

Food in Sport in New Zealand

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Why consider food in sport?



Aim

To examine the marketing and availability of food and drinks in New Zealand (NZ) sports settings

Methods

A case study involving:

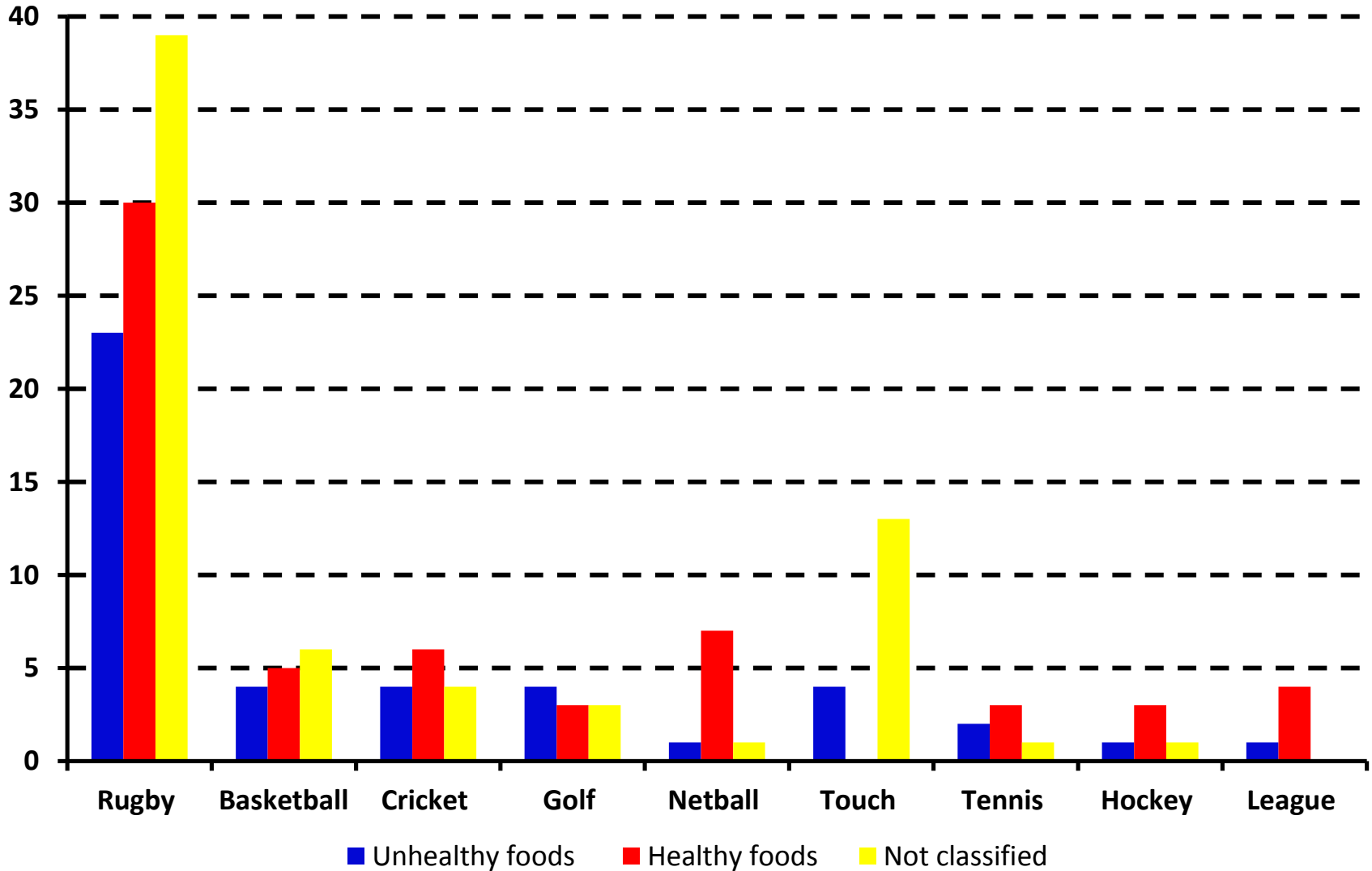
- interviews with 18 key informants from national and regional sports organisation
- analysis of 306 sports organisations' websites
- detailed investigation of rugby & netball
 - interviews with 37 administrators
 - website analysis (netball centres, netball and rugby clubs)
 - analysis of televised rugby & netball
 - observation at 25 rugby clubs & 13 netball venues in three regions.

