

## COMPARISON OF FRUIT AND VEGETABLES QUESTIONNAIRES USED IN THREE STATEWIDE SURVEYS

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Increasing fruit and vegetable intakes of Australians is one of the strategies for improving health. Recently, Queensland, Victoria and South Australia have conducted statewide survey to estimate usual fruit and vegetable consumption. Each state used a different set of questions to estimate intake. All these surveys used interviewer-administered questionnaires which we adapted to a written format.

We conducted a study among 102 students (including 44 male students) enrolled in the Associate Diploma of Hospitality at Gatton College, The University of Queensland to compare these questionnaires. The Queensland questionnaire was administered first to the class as a whole. The following week, the other questionnaires were administered in a random order over two consecutive days.

The differences between the questionnaires were: the Queensland (Qld) survey ascertained total fruit or total vegetable consumption using one question; the Victorian (Vic) survey ascertained frequency and quantity per occasion of consumption separately. The South Australian (SA) survey ascertained the consumption of potatoes, salad and cooked vegetables separately, while the fruit question was the same as the Queensland question, except that it specified that juice was not to be included. Total monthly consumption was calculated for fruit and vegetables separately and is as follows:

	n	mean	Percentile			Correlation #	
			25	50	75	SA	Vic
Vegetables							
SA	75	81.3	48	84	108	-	
Vic	75	64.7	28	56	84	0.42*	-
Qld	87	50.0	28	42	56	0.56*	0.29
Fruit							
SA	78	29.0	12	20	28	-	
Vic	68	34.5	12.5	28	44	0.71*	-
Qld	83	33.8	10	28	56	0.61*	0.66*

# correlations were done using a natural log transformation

\*P<0.05

It is evident that the questionnaires do not give comparable results. In particular, the South Australian vegetable set gives a much higher intake than the other two surveys. The difference in fruit intake, and in particular the larger range of the responses to the Victorian and Queensland questions compared to the South Australian question, raises the possibility that juice was counted as fruit by the respondents. We plan to extend this study to other students and to compare their results to weighed food records kept by the students.

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