



# Healthy, easy to prepare recipes

using ingredients from your freezer and pantry

smart **CHOICES**  
with limited fresh food supply



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Funded by the Queensland Government



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**Healthier. Happier.**

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Smart Choices, [the Healthy Food and Drink Supply Strategy for Queensland Schools](#) is all about offering healthy food and drink choices to students.

Foods produced using frozen or canned ingredients can be just as nutritious, cost effective and convenient as those made with fresh ingredients. This resource showcases healthy meals and snacks for schools to supply when there is limited access to fresh produce. Using frozen or canned foods instead of fresh may be beneficial if:

- your school is in a rural or remote location with a lack of fresh food supply
- your tuckshop or school sports club only operates once a week/ fortnight/ month
- storage of fresh produce is not possible when stocks are being run down at the end of the school term.

### Essential long life freezer and pantry items

A lack of fresh ingredients should not be the reason that healthy meals and snacks aren't prepared on site. There is a large range of healthy products that contain important nutrients, which have a good shelf life when kept in the freezer or pantry:

#### The pantry

- rice
- dried pasta
- dried noodles
- cous cous
- canned tomatoes
- kidney beans
- canned vegetables (corn, beans)
- jars of preserved vegetables
- lentils
- canned fish (tuna, salmon)
- canned chicken
- canned fruit
- dried fruit
- seeds (pumpkin, sunflower)
- tomato paste
- dried herbs
- spices
- stock, reduced salt
- long life milk
- flour
- oats

#### The freezer

- grated cheese
- wraps
- bread
- frozen vegetables







## Recipes

### Mexican rice with beans

Serves 10

*Mexican rice is a popular dish in many tuckshops. It is tasty and economical to make. Each portion of this recipe contains two serves of vegetables. You can add extra frozen vegetables. Individual serves of rice and beans can also be frozen for storage and reheated prior to serving.*

#### INGREDIENTS

2 tablespoons olive oil  
 2 onions, finely chopped  
 3 teaspoons ground cumin  
 1/3 cup no added salt tomato paste  
 1 kg can no added salt diced tomatoes  
 1 kg can no added salt kidney beans, drained and rinsed  
 1/2 tablespoon sugar  
 500 g rice (use brown rice in place of white rice for extra fibre)  
 400 g can corn kernels, drained and rinsed  
 200 g reduced fat cheese, grated

#### METHOD

1. Heat oil in a large saucepan over medium heat. Add onion, cook, stirring for 3 to 4 minutes or until soft.
2. Add cumin, cook, stirring for 2 minutes or until fragrant.
3. Add tomato paste, tomato, beans and sugar. Bring to the boil. Reduce heat to low. Simmer for 20 minutes or until mixture has slightly thickened.
4. Cook rice using your preferred method.
5. Add corn, stir and cook for 2 minutes or until corn is heated through.
6. Serve beans and rice, topped with grated cheese.





## Curried sweet potato soup

Serves 10 (200 ml each)

*Soup is a delicious addition to tuckshop menus during the cooler months. Soup has the added bonus of freezing well to be reheated on the day of service.*

### INGREDIENTS

- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- 2 onions, finely chopped
- 1 teaspoon crushed garlic (from jar or fresh)
- 1 tablespoon Madras curry powder
- 300 g dried red lentils
- 5 large sweet potatoes, peeled and chopped
- 3 litres salt-reduced vegetable stock

#### Smart tip

Sweet potato can be purchased in bulk when available, peeled and chopped and then frozen in freezer bags for later use.

### METHOD

1. Heat oil in a large heavy-based saucepan over medium heat.
2. Add onion and garlic, cooking for 2 to 3 minutes until soft.
3. Add curry powder and stir for 30 seconds until fragrant.
4. Add lentils, sweet potato and stock. Stir until well combined. Bring to the boil. Reduce heat to medium-low.
5. Cook, partially covered, for about 20 minutes, stirring regularly until sweet potato is just tender.



## Tuna pasta salad with green beans

Serves 10

*Pasta dishes are popular with children and teenagers and can be served either hot or cold. Pasta is a versatile grain food that when uncooked has a long shelf life.*

### INGREDIENTS

1 kg large pasta spirals  
 800 g can sliced green beans, rinsed and drained  
 800 g canned tuna in oil, drained reserving 2 tablespoons of oil for dressing  
 225 g jar char grilled capsicum, thinly sliced  
 ¼ cup dried herbs  
 2 teaspoons crushed garlic  
 1 teaspoon cracked black pepper  
 80 ml lemon juice

### METHOD

1. Cook pasta in a large saucepan of boiling water until tender, drain.
2. Drain tuna over a small bowl reserving 2 tablespoons of oil for the dressing.
3. Flake tuna in large chunks with a fork.
4. Place all ingredients and reserved oil in a large bowl and toss gently to combine.

