

How smarter school lunchrooms increase fruit sales

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Professor Brian Wansink will present findings from Cornell University's Smarter Lunchroom Initiative at the Food for Your Whole Life Health Symposium in New York City on June 6-7. Credit: Jason Koski, Cornell University

How many more apples can a school cafeteria sell if the fruit is displayed in an attractive basket and placed in a well-lit area?

That's the sort of question researchers from the Cornell Food and Brand Lab are exploring as part of their Smarter Lunchrooms Initiative—an effort to discover and share low-cost changes that can be made in lunchrooms to subtly guide smarter food choices.

Led by Professor Brian Wansink, the researchers observed a 58 percent increase in fresh [fruit](#) sales at one Upstate New York school simply by moving the fruit from a stainless steel tray and into a basket lit by an ordinary desk lamp.

Wansink will present these findings and others at the Food for Your Whole Life Health Symposium on June 6-7 at the Grand Hyatt in New York City.

"The best solution is often the simplest one," Wansink explained. "Rather than penalizing a less [healthy food](#) choice, we just made the healthier item much more likely to be noticed and chosen."

Later in the week, Wansink—along with colleagues David Just and Mitsuru Shimizu—will deliver presentations at a two-day Consumer Camp event on the Cornell University campus on June 10-11.

While Thursday's proceedings are geared toward [school](#) nutrition professionals and require pre-registration, Friday's sessions are free and open to the public.

"On Friday, we'll be presenting various studies and sharing strategies people can follow to help combat 'mindless eating.' It's a neat way to wrap up the academic year," Wansink added.

Provided by Cornell University

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