

Sustainable and Healthy Catering Guide

Alexandrina Council has a strong commitment to protect and nurture our local environment, support the health and wellbeing of our community and grow the economic prosperity of our region. We have developed a Sustainable and Healthy Catering Guide to support and act on these commitments.

The purpose of this Guide is to encourage and enable organisers of events and functions to prioritise food and drink choices that are environmentally sustainable, fair and healthy.

OBJECTIVES

The Sustainable and Healthy Catering Guide assists organisers to:

- Reduce our environmental impact – by providing the opportunity to access food and drink options that are minimally processed, local and organic where possible, and that generate minimal food miles and food and packaging waste.
- Support economic development by supporting local food producers and businesses.
- Support the health and wellbeing of our attendees by providing the opportunity to access healthy food and drink options at events and functions.
- Set a great example for our community and visitors and demonstrate a commitment to environmental sustainability and community health.

Organisers can do this by:

- Increasing the availability and promotion of sustainable, fair and healthy food and drink choices offered at events and functions. Prioritise foods and drinks that are minimally processed, local and organic where possible, and generate minimal food miles.
- Decreasing the availability and promotion of food and drink choices outside of the five food groups, as outlined in the [Australian Guide to Healthy Eating](#).
- Decreasing the amount of waste (e.g. food waste, packaging, disposable serving ware) created at events and functions.
- Supporting local businesses and food producers thus growing economic development.
- Ensuring culturally inclusive food choices are available and specific dietary requirements are catered for, where possible.
- Supporting and encouraging breastfeeding friendly environments.

SUPPORTING PLANS AND GUIDES

The following documents provide support for, and in some cases have assisted with the development of this Guide:

- Local Government Association's Healthy Catering Policy 2011
- Local Government Association of South Australia's Healthy Catering Suggestions
- SA Health's [Healthy Food and Drink Choices for Staff and Visitors in SA Health Facilities](#)


- The Heart Foundation's Guide to Healthier Catering – [A Healthier Serve](#)
- Queensland Health Metro, South Health Service District Nutrition Promotion Unit's Catering for the Environment

SUSTAINABLE, FAIR AND HEALTHY CATERING TIPS AND SUGGESTIONS

Listed here are some tips and suggestions to help you select and provide food and drinks that are sustainable, fair and healthy catering choices.

KEY TIPS AND HINTS

- Use **reusable or compostable serving ware**. Compostable serving ware can be disposed of in the Green Organics bin and will rapidly degrade when composted. Check that your serving ware items are labelled as compostable and disposal instructions indicate that these items can be disposed of in the Green Organics bin.
- Ensure **landfill, recycling and organics bins are provided and clearly labelled** for attendees. Infographic labels can help attendees understand the types of waste that can be placed in recycling and organics bins.
- Use **fresh, minimally processed and minimally packaged foods** where possible.
- Select **locally grown produce** where possible to reduce your 'food miles'. Food miles describes the distance that food has travelled from the paddock to the plate. The main reason for minimising food miles is that the transport of food significantly contributes to greenhouse gas production.
- Use **sustainable protein sources** such as beans, lentils, chickpeas and chicken in your menu, and limit beef and lamb. Beef and lamb require much more water in their production than white meats and plant-based proteins and ruminant animals (cows and sheep) produce methane through their digestive processes which is a powerful greenhouse gas. Reducing your consumption of these meats can help to reduce your impact on the environment.
- Choose **sustainable seafood**—visit [Australian Marine Conservation Society](#) for suggestions regarding sustainably-sourced seafood.
- Select **organic food and drinks** where possible.
- **Conserve water** in your food preparation.
- **Market your event in an environmentally friendly way** (e.g. minimise paper usage)
- **Raise awareness about the environmentally friendly measures you are taking** in putting on your event (e.g. communicate to attendees why you have chosen the food or serving ware you have chosen).

