



**Healthy Food
Partnership**

working together to improve your food

Healthy Food Partnership Portion Size Working Group

Recommendations and summary of work

Purpose of this Report	1
Recommendations from the Portion Size Working Group	1
Recommendation 1	1
Recommendation 2	1
Areas for future investigation	2
Next steps	2
Acknowledgements	3
Background – the problem being addressed	8
Context – the Portion Size Working Group	8
Process to identify effective and feasible actions to implement	8
Summary of deliverables	9
Deliverable 1 - Program Logic	9
Deliverable 2 - Evidence & policy analysis	9
Deliverable 3 - Consistent terminology	9
Deliverable 4 - Feasibility Assessment	10
Deliverable 5 - prioritise areas for action	10
Conclusions of the Portion Size Working Group	11
1. Size of serving is an important food & nutrition strategy for the Healthy Food Partnership	11
2. One size will not fit all	11
3. Monitoring and evaluation is important to demonstrate progress over time and ensure accountability of all stakeholders involved	11
4. Embed work into broader Healthy Food Partnership implementation	11
5. Industry guidance is required	12
5.1 <i>Development of voluntary serving targets</i>	12
5.2 <i>Develop and implement an Industry Best Practice Guide</i>	12
6. Food/nutrition marketing campaigns require messaging around the sizes of food and drinks	12
7. Terminology is important	12
Completing the ‘design phase’ of portion size activities	13
Attachments	13
Attachment 1 - Relationship between servings, portions and energy intake	14
Attachment 5 - Consistent terminology for describing the size of food and beverages	15

Purpose of this Report

The Healthy Food Partnership Executive Committee asked the Portion Size Working Group to consider how to:

1. Define and promote appropriate portion sizes
2. Work with industry and food service to optimise portion size
3. Undertake educative programs on portion size and portion guidance with consumers

The Portion Size Working Group's objective was to contribute to, through portion size strategies, increasing intake of core foods and decreasing intake of discretionary foods in line with the Healthy Food Partnership objective of rebalancing dietary patterns to more closely align with the Australian Dietary Guidelines by:

- Assessing the effectiveness and feasibility of portion size strategies for both core and discretionary foods in a variety of sectors (retail and food service)
- Developing a suite of activities for businesses, governments and non-government organisations to implement, as they are able.

Activities to meet these objectives have occurred between September 2016 and June 2018. This report sets out the key recommendations of the Portion Size Working Group and the activities undertaken and considerations made in reaching this point.

Recommendations from the Portion Size Working Group

The Portion Size Working Group recommends the following for implementation by the Healthy Food Partnership, summarised in Table 1 (p4).

Recommendation 1

Better Awareness: develop and implement a communications strategy and campaign to promote appropriate sizes of portions, using agreed terminology, to address consumer perceptions about portion.

It is important the Healthy Food Partnership contribute to shifting the perception that "bigger is better" through planned community communication campaigns and consistent messaging and terminology. Messages would need to be developed for relevant target audiences, including identifying appropriate sizes of portions to communicate.

Guidance from Australian research on sizes of portions of foods and drinks could be used to identify key foods for messaging. One example is to draw comparison between 600kJ equivalents (i.e. Australian Dietary Guidelines Standard Serve) of commonly consumed discretionary foods.

The Portion Size Working Group acknowledges that messaging about healthier sizes of food and drink portions may not be an engaging topic for the community. Messages to the community may need to be positioned around the issues important to them including: value for money, budget, waste, weight management and health. Messages also need to recognise there are two opportunities to make healthy choices: the (appropriate) size of serving options that are available to consumers (from which they choose a portion to eat) when purchasing packaged foods or foods in foodservice settings, and the (appropriate) size of portions of food and drinks they actually end up eating.

Recommendation 2

Better Choices: develop and implement an industry engagement strategy to adopt voluntary activities to support healthier sizes of portions and sizes of servings.

This strategy would involve the following three key activities:

1. ***Encourage stakeholders to adopt activities which contribute to the priority areas relating to the sizes of portions (outlined in Table 2).***

These activities should be embedded into the broader Healthy Food Partnership implementation plan. For example, the Portion Size Working Group voluntary activities can be combined with the draft pledges developed by the Food Service Working Group, and targets set by the Reformulation Working Group, to result in a suite of pledges for implementation across different sectors.

2. Develop voluntary goals for sizes of servings of key discretionary foods and drinks.

These goals should build on existing resources, recognise that a range is likely to be more appropriate than one amount, and be developed and launched over the next two years.

Voluntary goals can identify more appropriate sizes of servings of key discretionary foods and drinks, drawing on:

- Australian research to identify discretionary foods and drinks for which the sizes of portions and/or servings have increased over time,
- existing industry voluntary goals for category level size of servings (e.g. soft drink and confectionary), and
- existing guidance from state government food policies (e.g. the Healthy Food and Drink in NSW Health facilities for Staff and Visitors Framework).

Key categories for which saturated fat and sugar targets cannot be set by the Reformulation Working Group may also be suitable for voluntary goals for size of servings. Modelling, similar to that undertaken by the Reformulation Working Group, may also help to determine key categories for voluntary goals for size of servings.

A content-specific group should be convened to develop draft goals, commissioned by the Department of Health.

3. Develop and implement an Industry Best Practice Guide.

This should provide guidance and support to food companies to incorporate nutrition as a key driver in labelling decisions regarding the size of servings and the size of food and drinks offered.

