

MEDIA RELEASE

13/10/2021

Good news from community on National Nutrition Week

The year to June 2021 saw 8 tonnes less sugar consumed* and 508 tonnes of fresh fruit and vegetables sold across the 41 remote Indigenous communities serviced by Outback Stores.

This outcome is the joint result of the Outback Stores Healthy Food Policy and strong, community-led decision making from local store directors to tackle diet-related health problems.

Communities such as Engawala, Santa Teresa and Ali Curung have implemented restrictions on the size of soft drink bottles sold, as well as introduced sugar-free days of the week.

"At first people didn't like it, but as store workers we told them it was better for our health and they understood," said store director Audrey Inkamala, about implementing 'Sugar-Free Wednesdays' in Engawala.

Since 2012 an ongoing trend has seen the proportion of full-sugar drinks fall by 23.24% across stores serviced by Outback Stores. The proportion of water sold increased 2.46% and sugar-free drinks also increased 0.25%. The result of this is 80,079 litres less of sugary drinks sold in remote communities, enough to fill an average backyard swimming pool.

"It's great to see Outback Stores and local store directors working together to promote a healthier retail environment for stores and communities," said Anna Murison, Health & Nutrition Manager for Outback Stores.

Improving access to nutritious and affordable food continues to be a key component in the Outback Stores nutrition policy. In the last financial year customers bought a total of 508 tonnes of fresh fruit and vegetables, which is a quantity four times greater than the average amount sold per store in 2011.

Outback Stores works with communities to maintain value pricing on all fruit and vegetables to support customers to be able to regularly purchase fresh produce. Pricing of fresh fruit and vegetables is maintained at levels as close as possible to major metropolitan retailers. Over the past year the cost of fresh staples such as carrots, onions, broccoli, apples and bananas has dropped by 40 per cent on average, due to special-buy pricing on key lines being consistently maintained at, or below, major retailer pricing.

From October through to mid-December Outback Stores is promoting fruit and vegetables through a customer promotion. Those who spend \$5 or more on fresh produce go into the draw to win a \$100 voucher. To involve the kids, stores are holding a colouring in competition, with the best entry winning a \$100 voucher.

National Nutrition Week runs from 10-17 October. The theme this year is 'Get more veg in your life'. To view 100 new vegetable recipes and videos, as well as downloadable resources visit www.tryfor5.org.au.

*compared to last financial year.

Contacts

Nicola Pitt, Communications Officer

0428 092 929 nicola.pitt@outbackstores.com.au

Anna Murison, Health & Nutrition Manager

0458 966 684 anna.murison@outbackstores.com.au