#### Smart tip

**Replace frozen beans with other frozen or canned vegetables, for example corn and carrots.**







## Chicken and bean burrito

Serves 10

*Burritos are a favourite for many at home and at school. This recipe includes kidney beans, a great long life vegetable when fresh vegetable supply is limited.*

### INGREDIENTS

- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- 2 onions, finely diced
- 1 teaspoon crushed garlic
- 1 tablespoon ground cumin
- 1 tablespoon smoked paprika
- 400 g canned or fresh cooked shredded chicken
- 800 g can red kidney beans, drained and rinsed
- 800 g can no added salt crushed tomatoes
- 1/3 cup no added salt tomato paste
- 500 g frozen vegetables
- 10 tortillas
- 200 g grated cheese

### METHOD

1. Heat oil in a frying pan over medium heat.
2. Add onion and garlic, cooking for 2 to 3 minutes or until soft.
3. Add cumin and paprika and stir, cook for 30 seconds until fragrant.
4. Add chicken, beans, tomatoes, tomato paste. Add frozen vegetables. Cook for 10 minutes or until sauce has reduced slightly.
5. Sprinkle with cheese and serve in tortillas.

#### Smart tips

The bean and chicken mix used in this recipe in great in other Mexican dishes and pasta dishes. The bean and chicken mix can be made in advance and frozen in small quantities for later use. Grated cheese can be kept in the freezer.





## Vegetable biryani

Serves 10

*Biryani is a delicious rice dish from the Indian subcontinent, made with rice, spices and vegetables. Some varieties also contain meat, chicken or fish. Biryani can be made in advance and frozen. Sultanas and nuts (optional) can be added the day of serving.*

### INGREDIENTS

2 tablespoons olive oil  
3 potatoes, washed and cubed  
Black pepper  
1 kg basmati rice  
2 tablespoons turmeric  
2 teaspoons garam marsala  
1 kg canned corn and peas, rinsed and drained  
½ cup of slivered almonds (optional)  
½ cup of sultanas

#### Smart tips

**Biryani can be served with toasted flatbread.  
Frozen potatoes can be used instead of fresh potatoes.  
Replace almonds with sunflower seeds for a nut free option.**



## METHOD

1. Heat 1 tablespoon of oil in a large pot. Add potatoes and black pepper and cook until the potatoes soften. Put mixture aside.
2. Meanwhile soak rice for 5 to 10 minutes to remove excess starch. Drain.
3. Heat extra oil in pot on a medium heat. Add rice and mix.
4. Add turmeric and garam marsala and cook for 2 to 3 minutes, stirring occasionally.
5. Add water so that it just covers the rice and cook for 2 to 3 minutes, uncovered.
6. Reduce heat to low, being careful not to mix. When holes appear in the rice add the peas, corn and potatoes. At this stage you can also add in any extra vegetables that you may have.
7. Cook until rice is soft. Mix through almonds (optional) and sultanas. Serve warm.







## Cous cous and roast vegetable salad

Serves 20

*Cous cous is a versatile grain food that can be stored in the pantry prior to preparation. Use a variety of vegetables that are suited to roasting such as carrot, celery, tomato, zucchini, capsicum, pumpkin and sweet potato. Change the vegetables you use based on what is available.*

### INGREDIENTS

2 kg vegetables, peeled, cut into 3 cm cubes  
Spray oil  
3 cups cous cous (use wholemeal for extra fibre)  
3 cups boiling water  
 $\frac{3}{4}$  cup sultanas  
 $\frac{1}{2}$  cup lemon juice  
1 tablespoon olive oil  
1 tablespoon curry powder  
Toasted pumpkin seeds – optional

### METHOD

1. Preheat oven to 180 °C. Line a large baking tray with baking paper.
2. Place vegetables onto the tray and spray oil over the mixture. Toss to coat.
3. Bake for 40 minutes or until vegetables are golden and tender.
4. Meanwhile place cous cous in a heat proof bowl and add boiling water. Quickly cover with plastic wrap and allow to sit for 5 minutes. After this, use a fork to separate grains.
5. Add cooked vegetables to the cous cous.
6. Dress with lemon juice, olive oil and curry powder.
7. Sprinkle with toasted pumpkin seeds and serve.



