

POSITION STATEMENT

Juice versus deionised juice

Fruit juice (made with 99% juice and no added sugar) and products made from fruit juice are popular items in many school canteens. Whilst whole fruit (fresh, tinned or frozen) is the most nutritious fruit choice, 99% fruit juice is considered part of the Australian Guide to Healthy Eating, in small serves only.

**A number of school nutrition policies state that juice must not contain deionised juice.
But what is deionised juice and why can't it be sold in schools?**

Consumers are increasingly turning to fruit juice sweetened products as a “healthier” alternative to products sweetened with sugar. It is often assumed that if the sweetness is from fruit it must be healthier. For many years products such as fruit juices, fruit drinks and fruit products (such as jam, ice cream and yoghurt) have contained fruit juice concentrate. This concentrate is produced by heating fruit juice in order to evaporate off some of the water content, a process which leaves behind most of the flavour, colour and nutrients in the juice but makes the juice easier to store and increases the shelf life.

Newer food processing techniques are now seeing some food manufacturers using deionised juice in their products. Deionised juices are made by clarifying, filtering, deionising and evaporating the juice. This process removes all characteristics such as acidity, colour, taste and odour from the product, which allows the ‘juice’ to be used to sweeten a greater variety of products.

The issue

This process also results in the loss of fibre, vitamins, minerals and beneficial phytochemicals whilst retaining the sugar content, leaving a substance that is similar to a sweet, syrupy water with very little nutritional value.

FOCIS Food Registration Program

Drinks containing deionised fruit juice are not eligible for registration under the FOCIS Food Registration Program. Many state and territory school canteen policy/guidelines classify deionised juice as red (should not be sold).

For further information about drinks, check out the FOCIS factsheet – [Drinks in the canteen](#).

