



## Food Skills for Life

Food Skills for Life programme and digital content – survey of teachers

May 2023

### Introduction

In 2023 vegetables.co.nz worked with a student from the University of Auckland on a project as part of her Master of Dietetics. The project focused on the development of digital content to encourage the consumption of vegetables.

In scoping this project, a survey was developed to gather information specifically from teachers to understand more about their use of and interest in digital content in the classroom. Vegetables.co.nz and the Heart Foundation have a programme called *Food Skills for Life*, launched in 2016, aligned to the food technology curriculum. The use of this programme was last researched in 2020 (by students with Massey University). This 2023 survey included a focus on the Food Skills for Life programme to further build on the prior research and gather up to date insights.

The survey was developed by the student alongside vegetables.co.nz and was reviewed by the Heart Foundation.

## **Background**

The Food Skills for Life programme is a collection of resources generally aligned to the food technology curriculum for Years 7 and 8. It is designed to encourage food skills and confidence in the kitchen, with a focus on vegetables.

Resources include unit plans, lesson plans, activities, posters, recipes, food skill cards and videos – including ‘how to prepare vegetables’ videos and ‘meet the grower’ videos. The resources are available to download and view, with some available in hard copy.

The programme is promoted to schools and teachers through various channels, including newsletters, websites, social media and professional development seminars like those held by the New Zealand Association of Intermediate and Middle Schooling (NZAIMS) and Home Economics and Technology Teachers Association New Zealand (HETTANZ).

## **Previous studies**

Previous studies conducted in 2016 and 2020 by Massey University dietetic students focused on the food curriculum and meal planning and preparation. The 2016 study focused on food programmes being taught in Year 8. Consequently, several resources were developed aimed at Years 7 & 8 over the next few years to meet these needs. The 2020 study aimed to understand how teachers taught meal planning and preparation, the specific cooking skills being taught, and the types of food items the students make in classes. The 2023 survey focused on video content use within the programme.

## **Survey method 2023**

The online survey was created in Survey Monkey and promoted via the Food Skills for Life newsletter database, also through HETTANZ and NZAIMS newsletters. Posts were also placed on the Facebook groups for HETTANZ and Food & Nutrition Teachers.

Placing the survey in these channels targeted teachers from Years 7 through to 13, teaching food technology, food and nutrition, and hospitality.

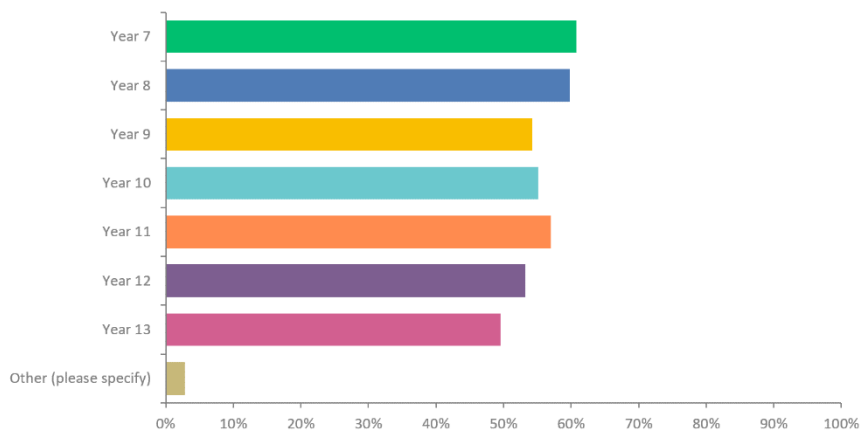
The survey was open for a period of two weeks in April 2023.

## Results

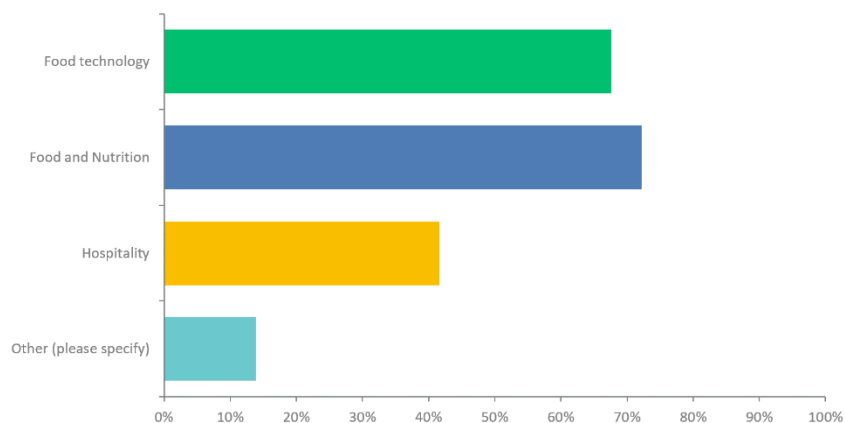
108 responses were received in this survey over the two week period. In 2020, 175 responses were received and the survey was open for a period of five weeks.

