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Food Reformulation Task Force: Monitoring Sugar in Processed Foods

July 2022 to June 2024

Food Reformulation Task Force: Monitoring Sugar in Processed Foods

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Abbreviations

CACF	Commercially available complementary food
EFSA	European Food Safety Authority
FRT	Food Reformulation Task Force
FSAI	Food Safety Authority of Ireland
GPAL	Public Analyst's Laboratory, Galway
HPAEC/PAD	high-performance anion-exchange chromatography/pulsed amperometric detection
IQR	Interquartile range
LOQ	limit of quantitation
Min–Max	minimum and maximum values
NCDs	non-communicable diseases
QC	quality control
RTEBC	ready-to-eat breakfast cereal
TE	total energy
WHO	World Health Organization

Version history

Title	Date published	Description
Food Reformulation Task Force: Monitoring Sugar in Processed Foods in 2022	29/9/2023	• Categories added: soups and sauces
Food Reformulation Task Force: Monitoring Sugar in Processed Foods July 2022 to June 2023	29/08/2024	• Categories added: sugar-sweetened carbonated beverages
Food Reformulation Task Force: Monitoring Sugar in Processed Foods July 2022 to June 2024	22/09/2025	• Categories added: Ready-to-eat-breakfast-cereal and commercially available complementary foods

Purpose

The purpose of this report is to provide an overview of the results obtained in the Food Reformulation Task Force (FRT) sugar monitoring surveys. These surveys commenced in 2022 and will continue until 2025. This report will be updated annually to reflect the findings of these annual sugar surveys.

Introduction

The European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) Scientific Opinion on a tolerable upper intake level for dietary sugars concluded that free and added sugar intake contribute to increased risk of obesity and some non-communicable diseases (NCDs) such as type 2 diabetes, hypertension and high blood cholesterol. Based on this the EFSA recommends free and added sugar intake should be kept as low as possible whilst meeting nutritional needs (EFSA, 2022). The World Health Organization (WHO) recommends dietary intakes of free sugar should not exceed 10% of total energy (TE), with a conditional recommendation of <5% TE (WHO, 2015). In Ireland, it is estimated that 105 to 141 deaths per 100,000 population are related to dietary intakes (Ashkan *et al*., 2017). High rates of overweight, obesity and dietary-related NCDs in the Irish population, alongside dietary intakes of free sugar above the WHO conditional recommendation of <5% TE, mean there is a need to reduce sugar consumption.

The Obesity Policy and Action Plan – A Healthy Weight for Ireland published in 2016, outlines ten steps to be taken within a 10-year time frame to prevent overweight and obesity in Ireland (Department of Health, 2016). Step three of the plan relates to food reformulation and aims to *'secure appropriate support from the commercial sector to play its part in obesity prevention and agree food industry reformulation targets and review progress*'. To achieve this a Food Reformulation Subgroup of the Obesity Policy Implementation and Oversight Group developed A Roadmap for Food Product Reformulation in Ireland which was published in 2021 (Department of Health, 2021).

To implement the Roadmap, the Food Reformulation Task Force (FRT), a strategic partnership between the Food Safety Authority of Ireland (FSAI) and Healthy Ireland at the Department of Health, was established. The Roadmap sets out that food products and non-alcoholic beverages, which are significant contributors to sugar in the Irish diet, will reduce their sugar content by 20%. Any reformulation that occurred between 2015 and 2025 will count towards meeting this target. In addition to this, sugar and sodium targets for commercially available complementary foods (CACFs) were developed and published in 2024 (see report here) (FSAI, 2024).

An analysis of the Irish national food consumption surveys identified 15 food categories and 5 non-alcoholic beverage categories which are significant contributors to dietary intakes of sugar in people aged 1–90 years[1]. These priority food categories and the methodology used to identify them is outlined in the Food Reformulation Task Force: Priority Food Categories for Reformulation in Ireland V3 report (FSAI, 2023a).

A significant role of the FRT is to monitor food reformulation progress in reducing energy (calories) and target nutrients (salt, saturated fat, and sugar) in 40 priority food categories. The Reformulation Task Force 2022 Progress Report summarises the proposed monitoring approach, including food categories for laboratory analysis (FSAI, 2023b). The FRT has adapted the sampling and analysis methodology followed in the Salt Reduction Programme (see report here) to monitor the sugar content of foods and non-alcoholic beverages for the duration of the food reformulation Roadmap implementation between the years 2022–2025 (FSAI, 2023c).

[1] National Preschool Nutrition Survey – NPNS (2011 – 2012; n500; ages 1-4 years), National Children's Food Survey II - NCFS II (2017-18; n600; ages 5-12 years), the National Teens' Food Survey II - NTFS II (2019-20; n428; ages 13-18 years) and the National Adult Nutrition Survey - NANS (2008-09; n1500; ages 18-90years)

Method

1. Sample collection

- In July and August 2022, a convenience sample was taken of the food category called 'Soups, sauces & miscellaneous foods' (see Table 1).[2]
- In May and June 2023, a convenience sample was taken of the food category called 'Carbonated beverages' (see Table 1).[2] As only sugar-sweetened varieties were sampled for the purposes of this study, they are referred to throughout the report as sugar-sweetened carbonated beverages.
- In February and March 2024, a convenience sample was taken of the food category called 'CACFs' (see Table 1).[2]
- In May and June 2024, a convenience sample was taken of the food category called 'Ready-to-eat-breakfast cereal (RTEBC)' (see Table 1).[2] For the purposes of this study, these are referred to throughout the report as RTEBC.
- Samples were collected from a range of supermarkets and convenience retail stores in County Dublin, within the locality of the sampling officers and the Dublin 1 area.
- Samples were prioritised for collection based on the following criteria: if sugar content was above the 'low sugar' nutrition claim condition of use[3] and contained 'free sugars' and/or 'added sugars' based on the World Health Organization[4] and European Food Safety Authority's definitions.[5]
- Following collection, samples were labelled with a unique identifier survey code and sample code which corresponded to a populated Excel spreadsheet (that includes the FSAI reference code, sample number and product label information).
- Photographs of all sides of the product label were taken, uploaded, and stored electronically.

