

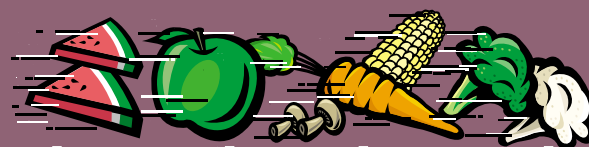
# Evaluation

Evaluation of the fruit and vegetable tool kit

Evaluation of your tasting event/program

- Process evaluation
- Impact evaluation
- Outcome evaluation

Capacity building outcomes



***Charge through your day***

***with 2 fruit & 5 vegetables***





This Section describes an evaluation of the tool kit, and an evaluation of the tasting event(s) you implement.

The information on the evaluation of tasting events is comprehensive, describing the steps needed to be taken right from the early planning stages (eg. developing a conceptual framework /outcomes hierarchy).

It then looks in some detail at the different levels of evaluation:

- process evaluation – which covers program reach, satisfaction, implementation and quality
- impact evaluation – which measures whether the program objectives have been met, and
- outcome evaluation – which looks at the longer-term effects of the program.

In each of these levels of evaluation, examples are given of the sorts of questions to include and possible methods to evaluate your event.

There is also information on capacity building outcomes – which is about improving the capacity of your organisation, or your partner organisations, to deliver a particular health promotion program or to work in a health promoting way.

Using the results from evaluations of tastings events across New South Wales, and from the evaluation of the tool kit itself, evidence can be built up for 'best bet' strategies to promote fruit and vegetable consumption via tasting events.

## EVALUATION OF THE FRUIT AND VEGETABLE TOOL KIT

Evaluation of the kit itself will help NSW Health determine the value of the resource to Area Health Services and others who use it. In the first round of kit distribution, NSW Health will keep track of kit recipients. These people will be contacted at regular intervals over the next 12 months and asked to provide feedback on their use of the kit. The types of information collected will include:

- whether or not you used the kit;
- if not, why not
- if so, a description of the event(s) held (goal, target group, reach, activities, planning and evaluation)
- reasons for choice of strategies
- partnerships developed/strengthened
- satisfaction with the format and content of the kit, and
- other support needed to conduct such events.

In addition, discussion about the use and usefulness of the kit will be included in future meetings of the NSW Nutrition Network.

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# EVALUATION OF YOUR TASTING EVENT/PROGRAM

The purpose of this evaluation is to describe the process of program delivery (process evaluation), and how effective the event was in relation to your set objectives (impact/outcome evaluation). This evaluation would be planned and carried out at the local level. The information provided would mainly be used by:

- you and others involved in running the event to prove the value of your efforts and/or to redesign tasting strategies as necessary, and
- others who wish to replicate the event.

The Program Coordinator of the Public Health Nutrition Program, NSW Health Department is also interested in receiving a copy of local level evaluations.

## ***Seeking assistance***

Most Area Health Services have a Research and Evaluation Officer employed who may be able to assist you with your evaluation design. If you don't have such a person in your Area, you can contact the NSW Centre for Public Health Nutrition who may be able to assist you with your evaluation design and/or refer you to other appropriate sources of advice.

## ***Developing a conceptual framework***

The first step in the evaluation process is to develop a conceptual framework or model for your evaluation. This should be done in the planning or needs assessment stages. This sets out, right from the start, what the project is trying to achieve, which aspects are assessing the process, impact and outcome evaluation. Appendix 11, page 138 provides an example of a project 'outcomes hierarchy' (a type of conceptual framework) used to guide evaluation of the Penrith Food Project Open Farm Day.

## ***Refining your evaluation plan***

Once you have agreed on the conceptual framework, the evaluation can then be refined, taking into account the following issues:

- who the evaluation is for
- how the results will be used and, therefore, what aspects of your event you really need to evaluate
- variables you will measure
- selection of appropriate evaluation indicators and tools
- sampling and survey design
- cost of the evaluation in relation to resources available, and
- how the results will be disseminated.

**Note:** The Penrith Food Project team identified during the planning phase that their evaluation would be limited to process and certain impact measures. This is appropriate for many of the public health nutrition projects run at the local level in NSW, particularly those that are time-limited or one-off events.

## Process evaluation

This stage of program evaluation is concerned with the process of program delivery.

The main questions are:

- has the program reached the intended target group?
- were the participants (and implementers) satisfied with the program?
- were the program activities implemented as planned?
- were the program and resources of high quality?