### Summary of responders

Those who responded to the survey taught across a range of years, from 7 through to 13.



The majority of respondents taught 'Food and nutrition' but many also teach or specialise in 'food technology' and (or) 'hospitality.' Many teachers will teach across several of these specialties and across several years.



60% of respondents taught at decile 6-10 schools. This compared to 46% in 2020.

Teachers responded to this survey from around the country, but the majority (69%) were based in the North Island.

#### Responses by region

REGION	% OF RESPONDENTS
NORTHLAND	4
AUCKLAND	19
WAIKATO	11
BAY OF PLENTY	8
GISBORNE	2
HAWKES BAY	4
TARANAKI	3
MANAWATU-WHANGANUI	6
WELLINGTON	12
MARLBOROUGH	0
NELSON	1
TASMAN	3
WEST COAST	1
CANTERBURY	15
OTAGO	9
SOUTHLAND	2
CHATHAM ISLANDS	0

#### Summary of 'Food Skills for Life' Programme

This survey was targeted at teachers from Years 7 to 13, to gain insights on interest in digital content. Previously surveys targeted teachers of Years 7 to 8, which aligns to the original focus of the Food Skills for Life programme.

In this survey, 36% of the respondents use the Food Skills for Life programme. Another 31% have heard of the programme but are not using it. The remaining 33% were not familiar with the programme.

Respondents that 'had heard of the programme but had not used it' were asked to give further details. Responses indicated that some feel the time required to implement the programme is a barrier. Others felt the content aimed at Year 7 and 8 students was therefore not appropriate for the older years. There were some in this group who noted they do use various parts of the programme depending on what year they were teaching, and some used the resources only (such as posters).

### **Responses from those using the programme (36%)**

Those using the programme were asked to select which types of content they use in the classroom. The most used type of content was 'posters' and 'recipes', with 83% of responders using both. This was followed by the food skills cards (67%). The least popular were lesson evaluations (9%), 'meet the grower' videos (9%) and assignments (8%).

### **Most popular recipes**

The ten most popular recipes selected were in order:

1. Veg-up macaroni cheese
2. Sushi
3. Veg-up noodles
4. Vegetable rice paper rolls
5. Banana pikelets and berry sauce
6. Build a salad bowl
7. Rainbow salad jars
8. Sweet and sour chicken stir fry
9. Courgette fritters
10. Pick 'n' mix smoothie

### **Lesson plans most used**

Respondents were asked which lesson plans were most used when teaching **Year 7**. The most popular was 'Colourful and seasonal vegetables' (60%), followed by 'Cultural foods' (37%) and 'Welcome to the kitchen' (31%). The least used was 'Cooking with allergies' (11%).

Respondents were asked which lesson plans were most used when teaching **Year 8**. The most popular was 'Using seasonal vegetables' (58%), followed by both 'Attributes of a

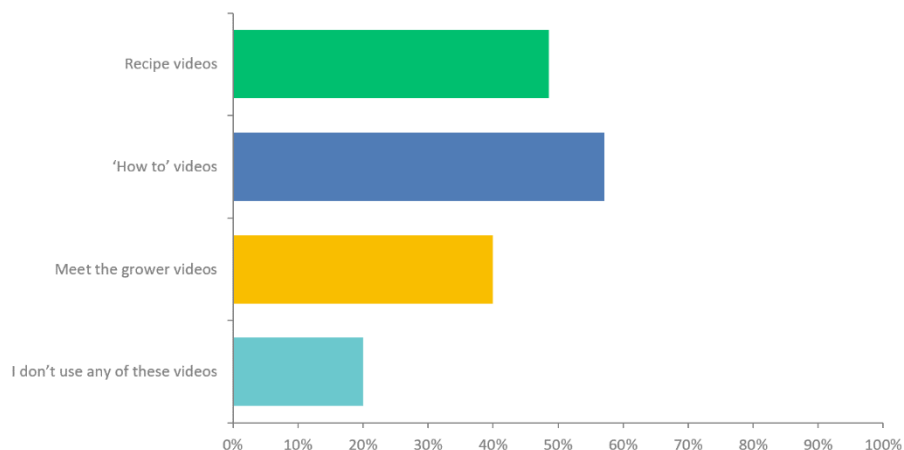
healthy and tasty meal' and 'Healthier fast food' (42% each). The least used was 'Vegetarian foods' (8%).