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[2] Please note that there was no specific randomised approach employed for sampling. Only sugar-sweetened varieties were sampled for the purposes of this study.
[3] **Low sugar nutrition** claim "A claim that a food is low in sugars, and any claim likely to have the same meaning for the consumer, may only be made where the product contains no more than 5 g of sugars per 100 g for solids or 2,5 g of sugars per 100 ml for liquids." (Regulation (EC) No 1924/2006)
[4] WHO definition "**free sugars** all monosaccharides and disaccharides added to foods by the manufacturer, cook or consumer, plus sugars naturally present in honey, syrups and fruit juices", WHO definition – "**Added sugars** include all added sugars such as sucrose, table sugar and/or other sugars in processed foods.'' (WHO, 2015)
[5] EFSA definition ''**Free sugars** are defined as added sugars plus sugars naturally present in honey, syrups, fruit juices and fruit juice concentrates.'' EFSA definition ''**Added sugars** are defined as mono- and disaccharides added to foods as ingredients during processing or preparation at home, and sugars eaten separately or added to foods at the table.'' (EFSA, 2022)

- Samples were transported by courier to the Public Analyst's Laboratory, Galway (GPAL) for sugar analysis.

2. Sample analysis

- All samples were analysed by GPAL Irish National Accreditation Board Registration Number: 009T.
- The GPAL used high-performance anion-exchange chromatography/pulsed amperometric detection (HPAEC/PAD) to accurately determine sucrose, galactose, glucose, fructose, lactose and maltose concentrations in food and beverage samples. This analytical method is an in-house method and is accredited to ISO 17025 since November 2019.
- Food samples were mixed or homogenized before analysis. In some cases, samples were mixed into a slurry with water before analysis. A test portion was extracted with carrez solution (some food matrices required an Ultra-Turrax step with water prior to the carrez extraction step). The sample extract was vortexed for ~15s to thoroughly mix the contents and centrifuged at 3000 rpm for 20 minutes at ambient temperature and filtered. The filtered extract was then analysed using HPAEC/PAD to accurately determine sucrose, galactose, glucose, fructose, lactose and maltose concentrations in the food samples.
- Carbonated beverage samples were degassed by sonicating for at least 15 minutes before analysis. A test portion was diluted and filtered. The filtered extract was then analysed using HPAEC/PAD to accurately determine sucrose, glucose, fructose and maltose (if present) concentrations in the samples.
- The method was performed using a Thermo Scientific Dionex ICS 5000+HPIC system using a Dionex CarboPac SA10-4µm (4 × 250 mm) column with a Dionex CarboPac SA10G-4µm (4 × 50 mm) guard column and a Dionex IonPac NG1 column (4 × 35 mm)(IonPac is only used when analysing for maltose).
- The limit of quantitation (LOQ) for each sugar based on a 1/11 dilution of the sample extracts was 0.06 g/ 100 g for food samples and 0.06 g/ 100 ml for beverages.
- The ‘Total sugar’ result for each sample was based on the summation of the individual sugars results (in cases where 1 or more of the individual sugars results used in the summation are >LOQ, results below the LOQ of the individual sugars was set to zero).

3. Statistical analysis

- Results were analysed using RStudio v4.3.0 in 2023 and 2024 and v4.4.0 in 2025.
- Descriptive statistics (mean, standard deviation (SD), median, interquartile range (IQR) and minimum and maximum values (Min–max)) were determined to assess the sugar content of soups, sauces & miscellaneous foods, sugar-sweetened carbonated beverages, RTEBC and CACFs.
- Results per average suggested serving size were calculated as follows:
    - Retrieve each product's suggested serving size
    - Calculate the sugar content (monosaccharides, disaccharides, and total sugar) as per suggested serving size per product
    - Determine descriptive statistics using the suggested serving size values for all sugars.

Table 1 Number of products collected in each food category and analysed for sugar content per 100 g or 100 ml from July 2022 to June 2024

Category	2022	2023	2024	Total
Soups	28			**28**
Sauces	35			**35**
Sugar-sweetened carbonated beverages		95		**95**
RTEBC[(a)]			100	**100**
CACFs[(b)]			104	**104**
Total	**63**	**95**	**204**	**362**

(a) RTEBC= ready-to-eat breakfast cereal
(b) CACFs= commercially available complementary foods. Descriptions of CACF categories are located in the Appendix in Table 14.

Background: tables 2–13

- A priority food category called soups, sauces & miscellaneous foods was sampled between July 2022 and August 2022 to determine mean and median levels of sugars (monosaccharides, disaccharides, and total sugar) which is shown in Tables 2–5.
- No food products categorised under miscellaneous foods (stocks and gravy granules) were sampled. Sugar results for soups and sauces are displayed in this report.
- A priority food category called sugar-sweetened carbonated beverages was sampled between May 2023 and June 2023 to determine mean and median levels of sugars (monosaccharides, disaccharides, and total sugar) which are shown in Tables 6 and 7.
- A priority food category called RTEBC was sampled between May 2024 and June 2024 to determine mean and median levels of sugars (monosaccharides, disaccharides, and total sugar) which are shown in Tables 8 and 9.
- A food category marketed for infants and young children under the age of 36 months called CACFs was sampled between February 2024 and March 2024 to determine mean and median levels of sugars (monosaccharides, disaccharides, and total sugar) which are shown in Tables 10–13.
- Levels of sugars (monosaccharides, disaccharides, and total sugar) in soups, sauces, sugar-sweetened carbonated beverages, RTEBC and CACFs were based on single-product samples.
- To note, some products in the CACF category were sampled from multipacks and included duplicate items bearing the same batch number to ensure that the minimum required quantity for laboratory analysis was met.
- The monosaccharides referred to in this report are glucose, fructose, and galactose.
- The disaccharides referred to in this report are lactose, sucrose, and maltose.
- All values are rounded to the nearest two decimal places. Trace results that were expressed with ‘<’ symbol were divided by two to obtain a decimal number that can be used in the analysis (e.g. analysed laboratory value <0.01 g, the value used in the statistical tests was 0.005 g).
- Due to these conversions, the summation of monosaccharides and disaccharides does not equal the total sugar values.
- Products were categorised based on their label description.
- Results relate to both branded and own brand label products.
- Results relate to products as consumed (including products which require reconstitution before consumption e.g. dried soups).

Soups

This section examines the analysed sugar content (monosaccharides, disaccharides, and total sugar) of soups[6] collected in July 2022. Figure 1 provides a summary of the total sugar content of soups. Tables 2 and 3 describe the monosaccharides, disaccharides, and total sugar content of soups per 100 g, and per suggested serving size. These tables should be referred to when interpreting Figure 1.

Figure 1 Mean total sugar content of soups per 100 g and per suggested serving size with the teaspoon equivalent of total sugar per suggested serving size (g/suggested serving size)

[6] Varieties of soup included: fresh soup packed in plastic pots, ambient soups packed in pouches, canned/tinned soup, and dried instant soup.

