono- and polyunsaturated oils eg canola, rice bran, sunflower, olive oil and margarine

AMBER

- » Coconut oil and butter in a portion size of up to 10g
- » Jam and honey in a portion size of up to 15g

RED

- » Dripping, lard, palm oil
- » Chocolate hazelnut spread

PACKAGED SNACKS (eg popcorn, corn chips, cassava chips, potato chips, muesli bars)**AMBER**

- » Packaged snacks with an HSR of at least 3.5 in a portion size of up to 40g

Note that corn chips can contribute to the minimum weight for grain foods if served as part of the main meal, eg beef nachos

RED

- » Packaged snacks with an HSR of less than 3.5
- » Packaged snacks in a portion size greater than 40g
- » Snacks containing confectionary

PASTRY (does not include pastry filling)**AMBER**

- » Filo pastry (brushed with plant-based oil)

RED

- » All other pastry products

CONFECTIONARY (chocolate, lollies, sweets)**RED**

- » All confectionary

MENU CHECKLIST FOR LUNCH PROVIDERS

RĀRANGITAKI TAOTAKA

Use this list to check that your menu meets the Nutrition Standards

1. **Total weight** of each meal exceeds the minimum weight

YEARS 0-3
180g
YEARS 4-8
240g
YEARS 9+
300g

2. **Vegetables** in each meal exceed the minimum weight

COOKED VEGETABLES
YEARS 0-3
50g
YEARS 4-8
60g
YEARS 9+
70g

SALAD VEGETABLES
YEARS 0-3
25g
YEARS 4-8
30g
YEARS 9+
35g

3. **Grain foods and starchy vegetables** in each meal exceed the minimum weight

YEARS 0-3
30g
YEARS 4-8
60g
YEARS 9+
90g

For rice, pasta, noodles and starchy vegetables, aim to include at least 50 percent more than the minimum weight



4. **Protein foods** in each meal exceed the minimum weight

MEALS WHERE MORE THAN HALF THE PROTEIN FOOD IS **ANIMAL-BASED**

YEARS 0-3

30g

YEARS 4-8

40g

YEARS 9+

50g

MEALS WHERE MORE THAN HALF THE PROTEIN FOOD IS **PLANT-BASED**

YEARS 0-3

45g

YEARS 4-8

60g

YEARS 9+

75g

5. **Amber items** in each meal do not exceed the maximum weight allowance

YEARS 0-3

60g

YEARS 4-8

75g

YEARS 9+

100g

6. **Baked items classified as amber** are served no more than two times per week

7. **Processed meats classified as amber** are served no more than two times per week



OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

ĒTAHI ATU WHAKAAROTANGA

Mixed meals or ready-to-eat meals

Ngā kai whāranu me ngā kai-kua-taka-kē

Some lunch recipes include several meal components that cannot be categorised as a whole (eg lasagne, soup, and frittatas). For these recipes, use the quantities of each ingredient to determine if the overall meal meets the amber allowance and minimum weight requirements.

See Appendix One for examples of how ‘mixed meals’ can be classified.

- » Lunch providers can use the menu checklist on page 25 to ensure their menu meets The Standards.
- » If you are unsure, contact the Ka Ora, Ka Ako nutrition team who can help.

Special meals

Ngā kai motuhake

Lunch providers will receive information from schools and kura on any dietary requirements.

Lunch providers are required to provide special meals for the common dietary requirements discussed below.

- » Common allergies in New Zealand children are milk products, egg, peanut, tree nut, sesame, fish, shellfish, kiwifruit, wheat, soy. **These allergies may be life-threatening.**
 - › *For more information on allergies: www.allergy.org.nz/education/schools-and-preschools/resources*
- » Common intolerances. This includes non-coeliac gluten sensitivity and lactose intolerance.
- » Religious dietary requirements.
- » Ethical dietary requirements.
 - › *Note: vegetarian and vegan diets may also be adhered to for religious reasons.*
- » Pregnancy and breastfeeding.
 - › *For more information on dietary requirements during pregnancy: www.mpi.govt.nz/food-safety-home/food-pregnancy/list-safe-food-pregnancy*

Note: Lunch providers do not have to cater for high and complex dietary requirements (see Appendix 2 for a list of these).