### The experience of the Food Skills for Life programme

Respondents were asked to express their experience of using the Food Skills for Life programme overall. The overwhelming responses 'agreed' or 'strongly agreed' that the programme helps students be inspired and enjoy vegetables, explains the importance of vegetables for good health, has adaptable recipes and helps teachers to teach a broad range of food preparation skills.

### Video content

Users of the Food Skills for Life programme were asked what types of video content available as part of the programme they used in the classroom. 57% used the 'how to' videos, 49% used the 'recipe' videos, 40% used the 'meet the grower' videos and 20% did not use any videos.



Respondents were asked what they **liked** about the video content they used in the classroom. Answers included that the content was New Zealand-made, short, clear and easy to follow. The videos are considered informative, relevant to the age group and show skills and techniques. They are a useful resource for teachers and students, saving preparation time and allowing for individual work.

Respondents were asked what **could improve** the videos. Responses included: longer 'how to' videos, more complicated skills, demonstrate more skills such as knife skills, developing a wider range of videos, creating recipe videos with alternative ingredients, adding closed captions for other languages, creating food safety videos, including more traditional Māori

food content, producing more grower videos and videos on using appliances. Some respondents would like to see more realistic videos for Year 7 and 8 students, longer content, or more videos in general.

When asked about specific skills-based video content from a defined list of skills, 95% of all respondents would like new videos on knife skills. This was followed by baking (58%), pickling (56%), frying (50%), fermenting (50%) peeling (48%), boiling (40%) and roasting (40%).

### **Specification preferences for videos**

Respondents were asked what length of video is useful in the classroom setting. Most preferred videos of 2-5 minutes duration (42%) or 5-10 minutes (31%). The shorter 1-2 minutes were least preferred (less than 20%). Seven responders preferred video content longer than 10 minutes.

The most useful digital platform used in the classroom was YouTube, used by 96% of responders. Around 12% also used Vimeo, Facebook, or 'other' platforms.

Digital resources mentioned as used include Clickview, Rumble, online quiz forums, Pinterest, downloading via a website link, Google Classroom and YouTube links.

Respondents were asked which platforms would be most appropriate for students to review content at home. Most suggested YouTube is preferable, followed by Google Classroom. TikTok and Instagram were used less, perhaps because of their association with social media.

### **New video content suggestions**

All respondents were asked for suggestions for video content they would find useful in the classroom and what platforms they would use to show this.

Responses included:

- Amazing recipes or things to do with unpopular vegetables
- One pan dishes with vegetables as the hero
- Simple, cost-effective and healthy meals for families

- Interesting (not dry) facts about vegetables
- Reading a recipe, following a method, and food safety and storage
- Knowing how to select the freshest vegetables
- Vegetable cuts and presentation
- Cake decorating, food presentation and garnishing
- Documentaries on growers of fruit and vegetables, how to grow and harvest vegetables
- Skills videos, e.g. rolling a spring roll
- Include more Te reo Māori and Māori foods
- Health and safety, hygiene, personal safety and cross-contamination in cooking
- Nutritional content and vegetable cuts and uses for different year levels
- Whole start-to-finish demonstration videos and interviews with role models about the importance of including vegetables in our diets
- Food storage
- Cultural cooking
- Dehydrating
- Specific cooking methods such as sautéing, poaching, grilling, and boiling
- Use of kitchen equipment
- Molecular gastronomy
- Serving amounts
- Local growers

Preferred platforms to view video content in the classroom were YouTube, Google Classroom, and Facebook. Some preferred not to use TikTok due to issues surrounding the platform. Others suggested using Kahoot for quiz content.

### **Final comments**

There was an opportunity to provide final comments in an open-ended format. Comments were positive towards the programme and the consideration of future digital content. The ability to 'mix and match' the programme with units of work and use content including videos across all years through to Year 13 is valued in the programme.

"It's a great initiative".



Suggestions for additional content within the programme overall included: more information on nutrition, healthy eating and digestion, as well as details on different types of produce and foods for dietary needs. Some suggested including interactive resources and workbooks. Content appropriate for the older years was encouraged.