DRINKS	
SUSTAINABLE AND HEALTHY SUGGESTIONS	Reduce and avoid if possible
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tap water Plain still and sparkling water Tea (include herbal and decaffeinated) Coffee (include decaffeinated) 100% fruit juice (150 ml per person) Reduced-fat plain and flavoured milk Fruit smoothies made with reduced-fat milk and yoghurt Diet soft drinks (only for large functions) <p style="color: #0070C0; margin-top: 10px;">Try this instead with tea and coffee</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Swap full-fat milk for reduced-fat milk Swap sugar for intense sweeteners Select “Fair Trade” coffee and tea brands where possible. These are identified by the “Fair Trade” symbol. <div style="text-align: center; margin-top: 10px;">  <p>FAIRTRADE AUSTRALIA NEW ZEALAND</p> </div>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Flavoured water Cordial Soft drinks (including diet soft drinks if catering for children) Sports waters and ‘energy’ drinks Fruit juice with less than 100% fruit juice Fruit drinks <p style="margin-top: 10px;">Alcohol (if provided)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Serve as a standard drink. Visit www.alcohol.gov.au for more information Provide ‘light’ alcohol or alcohol-free alternatives Provide food if serving alcohol
PLATTER ITEMS & FINGER FOOD	
SUSTAINABLE AND HEALTHY SUGGESTIONS	Reduce and avoid if possible
<p>Cold Choices</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cheese, reduced-fat hard and soft types. Keep the serve size small and serve with vegetables. Dips (vegetable or yoghurt based) Wholegrain, multigrain or plain water crackers, pita bread, bread sticks Vegetable sticks Grilled or roasted vegetables such as tomatoes, mushrooms, zucchini Vegetable patties (e.g. lentil, chickpea, falafel) Roast vegetable frittata Fresh or dried fruit Unsalted nuts Sushi or cold rolls Drained olives Lean meats e.g. skinless chicken, roast 	<p>Cold Choices</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Savoury biscuits high in fat and salt Crisps High fat processed meats – e.g. salami, strasbourg, mortadella, bacon Salted nuts <p style="color: #0070C0; margin-top: 10px;">Try this instead....</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Swap large serves of cheese for small Swap some cheese for vegetables Swap fatty meat for lean Swap dips for vegetable salsas Swap crisps for vegetable sticks Swap deep fried chicken for sushi

<p>meats, lean ham</p> <p>Hot choices</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grilled or roasted vegetables such as tomatoes, mushrooms, zucchini • Vegetable patties (e.g. lentil, chickpea, falafel) • Roast vegetable frittata • Mini quiches • Filo pastries with reduced-fat cheese and vegetables • Pizza with reduced-fat cheese and vegetable toppings • Meatballs (skinless chicken, fish, pork, lamb or beef) served with a dipping sauce such as salsa or sweet chilli • Marinated lean meats e.g. chicken pieces baked without the skin 	<p>Hot choices</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pies and pasties • Sausage rolls • Hot chips • Pizza with high fat toppings e.g. fatty processed meats • Deep fried foods e.g. rice balls, spring rolls, calamari • Crumbed and fried foods • Aioli, full-fat sour cream, cream-based sauces <p>Try this instead.....</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Swap high fat crackers for warm flat bread brushed with garlic or chilli • Swap pies for filo parcels filled with ricotta cheese and spinach, pumpkin and pine nuts or any other combination of mixed vegetables • Swap chips for chunky oven baked wedges with the skin on and served with salsa • Swap pizza for pita bread or English muffins topped with vegetables, lean meat and reduced-fat cheese
<p>MORNING AND AFTERNOON TEA</p>	
<p>SUSTAINABLE AND HEALTHY SUGGESTIONS</p>	<p>Reduce and avoid if possible</p>
<p>Finger Food</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fresh fruit • Fruit platter • Fruit kebabs • Vegetable sticks with vegetable or yoghurt-based dips • Vegetable or yoghurt-based dips with toasted pita bread, wholegrain or multigrain crackers • Cheese, reduced-fat hard and soft types. • Keep the serve size small and serve with vegetables • Unsalted nuts <p>Baked products</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mini fruit muffins • Plain, fruit-based cakes 	<p>Finger Food</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High fat and/or salty crackers or crispbreads • Salted nuts • Fatty processed meats e.g. salami, Strasburg, Mortadella, kabana • Full-fat hard and soft cheeses • Dips based on full-fat cream cheese • Aioli • Crisps, cheezels etc. • Salted nuts • Confectionery (including chocolate) <p>Baked products</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cake-style or large muffins • Iced, cream filled or chocolate coated biscuits • Iced, cream filled or chocolate coated cakes

