

# Cooking Curriculum Project

## Life skills for the future - Year 7 & 8 kids

Update 2018



### Background

The New Zealand Curriculum (2007)<sup>1</sup> states that all students will have had opportunities to learn practical cooking skills by the end of Year 8. The initial research underpinning this work<sup>2</sup> identified a need for lesson plans and resources that support teachers to deliver the year 7 and 8 food technology curriculum. It was recommended that these resources be cross curricula, utilise digital technologies, promote well-being of ākonga, teach cooking skills and support ongoing professional development. Resources need to be “by teachers, for teachers”, which means collaborating with and gaining teacher feedback throughout the project.

### Purpose

To develop tools and resources that support year 7 & 8 food technology/home economics teachers to deliver the food technology curriculum and in turn arming children with the fundamental life skills to be able to cook a healthy meal within their own budget, cultural and time constraints.

### Methods

A flow diagram of the project protocol is shown in Figure 1. The first drafts of the lesson plans and activities were based on previous recommendations<sup>2</sup>, teachers’ existing lesson plan examples and classroom observations. The second and final drafts were developed with ongoing input from key stakeholders, including 52 teachers from a range of school deciles and of wide geographical spread (Figure 2 and Figure 3). A variety of evaluation methods were used in order to improve stakeholder engagement and obtain both qualitative and quantitative data.

### Unit plan, activities and resources

The unit plan was primarily evaluated via in-depth email and phone interviews. Lesson plan activities were presented at conferences and events to key stakeholders, including members of the New Zealand Association of Intermediate and Middle Schooling (NZAIMS) and Home Economics and Technology Teachers Association New Zealand (HETTANZ). These attendees were able to offer input and feedback using post-it notes, a sticker chart (e.g. add a sticker if “I would use this resource”), discussion groups and evaluation forms was provided. Teachers also had the opportunity to offer feedback on the cooking skill cards and videos that were developed by *Easy Meals with Vegetables* - a collaboration project between Health Promotion Agency, Heart Foundation and Vegetables.co.nz aiming to improve the knowledge and cooking skills of families.

### Professional development seminar

A professional development seminar was provided for food teachers in Auckland, which involved nutrition education, networking, a cooking masterclass (Figure 4) and an opportunity for teachers to input on the resource drafts.

### User journey

The user journey (the steps in which teachers take to access resources) was also investigated during school visits and via email/phone communication with teachers. This was to identify the best ways to provide teachers with resources.

