

Making fruit easier to eat increases sales and consumption in school cafeterias

April 17 2013

No matter how you slice it, cutting fruit into bite-sized pieces prompts children to eat more apples during lunchtime, according to a recent study by Cornell University researchers.

Most people believe that children avoid [fruit](#) because of the taste and allure of alternative packaged snacks. A study by Cornell University's Food and Brand Lab researchers Brian Wansink, David Just, Andrew Hanks, and Laura Smith concluded that the size of the snack counts the most.

Kids love to eat fruit in ready-to-eat bite-sized pieces, yet in most [school settings](#), the fruit is served whole, which could explain why children are taking fruits on the lunch line but not eating them.

The authors concluded that children dislike eating large pieces of fruit for two main reasons: for younger students, who have smaller mouths and might have braces or missing teeth, whole fruit is too difficult to eat. For older girls, eating potentially messy whole fruits in front of others is an unattractive, and potentially embarrassing, proposition.

The study found that fruit sales increased by an average of 61 percent when the fruit was sliced. For example, [apple](#) sales in schools with fruit slicers increased by 71 percent compared to control schools without such slicers. More importantly, researchers found that the percentage of students who ate more than half of their apple increased by 73 percent, an effect that lasted long after the study was over.

Slicing fruit into handy, bite-sized pieces encourages more children to select it and to eat more of it. With an initial investment of just \$200, fruit slicers constitute a means for school cafeterias not only to encourage [fruit consumption](#) among students but also to prevent [food waste](#)!

Provided by Cornell Food & Brand Lab

Citation: Making fruit easier to eat increases sales and consumption in school cafeterias (2013, April 17) retrieved 6 January 2023 from <https://medicalxpress.com/news/2013-04-fruit-easier-sales-consumption-school.html>

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