This could be part of wider setting-specific guidance from the Healthy Food Partnership. Areas for guidance, relating to size of servings, include:

- Adopting consistent terminology
- Off-pack labelling information
- Voluntary goals relating to sizes of servings
- Promoting appropriate sizes of serving
- Serving control devices in product presentation
- Advice about sizes of servings in consumer communication material

A content-specific group should be convened to develop this guidance, commissioned by the Department of Health.

Areas for future investigation

Advice has been received that guidance around pack sizes, price and promotion may introduce risk of contravening competition laws. The Portion Size Working Group recommends that the Department of Health investigate these issues as relevant for the wider Healthy Food Partnership implementation of voluntary activities.

Next steps

- Healthy Food Partnership Executive Committee reviews recommendations.
- Activities rolled out to enact the recommendations. Table 1 provides an overview of key considerations.

Acknowledgements

The following contributions to the Portion Size Working Group are acknowledged -

Portion Size Working Group:

- Geoffrey Annison (co-Chair)
- Clare Bleys
- Melissa Cameron
- Megan Cobcroft
- Kirsten Grinter
- Beth Meertens (co-Chair)
- Anna Rangan
- Janine Waller
- Heather Yeatman

Observers:

- Eithne Cahill
- Michele Walton

Advice received from:

- Professor Lesley King (University of Sydney): assessment method
- Professor Amanda Lee (Sax Institute) and Ms Meron Lewis: rapid review of evidence
- Vincy Li: program logic

The Healthy Food Partnership Secretariat.

Note: Members of the Portion Size Working Group from industry and the Australian Food and Grocery Council did not engage in any discussions before, during or after Portion Size Working Group meetings which canvassed specific product formats, prices, promotions or marketing strategies consistent with the requirements of Australian Consumer and Competition Law.

Table 1: Summary of implementation considerations for Portion Size Working Group recommendations

Area and Objectives	Key Element(s)	Actions	Primary Outcomes	Resourcing
<p>1. Better Awareness: 1.1 Terminology Alignment - Adoption of agreed amount descriptors (serve, serving, portion) of foods for clearer communication of nutrition and dietary information and advice, and a shared understanding among stakeholders.</p>	<p>Information defining the amount descriptors with recommendations for their use by industry and health professional in communications</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consultation with stakeholders to secure buy-in through survey questions (additions to planned Healthy Food Partnership surveys) [complete] • Development of 'copy' and production of an information sheet (flyer) detailing the agreed terms, examples and rationale for their use • Distribution to key stakeholder organisations • Healthy Food Partnership Branding 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alignment of use and understanding of terms used to describe amounts of food between health professionals and in new and revised communications to, and by, stakeholders 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Resources from the Department of Health are required to develop 'copy' and production and distribution of the flyers
<p>1. Better Awareness: 1.2 Consumers Outreach - Promoting mindfulness of appropriate amounts of foods selected & consumed at different eating occasions.</p>	<p>Consumer communication program supported across stakeholder organisations</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development of key messages about portion selection and mindful eating. This will require determining the appropriate portions to communicate. • Preparation of resource material with key messages • Dissemination to organisations to use key messages regarding servings and portions in their own communications • Healthy Food Partnership Branding 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consistent and aligned messages about the appropriate sizes of servings and portion choices disseminated by public health organisations • Consistent and aligned messages supported by industry through their communications leveraging Healthy Food Partnership brand • Consumers more conscious of the importance of sizes of servings and portions in supporting good diets, and good health 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Department of Health to support a group to develop key messages and commission development of communications materials • Department of Health to seek funding for a communications campaign

Area and Objectives	Key Element(s)	Actions	Primary Outcomes	Resourcing
<p>2. Better Choices: 2.1 Industry Engagement - Promoting nutritional needs of consumer demographic as a central determinant of serving size labelling and availability</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Industry ‘best practice’ guidelines for determining appropriate sizes of servings in the packaged goods and food service sectors. • Voluntary actions under four priority areas • Development of voluntary targets for sizes of servings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop size of serving labelling and availability principles and guidelines refined by product category and by consumer demographic based on agreed nutrition criteria • Develop voluntary targets for sizes of servings for key discretionary food and drink categories • Translate into practical advice for industry and publish (primarily on-line) • Industry engagement program developed with key messages promoting the guidelines, targets and voluntary actions/pledges in the packaged food and food service sector • Healthy Food Partnership Branding 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Guidance on healthier sizes of serving disseminated to industry stakeholders through Best Practice Guide and through voluntary targets • Foodservice pledges include voluntary activities for sizes of servings • Industry size of serving (both labelling and availability) in food service and retail settings is more aligned with consumer nutrition needs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Department of Health to support convening of an industry working group with public health representation to develop a best practice guide • Department of Health to support convening a working group to develop voluntary targets for sizes of servings • Support needed to develop a ‘final’ document and disseminate and promote to industry
<p>2. Better Choices: 2.2 Student Prize – development of the two innovative ideas: 1) App commercialised by industry. 2) Plate graphic program supported by Government.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To be confirmed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To be confirmed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To be confirmed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To be confirmed

Table 2: Summary of Priority Areas, Activities, Implementation Requirements and Evaluation