- The mean total sugar content per 100 g of soup was 3.95 g per 100 g.
- The mean total sugar content per suggested serving size of soup was 9.56 g[7] (equivalent to 2.4 teaspoons of sugar).
- Twenty-five percent of products (n=7) did not provide a suggested serving size, the average suggested serving size was 230 g.

[7] For 75% of products for which suggested serving size was given on the product label.

Table 2 Mean (SD), median (IQR), min–max sugar content (monosaccharides, disaccharides, and total sugar) of soups per 100 g (g/100 g)

Statistic	Sugar in soups per 100 g[(a)] 2022						
	Monosaccharides			Disaccharides			Total sugar
	Glucose	Fructose	Galactose	Lactose	Sucrose	Maltose	
Mean (SD)	1.09 (0.50)	1.12 (0.56)	0.02 (0.01)	0.18 (0.16)	1.50 (0.61)	0.09 (0.21)	3.95 (1.35)
Median (IQR)	1.10 (0.66)	1.16 (0.77)	0.03 (0.01)	0.15 (0.22)	1.46 (0.93)	0.03 (0.00)	3.70 (1.62)
Min–max	0.43–2.28	0.26–2.27	0.01–0.03	0.01–0.50	0.73–2.90	0.01–1.09	1.90–7.60
Total samples (n)	28						

(a) Unless otherwise indicated, all samples were analysed as sold. Varieties of soup included: fresh soup packed in plastic pots, ambient soups packed in pouches, canned/tinned soup, and dried instant soup. One of the dried soups was analysed as reconstituted product as per manufacturer's instructions. Two dried soup samples were analysed as dry product and then based on the manufacturer's dilution instruction i.e. ~1/11 sugar content in g/100 ml as prepared was calculated. As density was 1.0 these are reported as g/100 g.
SD= standard deviation; IQR= interquartile range; Min–max= minimum and maximum.

Table 3 Mean (SD), median (IQR), min–max sugar content (monosaccharides, disaccharides, and total sugar) of soups per suggested serving size (g/suggested serving size)

Statistic	Sugar in soups per suggested serving size[(a)] 2022						
	Monosaccharides			Disaccharides			Total sugar
	Glucose	Fructose	Galactose	Lactose	Sucrose	Maltose	
Mean (SD)	2.70 (1.40)	2.84 (1.57)	0.06 (0.03)	0.43 (0.37)	3.54 (1.62)	0.10 (0.10)	9.56 (3.74)
Median (IQR)	2.45 (1.14)	2.56 (1.52)	0.06 (0.04)	0.41 (0.53)	3.10 (2.28)	0.06 (0.03)	8.60 (3.62)
Min–max	0.96–6.12	0.59–6.79	0.01–0.12	0.01–1.18	1.56–7.74	0.04–0.44	3.80–20.29
Total samples (n)	21[(b)]						

(a) Unless otherwise indicated, all samples were analysed as sold. Varieties of soup included: Fresh soup packed in plastic pots, ambient soup packed in pouches, canned/tinned soup, and dried instant soup. Each product's total sugar content was individually calculated based on its suggested serving size, and the average was calculated. Products without a suggested serving size were excluded. Mean suggested serving size for soups was 230 g with a minimum of 190 g and a maximum of 390 g. Values for one of the dried soups was analysed as a reconstituted product as per manufacturer's instructions. Two dried soup samples were analysed as dry product and then based on the manufacturer's dilution instruction i.e. ~1/11 sugar content in g/100 ml as prepared, was calculated. As density was 1.0 these are reported as g/100 g.

(b) Soup (n=21) with a suggested serving size were included. Seven soups were excluded due to no suggested serving size present on the food label.
SD= standard deviation; IQR= interquartile range; Min–max= minimum and maximum.

Sauces

This section examines the sugar content (monosaccharides, disaccharides, and total sugar) of sauces[8] collected in August 2022. Figure 2 provides a summary of total sugar in sauces. Tables 4 and 5 describe the monosaccharides, disaccharides and total sugar content of sauces per 100 g and per suggested serving size. These tables should be referred to when interpreting Figure 2.

Figure 2 Mean total sugar content of sauces per 100 g and per suggested serving size with the teaspoon equivalent of total sugar per suggested serving size (g/suggested serving size)

[8] Sauces included in this sample were cooking sauces and condiments. Varieties of cooking sauces included: sweet & sour, bolognese, curry, and other Asian style sauces. Varieties of condiments included: tomato ketchup, salad cream, mayonnaise, and brown sauce.

- The mean total sugar content per 100 g of sauces was 16.83 g per 100 g.
- The mean total sugar content per suggested serving size of sauces was 10.33 g[9] (equivalent to 2.6 teaspoons of sugar).
- Fourteen percent (n=5) of sampled sauces did not provide a suggested serving size on the label.
- The average suggested serving size of cooking sauces was 88.46 g.
- The average suggested serving size of condiments was 14.90 g.

[9] For 86% of products for which suggested serving size was given on the product label.

Table 4 Mean (SD), median (IQR), min–max sugar content (monosaccharides, disaccharides, and total sugar) of sauces per 100 g (g/100 g)

Statistic	Sugars in sauces per 100 g[(a)] 2022						
	Monosaccharides			Disaccharides			Total sugar
	Glucose	Fructose	Galactose	Lactose	Sucrose	Maltose	
Mean (SD)	4.86 (4.14)	4.77 (3.92)	0.04 (0.01)	0.10 (0.22)	7.06 (4.73)	0.09 (0.25)	16.83 (9.07)
Median (IQR)	3.40 (3.62)	3.40 (3.24)	0.05 (0.02)	0.05 (0.02)	6.80 (7.60)	0.05 (0.02)	15 (13.40)
Min–max	0.10–16.70	0.07–16.80	0.01–0.05	0.03–1.20	0.44–15.60	0.01–1.50	1.60–38
Total samples (n)	35						

(a) Unless otherwise indicated, all samples were analysed as sold. Sauces included in this sample were cooking sauces and condiments. Varieties of cooking sauces included: sweet & sour, bolognese, curry, and other Asian style sauces. Varieties of condiments included: tomato ketchup, salad cream, mayonnaise, and brown sauce. One dried sauce was included in this sample. SD= standard deviation; IQR= interquartile range; Min–max= minimum and maximum.