#### Smart tips

**Vegetables can be purchased in bulk when available, chopped and then frozen in freezer bags for use later.**

**You may choose to stir-fry vegetables instead of baking – this works well when using frozen vegetables.**





## Mee goreng

Serves 10

*Mee goreng is a noodle dish common in Malaysia, Indonesia and Singapore. The ingredients in this recipe are often easily accessible or have a long shelf life in the freezer or pantry.*

### INGREDIENTS

500 g dried egg noodles  
1.5 litres water, boiling  
1/3 cup sesame oil  
8 eggs, lightly beaten  
2 teaspoons crushed garlic  
2 teaspoons crushed ginger  
400 g can green beans, rinsed and drained  
400 g can bean sprouts, rinsed and drained  
2 tablespoons kecap manis (sweet soy sauce)  
1 tablespoon sweet chilli sauce

### METHOD

1. Place the noodles in a heat proof bowl and cover with boiling water. Set aside for 5 minutes or until noodles are just soft. Drain.
2. Heat 1 tablespoon of oil in a wok over a medium-high heat. Add egg mixture and swirl around wok to form an omelette. Cook for 2 minutes or until just set. Season and transfer to chopping board; roll and thinly slice.
3. Heat remaining oil in the wok over a medium-high heat. Add garlic and ginger and stir fry for 1 minute or until fragrant.
4. Add the noodles, green beans, bean sprouts, kecap manis and sweet chilli sauce and mix through evenly, cook for 5 minutes.
5. Serve topped with egg.

#### Smart tip

**Swap beans for other frozen or tinned vegetables.**

## Tuna and sweet potato cakes

Serves 20 (2 patties per serve)

*Tuna and sweet potato cakes are a tasty way to encourage children and teenagers to eat fish. These can be served with salad, stir-fry vegetables or on a roll or in a wrap.*

### INGREDIENTS

Olive oil cooking spray  
3 onions, finely chopped  
1 kg sweet potato, peeled and chopped  
2 kg canned tuna in springwater, drained, flaked  
6 eggs, lightly beaten  
2 cups breadcrumbs  
500 g frozen peas and corn  
½ cup sweet chilli sauce

### METHOD

1. Spray a small non-stick frying pan lightly with oil. Heat over medium heat. Add onions. Stir for 2 minutes or until soft.
2. In a bowl combine cooked onions, sweet potato, tuna, egg, breadcrumbs, peas and corn and sweet chilli sauce. Stir until well combined.
3. Divide mixture into 40 equal portions and shape into 1.5 cm thick patties.
4. Heat a large, non-stick frying pan over medium heat until hot. Lightly spray the pan with oil. Cook in batches for 4 to 5 minutes each side or until golden and heated through. Place in oven to keep warm.



### Smart tips

**Tuna cakes can be made in advance and frozen before cooking for later use.  
Tuna cakes can be baked in the oven instead of cooked in a pan.**



## Apple muffins

Serves 24

*This muffin recipe makes use of mostly long life ingredients. Yoghurt for use in this recipe can be stored in the freezer until you are ready to cook up a batch of these muffins.*

### INGREDIENTS

3 cups self-raising flour (use wholemeal for extra fibre)  
½ cup raw sugar  
2 teaspoons cinnamon  
2 eggs  
400 g reduced fat plain yoghurt  
1 cup reduced fat long life milk  
1 cup rice bran oil  
¼ cup apple juice  
200 g canned pie apples, chopped

### METHOD

1. Preheat oven to 200 °C. Line muffin tray with baking paper.
2. In a bowl, combine flours, sugar, baking soda and cinnamon.
3. In a separate bowl, mix the egg, yoghurt, milk, oil and orange juice.
4. Combine both the mixtures with half the chopped pie apple and stir, being careful not to over-mix.
5. Fill muffin cases with mixture and top with remaining chopped pie apples.
6. Cook for 15 to 20 minutes or until golden brown. Cool in tray.

#### Smart tip

**Use different canned or frozen fruits for variety.**



## Frozen yoghurt pops

20 serves

### INGREDIENTS

6 cups chopped fruit  
6 cups plain yoghurt, reduced fat  
¼ cup honey

### METHOD

1. Peel and slice fruit and put it into a food processor or blender with the yoghurt and honey. Whiz it up on a low setting until smooth. Add some water if the mixture is too thick.
2. Divide the mixture between 20 paper cups or plastic ice block moulds.
3. Place the pops in the freezer for 10 minutes, then gently poke a popsicle stick into the center of each one. Place back in the freezer for at least 3 hours, or until frozen solid.