Priority Areas	Suite of activities for Healthy Food Partnership stakeholders	Implementation Requirements
<p>1. Shifting community perception of portion size value. <i>High priority according to evidence and feasibility assessment.</i></p> <p>The goal is to increase consumer awareness of the impact of sizes of servings and portions on nutrient intake and encourage a greater valuing and demand for quality and appropriate quantities of food and beverages. This would drive and support a demand for smaller servings offered in food service and retail for some products, and larger servings for other products i.e. key core foods.</p> <p>This could be achieved through a combination of information strategies (e.g. consumer marketing campaigns, consistency in terminology, extended labelling guidance), education strategies (e.g. consistent terminology, embedding serve, serving and portion education in national curriculum) and technology (e.g. ideas from University of Wollongong <i>Right Size Me</i> competition).</p>	<p>Increase consumer demand for appropriate servings of food by implementing communications which encourage responsible sizes for food and drinks on pack, at point of sale and in communication materials:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Adopt consistent terminology 2) Provide information on servings of food and drinks for whole of pack 3) Provide information on servings of food and drinks in household measures 4) Include messages about selection of healthy portions of food and drinks in communications and promotions 5) Other nominated options which contribute to this activity 	<p>This would be supported by the following future activities of the Healthy Food Partnership:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A communications strategy - Industry Best Practice Guide
<p>2. Decreasing sizes of servings of discretionary food and drinks in foodservice and retail settings. <i>Medium priority according to evidence and feasibility assessment.</i></p> <p>The goal is to encourage an environment which supports healthier choices by offering smaller servings of discretionary food and drinks. This could be achieved through changes to pack sizes in retail environments, changes to package, container and dishware size in foodservice settings, and developing voluntary serving goals /strategies for key discretionary food and drinks.</p> <p>Australian data identify key discretionary food and drink products which have increased in size of servings over time, and voluntary serving goals could be developed drawing on existing guidance (i.e. state canteen guidelines) as well as for categories which do not have reformulation targets.</p>	<p>Provide a range of responsible/appropriate sizes of servings for food and drinks to support consumers to purchase healthier options: larger sizes of food and drinks increases intake therefore manufacturers, retailers and foodservice vendors may:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Introduce a smaller offering where there is none and consider removing the largest offering 2) Ensure smaller offerings are readily available on shelf and in-store and are priced competitively 3) Offer entrée size as the default 4) Use smaller dishware for meals¹ 5) Offer vegetables/salad as default first course¹ 6) Other nominated options which contribute to this activity 	<p>This would be supported by the following future activities of the HFP:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Voluntary targets for sizes of servings (voluntary serving goals) - Industry best practice guide - An industry engagement strategy to encourage uptake by manufacturers, retailers and foodservice (note servings strategies in foodservice pledges)

¹ Noting limited evidence base in evidence and feasibility assessment
Portion Size Working Group

Priority Areas	Suite of activities for Healthy Food Partnership stakeholders	Implementation Requirements
<p>3. Changing sizes of servings and portions of Five Food Group foods in home, food service and retail settings.</p> <p><i>Medium priority according to evidence and feasibility assessment.</i></p> <p>Based on Australian data that most Five Food Group foods are under- consumed (intake is lower than the recommended amount i.e. size and number of Australian Dietary Guideline serves) and some portions are lower than the Australian Dietary Guideline serves, there is an opportunity to encourage ideal servings and portions of Five Food Group foods and beverages.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Offer vegetables/salad as default first course¹ 2) Other nominated options which contribute to this activity 	<p>This would be supported by the following future activities of the HFP:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Voluntary serving goals - Industry best practice guide - An industry engagement strategy to encourage uptake by manufacturers, retailers and foodservice (note servings strategies in foodservice pledges)
<p>4. Changing promotion practices which favour larger servings of discretionary food and drinks.</p> <p><i>Medium priority according to evidence and feasibility assessment.</i></p> <p>Both price and promotion are key determinants in food choice. The Healthy Food Partnership is limited in its ability to provide guidance on price and promotion practices due to anti-competition laws. However, there is the opportunity to encourage food companies to responsibly promote appropriate servings of food and drinks and to avoid promotions which encourage excessive consumption (i.e. supersize, and meal deals for products which are likely to be consumed by an individual and not shared). An important area of focus is tools to support the community to make choices within their individual constraints (i.e. budget) that do not favour discretionary food and drinks.</p>	<p>Appropriate and responsible size of servings for food and drinks: these activities will contribute to shifting ‘norm’ that “bigger is better”:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Do not promote up-sizing/2-4-1 deals that are designed to be consumed by an individual 2) Use appropriate serving images on pack/menu boards 3) Include messages about the amount/portion of food and drinks in campaigns, determined from guidance in Australian research (i.e. larger portions of FFG and smaller portions of discretionary) 4) Provide adequate information for consumers online about product portfolios which include household measures of servings, information for energy/nutrients for whole pack (not just serving and per 100g) 5) Other nominated options which contribute to this activity 	<p>This would be supported by the following future activities of the HFP:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Voluntary serving goals - Industry best practice guide <p>An industry engagement strategy to encourage uptake by manufacturers, retailers and foodservice (note servings strategies in foodservice pledges)</p>

For all priority areas detailed in Table 2 (above) **measurement parameters** are:

1. Identify and report products at a category level which utilize voluntary serving goals as a proportion of products
2. Identify and report the number of business practices that have adopted best practice industry guidance
3. Identify and report changes to business practices which enable industry guidance to be adopted
4. Identify and report activities for HFP stakeholders which have been adopted
5. Report uptake of recommended terminology across an audit of recent stakeholder publications.