Table 5 Mean (SD), median (IQR), min–max sugar content (monosaccharides, disaccharides and total sugar) of sauces per suggested serving size (g/suggested serving size)

Statistic	Sugars in sauces per suggested serving size[(a)] 2022						
	Monosaccharides			Disaccharides			Total sugar
	Glucose	Fructose	Galactose	Lactose	Sucrose	Maltose	
Mean (SD)	2.96 (2.58)	2.93 (2.45)	0.03 (0.02)	0.10 (0.29)	4.25 (3.96)	0.09 (0.31)	10.33 (6.70)
Median (IQR)	2.13 (1.86)	2.24 (1.73)	0.03 (0.03)	0.03 (0.02)	2.90 (4.65)	0.03 (0.03)	8.49 (10.41)
Min–max	0.01–10.02	0.01–10.08	0.00–0.06	0.00–1.39	0.20–15.96	0.00–1.69	0.22–24
Total samples (n)	30[(b)]						

(a) Unless otherwise indicated, all samples were analysed as sold. Sauces included in this sample were cooking sauces and condiments. Varieties of cooking sauces included: sweet & sour, bolognese, curry and other Asian style sauces. Varieties of condiments included: tomato ketchup, salad cream, mayonnaise, and brown sauce. Each product's total sugar content was individually calculated based on its suggested serving size, and the average was calculated. Products without a suggested serving size were excluded. Mean suggested serving size for cooking sauces was 88.46 g with a minimum of 35.60 g and a maximum of 125 g. Mean suggested serving size for condiments was 14.90 g with a minimum of 14 g and a maximum of 15.30 g. Values for one of the dried sauces was analysed as per reconstituted product as per manufacturer's instructions.

(b) Sauces (n=30) with serving size recommendations were included. Five sauces were excluded due to no suggested serving size present on the food label.
SD= standard deviation; IQR= interquartile range; Min–max= minimum and maximum

Sugar-sweetened carbonated beverages

This section examines the sugar content (monosaccharides, disaccharides, and total sugar) of sugar-sweetened carbonated beverages[10] collected between May and June 2023. Figure 3 provides a summary of total sugar in sugar-sweetened carbonated beverages. Tables 6 and 7 describe the monosaccharides, disaccharides and total sugar content of sugar-sweetened carbonated beverages per 100 ml and per suggested serving size. These tables should be referred to when interpreting Figure 3.

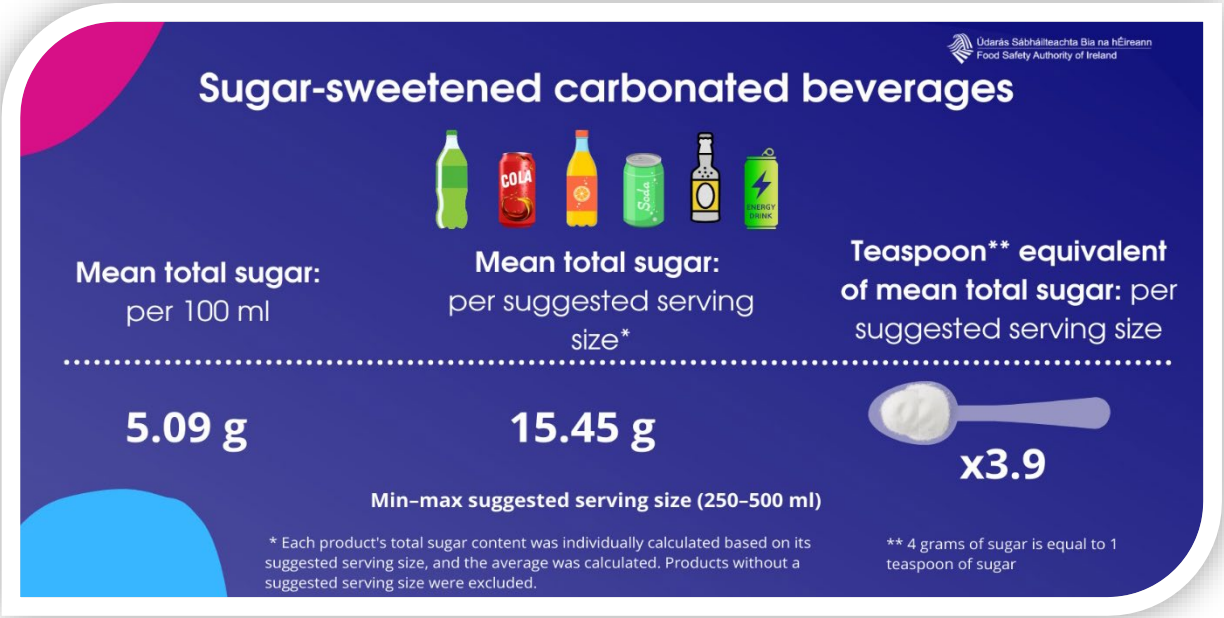

Figure 3 Mean total sugar content of sugar-sweetened carbonated beverages per 100 ml and per suggested serving size with the teaspoon equivalent of total sugar per suggested serving size (g/suggested serving size)

[10] Sugar-sweetened carbonated beverages included in this sample were cola, citrus and fruit flavoured, energy drinks and tonics.

- The mean total sugar content per 100 ml of sugar-sweetened carbonated beverages was 5.09 g per 100 ml.
- The mean total sugar content per suggested serving size of sugar-sweetened carbonated beverages was 15.45 g[11] (equivalent to 3.9 teaspoons of sugar).
- Twenty percent (n=19) of sampled sugar-sweetened carbonated beverages did not provide a suggested serving size and he average suggested serving size of sugar-sweetened carbonated beverages was 296.30 ml.

[11] For 80% of products for which suggested serving size was given on the product label.

Table 6 Mean (SD), median (IQR), min–max sugar content (monosaccharides, disaccharides, and total sugar) of sugar-sweetened carbonated beverages per 100 ml (g/100 ml)

Statistic	Sugars in sugar-sweetened carbonated beverages per 100 ml[(a)] 2023				
	Monosaccharides		Disaccharides		Total sugar
	Glucose	Fructose	Sucrose	Maltose	
Mean (SD)	1.33 (1.10)	1.11 (0.92)	2.56 (1.98)	0.44 (0.73)	5.09 (2.39)
Median (IQR)	1.01 (1.46)	0.82 (1.12)	2.37 (2.43)	0.03 (0.30)	4.70 (0.90)
Min–max	0.03–4.92	0.03–5.01	0.03–12.70	0.03–1.93	1.50–14
Total samples (n)	95	95	95	19	95

(a) Unless otherwise indicated, all samples were analysed as sold. Sugar-sweetened carbonated beverages included in this sample were cola, fruit and citrus flavoured, energy drinks and tonics.
SD= standard deviation; IQR= interquartile range; Min–max= minimum and maximum.