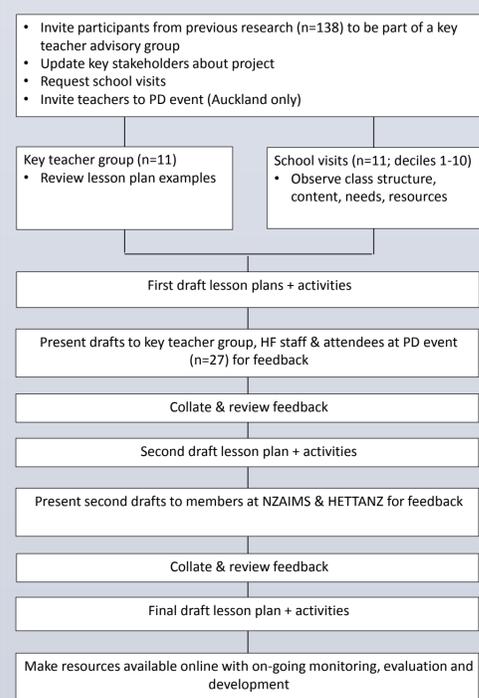


Figure 1. Project protocol flow diagram

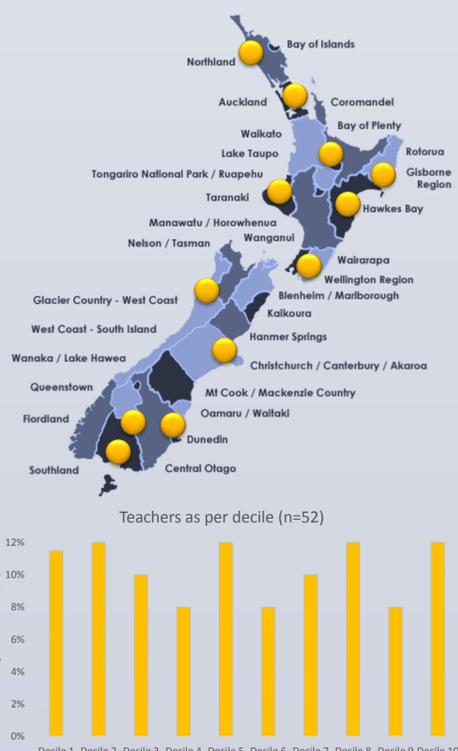


Figure 2. The New Zealand map shows the geographical spread of teacher feedback on draft resources; yellow dots indicate feedback location (top); the bar graph shows the range of school deciles involved (bottom).

### Outcomes

#### Unit plan, activities and resources

A unit plan consisting of 8-10 lessons (1.5 hours each) with a suite of supporting activities/resources was developed. Each lesson includes a lesson cover sheet, a recipe, cooking skills learned and at least one classroom activity. These are in digital format, located on the Heart Foundation website. The unit plan can be downloaded as a resource kit, however, lessons will be organised as individual packages to allow teachers to ‘pick n mix’ to suit their programme. All the activities received positive feedback. The most popular activities centered around nutrition, the technology process and time management. Teachers were also very interested in and eager to use the *Easy Meals with Vegetables* skill cards and videos, with many requesting links to the resources. Images of some of the resources are shown below (Figure 3).



Figure 3. (left to right) Food Technology Unit Plan – Year 8; examples of lesson plan activities; Easy Meals with Vegetables skill cards/videos.

#### Teacher comments

- “I really like the way you have them focusing on different cooking skills.”
- “Overall looks really good and I would mix and match for myself, but could see how a novice teacher could use it as is.”
- “We have chosen to lean more towards the Health and Physical Education curriculum, but my students would benefit from the messages that come through these lessons.”
- “It is great, especially the way you have set out the unit plan. You have provided clear and concise instructions, additional lessons as enhancement or replacement lessons for the 8 planned. Great thematic approach, both culturally and a Vegetarian theme. You have really excelled yourself, well done. Nicely presented and set out.”
- “I think it is perfectly pitched for this includes all the essential elements of our unit plans. Sometimes I think we try to include too much. I was very impressed how easy you made it seem with all the activities. I will look forward to using it in the future.”

#### Professional development seminar

- 97.5% agreed or strongly agreed that “the event was a good use of my time”.
- 100% said they would attend future professional development seminars; 50% would attend these twice per year.



Figure 4: Masterclass as professional development seminar (March 23, 2018)

#### User journey

- Teachers wanted digital educational resources that are easily accessible and clearly signposted in a customised area that speaks to their needs.
- All teachers were interested in the resources being organised into packages or “kits” that would allow them to pick and choose the pieces they wanted.
- Teachers would like resources to have a real-world feel, and have a New Zealand and multicultural focus.

### Conclusion and next steps

The unit plan and supporting resources appear suitable to support teachers in delivering the Year 8 food technology curriculum.

#### The next steps are to:

- maintain collaboration with teachers
- make the unit plan and resources available online
- continue evaluation as the resources are rolled out
- use the same process to prepare a year 7 unit plan with relevant resources
- roll out professional development seminars to other regions

#### References

- Ministry of Education. (2007). *The New Zealand Curriculum*. Wellington, New Zealand: Learning Media Limits.
- Henderson, L. (2016). *Life skills for the future – year 7 and 8 cooking curriculum (final report and poster)*. Retrieved from <http://www.vegetables.co.nz/assets/Research/Life-Skills-Year-7-8-Survey-Results-Summary-A4.pdf>

#### Acknowledgements

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