#### Smart tip

Frozen yoghurt pops are a great way to use up leftover fruit and yoghurt.

## Baked bean jaffles

10 serves

### INGREDIENTS

20 slices wholemeal bread  
500 g baked beans  
Spray oil

### METHOD

1. Make 10 baked bean sandwiches, uncut.
2. Spray jaffle iron with oil.
3. Toast each sandwich in jaffle iron.
4. Allow to cool slightly. Wrap in paper and place in warmer, ready for service.

#### Smart tip

Bread for jaffles can be kept in the freezer for up to 3 months until ready to use.

## Roasted veggie pita pizzas

10 serves

### INGREDIENTS

10 mini pita breads  
100 g tomato paste, no added salt  
1 teaspoon dried herbs  
1.5 kg roasted vegetables  
400 g reduced fat cheese, grated

### METHOD

1. Preheat oven to 200 °C.
2. Lay out pita breads on a tray.
3. Combine tomato paste and herbs to make a pizza sauce.
4. Top with pizza sauce, roasted vegetables and cheese.
5. Cook in oven until cheese is melted and base is crisp.
6. Cut in half and place in paper serving tray. Keep warm until service.

#### Smart tip

**Roast vegetables can be stored in the freezer until ready to use.**

## Hawaiian melts

10 serves

### INGREDIENTS

5 wholemeal English muffins, halved  
100 g pizza sauce  
400 g canned pineapple  
400 g canned corn  
300 g reduced fat cheese, grated

### METHOD

1. Preheat oven to 200 °C.
2. Lay out English muffin halves on a lined baking tray.
3. Top with pizza sauce, pineapple, corn and cheese.
4. Cook in oven until cheese is melted.
5. Place in paper serving tray and keep warm until service.

Here are two healthy and easy to prepare tuckshop menus using long life ingredients. These menus are perfect for tuckshops which may not have easy access to fresh produce, that don't operate every day or who operate their food service for a weekly/fortnightly or monthly event.

## Sample primary school menu

*Tuckshop open Thursdays & Fridays*

### MEALS

#### **Cheesy Mexican rice \***

*Rice topped with yummy Mexican bean mix and cheese*

#### **Fisherman's plate \***

*Tasty tuna & sweet potato cakes with salad*

### SPECIALS

**Thursday** - Chicken burrito \*

**Friday** - Mee goreng \*

### SANDWICHES AND WRAPS

Choose from wholegrain, wholemeal or white bread, or wraps

Ham, cheese & salad

Egg & salad

Tuna & salad

*Salad options are dependent on fresh food supply*

### SNACKS

**Fruit cups with custard** *tinned fruit with a dollop of reduced fat custard*

**Frozen yoghurt pops \***

**Apple muffins \*** *made in our tuckshop*

**Cheese & crackers**

### DRINKS

Water

100% fruit juice (apple or orange)

Plain milk, reduced fat

Flavoured milk (chocolate or strawberry), reduced fat

\* recipe included in this recipe booklet



## Sample secondary school menu

*Tuckshop open daily*

### MEALS

**Chicken burrito \***

*Tasty wrap filled with chicken, beans and cheese*

**Vegetable biryani \***

*Rice with almonds, sultanas and veg*

**Hawaiian melts \***

*English muffin topped with sweet corn, pineapple and melted cheese – yum!*

### SPECIALS

**Tuesday** - Mee goreng \*

**Wednesday** - Curried sweet potato soup \*

**Thursday** - Tuna pasta salad \*

**Friday** - Cous cous salad \*

### SANDWICHES AND WRAPS

Choose from wholegrain, wholemeal or white bread, or wrap

Ham, cheese & salad

Egg & salad

Tuna & salad

Cheese & roast vegetable - toasted

*Vegetable & salad options are dependent on fresh food supply*

### SNACKS

**Fruit cups with custard** *tinned fruit with a dollop of reduced fat custard*

**Frozen yoghurt pops \***

**Apple muffins \*** *made in our tuckshop*

**Cheese & crackers**

### DRINKS

Water

100% fruit juice (apple or orange)

Plain milk, reduced fat

Flavoured milk (chocolate or strawberry), reduced fat

*\* recipe included in this recipe booklet*