Table 7 Mean (SD), median (IQR), min–max sugar content (monosaccharides, disaccharides and total sugar) of sugar-sweetened carbonated beverages per suggested serving size (g/suggested serving size)

Statistic	Sugars in sugar-sweetened carbonated beverages per suggested serving size[(a)] 2023				
	Monosaccharides		Disaccharides		Total sugar
	Glucose	Fructose	Sucrose	Maltose	
Mean (SD)	3.90 (4.33)	3.10 (2.97)	8.14 (9.01)	1.86 (2.67)	15.45 (12.16)
Median (IQR)	2.21 (4.33)	1.86 (2.95)	7.31 (5.14)	0.25 (3.35)	11.75 (2.98)
Min–max	0.08–24.60	0.08–12.53	0.08–63.50	0.08–7.33	4–70
Total samples (n)	76	76	76	14	76

(a) Unless otherwise indicated, all samples were analysed as sold. Sugar-sweetened carbonated beverages included in this sample were cola, fruit and citrus flavoured, energy drinks and tonics. Each product's total sugar content was individually calculated based on its suggested serving size, and the average was calculated. Products without a suggested serving size were excluded. Mean suggested serving size for sugar-sweetened carbonated beverages was 296.30 ml with a minimum of 250 ml and a maximum of 500 ml. Sugar-sweetened carbonated beverages (n=76) with suggested serving size recommendations were included. Nineteen sugar-sweetened carbonated beverages were excluded due to no suggested serving size present on the food label.
SD= standard deviation; IQR= interquartile range; Min–max= minimum and maximum.

Ready-to-eat breakfast cereal

This section examines the sugar content (monosaccharides, disaccharides, and total sugar) of ready-to-eat breakfast cereal (RTEBC)[12] collected between May and June 2024. Figure 4 provides a summary of the total sugar in RTEBC. Tables 8 and 9 describe the monosaccharides, disaccharides and total sugar content of RTEBC per 100 g and per suggested serving size. These tables should be referred to when interpreting Figure 4.

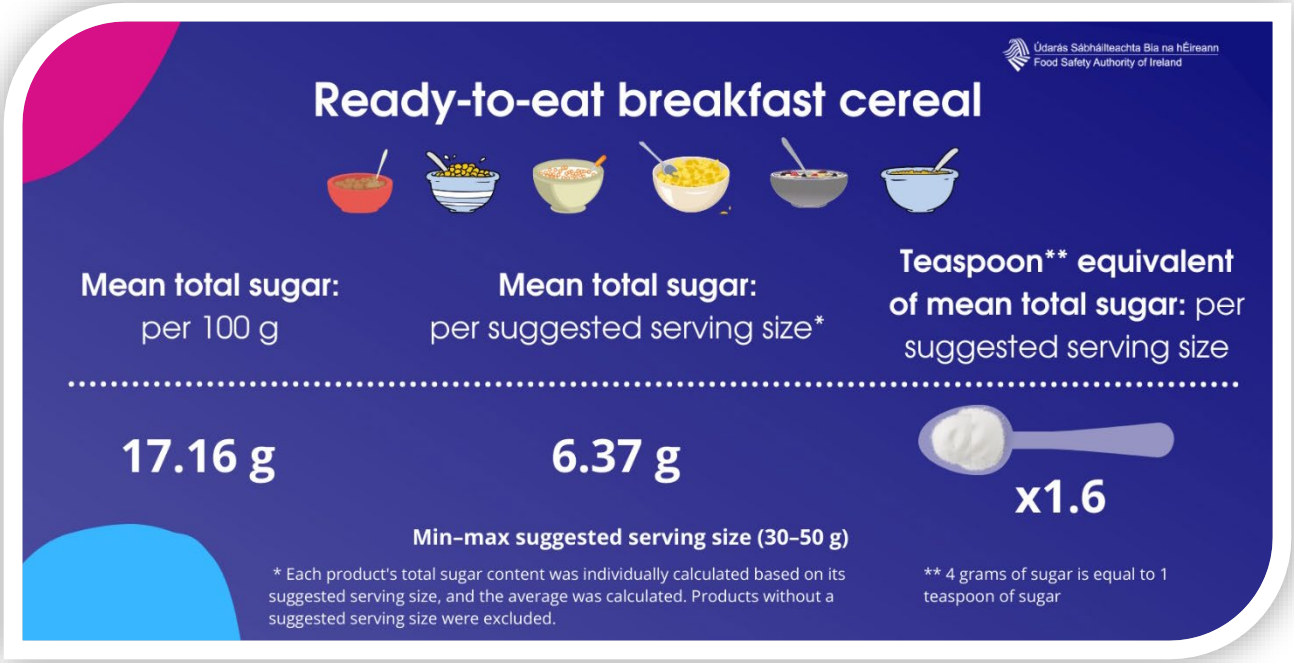

Figure 4 Mean total sugar content of RTEBC per 100 g and per suggested serving size with the teaspoon equivalent of total sugar per suggested serving size (g/suggested serving size)

[12] RTEBC included in this sample were rice-based, cornflake-based, biscuit-based and bran-based cereal, muesli, granola and multigrain cereal.

- The mean total sugar content per 100 g of RTEBC was 17.16 g.
- The mean total sugar content per suggested serving size of RTEBC was 6.37 g[13] (equivalent to 1.6 teaspoons of sugar).
- Ninety-nine percent (n=99) of sampled RTEBC provided a suggested serving size, and the average suggested serving size of RTEBC was 36.70 g.

[13] For 99% of products for which suggested serving size was given on the product label.

Table 8 Mean (SD), median (IQR), min–max sugar content (monosaccharides, disaccharides, and total sugar) of RTEBC per 100 g (g/100 g)

Statistic	Sugars in RTEBC per 100 g[(a)] 2024						
	Monosaccharides			Disaccharides			Total sugar
	Glucose	Fructose	Galactose	Lactose	Sucrose	Maltose	
Mean (SD)	2.94 (4.56)	2.79 (4.40)	0.04 (0.01)	0.23 (0.72)	10.60 (8.62)	0.62 (1.19)	17.16 (8.94)
Median (IQR)	0.71 (3.15)	0.74 (2.74)	0.03 (0.02)	0.03 (0.02)	9.1 (13.99)	0.20 (0.53)	17 (11.15)
Min–max	0.05–19.58	0.03–18.10	0.01–0.10	0.01–4.50	0.03–42.30	0.03–7.30	0.90–45
Total samples (n)	100						

(a) Unless otherwise indicated, all samples were analysed as sold. RTEBC included in this sample were rice-based, cornflake-based, biscuit-based and bran-based cereal, muesli, granola and multigrain cereal.
SD= standard deviation; IQR= interquartile range; Min–max= minimum and maximum.