## Program reach

This criterion measures who the program reached. This may include the number of people reached, whether the people reached were in the target audience (according to demographic characteristics) and what proportion of the target audience was reached.

Some possible methods for collecting information about program reach in a fruit and vegetable tasting event are:

- using intercept surveys, ie. collecting information from participants during the event
- measuring the demand for resources, eg. how many pamphlets, recipe cards, samples etc were distributed during the event
- keeping track of how many coupons are sent in and/or how many phone calls are received requesting more information after the event
- asking people how they found out about the event - this would indicate the effectiveness of your communication strategy
- if you advertised your event in print or electronic media, how many ads were placed and what was the extent of the distribution of the media used?
- assessing how many partnerships were established?
- media coverage achieved eg. how many articles appeared in the papers? how many interviews were given? how much airtime did you receive?

## Satisfaction

This criterion seeks feedback from the event participants, partner organisations and program staff about their level of satisfaction with the event.

Some issues that you may like to cover include:

- Service issues. Eg. Was the venue convenient? Was the timing of the event appropriate? Were the different parts of the event easy to navigate?
- Interpersonal issues, Eg. Were the staff friendly and helpful?
- Content issues. Eg. Was the information they received presented in an appropriate way? Were the topics covered relevant to participants?

This information can be gathered via interviews, self-completed questionnaires and/or de-briefing sessions (with staff/partners) during or after the event. Remember to keep the respondent burden low.

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## Implementation

This criterion measures how well the program was delivered, ie. on the day, did all of the components of the event run well and as you had intended?

The most common reason for program failure is poor implementation. In reality, how a program is actually run can often be very different to the original plans. For an ongoing program, assessment of program implementation can be used to improve how the program is run the second and subsequent times. For one-off events, information about implementation can often help to explain the results of impact and outcome evaluation, ie. if you do not see the effects you were hoping for, it may be because some of your activities did not run well, or as you had planned.

Examples of questions you may ask about program implementation for a fruit and vegetable tasting event include:

- How did the activities or components of your event go?
- What aspects of the event worked well?
- Could people get access to the food? Did they have to wait?
- Did you have enough/too much food for the number who attended?
- Did the weather affect your event? If so, what could you have done to ensure that the event ran smoothly whatever the weather?
- Did all the stall-holders turn up?
- Did the buses taking people from farm to farm arrive on time, hold enough people etc?

Specific questions which may be asked of staff or partner organisations include:

- What could have been done differently for a better organised event?
- From your experience in implementing the tasting event can you identify gaps or weaknesses in the activity outlines, tip sheets and/or checklist?
- What else is needed to make this event more successful, eg. more staff training, resources etc?

You may also ask event participants, “If you were to attend a tasting event at this festival again, can you think of ways to improve it, eg. venue, recipes, activities, stand, location etc”?

### Methods of collecting this information include:

- observing and recording what actually happens at the event by taking photos and/or keeping written records; and
- using interviews or questionnaires with event participants, staff, volunteers, agencies and partners involved in organising or supplying the event to gain their perceptions of how the event was conducted - encourage them to be honest.

It is also important to keep copies of your event materials/resources and records of how you developed these materials, lists of contacts used for the event etc. These records form part of a good process evaluation and will help you, or others who are interested in your event, to re-construct and/or understand your event.

## Quality

### **This criterion looks at the performance of the components of the tasting event.**

It is always best to do some pre-testing of your program materials, presentations and processes if possible. This allows you to make improvements if necessary before the actual event, thus avoiding event failure, saving valuable resources and safeguarding the quality of your event. Ideally, you would test the event materials on a small group of people who are similar to those you expect will attend your event. If this is not possible, you can test them with some of your work colleagues and/or employ standard techniques, such as readability tests on written materials.

An example of a comprehensive pre-test is that carried out by the Central Coast Area Health Service Community Nutrition team for the tasting event described in the case study section of the kit, page 61. They conducted a trial of their event (as a whole) to test recipes they had developed, to give health professionals a preview of the event and to ensure the suitability of all plans and equipment.

Some examples of aspects of program quality you may assess during or after your event include:

- your participants' reaction to the resources on the stand, eg. recipe cards, give-aways, flyers, posters and banners; aspects of interest may include attraction, comprehension, acceptability, personal involvement and persuasion<sup>1</sup>
- your leaders/presenters performance on the day; were their directions clear? did they engage participants appropriately? did participants feel comfortable asking questions of the leader during the guided tour?

