



Healthy Catering Guidelines:

Guidelines for Serving Healthy Food and Drinks at SPC Events

Prepared by the Public Health Division of the Pacific Community | 2017



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SPC is dedicated to providing a healthy work environment that supports and promotes the health of our staff members and partners. **The Healthy Catering Guidelines** have been developed to provide practical information and suggestions for assisting your division in the serving of healthier food and drinks at SPC events. These guidelines are designed to **make healthy choices easy choices** and help build a healthy environment in our workplace.

Why have Healthy Catering Guidelines?

SPC hosts many events throughout the year for staff members and partners. By serving healthier food and drinks at events, we can demonstrate SPC's commitment to the health and wellbeing of staff members and visitors. Furthermore, promoting healthy food and drink choices to participants at SPC events has many benefits, including a general improvement in eating habits, an increase in productivity at work, and SPC acting as a good role model in relation to healthy eating.



Offering
plenty of
vegetables
and fruit

Scope

These Guidelines are for all SPC staff members, and apply to:

- catering at SPC events (held on SPC premises and off site) such as:
 - conferences, meetings and forums
 - staff training courses or workshops
 - official events such as program launches and awards nights
 - social and fundraising activities
- food and drinks sold on SPC premises
- events conducted on SPC premises, even when SPC is not the event organiser.

Principles

When providing food at an event, it is important to offer healthy food choices. This means:

- offering a variety of nutritious foods that are low in fat, salt and sugar
- offering plenty of vegetables and fruit
- providing smaller portion sizes and avoiding over-catering. Also consider whether it is necessary to provide food at events, especially morning and afternoon teas.
- including foods that are fresh, steamed or baked, and keeping fried foods to a minimum.
- including only small amounts of 'extra' food, such as biscuits, cakes and fried food – or even better, do not serve any of these!
- serving locally produced food to support the local economy and help protect the environment (whenever possible).

Special dietary needs

Consider the needs of different cultures, religious groups and those with special dietary needs or food allergies, and accommodate these on request (where possible and practical).

Selecting a suitable caterer

When contacting a potential caterer for an event, give them an outline of what is required and provide them with the checklist attached (Appendix 1) to assist them to plan suitable menu options.



Healthy food and drink suggestions

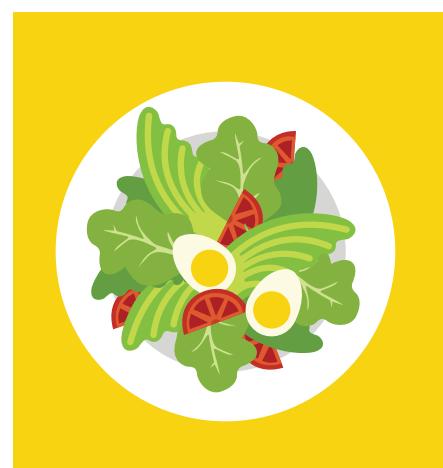
Making some small changes to the food and drinks that are served to participants at functions and events can make a big difference to their overall health and wellbeing. This section provides ideas and suggestions for tasty and nutritious food and drinks.

Drinks	
Serving suggestions	Not recommended
<p>Offer a variety of hot and cold drinks including the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Plain water (this should be easily accessible to all participants) Tea and coffee Reduced-fat milk Sugar served separately and only in small amounts 100% fruit juice with no added sugar Fresh coconut juice <p>We recommend exclusion of all alcohol, but if alcohol needs to be served, we recommend restricting the consumption to two standard drinks per person</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Full-fat milk Soft drinks and cordial Fruit drinks with added sugar Sports drinks Pre-sweetened or whitened tea and coffee

Morning and afternoon tea		
Item	Serving suggestions	Not recommended
Fruit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fresh or frozen fruit (provide napkins and forks for easier eating) Plain dried fruit (e.g. sultanas) Canned fruit in natural juice 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fruit with added sauce/syrup Canned fruit in syrup
Vegetables	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Freshly cut vegetables with low-fat dip or salsa 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Oil, cream or cheese-based dips
Nuts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Plain or dry-roasted, unsalted nuts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Salted, coated or fried nuts
Cakes and biscuits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Plain cakes and biscuits with no icing, jam or filling Small serving size (e.g. cut cake into small 5 cm squares) Mini fruit muffins Include reduced-fat or wholemeal options 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> High-fat options such as pastries and fried snacks