Table 9 Mean (SD), median (IQR), min–max sugar content (monosaccharides, disaccharides and total sugar) RTEBC per suggested serving size (g/suggested serving size)

Statistic	Sugars in RTEBC per suggested serving size[(a)] 2024						
	Monosaccharides			Disaccharides			Total sugar
	Glucose	Fructose	Galactose	Lactose	Sucrose	Maltose	
Mean (SD)	1.23 (2.04)	1.18 (1.97)	0.01 (0.01)	0.09 (0.29)	3.65 (2.91)	0.24 (0.48)	6.37 (3.72)
Median (IQR)	0.25 (1.38)	0.26 (1.09)	0.01 (0.01)	0.01 (0.01)	3.51 (4.81)	0.08 (0.18)	6.06 (4.36)
Min–max	0.01–8.81	0.01–8.15	0–0.04	0-2.02	0.01–12.69	0.01–3.15	0.27–18.45
Total samples (n)	99						

(a) Unless otherwise indicated, all samples were analysed as sold. RTEBC included in this sample were rice-based, cornflake-based, biscuit-based and bran-based cereal, muesli, granola and multigrain cereal. Each product's total sugar content was individually calculated based on its suggested serving size, and the average was calculated. Products without a suggested serving size were excluded. Mean suggested serving size for RTEBC was 36.70 g with a minimum of 30 g and a maximum of 50 g. RTEBC (n=99) with suggested serving size recommendations were included. One RTEBC was excluded due to no suggested serving size present on the food label.
SD= standard deviation; IQR= interquartile range; Min–max= minimum and maximum.

Commercially available complementary foods

This section examines the sugar content (monosaccharides, disaccharides, and total sugar) of commercially available complementary foods (CACFs) categories[14] collected between February and March 2024. Figure 5 and 6 provides a summary of total sugar content in eight CACF categories. Tables 10 to 13 describe the monosaccharides, disaccharides and total sugar content of each CACF category per 100 g and per suggested serving size. These tables should be referred to when interpreting Figure 5 and 6.

Figure 5 Mean total sugar content of CACF categories: Savoury meals, 100% fruit and/or vegetable purées, Dairy-based foods and Cereal-based foods per 100 g and per suggested serving size with the teaspoon equivalent of total sugar per suggested serving size (g/suggested serving size)

[14] CACFs categories included: Savoury meals, 100% fruit and/or vegetable purées, Dairy-based foods, Cereal-based foods, Snacks/finger foods, Confectionery, Ingredients and Drinks. Descriptions of CACF categories are located in the Appendix in Table 14.

- The mean total sugar content of Savoury meals was 3.28 g per 100 g and 5.74 g per suggested serving size (equivalent to 1.4 teaspoons of sugar).
- Eighty-three percent (n=10) of sampled Savoury meals provided a suggested serving size, averaging at 182 g.
- The mean total sugar content of 100% fruit and/or vegetable purées was 10.42 g per 100 g and 12.19 g per suggested serving size (equivalent to 3 teaspoons of sugar).
- Sixty-two percent (n=13) of sampled 100% fruit and/or vegetable purées provided a suggested serving size, averaging at 104.62 g.
- The mean total sugar content of Dairy-based foods was 9.18 g per 100 g and 8.69 g per suggested serving size (equivalent to 2.2 teaspoons of sugar).
- One hundred percent (n=14) of sampled Dairy-based foods provided a suggested serving size, averaging at 95 g.
- The mean total sugar content of Cereal-based foods was 19.21 g per 100 g and 7.46 g per suggested serving size (equivalent to 1.9 teaspoons of sugar).
- Seventy-eight percent (n=7) of sampled Cereal-based foods provided a suggested serving size, averaging at 57.67 g.

Figure 6 Mean total sugar content of CACF categories: Snacks/finger foods, Confectionery, Ingredients, and Drinks per 100 g or 100 ml and per suggested serving size with the teaspoon equivalent of total sugar per suggested serving size (g/suggested serving size)

- The mean total sugar content of Snacks/finger foods was 20.33 g per 100 g and 3.20 g per suggested serving size (equivalent to 0.8 teaspoons of sugar).
- One hundred percent (n=39) of sampled Snacks/finger foods provided a suggested serving size, averaging at 13.44 g.
- The mean total sugar content of Confectionery was 63.43 g per 100 g and 7.61 g per suggested serving size (equivalent to 1.9 teaspoons of sugar).
- One hundred percent (n=3) of sampled Confectionery provided a suggested serving size, averaging at 12 g.
- The mean total sugar content of Ingredients was 6.50 g per 100 g (no suggested serving size was present on any ingredients product).
- The mean total sugar content of Drinks was 1.02 g per 100 ml and 1.50 g per suggested serving size (equivalent to 0.4 teaspoons of sugar).
- Fifty percent (n=2) of sampled Drinks provided a suggested serving size, averaging at 150 ml.

CACF categories: Savoury meals, 100% fruit and/or vegetable purées, Dairy-based foods and Cereal-based foods

Table 10 Mean (SD), median (IQR), min–max sugar content (monosaccharides, disaccharides, and total sugar) of CACF categories: Savoury meals, 100% fruit and/or vegetable purées, Dairy-based foods and Cereal-based foods per 100 g (g/100 g)

CACF categories	Statistic	Sugars per 100 g[(a)] 2024						
		Monosaccharides			Disaccharides			Total sugar
		Glucose	Fructose	Galactose	Lactose	Sucrose	Maltose	
Savoury meals (n=12)	Mean (SD)	1.06 (0.39)	1.07 (0.41)	0.03 (0)	0.45 (0.63)	0.64 (0.28)	0.10 (0.10)	3.28 (0.74)
	Median (IQR)	1.06 (0.56)	1.17 (0.58)	0.03 (0)	0.03 (1.09)	0.55 (0.38)	0.03 (0.12)	3.35 (0.88)
	Min–max	0.47–1.70	0.42–1.60	0.03–0.03	0.03–1.60	0.31–1.15	0.03–0.33	2.30–4.80
100% fruit and/or vegetable purées (n=21)	Mean (SD)	3.13 (1.63)	5.20 (2.16)	0.03 (0.01)	0.07 (0.17)	1.93 (1.81)	0.10 (0.23)	10.42 (3.74)
	Median (IQR)	3.03 (0.97)	5.96 (1.96)	0.03 (0)	0.03 (0)	1.39 (1.24)	0.03 (0)	10.60 (2.7)
	Min–max	0.26–7	0.21–7.41	0.03–0.05	0.03–0.83	0.03–7.72	0.03–1.06	3.10–18.70

