Effects of school meals based on the New Nordic Diet on intake of signature foods: a randomised controlled trial. The OPUS School Meal Study - DTU Orbit (03/04/2019)

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A New Nordic Diet (NND) was developed in the context of the Danish OPUS Study (Optimal well-being, development and health for Danish children through a healthy New Nordic Diet). Health, gastronomic potential, sustainability and Nordic identity were crucial principles of the NND. The aim of the present study was to investigate the effects of serving NND school meals compared with the usual packed lunches on the dietary intake of NND signature foods. For two 3-month periods, 834 Danish children aged 8-11 years received NND school meals or their usual packed lunches brought from home (control) in random order. The entire diet was recorded over 7 consecutive days using a validated Web-based Dietary Assessment Software for Children. The NND resulted in higher intakes during the entire week (% increase) of root vegetables (116 (95 % CI 1.93, 2.42)), cabbage (26 (95 % CI 1.08, 1.47)), legumes (22 (95 % CI 1.06, 1.40)), herbs (175 (95 % CI 2.36, 3.20)), fresh berries (48 (95 % CI 1.13, 1.94)), nuts and seeds (18 (95 % CI 1.02, 1.38)), lean fish and fish products (47 (95 % CI 1.31, 1.66)), fat fish and fish products (18 (95 % CI 1.02, 1.37)) and potatoes (129 (95 % CI 2.05, 2.56)). Furthermore, there was a decrease in the number of children with zero intakes when their habitual packed lunches were replaced by NND school meals. In conclusion, this study showed that the children increased their intake of NND signature foods, and, furthermore, there was a decrease in the number of children with zero intakes of NND signature foods when their habitual packed lunches were replaced by school meals following the NND principles.

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