Background – the problem being addressed

Current eating patterns are a leading contributor to disease burden in Australia.² Current eating patterns are low in the five food groups³ and discretionary food and drinks⁴ account for around one-third of total energy intake in Australia adults. These eating patterns result in dietary risk factors – which include excess intake of energy, saturated fat and sodium and inadequate intake of vegetables, fruits and wholegrain – which are associated with the aetiology of obesity and related non-communicable diseases such as cardiovascular disease and diabetes. Overconsumption of discretionary food and drinks is not the sole malnutrition issue in Australia. For an appreciable number of Australians (particularly older adults) *under* nutrition leads to health problems, as does inadequate intake of five food group foods for most Australians.

To date, much of the focus of advice to the community has been on achieving and maintaining a healthy weight through dietary guidelines which promote the five food groups foods and reducing risk associated nutrients in the Australian diet (saturated fat, sodium, sugar and alcohol). A complementary approach is to specifically support the community to reduce sizes of discretionary food and drinks consumed, and in some cases increase sizes of five food group foods. This may displace intake of energy from discretionary food and drinks, and reduce intake of risk associated nutrients.

Attachment 1 describes the relationship between size of portion and energy intake, and demonstrates that the portion, or amount consumed, is one part of promoting and supporting a healthy eating pattern. It also demonstrates the portion, or amount consumed, is not interchangeable with the Australian Dietary Guidelines serves.

Context – the Portion Size Working Group

The Healthy Food Partnership is a voluntary initiative of the Australian Government to work in partnership with industry and public health groups to cooperatively tackle obesity, encourage healthy eating and empower food manufacturers to make positive changes. Five working groups were established to guide the activities of the Healthy Food Partnership, and oversee the work of the Healthy Food Partnership in the priority areas.

The Portion Size Working Group undertook activities between September 2016 – June 2018 to develop a suite of voluntary activities for businesses, governments and non-government organisations to implement, as they are able. The workplan is available at Attachment 2. This involved:

- Identifying appropriate terminology in promoting appropriate servings, portions and volume control for industry and consumers
- Identifying, assessing and prioritising strategies to address servings for both core and discretionary foods in a variety of sectors (retail and food service)

Process to identify effective and feasible actions to implement

From the outset of this work, the Portion Size Working Group identified that the issues surrounding portions are varied and complex. Further, a lack of available evidence and complexity of the issues meant the Portion Size Working Group invested its efforts in identifying the effective and feasible strategies to promote appropriate servings and portions in Australia rather than immediately proposing strategies.

The key steps involved in developing the recommendations include:

- Commissioned evidence review of effective servings and portion interventions (Attachment 3),
- Insights from key stakeholders including industry and nutrition professionals on servings and portion strategies and terminology,
- Seeking new and untested ideas from key stakeholders, including a competition with the University of Wollongong.

² AIHW (2016) Australian Burden of Disease Study: impact and causes of illness and death in Australia 2011.

³ Five Food Groups include vegetables, fruits, grains and cereals, lean meats and alternatives (poultry, fish, legumes, tofu, nuts and seeds), and dairy (milk, cheese and yoghurt).

⁴ Discretionary food and drinks refer to a group of products which are energy dense and nutrient poor.

Summary of deliverables

The following section summarises the work completed for each deliverable outlined in the workplan ([Attachment 2](#)).

Deliverable 1 - Program Logic

A program logic identifies how the priority areas and their actions are expected to work together to meet the aim of the Portion Size Working Group and the Healthy Food Partnership ([Attachment 4](#)).

Deliverable 2 - Evidence & policy analysis

The amounts, i.e. portions, consumers choose to eat are subject to a range of factors, with many related to the way food is presented. For example, it has been shown that reducing plate size will lead to consumers eating smaller amounts under certain circumstances.⁵ Increased servings appear to be a driver in increased energy intake, and opportunities exist to address the size, availability and appeal of food and beverages.^{6,7} Australian data identify key discretionary food and drink products which have increased in size of serving over time,⁸ as well as key discretionary and Five Food Group products which are consumed in servings significantly different to Australian Dietary Guidelines serves.^{9, 10}

The evidence is strong on the relationship between larger sizes of food offered, served or taken and increased portions eaten.¹¹ The information gathered by the Portion Size Working Group through consultation and evidence, with consideration of barriers and enablers, has resulted in recommendations on strategies and their implementation. The information gathered also confirms the logic pathway between the size of food available, the portion consumed and nutrient intake, including energy intake at a meal and over the day. It shows that many activities can contribute to the pathway synergistically (see program logic, [Attachment 4](#)) and that it is unlikely that one activity alone will address the 'portion size problem'.

For more information on the evidence, see the Rapid Review ([Attachment 3](#)).

Deliverable 3 - Consistent terminology

Through a review of the scientific literature, and government and policy documents the Portion Size Working Group identified three key terms currently used: serving size, serve size and portion size. Based on similarity, duplication and confusion of the terms used, terminology has been defined to three terms: 'serving', 'serve' and 'portion'; and suggested actions proposed ([Attachment 5](#)). Future communications based on this terminology can provide health professionals, food manufacturers and food service guidance on a recommended list of terms to use for: product labelling; public health education; food service; or, research.

In summary,

- If the size or the amount of food is determined/selected by the manufacturer/business/home cook or host then use the term 'serving'.
 - For example, information on the amount of food is listed on product labelling as 'serving'. A standard meal or snack or beverage in a foodservice setting would be a 'serving'.