Individual food preferences

Ngā manakohanga kai takitahi

You do not have to cater for individual food preferences (likes or dislikes). Food preferences are for different food flavours, colours, forms and textures.

Note: Repeated exposure to common foods, such as vegetables, helps children and young people develop healthy food choices. It can take many exposures to a new food before a child learns to accept and enjoy it, so continuing to offer a rejected food in small quantities will often result in increased uptake over time.

Food safety

Te haumarū kai

Be careful to choose, prepare, cook and store foods safely to meet the requirements of your approved Food Control Plan.

For more support on how to manage food safety risks, visit the Ministry of Primary Industry's website at www.mpi.govt.nz/food-business/running-a-food-business/



Nutrition tips for lunch providers

Ngā tīwhiri taioranga mā ngā kaiwhakarato tina

This information can assist lunch providers in creating nutritionally balanced meals within a budget.

CHOOSING AND PREPARING NUTRITIOUS FOODS

Aim to choose foods that mostly come from nature or resemble their natural form.

- » Choose natural or minimally processed foods as much as possible, as these contain less added fat, sugar and sodium than processed foods.
- » Choose vegetables with different colours and textures. This is important as each vegetable provides different nutrients and an opportunity to introduce new foods to children.
- » Look at the 'per 100g' column when reading food labels or comparing to other products.
 - › Choose foods that contain less of the three S's;
 - saturated fat, sugar and sodium.
- » Introduce new foods with familiar foods to help children accept different flavours and textures, eg introduce brown rice alongside white rice.

- » Choose plant-based cooking oils/fats/spreads as these are considered heart healthy options eg canola, rice bran and olive oils, nut butter, avocado, plant-based spread (margarine) and hummus.
 - › This avoids the use of fats or spreads that are high in saturated fat such as butter, lard, coconut oil and palm oil.
- » Reduce the amount of sugar in recipes or use fresh fruit for sweetness instead of sugar.
- » Dilute coconut cream with water (ratio of 1:1 for water: coconut cream), as coconut cream is high in saturated fat. This also makes the coconut cream go further.

ADDING FLAVOUR WITHOUT USING SALT

There are many seasonings (other than salt) that add flavour to meals.

- » Use herbs, spices, vegetables and reduced sodium sauces instead of salt.
 - › Examples include dried herbs, fresh herbs, pepper, curry powder, turmeric, cumin, paprika, ginger, garlic, onions, reduced salt/sodium soy sauce, lemon juice and low salt stock cubes. Crushed varieties of ginger and garlic can be used instead of fresh.



COST-SAVING IDEAS

There are several ways to save money, while still making tasty and nutritious meals.

- » Buy vegetables that are in season or local, as these are cheaper and have more flavour.
 - › Supporting local community/school gardens is a sustainable way to source produce.
 - › Canned and frozen are affordable options when fresh vegetables are not in season.
- » Use legumes or vegetables to make a meal go further. Legumes include lentils, butter beans, cannellini beans, red kidney beans, chickpeas and soybeans.
- » Use the whole vegetable to reduce food waste, eg keep the skin on where possible and use stalks from broccoli and cauliflower.
- » Use canned instead of fresh fish as a cost-efficient way to add fish into the menu.
- » Use powdered milk as a cost-effective alternative to fresh milk.

ENGAGING WITH ĀKONGA, THE COMMUNITY AND THE LAND

Schools using the internal delivery model can get ākonga and the community involved. This also allows lunch providers to connect to the land and protect the natural environment (kaitiakitanga).