## Impact evaluation

Impact evaluation assesses the immediate effects of the event, ie. whether the program objectives were met. Ideally, this includes an assessment of both intended and unintended effects.

Some examples of impact evaluation questions you may ask include:

- What did the participants get out of the event?
- Did they try a new vegetable today? If so, did they like it? What did they like most about the new vegetable they tried? Would they buy it themselves?
- Did they try a familiar vegetable, prepared in a new way? If so, did they like it? Would they try preparing it this way at home?
- Do participants understand the recommendations for fruit and vegetable consumption? Did their understanding increase? (you will need to assess their understanding before your event in order to assess this change). Did people's awareness of their consumption levels change? Do they feel able to achieve the recommended intake? Do they intend to try to meet the recommendations?
- Did participants use the resources after the event? Have they given them, or recommended them, to their family and friends?
- Have the target population's attitudes to identified barriers changed?

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### **Methods you may use to answer these questions include:**

- intercept surveys with participants on the day of the event
- telephone calls or questionnaires after the event, and
- surveys of your target population (before and) after the event.

These methods vary in their complexity (including the complexity of the analysis) and cost. The extent of your impact evaluation will depend on the size and cost of your event/program, the resources you are able to devote to evaluation and the users/purpose of your evaluation.

Note: If you are measuring changes in your whole target population, not just in those who attend the event, program reach will need to be taken into account, ie. will your event reach a sufficient proportion of the population to make a measurable change in the whole target group? Also, if you are assessing changes in knowledge, attitudes, behaviours etc (before and) after the event, you will need to consider whether the changes can be directly attributed to your program, eg. the increase in knowledge may be due to a community-wide campaign which is running at the same time as your event. See your research and evaluation support person to assist with design, analysis and interpretation of your evaluation in this regard.

## **Outcome evaluation**

This final level of evaluation assesses the subsequent or longer term effect of the program, usually corresponding to the program goal. Outcome evaluations generally focus on health practices, behaviours or health status - usually corresponding to the health problem that gave rise to the program in the first place.

Outcome evaluation needs to be planned, costed and resourced during the planning phase of the intervention. As mentioned in the introduction to this section, for time-limited or one-off programs, it may not be appropriate to consider doing outcome evaluation. It is often more appropriate to conduct thorough process evaluations and assess shorter-term project impacts.

In the longer term, shifts in fruit and vegetable consumption will be monitored by NSW Health surveys and national health and nutrition surveys. The changes seen at this level will be the result of the combined efforts to improve nutrition, rather than to any one project.

If you choose to do outcome evaluation, the same issues mentioned in relation to impact evaluation will apply. For example, if your goal is to increase the sale and/or consumption of fruit and vegetables in your target group, you will have to take into account the reach of your program and issues of attribution of results. Any changes may be due to other factors, such as a price decrease, seasonality or another program operating concurrently which emphasises increased consumption of fruit and vegetables.

## Capacity-building outcomes

A current focus of health promotion in NSW is to consider the inclusion of (and assessment of) capacity building initiatives/components in the design and implementation of health promotion programs.

‘Capacity building’ is about improving the capacity of your organisation, or your partner organisations, to deliver (and/or to continue to deliver) a particular health promotion program or to work in a health promoting way.<sup>1,2</sup> The main components of capacity building relevant to short-term or one-off programs, are those dealing with the capacity of an organisation to undertake a particular program, and development and maintenance of partnerships with organisations (particularly those external to the health system).

A series of checklists have been developed to measure various aspects of capacity building in health promotion<sup>2</sup>. They are useful for planning the capacity building components of your program. If you wish to assess capacity building in your program, discuss this with your local health promotion research and evaluation support person.

## Acknowledgements

The basis for much of this information was the text by Hawe et al (1990)<sup>3</sup> and the material presented in a Nutrition Evaluation Workshop conducted at Sydney University, May 11-13, 1993 by the Department of Community Medicine - Westmead Hospital, the Nutrition Program - University of Queensland, the NSW Health Department and the Dietitians Association of Australia -NSW Branch<sup>4</sup>. The sections of the workshop manual by Penny Hawe (on process evaluation) and Geoff Marks (on impact evaluation), and the case studies by Beth Stickney and Karen Webb were particularly useful.

Thanks also to the Penrith Food Project, Department of Public Health and Community Medicine, University of Sydney and Penrith City Council<sup>5</sup> and the Central Coast Area Health Service Community Nutrition Team<sup>6</sup> for permission to use their evaluations as case studies for this Kit.<sup>5,6</sup>

## References

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