CACF categories	Statistic	Sugars per 100 g[(a)] 2024						
		Monosaccharides			Disaccharides			Total sugar
		Glucose	Fructose	Galactose	Lactose	Sucrose	Maltose	
Dairy-based foods (n=14)	Mean (SD)	2.22 (1.10)	3.71 (1.47)	0.13 (0.1)	1.39 (0.51)	1.72 (0.88)	0.06 (0.10)	9.18 (2.49)
	Median (IQR)	2.03 (0.96)	3.75 (0.89)	0.12 (0.19)	1.31 (0.79)	1.84 (1.42)	0.03 (0)	8.85 (1.90)
	Min–max	0.02–3.98	0.03–5.79	0.03–0.29	0.68–2.24	0.36–3.1	0–0.41	4.9–14.20
Cereal-based foods (n=9)	Mean (SD)	2.02 (1.05)	3.07 (1.65)	0.15 (0.18)	10.98 (12.86)	2.89 (2.64)	0.20 (0.29)	19.21 (10.11)
	Median (IQR)	1.80 (0.96)	2.9 (1.14)	0.03 (0.27)	1.83 (25.87)	1.80 (2.77)	0.03 (0.27)	12.40 (15.80)
	Min–max	0.15–3.43	0.17–6.07	0.03–0.44	0.03–26.89	0.13–7.83	0.03–0.90	7.50–33.70

(a) Unless otherwise indicated, all samples were analysed as sold.
CACF= commercially available complementary food; SD= standard deviation; IQR= interquartile range; Min–max= minimum and maximum

Table 11 Mean (SD), median (IQR), min–max sugar content (monosaccharides, disaccharides and total sugar) of CACF categories: Savoury meals, 100% fruit and/or vegetable purées, Dairy-based foods and Cereal-based foods per suggested serving size (g/suggested serving size)

CACF categories	Statistic	Sugars per suggested serving size[(a)] 2024						
		Monosaccharides			Disaccharides			Total sugar
		Glucose	Fructose	Galactose	Lactose	Sucrose	Maltose	
Savoury meals (n=10)	Mean (SD)	1.89 (0.64)	1.92 (0.7)	0.05 (0.01)	0.61 (1.19)	1.2 (0.66)	0.18 (0.22)	5.74 (1.59)
	Median (IQR)	1.91 (0.85)	2 (1.06)	0.06 (0)	0.06 (0)	1.07 (1.03)	0.06 (0.18)	5.26 (1.62)
	Min–max	0.94–2.91	0.84–3.04	0.04–0.06	0.04–3.2	0.51–2.30	0.04–0.66	4.29–9.60
100% fruit and/or vegetable purées (n=13)	Mean (SD)	3.70 (0.95)	6.18 (1.72)	0.03 (0.01)	0.03 (0.01)	2.13 (1.74)	0.13 (0.34)	12.19 (2.69)
	Median (IQR)	3.42 (0.91)	6.32 (2.3)	0.04 (0.01)	0.04 (0.01)	1.58 (1.03)	0.04 (0.01)	11.40 (2.31)
	Min–max	2.03–5.78	3.55–9.62	0.02–0.06	0.02–0.06	0.04–6.07	0.02–1.27	8.12–18.96

CACF categories	Statistic	Sugars per suggested serving size[(a)] 2024						
		Monosaccharides			Disaccharides			Total sugar
		Glucose	Fructose	Galactose	Lactose	Sucrose	Maltose	
Dairy-based foods (n=14)	Mean (SD)	2.08 (1.13)	3.50 (1.56)	0.13 (0.09)	1.31 (0.5)	1.66 (0.93)	0.05 (0.08)	8.69 (2.62)
	Median (IQR)	1.84 (0.91)	3.47 (1.66)	0.11 (0.17)	1.21 (0.61)	1.69 (1.11)	0.03 (0)	8.09 (1.90)
	Min–max	0.02–3.98	0.04–5.79	0.02–0.29	0.78–2.59	0.31–3.20	0.01–0.33	5.52–14.20
Cereal-based foods (n=7)	Mean (SD)	1.54 (1.51)	2.38 (2.34)	0.03 (0.02)	1.92 (2.79)	1.58 (1.62)	0.07 (0.09)	7.46 (4.40)
	Median (IQR)	0.73 (1.91)	0.72 (3.81)	0.03 (0.02)	0.04 (3.41)	1.31 (0.67)	0.03 (0.03)	7.5 (3.88)
	Min–max	0.28–4.29	0.42–5.64	0.01–0.07	0.01–6.48	0.45–5.15	0.01–0.27	2–15.12

(a) Unless otherwise indicated, all samples were analysed as sold. Each product's total sugar content was individually calculated based on its suggested serving size, and the average was calculated. Products without a suggested serving size were excluded. Mean suggested serving size for Savoury meals was 182 g with a minimum of 130 g and a maximum of 200 g. Savoury meals (n=10) with suggested serving size recommendations were included. Two Savoury meals were excluded due to no suggested serving size present on the food label. Mean suggested serving size for 100% fruit and/or vegetable purées was 104.62 g with a minimum of 70 g and a maximum of 130 g. 100% fruit and/or vegetable purées (n=13) with suggested serving size recommendations were included. Eight 100% fruit and/or vegetable purées were excluded due to no suggested serving size present on the food label. Mean suggested serving size for Dairy-based foods was 95 g with a minimum of 80 g and a maximum of 120 g. All Dairy-based foods (n=14) with suggested serving size recommendations were included. Mean suggested serving size for Cereal-based foods was 57.67 g with a minimum of 16.70 g and a maximum of 125 g. Cereal-based foods (n=7) with suggested serving size recommendations were included. Two Cereal-based foods were excluded due to no suggested serving size present on the food label.

SD= standard deviation; IQR= interquartile range; Min–max= minimum and maximum.