- » Establish relationships with local community gardens or school gardens.
 - › This provides lunch providers with the opportunity to use locally sourced produce in the meals, which has a lower impact on the environment by reducing food packaging and carbon emissions.
 - › Getting children and young people involved in growing produce helps them understand where food comes from and allows them to connect to nature.
 - › For more information on Garden to Table at gardentotable.org.nz
- » Get feedback from ākonga on how they are enjoying the meals. This could be surveys that ask simple questions around new foods they have enjoyed, collecting verbal feedback, or putting a sticker on a chart that represents their enjoyment of the meal.



Glossary

Te kuputaka

Ākonga (*te reo Māori*) — student or students.

Allergies — Food allergies occur when a food triggers an immune response in the body.

Confectionary — Includes boiled sweets, toffees and caramels, fudge, fondants, gums (including sugar-free gums), pastilles and jellies, yoghurt-covered items, candied fruit and nuts, chocolate and compound chocolate.

Fibre — Fibre refers to the edible parts of plant foods that do not get digested by the body. Examples of foods high in fibre include oats, legumes, vegetables, fruit and wholegrains. Fibre has many health benefits including helping to keep bowels regular.

Food insecurity — A limited or uncertain availability of nutritionally adequate and safe foods or limited ability to acquire personally acceptable foods that meet cultural needs in a socially acceptable way.

Heart healthy foods — Heart healthy foods support the health of the heart. Heart healthy foods are commonly associated with the Mediterranean eating style, which includes a large amount of fruit and vegetables, nuts, wholegrains, fish and legumes.

Highly processed foods — These foods, or the ingredients used to make them, are heavily processed so they are usually very different from their natural form. They are often high in refined grains, energy, added saturated fat, sugar and/or salt.

Kura (*te reo Māori*) — school or education.

Low-fat — The food must contain no more fat than 1.5 g/100 mL (liquids) or 3 g/100 g (solids).

Manaaki (*te reo Māori*) — to support, take care of, give hospitality to, protect, look out for – show respect, generosity and care for others.

Meal component — In this context, meal components include non-starchy vegetables, grain foods and starchy vegetables, protein foods and additional food items.

Minimally processed foods — Resembles the appearance of their natural form and have undergone minor changes to make them safer and easier to eat such as cleaning, pasteurising, canning, and freezing eg pasteurised milk, meat, rice, grains (wheat and corn normally is consumed as pasta or tortilla).

Natural foods — Natural foods come from plants and animals and do not undergo any change eg fresh fruit and vegetables, eggs.

Portion size — A portion size refers to the amount of food offered at a single eating occasion.

Processed meats — Processed meats have been changed in some way to enhance the meat's flavour or to make it last for longer. Ways of processing include smoking, curing, salting or adding chemical preservatives. Processed meats include ham, bacon, cured sausages, jerky, deli meats (eg smoked chicken, luncheon, sliced

roast beef, corned beef) and meat-based pre-prepared foods (eg patties, meatballs, chicken nuggets).

Reduced (fat, sugar, or salt) — The food should be at least 25 percent lower in fat, sugar, or salt than the original version of the food (or a comparable food) eg a reduced-fat sour cream should have at least 25 percent less fat than a standard full-fat sour cream.

Refined grains — Refined grains refer to grains that are not whole (they are missing one or more of the three elements: bran, germ, outer layer). Examples include white flour and white rice.

Sodium — Sodium is commonly found in food as salt (sodium chloride). Foods high in sodium tend to be processed and packaged.

Special meal — Meals that meet the specific needs of a student. This may be for medical, health, religious or ethical reasons.

Starch — Starch is a type of carbohydrate; it is an important energy source in foods.

Starchy vegetables — Starchy vegetables contain higher levels of carbohydrates than other vegetables. Based on how starchy vegetables are commonly used in lunches, this category includes potatoes, Māori potatoes, kūmara, taro, green banana and cassava.

Tiaki (*te reo Māori*) — to safeguard, protect, look after, nurse, care, conserve.

