

Inspiring school students to choose veggies and fruit – An Overview.



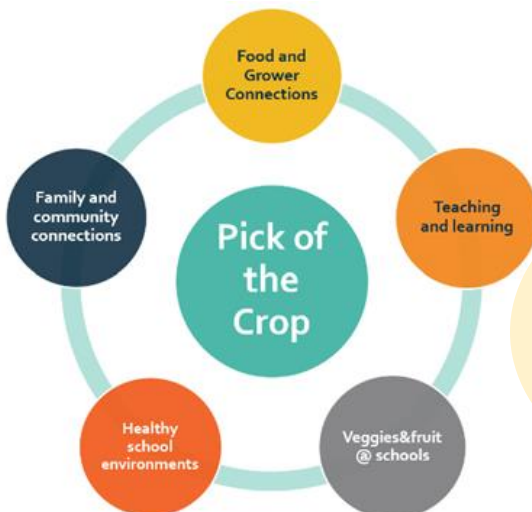
Pick of the Crop is a whole school healthy eating initiative developed by Health and Wellbeing Queensland (HWQld). It aims to increase the opportunities for Queensland primary school students to learn about and eat more vegetables and fruit.

Consistent with the latest Australian and international evidence of good practice, Pick of the Crop supports school communities to create environments for their students to learn about and make healthier food and drink choices.



School-led actions

Schools develop locally designed action plans, focusing on their needs and environments. These are based on five key components:



Regional focus

Schools in Department of Education regions of Far North Queensland, North Queensland, North Coast, Darling Downs South West and South East are invited to participate in Pick of the Crop.

Since 2021, 134 state schools have been involved in Pick of the Crop, reaching over 26,000 students. 67 new schools came onboard in 2023.

Benefits for schools

- Individualised support from locally based regional coordinators:
 - To develop and implement a school action plan, working alongside HWQld and partners.
 - To highlight opportunities for schools to increase student's opportunity to taste and learn about vegetables or fruit during the school day; and
 - To connect with schools, programs, stakeholders, and other partners.
- Access up to \$5,000 in Year 1 and \$2,000 in Year 2, to assist implementation of school action plans.
- Ability to join a closed Facebook Group.
- Receive termly communications from regional coordinators.
- Opportunities to network or attend professional development sessions, webinars or promotion events.
- Ongoing access to resources, information and tools through a dedicated webpage.

It has been so positive for our school but also for building relationships with local farmers and suppliers. (Year 2 school)

'To enable children to better understand the benefits of and enjoy fruit and vegetables.'
(School action plan)



A program delivered by

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Commitments from schools

- Demonstrated commitment from school leadership is essential to Pick of the Crop's success, with 'School Champions' leading the initiative in schools.
- Submission of an action plan, linking funding to actions or activities across the five Pick of the Crop components
- Good communication with regional coordinators in relation to the implementation of the approval action plan, including termly meetings.
- Completion of a Term 4 Review.



'Every week in Term 3, the prep students would learn and eat an interesting fruit during the health lesson. I was thrilled to hear from the prep teachers that some students who rarely ate fruit started to bring in these 'interesting fruit' over the next few weeks for lunch. We had some positive feedback from prep parents after these activities.' (Year 1 school)

'Prep students expanding their persistence in trying new healthy foods.' (Year 1 school)

'One student and her brother, who are heavily involved in our garden, have started eating vegetables at home because of vegetables introduced to them through our school garden. They now bring cucumbers and carrots to fruit snack every day.' (Year 2 school)

'Have loved the program and the wellbeing perspective it has provided kids at school. Having the funding to allow them to experience growing their own produce has been brilliant'. (Year 1 school)

For more information, see www.hw.qld.gov.au/pick-of-the-crop

Note: Quotes are from the 2022 Pick of the Crop Evaluation.