CACF categories: Snacks/finger foods, Confectionery, Ingredients and Drinks

Table 12 Mean (SD), median (IQR), min–max sugar content (monosaccharides, disaccharides, and total sugar) of CACF categories: Snacks/finger foods, Confectionery, Ingredients and Drinks per 100 g or 100 ml (g/100 g or g/100 ml)

CACF categories	Statistic	Sugars per 100 g or 100 ml[(a)] 2024						
		Monosaccharides			Disaccharides			Total sugar
		Glucose	Fructose	Galactose	Lactose	Sucrose	Maltose	
Snacks/finger foods (n=39)	Mean (SD)	5.44 (6.19)	8.54 (8.28)	0.04 (0.01)	0.2 (0.37)	5.92 (7.97)	0.27 (0.57)	20.33 (16.85)
	Median (IQR)	2.27 (6.88)	5.67 (11.2)	0.03 (0.01)	0.03 (0.02)	2.69 (3.89)	0.05 (0.18)	15.60 (15.45)
	Min–max	0.03–24.80	0.03–39.80	0.03–0.05	0.03–1.60	0.16–29.20	0.03–2.65	3.60–76
Confectionery (n=3)	Mean (SD)	19.31 (0.68)	38.3 (1.94)	0.04 (0.01)	0.04 (0.01)	5.66 (0.64)	0.04 (0.01)	63.43 (2.89)
	Median (IQR)	19 (0.62)	38.20 (1.94)	0.03 (0.01)	0.03 (0.01)	5.65 (0.63)	0.03 (0.01)	64 (2.85)
	Min–max	18.85–20.09	36.41–40.28	0.03–0.05	0.03–0.05	5.03–6.3	0.03-–0.05	60.30–66

CACF categories	Statistic	Sugars per 100 g or 100 ml[(a)] 2024						
		Monosaccharides			Disaccharides			Total sugar
		Glucose	Fructose	Galactose	Lactose	Sucrose	Maltose	
Ingredients (n=2)	Mean (SD)	2.29 (0.33)	3.68 (1.23)	0.03 (0)	0.03 (0)	0.53 (0.10)	0.03 (0)	6.50 (1.70)
	Median (IQR)	2.29 (0.23)	3.68 (0.87)	0.03 (0)	0.03 (0)	0.53 (0.07)	0.03 (0)	6.50 (1.20)
	Min–max	2.06–2.52	2.81–4.55	0.03–0.03	0.03–0.03	0.46–0.60	0.03–0.03	5.30–7.70
Drinks (n=4)	Mean (SD)	0.29 (0.03)	0.62 (0.04)	0.03 (0)	0.03 (0)	0.12 (0.02)	0.03 (0)	1.02 (0.05)
	Median (IQR)	0.29 (0.04)	0.62 (0.04)	0.03 (0)	0.03 (0)	0.12 (0.04)	0.03 (0)	1 (0.02)
	Min–max	0.26–0.32	0.59–0.67	0.03–0.03	0.03–0.03	0.09–0.14	0.03–0.03	1–1.1

(a) Unless otherwise indicated, all samples were analysed as sold.
SD= standard deviation; IQR= interquartile range; Min–max= minimum and maximum.

Table 13 Mean (SD), median (IQR), min–max sugar content (monosaccharides, disaccharides and total sugar) of CACF categories: Snacks/finger foods, Confectionery, Ingredients and Drinks per suggested serving size (g/suggested serving size)

CACF categories	Statistic	Sugars per suggested serving size[(a)] 2024						
		Monosaccharides			Disaccharides			Total sugar
		Glucose	Fructose	Galactose	Lactose	Sucrose	Maltose	
Snacks/finger foods (n=39)	Mean (SD)	0.92 (1.30)	1.34 (1.59)	0 (0)	0.03 (0.06)	0.87 (1.35)	0.04 (0.10)	3.20 (3.32)
	Median (IQR)	0.18 (0.92)	0.31 (2.49)	0 (0)	0.01 (0.01)	0.30 (0.85)	0.01 (0.03)	2.07 (4.14)
	Min–max	0.01–4.22	0.01–4.78	0–0.01	0–0.23	0.01–4.96	0–0.53	0.14–12.92
Confectionery (n=3)	Mean (SD)	2.32 (0.08)	4.60 (0.23)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0.68 (0.08)	0 (0)	7.61 (0.35)
	Median (IQR)	2.28 (0.07)	4.58 (0.23)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0.68 (0.08)	0 (0)	7.68 (0.34)
	Min–max	2.26–2.41	4.37–4.83	0–0.01	0–0.01	0.60–0.76	0–0.01	7.24–7.92

CACF categories	Statistic	Sugars per suggested serving size[(a)] 2024						
		Monosaccharides			Disaccharides			Total sugar
		Glucose	Fructose	Galactose	Lactose	Sucrose	Maltose	
Drinks (n=2)	Mean (SD)	0.40 (0.01)	0.89 (0.01)	0.04 (0)	0.04 (0)	0.20 (0.01)	0.04 (0)	1.50 (0)
	Median (IQR)	0.40 (0.01)	0.89 (0.01)	0.04 (0)	0.04 (0)	0.20 (0.01)	0.04 (0)	1.50 (0)
	Min–max	0.39–0.41	0.88–0.90	0.04–0.04	0.04–0.04	0.19–0.21	0.04–0.04	1.50–1.50

(a) Unless otherwise indicated, all samples were analysed as sold. Each product's total sugar content was individually calculated based on its suggested serving size, and the average was calculated. Products without a suggested serving size were excluded. Mean suggested serving size for Snacks/finger foods was 13.44 g with a minimum of 1.60 g and a maximum of 30 g. All Snacks/finger foods (n=39) with suggested serving size recommendations were included. Mean suggested serving size for Confectionery was 12 g with a minimum and maximum of 12 g. All Confectionery (n=3) with suggested serving size recommendations were included. Mean suggested serving size for Drinks was 150 ml with a minimum and maximum of 150 ml. Drinks (n=2) with suggested serving size recommendations were included. Two Drinks were excluded due to no suggested serving size present on the food label. All of the Ingredients category were excluded due to no suggested serving size present on the food label and therefore not displayed in Table 13.
SD= standard deviation; IQR= interquartile range; Min–max= minimum and maximum.

Appendix

Table 14 Commercially available complementary foods category descriptions

CACF categories	CACF category description
Savoury meals	All savoury meals, such as vegetable, meat and fish-based meals and meal components **which include combinations** of starches, vegetables, dairy and/or traditional protein and which are sold in pouches, jars and containers and marketed for infants and young children under the age of 3 years.
100% fruit and/or vegetable purées	Purées made from 100% fruit and/or vegetables.
Snacks/finger foods	Snacks/finger foods mean any grain, starch, pulse/lentil, processed fruit or vegetable snack products such as cracker, bread, rusk, marketed for children under the age of 3 years.
Cereal-based foods	Dry cereals and starches for preparation with milk or water.
Dairy-based foods	Dairy-based foods and cereals where dairy is the largest ingredient.
Confectionery	Chocolate and non-chocolate confectionery.
Ingredients	CACFs added in meal preparation such as stocks and sauces.
Drinks	Drinks excluding formula milks.

CACFs= commercially available complementary foods.

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