Vegetables category — These vegetables come in a wide variety of colours and types, such as carrots, onion, lettuce and broccoli. Some vegetables can technically be classified as legumes, fruits, fungi or starchy vegetables but in this context, this category includes mushrooms, peas, sweet corn, tomatoes, yam, parsnip, turnip and swede.

Whānau (*te reo Māori*) — a family, extended family.

Whole foods — Foods that resemble their natural form with as little processing as possible. They may have been harvested and cleaned ready for eating. Examples include fresh fruit and vegetables, raw nuts and seeds, eggs, fish, chicken and red meat.

Wholegrains — Wholegrains are foods that have the entire grain including the outer layers, bran and germ. Wholegrains can be processed (eg cracked, crushed, rolled, extruded, and/or cooked), to allow them to be digested. Examples include brown rice, oats, barley, quinoa, millet, and buckwheat.

Wholemeal — Wholemeal refers to foods in which the wholegrains have been refined into smaller pieces. Examples include wholemeal flour and wholemeal bread.



References

Te rārangi pukapuka

Heart Foundation. Is Eating Meat Good for You?

www.heartfoundation.org.nz/wellbeing/healthy-eating/nutrition-facts/is-meat-good-for-you. 2022

Ministry of Education. Ka Ora, Ka Ako | Healthy School Lunches Programme.

www.education.govt.nz/our-work/overall-strategies-and-policies/wellbeing-in-education/free-and-healthy-school-lunches. 2021.

Ministry of Health. Household Food Insecurity among Children: New Zealand Health Survey. Wellington; 2019.

Ministry of Health. Healthy Food and Drink Guidance – Schools. Wellington; 2020.

Ministry of Health. Eating and Activity Guidelines for New Zealand Adults: Updated 2020. Wellington; 2020.

Food Standards Australia New Zealand Act. Australia New Zealand Food Standards Code – Standard 1.2.7 – Nutrition, health and related claims. 2016.



Appendix

Ngā āpitihanga

APPENDIX 1: SAMPLE MENUS

ĀPITIHINGA 1: NGĀ TAUIRA TAOTAKA

This section provides examples of meals that meet the Standards.

Summer sample menu



Meal 1. Ham and cheese sandwich

This meal contains wholegrain bread, sliced ham, reduced-fat cheese, mayonnaise, lettuce, cucumber. Served with a wholemeal apple muffin and carrot sticks.

Vegetarian option: swap ham for mashed egg.

Vegetables: lettuce, cucumber and carrot.

Protein foods: ham/egg and cheese.

Grain foods/starchy vegetables: wholegrain bread and wholemeal apple muffin.

Amber component: mayonnaise, ham and wholemeal apple muffin.

Meal 2. Chilli Con Carne

This meal contains lean beef mince, white rice, dried herbs, vegetable sauce (canned tomatoes, grated carrot, frozen corn), with lite sour cream and reduced-fat cheese to garnish. Served with a piece of fruit.

Vegetarian option: swap lean beef mince for canned kidney beans.

Vegetables: vegetable sauce.

Protein foods: beef/kidney beans and cheese.

Grain foods and starchy vegetables: white rice.

Amber component: lite sour cream.



Meal 3. Couscous salad

This meal contains couscous, roast lamb, roast pumpkin, capsicum, green beans, reduced-sodium feta cheese, salad dressing. Served with yoghurt (HSR 4).

Vegetarian option: swap roast lamb for falafel (HSR 4.5).

Vegetables: roast pumpkin, capsicum and green beans.

Protein foods: lamb/falafel and reduced-sodium feta.

Grain foods and starchy vegetables: couscous.

Amber component: salad dressing

Meal 4. Mexican-style tacos

This meal contains wholegrain tortilla wraps, crumbed fish, Mexican spices, avocado, lettuce, canned corn kernels, red onion, lite sour cream. Serve with a piece of fruit and an oat and raisin biscuit.

Vegetarian option: swap crumbed fish for black beans.

Vegetables: avocado, lettuce, red onion and canned corn kernels.

Protein foods: crumbed fish/black beans.

