

Fast Facts on Juice:

The role of juice in the Australian diet and implications for the HSR review

Background

The Australian Dietary Guidelines [ADG] recognise the positive contribution juice (no added sugar) makes to a healthy dietary pattern and its role in helping many Australians meet their recommended daily fruit serves.

Juice is included in the 'core food' fruit recommendations:

125mL of fruit juice with no added sugar can be included as a serve of fruit "occasionally"

Yet, the proposed Health Star Rating system [HSR] communicates the contrary, with juice scoring as low as 2.5 stars, signalling to consumers that juice is not a healthier choice.

As the ADG were developed over seven years ago, the Australian Beverages Council Limited [ABCL] commissioned a research dossier in September 2020 to address this challenge by collating the latest evidence related to juice consumption in Australia and its contribution to the Australian diet. This briefing sheet summarises the key findings to provide direction to inform further discussions on the proposed HSR for juice.

Table 1: Proposed Health Star Ratings for foods/drinks in the 'fruit' group compared to Australian Dietary Guideline position

	MINIMUM STARS	HSR Position*	ADG Position
Whole fruit 150g		Core (≥3.5)	Core Food
Dried fruit 30g		Core (≥3.5)	Core Food (Included in fruit recommendations)
Juice (no added sugar) 125mL		Discretionary (<3.5)	Core Food (Included in fruit recommendations)

* Note this cut-off of 3.5 has been widely used by researchers and state health departments (Crino, et al. 2018) (Jones, Rådholm and Neal 2018) (Dunford, Thomas and Wu 2015)

Key messages

Juice makes a significant contribution to micronutrient intakes of consumers:

- 57% to vitamin C intake**
- 17% to folate intake**
- 14-16% to potassium intake**

Juice makes a relatively low contribution to energy and sugar intakes of the:

Population	Consumers
1% of energy	5% of energy
3.5% of total sugar	20% of total sugar
0% of added sugar	0% of added sugar



Juice consumption is declining, at the same time fruit and vegetable consumption remains low with 94% of the population not meeting recommended intakes.



Juice consumption is associated with multiple markers of a healthy diet, including total diet quality score, lower discretionary food intake and higher vegetable intake.



Juice provides a positive contribution to a healthy dietary pattern, consistent with the dietary guidelines where juice is included in the 'core food' fruit recommendations.

Juice makes a significant contribution to micronutrient intakes of juice consumers, while making small contributions to energy and sugar intakes.

Recommendation:

The ABCL recommends juice with no added sugar should **automatically score 4 stars** in the HSR based on its positive contribution to the Australian diet and to help consumers make healthier choices within the beverage category.

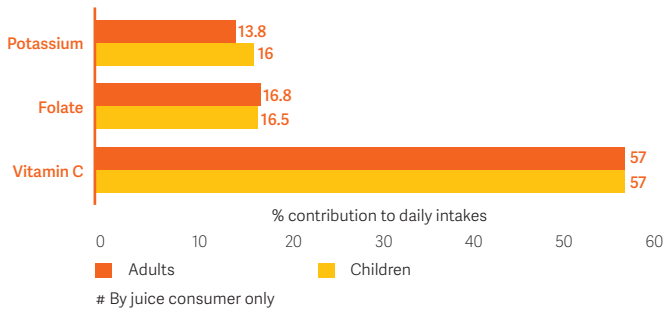
What's the role of juice in the Australian diet?

This latest evidence confirms the ADG position that juice is part of the 'core food' fruit group and can make a positive contribution to the Australian diet and is associated with markers of healthy diets. Most of the data presented in this document is based on the secondary analysis of the 2011-12 National Nutrition and Physical Activity Survey (NNPAS) which is the latest comprehensive government research on Australia's population dietary and nutrient intakes.¹

Key findings

Juice contributes to essential micronutrient intakes

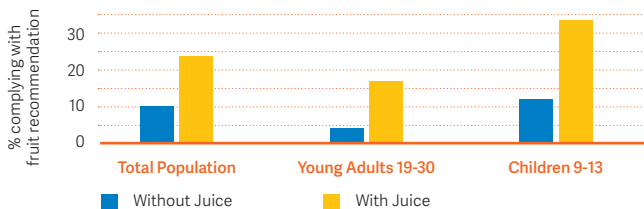
Figure 1: Contribution of juice to consumer's nutrient intakes^{1,2}



Juice helps Australians meet their daily fruit needs

94% of Australians are still not eating enough fruit and vegetables.³

Figure 2: Compliance with the ADG fruit recommendation, with and without juice considered as a serve of fruit.¹



Juice consumption can help Australians to achieve their recommended intake of fruit as per the ADG, as fruit and vegetable consumption remains low.

Juice contributes a small amount to energy and sugar intakes

Table 2: Juice's contribution to energy and sugar intakes¹

Description	Total Population	Children (2-18 years)	Adults (>18 years)
	Juice consumers and non-consumers	23% consumed juice on the day before the survey	15% consumed juice on the day before the survey
Contribution to total energy (kJ) intake	1%	5.3%	5.2%
Contribution to total sugar intake	3.5%	20.2%	20.5%
Contribution to added sugar intake	0%	0%	0%

Juice consumption is associated with markers of a healthy diet like a higher diet quality score and lower discretionary food intakes

For both children and adults, consumers of fruit juice had a higher diet quality score indicating:

- ↑ higher compliance with the ADG (+5.5/100 points)
- ↓ lower intake of energy from discretionary foods (-3% energy)
- ↑ higher vegetable intake (0.1 serves more for children and 0.3 serves more for adults).¹

Juice category evolving in an even healthier direction

- Over the last decade, there has been lots of innovation in line with consumer trends to provide plenty of nutritious choices.⁴
- Juice category includes a wide range of beverages: ambient and chilled juices, vegetable juices, fruit and vegetable blends diluted juices and many reduced and lower-sugar options.
- Future trends are likely to include fruit and vegetable blends that feature exotic herbal and functional ingredients such as ginger, turmeric, and mint. Other novel juice products likely to grow include functional juice shots/tonics and coconut-water based juices.

The current proposed changes to the HSR overlook these healthy innovations in the juice category and is a missed opportunity to help consumers make healthier choices in the beverage category.

The ABCL recommends juice with no added sugar should automatically score 4 stars in the HSR based on its positive contribution to the Australian diet and to help consumers make healthier choices within the beverage category.

References

- ¹Hendrie, G.A., Baird, D., Syrette, J., Barnes, M., Riley, M. 2015. Consumption of non-dairy, non-alcoholic beverages in the Australian population: A secondary analysis of the National Nutrition Survey 2011-12. Australia: CSIRO.
- ²Riley, M. D., Hendrie, G. A., & Baird, D. L. 2019. "Drink Choice is Important: Beverages Make a Substantial Contribution to Energy, Sugar, Calcium and Vitamin C Intake among Australians." Nutrients 13:89.
- ³Australian Bureau of Statistics. 2017. "National Health Survey: First results." <https://www.abs.gov.au/statistics/health/health-conditions-and-risks/national-health-survey-first-results/latest-release>.
- ⁴Australian Beverages Council. 2019. Growing for the Future. <https://www.australianbeverages.org/growing-for-the-future/>.