⁵ Hollands GJ, Shemilt I, Marteau TM, Jebb SA, Lewis HB, Wei Y, Higgins JPT, Ogilvie D. Portion, package or tableware size for changing selection and consumption of food, alcohol and tobacco. *Cochrane Database of Systematic Reviews* 2015, Issue 9. Art.

⁶ Marteau T, Hollands G, Shemilt I & Jebb S (2015) Downsizing: Policy options to reduce portion sizes to help tackle obesity. *BMJ*.

⁷ Steenhuis and Vermeer (2009) Portion size: review and framework for interventions. *International Journal of Behavioural and Physical Activity*.

⁸ Zheng et al (2017) Changes in Typical Portion Sizes of Commonly Consumed Discretionary Foods among Australian Adults from 1995 to 2011–2012. Zheng, M., Rangan, A., Meertens, B., & Wu, J. H. Y. (2017). Changes in Typical Portion Sizes of Commonly Consumed Discretionary Foods among Australian Adults from 1995 to 2011–2012. *Nutrients*, 9(6), 577.

<http://doi.org/10.3390/nu9060577>

⁹ Zheng et al (2016) Typical food portion sizes consumed by Australian adults: results from the 2011–12 Australian National Nutrition and Physical Activity Survey. *Scientific Reports* volume6, Article number: 19596

¹⁰ Yang, Gemming & Rangan (2018) Large Variations in Declared Serving Sizes of Packaged Foods in Australia: A Need for Serving Size Standardisation? *Nutrients* 2018, 10(2), 139;

¹¹ Lee & Lewis (2017) Effective Portion Size Strategies An evidence review prepared for the Australian Department of Health on behalf of the Australian Prevention Partnership Centre.

- If size or amount of food is determined/selected by the person eating then use the term 'portion'.
 - For example, the amount of food a person selects to eat from what is served by a manufacturer (in a pack), a foodservice operator (a snack or meal) or home cook/host.

The term 'serve' should only be used in reference to the Australian Dietary Guidelines reference serves.

Examples:

- An individual might be encouraged to choose a smaller serving in a quick service restaurant or restaurant (e.g. choose an entrée sized meal/leave some food uneaten) in order to eat a smaller portion.
- An individual might choose to take a portion of breakfast cereal which is different to the serving indicated by the food manufacturer.
- A food company (e.g. quick service restaurant) is encouraged to include smaller servings of foods such as muffins and cake, and larger servings of salad and vegetables.
- A food company (e.g. manufacturer) is encouraged to list a serving on a yoghurt tub which is realistic and estimates a commonly consumed portion.
- In an institutional setting (i.e. aged care, school), a health professional may determine the number of Australian Dietary Guidelines serves of vegetables or dairy required for the group, and therefore advise on changing the serving of a meal to better meet the group's needs, while also advising the group on how to choose/select a better portion.

Deliverable 4 - Feasibility Assessment

Along with the expertise from the Portion Size Working Group, insights from key stakeholders including industry and nutrition professionals on portion strategies were collected

An assessment method designed by Professor Lesley King (University of Sydney) provided a structured way to collate this information and:

- Define effective and feasible,
- Determine implementation considerations, considering the barriers and enablers, and
- Clearly document decision making.

The assessment process resulted in four (4) priority areas for action and four (4) recommendations, supported by key conclusions which are explained in the following section of this report.

Deliverable 5 - prioritise areas for action

Based on assessment of evidence for effectiveness and feasibility, four priority areas were identified which guided the development of the key activities proposed by the Portion Size Working Group.

The highest priority was to increase consumer awareness of the impact of portion size on intake and encourage a greater valuing and demand for quality of food ahead of larger serving size (quantity) by implementing:

1. Activities which shift community perception of serving/portion value.

The medium priorities, in order to encourage an environment which supports healthier choices, were to address:

2. Servings of discretionary food and drinks in foodservice and retail settings, to reduce total intake.
3. Servings of Five Food Group Foods in home, foodservice and retail settings, to increase total intake
4. Promotion practices which favour larger servings of discretionary food and drinks.

Conclusions of the Portion Size Working Group

Based on the work completed by the Portion Size Working Group, the following conclusions are made.

1. Size of serving is an important food & nutrition strategy for the Healthy Food Partnership

There is clear evidence that offering larger servings of foods and drinks means someone will eat more. The information gathered by the Portion Size Working Group through consultation and evidence, and with considerations of barriers and enablers, has determined that many activities can contribute synergistically to improving eating patterns in line with Australian Dietary Guidelines, however this requires sustained funding and support by both government and stakeholders.

2. One size will not fit all

While the problem is clear, there is less clarity on the exact mix of initiatives that will bring about the individual, industry and environment changes required to help people choose healthier amounts of foods (i.e. less discretionary food and drinks, and more from the five food groups).

The amount of food (and nutrients) an individual requires varies according to age, gender, life stage, physical activity and personal medical considerations. The environment in which an individual makes food choices depends on the setting (in-home, retail or foodservice) and geography (metropolitan or regional). Industry includes companies of differing size and resources (small to large) and varying levels of engagement (changes already underway, interested in making changes or uninterested). Therefore, there is no 'one size fits all' recommendation or strategy for improving consumption of appropriate quantities of food and drinks.

However, based on the work of the Portion Size Working Group, a range of options [see *Table 2*] are presented which provide guidance, based on evidence and feasibility, on key activities which are most likely to contribute to individual, industry or environment change to support healthy eating patterns.