Results: Sponsorship

Frequency of food sponsors

Sponsor group/category	n= (%)
Bars and restaurants	83 (35)
Unhealthy brands/companies	60 (25)
Healthy brands/companies	50 (21)
Supermarkets	36 (15)
Unclassified	7 (4)

Frequency of food sponsor by selected sport



6 sponsorships supported by marketing activities



Televised Sports = More Sponsors

“... because we don’t get television coverage there’s not a lot of demand for companies coming in wanting to advertise. It’s slightly different to a rugby or a soccer or a netball where there’s lots of television”



Money

“I guess that we are looking for healthy foods, healthy sponsors, whatever that might look like. Now that said, I’d be the first to say that if somebody came to us with food that wasn’t quite healthy but had a big cheque book, I’d probably look at the cheque book in preference”



Sponsor Fit

“A fast food company came to us & offered some reasonable money & it was quite a good discussion, does it sit with our brand & what would this do to the brand when you're all about healthy lifestyles.....when suddenly you attach a fast food which has all these other connotations attached to it.”

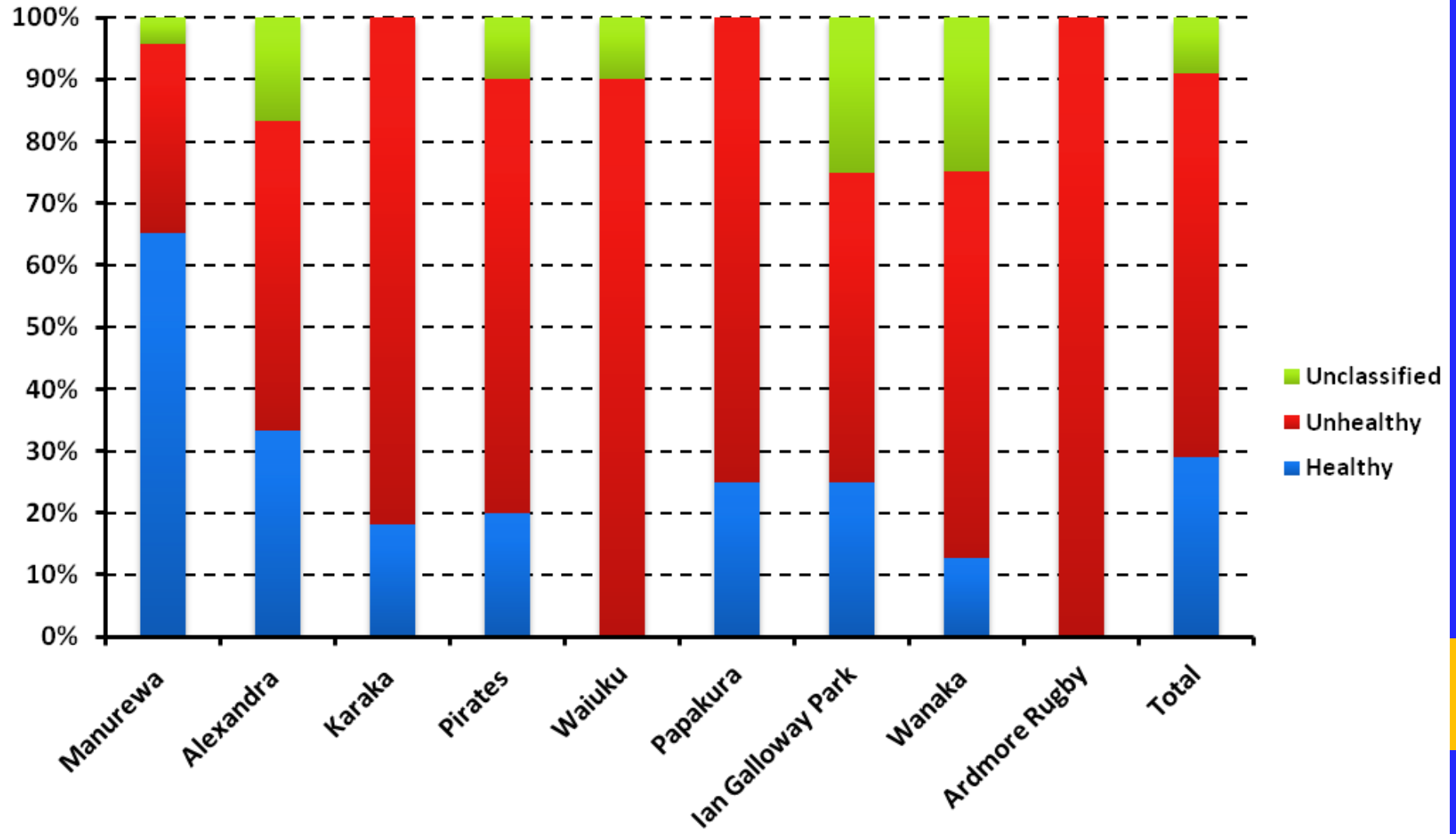


Results: Availability

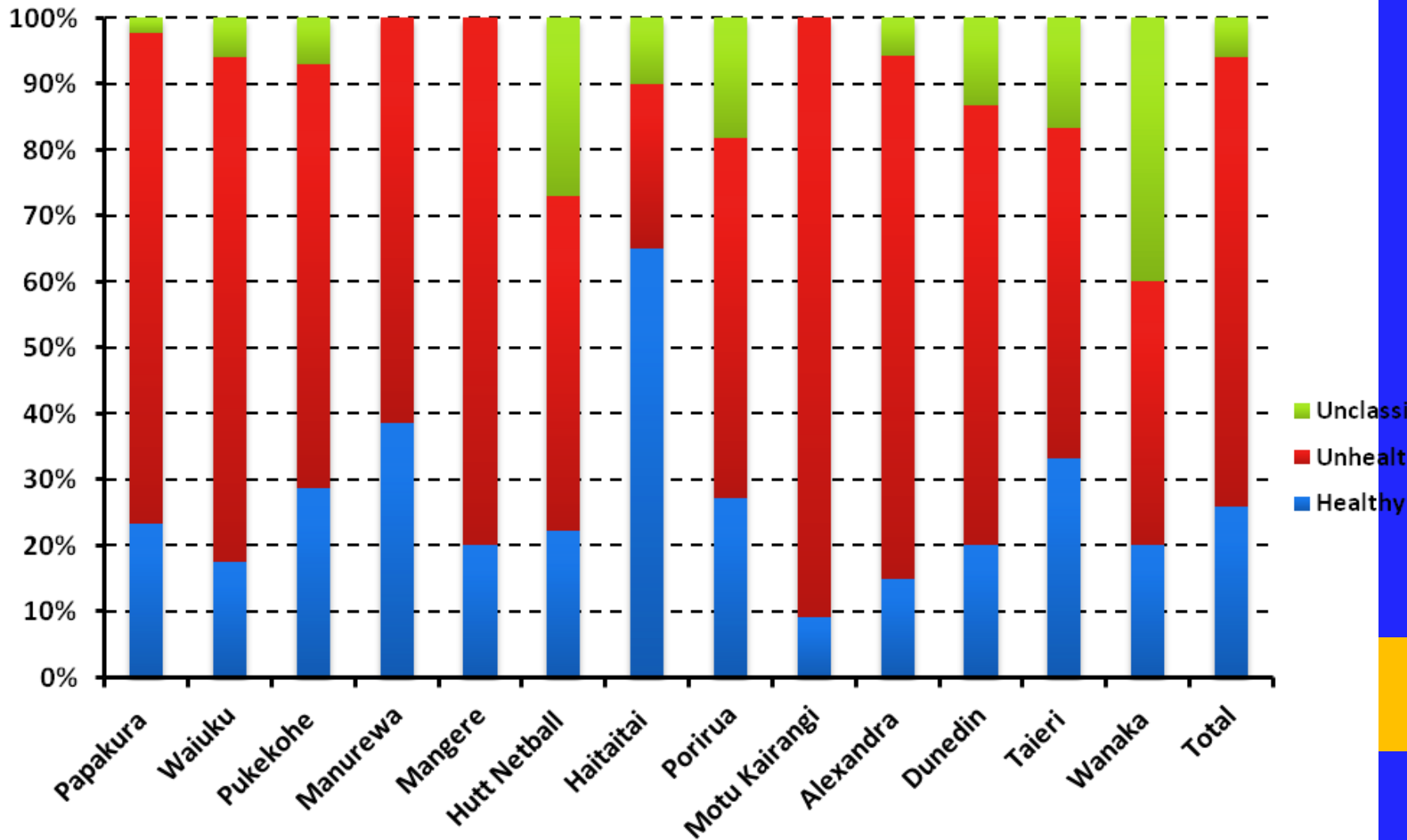


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Food at rugby venues



Food at netball venues



Views of sports leaders

- Aware most food and drinks were energy dense
- Most contracted caterers who chose what foods to provide
- Few administrators had any input at clubs
- At most stadia venue authorities were responsible
- Most thought caterers were entitled to profit from sales and this could only be achieved by selling 'junk food'
- The type of foods and drinks were described as normal.

Conclusions

- Sponsorship associates unhealthy food & drinks with sport
- High profile televised sports are more sponsored
- Marketing campaigns supporting these sponsorships likely influence food choices
- Junk food is widely available in sport
- This undermines efforts to promote healthy eating to players and spectators
- There are opportunities to enhance food environments in almost all sports settings
- We need a discussion of the role of food in sport.

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