Offer a variety of nutritious foods that are low in fat, salt and sugar



Lunch and dinner

Item	Serving suggestions	Not recommended
Sandwiches and wraps	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A variety of sandwich fillings Vegetarian choices A variety of wholegrain breads (if available) Lean cuts of meat, lean chicken, reduced-fat cheese, fish, boiled egg, peanut butter (no more than one of these per sandwich) A variety of salad fillings such as tomatoes, cucumber, lettuce and beetroot 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Processed meats high in fat and salt (e.g. corned beef, salami, bacon) Canned fish with added salt or oil Adding salt to sandwiches or sandwich fillings Spreads that are high in fat and salt (e.g. butter, mayonnaise)
Main dishes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Food items that are steamed, grilled, stir-fried, oven-baked or poached Food items in tomato-based sauces rather than cream, butter or cheese sauces Always offer vegetarian options such as beans and other legumes Offer local fish instead of imported fatty meat products Keep meat and fish portions small, allow for 120 g portion per person 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fried foods Salty foods (e.g. canned fish in brine, processed meat high in salt) Keep added oil to a minimum (oil should not be visible)
Salads and vegetables	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A good variety of salads and vegetables At least half of the food provided should be salads, cooked vegetables, and fruit 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Salads containing deep fried ingredients or fatty meat
Dressings and sauces	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Salad dressing served on the side Low-oil and low-salt dressings and sauces (e.g. lemon juice, yoghurt) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Salty sauces (e.g. soy sauce) or adding salt to dressings and sauces Creamy dressings and sauces Do not provide salt on tables
Starchy foods	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Local starchy foods (e.g. taro) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fried starchy foods (e.g. chips)
Fruit-based dessert	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fresh fruit salads or platters Fruit-based desserts with yoghurt 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Desserts high in fat and sugar (e.g. cakes)



At least half of the food provided should be salads, cooked vegetables and fruit



Receptions and cocktail events

Serving suggestions

- Low-fat vegetable-based salsas, relishes such as tomato, capsicum, bean or corn
- Reduced-fat dips (e.g. eggplant dip)
- Roasted or grilled vegetables drained of oil
- Freshly cut vegetable sticks
- Wholegrain crackers
- Fresh vegetable spring rolls
- A variety of breads, water crackers or crisp breads, preferably wholemeal varieties
- Fresh fruit platters with low-fat yoghurt
- Sushi
- Mini sandwiches and wraps
- If serving alcohol, allow maximum of 1–2 standard drinks per person

Not recommended

- Deep fried items (e.g. spring rolls, samosas)
- Pastries (e.g. pies, sausage rolls)
- High-fat cured meats (e.g. salami, bacon)
- Oil, cream or cheese-based dips



Other considerations

Food Safety

Food needs to be nutritious and safe to eat. Here are some tips to ensure food is good for consumption:

- Food should be freshly prepared.
- Food should be covered at all times.
- Cold foods should be kept chilled until just before serving. If break times are delayed, cold food should be moved back to a cold place.
- Hot foods should be served piping hot, and not be allowed to cool down before serving.
- Fruit and salads should be thoroughly washed in safe water before cutting, peeling or eating.
- Ensure that there is somewhere where participants can wash their hands before eating.
- Proper hygiene practices should be followed at all times when preparing food.

Caring for Our Environment

Be environmentally friendly. For example:

- use local seasonal food and drinks
- use reusable cups, plates and cutlery
- reduce waste by not over-catering – cater for the number of people attending the event.

Branding

It is also important to avoid association with products and brands that are not consistent with a healthy food and drink environment, e.g. accepting event sponsorship from alcohol brands.

APPENDIX 1: Checklist for healthy catering options



**Serve foods
that are both
steamed or baked.
Keep fried foods
to a minimum**

Healthier choices menu checklist

Use this tool to check if your menu is healthy

Check that the menu offers		Tick
Variety	A wide range of nutritious food from each of the food groups should be offered	<input type="checkbox"/>
	A variety of vegetables, fruit, and dried beans should be available	<input type="checkbox"/>
Vegetables and fruit	Vegetables and fruit should be included in most of the menu items	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Fruit should be offered either fresh, canned (in natural juice) or dried	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Salads and vegetables should be available and fruit should be offered with dessert	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Vegetarian items should be available	<input type="checkbox"/>
Food preparation	Healthy food preparation methods used e.g. steaming, stir-frying, microwaving, light grilling, oven baking or poaching	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Fried foods should be avoided but if not possible, use poly- or monounsaturated oils (e.g. canola, olive, sunflower, peanut)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Beverages	Offer non-alcoholic beverages: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Water: still, sparkling, soda or mineral (unflavoured) ▪ 100% fruit juices ▪ Fruit cocktails or fruit punch ▪ Tea: herbal, green or black ▪ Coffee: instant or filtered 	<input type="checkbox"/>

References

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- Ministry of Health New Zealand. 2016. *Healthy food and drink policy for organisations*. <http://www.health.govt.nz/system/files/documents/publications/healthy-food-and-drink-policy-for-organisations-sept20-16.pdf>
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