3. Monitoring and evaluation is important to demonstrate progress over time and ensure accountability of all stakeholders involved

The Portion Size Working Group has determined that activities which contribute to the four priority areas are likely to help shift Australian eating patterns towards more Five Food Group foods and less discretionary food and drinks. Given the voluntary nature of the initiative, and the range of activities that can contribute, monitoring and reporting is critical to ensure accountability and evaluation against the broader Healthy Food Partnership goals.

4. Embed work into broader Healthy Food Partnership implementation

Coordination of activities and stakeholders is required to help turn barriers into enablers. Given the multi-factorial influences on sizes of food and drinks, and that different stakeholders can contribute different activities toward the same goal, this shared role can be reflected in Healthy Food Partnership activities by integrating information from the Portion Size Working Group into an overarching implementation plan.

For example, a voluntary activity to support a range of responsible sizes involves not just one stakeholder adopting a change, but several. For example:

- 1) Healthy Food Partnership promotion that "bigger isn't always better",
- 2) Retailers can support the opportunity for smaller products on shelf (limiting undue pressure if sales are low to begin with),
- 3) Manufacturers can develop and promote a self-determined range of sizes, including smaller sizes, of food and drink products, and/or
- 4) Other stakeholders can disseminate communications on servings and portions to their communities.

Another example is the findings around labelling, which suggests a low level of evidence and feasibility to support changes, however there is a strong logic that information could help individuals make better choices. Therefore, an opportunity exists for the Healthy Food Partnership to develop guidance (e.g. as part of the recommended industry best practice guide) on what information can be provided on or off-pack, and this information can be an input to current discussions amongst stakeholders on extended labeling.

5. Industry guidance is required

Given the evidence between larger sizes and increased intake, and the existence of existing (but variable) guidance, there is an opportunity to develop industry guidance for both manufacturer and foodservice settings. This guidance should build on existing resources, recognise that a range is likely to be more appropriate than one amount, and be developed and launched over the next two years. Specifically:

5.1 Development of voluntary serving targets

These targets can provide guidance on the healthier sizes of servings which can be offered by foodservice and manufacturers. Voluntary serving goals can identify more appropriate sizes of key discretionary food and drinks, drawing on:

- Australian research to identify discretionary food and drinks in which sizes of servings have increased over time,
- existing industry voluntary goals for sizes of category level servings (e.g. soft drink and confectionary), and
- existing guidance from state government food policies (e.g. the Healthy Food and Drink in New South Wales Health facilities for Staff and Visitors Framework).

Key categories for which saturated fat and sugar targets cannot be set by the Reformulation Working Group may also be suitable for voluntary serving goals. Modelling, similar to that being undertaken by the Reformulation Working Group, may also help to determine key categories for voluntary serving goals.

5.2 Develop and implement an Industry Best Practice Guide

This should provide guidance and support to food companies to incorporate nutrition as a key driver in decisions about serving –related labelling and the size of food and drinks offered. This guide can drawing on existing guidance including:

- existing industry principles, e.g. Australian Food and Grocery Council serving principles ,
- existing Food Standards Australia New Zealand reference quantities,
- existing jurisdiction information, e.g. state government policies on healthy food guidelines in canteens, and
- guidance from other countries, e.g. US Food and Drug Administration *Reference Amounts Customarily Consumed: list of products for each product category*.

The outcomes of changes to labels and serving size information in Canada should be monitored to determine if this is an appropriate approach for Australia. The evaluation of the New South Wales Health Food & Drink Guidelines will also be an important input.

6. Food/nutrition marketing campaigns require messaging around the sizes of food and drinks

Given the information gathered which consistently identifies community demand as a key barrier to change, it is important the Healthy Food Partnership contributes to shifting this perception through planned consumer education/communication campaigns and consistent messaging/terminology.

7. Terminology is important

Confusion between terms was evident in the evidence and consultation undertaken. The Portion Size Working Group has clarified the three key terms, and provided advice on how they can be best used.

- **Serve:** This term should be used when referring to a 'standardised' amount of a food or drink, as identified in the Australian Dietary Guidelines.
- **Serving:** This term should be used when describing the amount of food provided by a manufacturer, company or cook/host.
- **Portion:** This term that should be used when educating people about how much they should select or choose to consume at one occasion (meal or snack).

Completing the ‘design phase’ of portion size activities

The work and recommendations of the Portion Size Working Group have met the original objectives set by the Executive Committee:

Portion Size Working Group Objective	Recommended Activities	Status
1. Consider how to define and promote appropriate portion sizes	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Terminology defined 2. Marketing campaign recommended 3. Voluntary serving goals recommended 	Complete
2. Consider how to work with industry and food service to optimise servings	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Voluntary activities/pledges recommended as part of broader HFP suite of activities 2. Four priority areas identified 3. Industry best practice guidance recommended for development 	Complete
3. Consider how to undertake educative programs on serves, servings and portions, with appropriate guidance for consumers	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Terminology defined 2. Consumer marketing campaign recommended 3. Serves, servings and portions included as key principles in Education WG communication strategy 	Complete

Attachments

Attachment 1 – Relationship between servings, portions and energy intake (*below*)

Attachment 2 – [Portion Size Working Group work plan](#) (*web link*)

Attachment 3 – [A Rapid review of the evidence – Effective portion size strategies](#) (*web link*)

Attachment 4 – Program Logic (*insert web link*)

Attachment 5 – Terminology Factsheet (*below*)