Grain foods and starchy vegetables: Wholegrain tortilla wraps.

Amber component: lite sour cream and oat and raisin biscuit.

Meal 5. Chicken wraps

This meal contains wholemeal wraps, shredded chicken, carrot, beetroot, cabbage, capsicum, reduced-sugar BBQ sauce and mayonnaise. Served with a low-fat yoghurt.

Vegetarian option: swap chicken for haloumi cheese.

Vegetables: carrot, beetroot, capsicum and cabbage.

Protein foods: shredded chicken/haloumi cheese.

Grain foods and starchy vegetables: wholemeal wrap.

Amber component: haloumi cheese (vegetarian option), BBQ sauce and mayonnaise.



Winter sample menu

Meal 1. Sweet and sour chicken

This meal contains diced skinless chicken, white and wholegrain rice mix, stir-fried seasonal vegetables and sweet and sour sauce. Served with a piece of fruit.

Vegetarian option: swap diced chicken for diced tofu.

Vegetables: stir-fried seasonal vegetables.

Protein foods: chicken/tofu.

Grain foods and starchy vegetables: white and wholegrain rice mix.

Amber component: sweet and sour sauce.

Meal 2. Massaman curry

This meal contains pulled beef, massaman sauce, steamed seasonal vegetables and brown rice. Served with a muesli bar (HSR 4).

Vegetarian option: swap pulled beef for paneer cheese.

Vegetables: steamed seasonal vegetables.

Protein foods: pulled beef/paneer cheese.

Grain foods and starchy vegetables: brown rice.

Amber component: massaman sauce and muesli bar.



Meal 3. Lasagne

This meal contains lasagne sheets, lean beef mince, white sauce (milk, flour, parmesan and edam cheese), dried herbs, onion, garlic, beef stock, canned tomatoes, carrot and spinach. Served with yoghurt (HSR 4.5).

Vegetarian option: swap lean beef mince for a lentil and cannellini bean mix and swap the beef stock for vegetable stock.

Vegetables: onion, garlic, canned tomatoes, carrot and spinach.

Protein foods: cheese and beef mince/lentil and cannellini bean mix.

Grain foods and starchy vegetables: lasagne sheets.

Amber component: white sauce.

Meal 4. Chicken sandwich

This meal contains wholegrain bread, shredded chicken, mayonnaise, edam cheese and lettuce. Served with vegetable (carrot and cucumber) sticks and hummus.

Vegetarian option: swap the shredded chicken for mashed egg.

Vegetables: lettuce and vegetable sticks.

Protein foods: shredded chicken/mashed egg, and reduced-fat cheese.

Grain foods and starchy vegetables: wholegrain bread.

Amber component: mayonnaise.

Meal 5. Tuna wrap

This meal contains canned tuna, wholemeal wraps, carrot, beetroot, cabbage, mayonnaise. Served with yoghurt (HSR 4).

Vegetarian option: swap canned tuna for falafel.

Vegetables: carrot, beetroot, cabbage.

Protein foods: canned tuna/falafel.

Grain foods and starchy vegetables: wholemeal wraps.

Amber component: mayonnaise.



APPENDIX 2: COMPLEX DIETARY REQUIREMENTS

ĀPITIHINGA 2: NGĀ WHIRINGA KAI TUATINI

Complex dietary requirements do not have to be catered for by Ka Ora, Ka Ako lunch providers, as the risk of error or the risk to health/safety is too high.

Complex dietary requirements include the following:

- » Rare or multiple allergies, generally three or more, will need to be considered on a case-by-case basis and may need to be excluded from standard provision
- » Intolerances other than those listed as “in-scope”, such as fructose intolerance, FODMAP intolerance, or other medically diagnosed intolerances
- » Other medically prescribed diets that can’t be addressed by the menus for dietary requirements that are “in scope”
- » Multiple medical conditions that require special diets, for example allergies and dysphagia
- » Special diets that are already funded for provision by District Health Boards.

