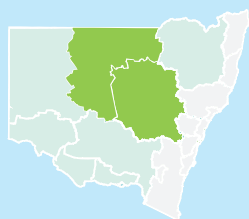


FOOD ACCESS AND AFFORDABILITY IN WESTERN NSW LHD 2014

HEALTHY FOOD IS A HUMAN RIGHT

The Australian Dietary Guidelines¹ tell us how eating healthy food can support good health. People have *food security* when all people, at all times, have physical and economic access to sufficient, safe, nutritious food to meet their dietary needs and food preferences for an active healthy life².

This study set out to find out how easy it was to buy healthy food and a basic healthy diet from May-July 2014. 183 (92%) of the grocery stores and 19 (73%) of the fruit and vegetable stores across an area of Western New South Wales (NSW) were surveyed. This area included Murrumbidgee, Western NSW, Far West Local Health Districts (LHD) and the New England portion of Hunter New England LHD. The research was supported by NSW Ministry of Health Population Health, Local Health Districts, Medicare Locals and Charles Sturt University with other local partners.



WESTERN NSW LHD
SURVEY AREA



58 (86%)
GROCERY STORES
from the area in the survey



2 (29%) FRUIT AND
VEGETABLE STORES
from the area in the survey

FOOD ACCESS

AVERAGE OPEN DAYS

OPEN 6.8 days

(Range 5 - 7 days)

THIS WAS THE
SAME ACROSS WESTERN
NSW 6.8 DAYS

37% STORES HAD
ALL 44 ITEMS
IN VICTORIAN
HEALTHY FOOD
BASKET³

THIS WAS LOWER THAN
THE AVERAGE ACROSS
WESTERN NSW 43%

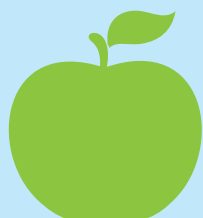
MISSING ITEMS

3.5/44

(Range 0 - 22)

THIS WAS HIGHER THAN
THE AVERAGE ACROSS
WESTERN NSW 2.4

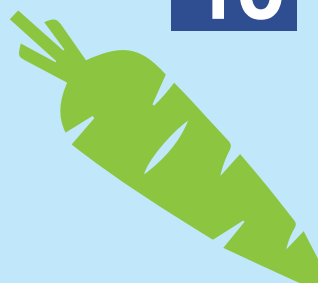
TOP 10 Selling Fruit Varieties in Australia



27.4 (0 - 54)
loose and bagged
choices for sale

This was lower than the average across
western NSW surveyed 29.1 choices

TOP 10 Selling Vegetable Varieties in Australia



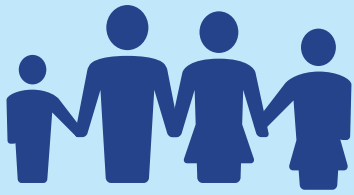
48.6 (6 - 93)
loose and bagged
choices for sale

This was lower than the average across
western NSW surveyed 50.9 choices

1. National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC). (2013). Eat for Health: Australian Dietary Guidelines, Canberra, Australian Government. Available from <https://www.nhmrc.gov.au/guidelines-publications/n55>
2. Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO). (1996). Rome declaration on world food security and world food summit plan of action. Rome; Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations. Available from <http://www.fao.org/docrep/003/w3613e/w3613e00.HTM>

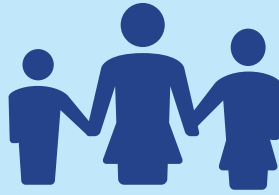
FOOD AFFORDABILITY

AVERAGE COST OF THE VICTORIAN HEALTHY FOOD (VHF) BASKET³ FOR 2 WEEKS



4 person family

\$473.21 (\$411 - \$587)
34% (30 - 42.8%)



Single parent family

\$323.39 (\$281 - \$405)
30.6% (26.5 - 38.3%)



Single Male

\$149.92 (\$130 - \$182)
29.4% (25.6 - 35.8%)



Single Female Pensioner

\$113.59 (\$98 - \$142)
14.8% (12.9 - 18.5%)

of Centrelink income support payments

THESE ARE ABOUT THE SAME AS THE AVERAGES ACROSS WESTERN NSW STORES SURVEYED:

\$466.79 or 34%
income

\$316.93 or 30.2%
income

\$147.87 or 30%
income

\$112.26 or 14.7%
income

THE RESULTS SUGGEST:



A healthy diet for a family of four is likely to cost more in stores

- ▶ that are further from Sydney
- ▶ in communities with higher Aboriginal populations



There is a long way to go to achieve the target recommended by the Steering Committee for Indigenous Health Equality⁶ "By 2018 ... at least 90% of Indigenous families have access to a standard healthy food Basket (or supply) at the cost of less than 25% of their available income". Many households on income support were unable to achieve this target.

Low income households may be at risk of "food stress"⁷ where they might choose to buy cheaper foods and have a less healthy diet.



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The views expressed are those of the authors and do not necessarily represent those of the NSW Ministry of Health, Charles Sturt University or the local Primary Health Network.

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Hunter New England HNELHD-PHENquiries@hnehealth.nsw.gov.au

3. ABS. (2014). Quickstats for Australian communities 2011 census data. Retrieved various dates in 2014 from <http://www.abs.gov.au/websitedbs/censushome.nsf/home/quickstats>
4. Steering Committee for Indigenous Health Equality, (2008). Submission to the National Preventative Health Taskforce (4 December 2008). Retrieved April 2015 from [http://www.preventativehealth.org.au/internet/preventativehealth/publishing.nsf/Content/submissions-public-cnt-c-2/\\$File/D46-2008.pdf](http://www.preventativehealth.org.au/internet/preventativehealth/publishing.nsf/Content/submissions-public-cnt-c-2/$File/D46-2008.pdf)
5. Ward, P., Verity, F. Carter, P., Tsourtos, G., Coveney, J., and Wong, K.C. (2013). Food Stress in Adelaide: The Relationship between Low Income and the Affordability of Healthy Food, Journal of Environmental and Public Health, Article ID 968078, doi: [org/10.1155/2013/968078](https://doi.org/10.1155/2013/968078)