Attachment 1 - Relationship between servings, portions and energy intake

The relationship between energy intake and portions can be described as:

$$(\text{Freq}_{\text{FFG}} \times \text{P}_{\text{FFG}}) + (\text{Freq}_{\text{DF}} \times \text{P}_{\text{DF}}) = \text{Total energy intake}$$

Freq = frequency of consumption; Portion = amount consumed;

Ideally, energy intake should equal requirements, such that:

$$\text{Total energy intake} = \text{Dietary Requirements}$$

$$\text{Total energy intake} = (\text{ADG Srv}_{\text{FFG}} \times \text{Rec \# Srv}_{\text{FFG}}) + (\text{ADG Srv}_{\text{DF}} \times \text{Rec \# Srv}_{\text{DF}})$$

ADG Serve = reference serve; Rec # Serves = ADG recommendations for gender, size and activity levels

Resulting in a goal that:

$$(\text{Freq}_{\text{FFG}} \times \text{P}_{\text{FFG}}) + (\text{Freq}_{\text{DF}} \times \text{P}_{\text{DF}}) = (\text{ADG Srv}_{\text{FFG}} \times \text{Rec \# Srv}_{\text{FFG}}) + (\text{ADG Srv}_{\text{DF}} \times \text{Rec \# Srv}_{\text{DF}})$$

This relationship demonstrates that the portion, or amount consumed, is one part of promoting and supporting a healthy eating pattern. It also demonstrates the portion, or amount consumed, is not interchangeable with the Australian Dietary Guidelines serve.

Attachment 5 - Consistent terminology for describing the size of food and beverages

The Healthy Food Partnership aims to improve the dietary habits of Australians by making healthier food choices easier and more accessible and by raising awareness of better food choices and portion sizes. Five working groups have been appointed, one of which is the Portion Size working group. The Portion Size working group has been tasked with providing clarification of the terminology to be used to describe the serves of food and beverages we consume.

Through a review of the scientific literature, and government and policy documents the working group identified four key terms currently used: serving size, serve size, portion size and portion control.

Based on similarity, duplication and confusion of the terms used, this summary document has been developed revising the terminology down to three terms – portion, serving and serve. It aims to describe the three terms, their intended use and recommendations for future Healthy Food Partnership activities. For example, using this information to develop resources, which provide varying audiences with guidance on use of these terms for product labelling, public health education, food service, and research activities.

Table 1. Summary of consistent terminology – Portion, Serving, Serve

Term	Further information and examples
<p>Portion – the size or amount of a product (food and/or drink) selected by the individual at any particular eating occasion</p>	<p>The amount of any food or drink selected – i.e. the ‘portion’ is influenced by many factors including what is offered, or is available.</p> <p>Examples:</p> <p>The amount of food selected or actually eaten from the serving in a food package provided by a manufacturer is a ‘portion’.</p> <p>The amount of food selected or actually eaten from the serving in a meal or snack provided by a foodservice business (restaurant, canteen, kiosk etc.) is a ‘portion’.</p> <p>The amount of a food or beverage a person serves for themselves when eating at home, with family or friends or at a buffet, is a ‘portion’.</p>
<p>Serving – the size or amount of a product (food and/or drink), suggested by others, such as on-pack labelling by a manufacturer or provided by a food service business.</p>	<p>Food businesses suggest appropriate amounts to be consumed, by labelling, or through the amount of food provided for a menu order. Both are a ‘serving’.</p> <p>Examples :</p> <p>The mandatory ‘serving’ as depicted on the label in the Nutrition Information Panel on packaged food.</p> <p>The amount of a meal component, snack or beverage provided in a foodservice business (restaurant, canteen, kiosk etc) is a ‘serving’.</p> <p>The amount of food or beverage offered by a carer or host (for example, by placing on a plate) to a family member or guest in the home is a ‘serving’.</p>
<p>Serve – a reference amount of a food or beverage described by the Australian Dietary Guidelines.</p>	<p>Australian Dietary Guideline serves are reference amounts of foods used by health professionals, educators and businesses to assist in providing guidance on healthy diet construction for population subgroups and individuals, or for assessing nutritional intake. It allows the total daily recommended amounts of specific food groups to be quantified.</p>

Potential applications:

- An individual might be encouraged to choose a smaller serving in a quick service restaurant or restaurant (e.g. choose an entrée sized meal/leave some food uneaten) in order to eat a smaller portion.

- An individual might choose to take a portion of breakfast cereal which is different to the serving indicated by the food manufacturer.
- A food company (e.g. quick service restaurant) is encouraged to include smaller servings of foods such as muffins and cake, and larger servings of salad and vegetables.
- A food company (e.g. manufacturer) is encouraged to list a serving on a yoghurt tub which is realistic and estimates a commonly consumed portion.
- In an institutional setting (i.e. aged care, school), a health professional may determine the number of Australian Dietary Guidelines serves of vegetables or dairy required for the group, and therefore advise on changing the serving of a meal to better meet the group's needs, while also advising the group on how to choose/select better portions.

Recommended implementation activities for the Healthy Food Partnership:

- Develop communications which explain the difference between portion, serving and serve. The audience for the information would need to be confirmed, but may include general community as well as nutrition/health professionals and food/food service professionals. A factsheet may be appropriate to underpin consumer communications, while a best practice guide would be more appropriate for food industry along with health professionals.
 - o Examples of consumer content includes:
 - <https://www.niddk.nih.gov/health-information/weight-management/just-enough-food-portions>
 - <https://www.nhlbi.nih.gov/health/educational/wecan/eat-right/distortion.htm>
- These communications can then be disseminated, as part of a broader communication and engagement strategy
- Additional engagement may be required with key stakeholders to encourage consistency in use of terms. This may involve conference presentations, trade meetings, continuing professional development events, newsletter articles etc conducted by the Healthy Food Partnership.

Table 2. Detailed information on the terms, definitions, application and recommendations of the Portion Size Working Group, June 2018.

Consistent term	Descriptive term	Definition	Application	Portion Size Working Group Recommendations
Portion	<p><i>Ideal portion:</i> previous terms include portion pack, pack guidance and portion control.</p> <p><i>Portion selected:</i> previous terms include 'amount consumed at an eating occasion'</p>	<p>Dual term to describe the amount an individual selects, or is guided to select.</p> <p>Specifically:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. the actual amount of food and drink selected by an individual at one eating occasion (meal or snack). 2. guidance on the amount of food and drink that could/should be selected by an individual at one eating occasion – based on their energy and nutrient needs (as per the Australian Dietary Guidelines). <p>To note: these energy needs may be smaller or larger than the Australian Dietary Guidelines 'standardised' serve sizes' and the 'serving size' declared on the nutrition information panel (NIP).</p> <p>Portion Guidance: refers to any measure or mechanism that assists with selecting a specific portion of a food or drink, e.g. household measure, marking/ guidance on pack.</p>	<p>Education: "what your portion should be"</p> <p>Education on the size of portions can include comparison with the Australian Dietary Guidelines 'serves' and the 'servings' presented by food companies (e.g. on pack, or served in foodservice settings). The size of the portion will differ depending on the individual's energy and nutrient requirements.</p> <p>Research: "what is your portion"</p> <p>Gathering information on actual intake, may make reference to food models to estimate actual amount selected or consumed (e.g. food models used in National Nutrition Survey).</p>	<p>A communications campaign is recommendation which includes messages to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Define or explain what a portion is - Promote selection of appropriately sized portions to personal needs - Uses consistent terminology - Influence community perceptions about the size of portions <p>The Portion Size Working Group acknowledges:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - messages about healthier portions of food/drinks may not be an engaging message to the community. Messages may need to be positioned around other important community issues including: value for money, budget, minimising waste, health. - additional work is required to clarify appropriately sized portions to communicate in a campaign. <p>Recommended activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Develop communications for dissemination (examples above). - Clarify appropriate sizes of portions to communicate (i.e. for average adult/child).

Consistent term	Descriptive term	Definition	Application	Portion Size Working Group Recommendations
Serving	<p><u>Product serving</u></p> <p>Or</p> <p><u>Pack serving</u></p> <p>Or</p> <p><u>Meal or snack served in foodservice setting</u></p>	<p>Dual term to describe the amount a company selects or provides guidance on selecting.</p> <p>Specifically:</p> <p>1. Product Labelling</p> <p>As defined in Australia and New Zealand Food Standards Code: an amount of a food or drink (single food item or combination of foods ingredients) which constitute one normal ‘serving’ according to a manufacturer’s directions (Food Standards Code, Standard 1.1.2, p9)</p> <p>2. Foodservice settings</p> <p>As defined by the Healthy Food Partnership Portion Size Working Group: an amount of a food or drink (single food item or combination of foods ingredients) which is presented/served to a customer/consumer.</p>	<p>1. Product labelling</p> <p>Mandatory term to describe the amount of a food/ drink listed in the nutrition information panel (NIP)/ food label, and is determined by the manufacturer. It should reflect a realistic amount of the product the person might normally consume on one eating occasion.</p> <p>2. Foodservice settings</p> <p>A serving would refer to the amount of a food/ drink served to a consumer (from which the consumer chooses to eat their preferred amount).</p>	<p>Further policy work is recommended to provide guidance to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - manufacturers on current and more realistic size of ‘servings’ - that may be ‘ranges’ (noting existing guidance on serving sizes does exist for some categories – e.g. beverages, chocolate/ confectionary – ‘industry agreed standardised servings’ – Health Star Rating (HSR Style Guide, v5). - develop guidance on healthy servings for commonly sold food and beverages in food service settings (i.e. voluntary serving size targets). This would enable the term ‘serving’ to be incorporated into strategies which promote healthy amounts of food and beverages. <p>Recommended activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Develop Industry Best Practice Guide to encourage consistency of serving size information, and portion size guidance - Develop targets for the size of servings which encourage industry to offer healthier sized food and drinks

Consistent term	Descriptive term	Definition	Application	Portion Size Working Group Recommendations
Serve	<u>Australian Dietary Guidelines serve</u> Or <u>Reference serve</u> Or <u>Standard serve</u>	As defined in Australian Dietary Guidelines (2013): A standardised amount of a core food or drink, to help meet your daily energy and nutrient needs, e.g. 1 standard serve of fruit is 350kJ or 150g	Education: Serve information should be used along with advice on frequency, to work out the total amount of food and drinks required from each of the Five Food Groups, to meet an individual’s daily energy and nutrient requirements. The term should be used in conjunction with the Australian Dietary Guidelines to provide context to its meaning and to reduce the risk of misleading consumers.	In Portion Size Working Group discussions, and as observed in the Portion Size Working Group consultation survey in April 2018, was the interchangeable use of terms ‘serve’ and ‘serving’. The similarity of these two terms is likely to be a contributing factor. Future work should consider using the descriptive term ‘ <i>Australian Dietary Guidelines serve</i> ’ where possible.