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fruit bread • Small savoury or fruit scones • Plain sweet biscuits 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pastries such as Danishes, éclairs, tarts • Doughnuts • Croissants • Macaroons <p>Try this instead....</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Swap large serves of cheese for small • Swap some cheese for vegetables • Swap fatty meat for lean • Swap dips for vegetable salsas • Swap crisps for vegetable sticks • Swap doughnuts for small serves of banana bread
<h2>SANDWICHES</h2>	
<p>SUSTAINABLE AND HEALTHY SUGGESTIONS</p>	<p>Reduce and avoid if possible</p>
<p>Sandwich breads</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wraps, rolls, crumpets, lavash and other flat breads, bagels, plain focaccias, baguettes and English muffins • Wholegrain, multigrain, rye and white high-fibre bread are excellent choices <p>Sandwich fillings</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fill with vegetables (fresh or grilled), lean meats, egg, fish (salmon, tuna, and sardines), reduced-fat tasty cheese, cottage, ricotta or quark cheese, avocado <p>Spreads</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Margarine • Reduced-fat cream cheese • Ricotta • Vegemite • Reduced-salt peanut butter • Avocado <p>Dressings and sauces</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sauce, mustard, pesto, chutney, pickles and reduced-fat salad dressings • Small amounts of dressings and sauces 	<p>Sandwich fillings</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High fat, processed meats – e.g. salami, strasburg, mortadella, bacon • Crumbed and deep fried fillings e.g. schnitzel • Large serves of meat and cheese together. Halve the serve size of each and use reduced-fat cheese and lean meat • Butter <p>Try this instead.....</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Swap margarine or butter for avocado or hummus • Swap mayonnaise for a yoghurt-based dip e.g. tzatziki • Swap white bread for wholegrain, multigrain or high fibre white bread

SALAD and BBQs	
SUSTAINABLE AND HEALTHY SUGGESTIONS	Reduce and avoid if possible
<p>Salads & barbeques</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Serve salads with BBQs • BBQ vegetables • BBQ kebabs such as zucchini, capsicum, eggplant, pineapple, mushroom, banana or mushroom • Corn on the cob • Vegetable patties (lentil, chickpea, falafel) • Lean burgers • Lean meats e.g. steak • Reduced-fat, reduced-salt sausages <p>□ Dressings and sauces</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tomato, sweet chilli, BBQ and mustard sauce, pesto, chutney, and reduced-fat salad dressings • Serve dressings on the side • Small amounts of dressings and sauces 	<p>Salads & barbeques</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Full-fat sausages • Fatty rissoles or burgers • Meat with visible fat • Bacon • Salads with full-fat dressings (e.g. mayonnaise, thousand island, Caesar) <p>Try this instead.....</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Swap white bread for wholegrain, multigrain or high-fibre white bread in a sausage sizzle • Swap salt for herbs and spices such as garlic, chilli, lemon or lime juice, balsamic vinegar, basil and coriander • Keep dressings to a minimum or serve on the side • Swap some white pasta and rice for brown to give a difference texture and taste • Swap margarine for avocado or hummus • Add salad to burgers

BREAKFAST	
SUSTAINABLE AND HEALTHY SUGGESTIONS	Reduce and avoid if possible
<p>Fruit and fruit juice</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fresh fruit • Canned fruit (in natural juice) • 100% fruit juice with no added sugar (150 ml per person) • Fruit smoothies made with reduced-fat milk and yoghurt <p>Cooked breakfasts</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eggs, scrambled, poached, boiled or as an omelette • Grilled vegetables (tomatoes, mushrooms, onion) • Baked beans • Vegetable frittata • Lean ham or grilled lean bacon • Reduced-fat, reduced-salt sausages • Small pancakes topped with fruit <p>Toppings and spreads</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Margarine • Reduced-fat cream cheese • Ricotta cheese • 100% spreadable fruit • Fish, chicken or meat pastes • Vegemite or similar • Peanut butter • Avocado • Fruit e.g. banana 	<p>Fruit and fruit juice</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Canned fruit in syrup • Fruit juice with added sugar • Fruit drinks <p>Cooked breakfasts</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fried foods (eggs, bacon, hash browns) • Full-fat bacon • Full-fat sausages <p>Toppings and spreads</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Butter • Cream • Full-fat cream cheese • Honey or syrups • Chocolate-based spreads <p>Try this instead.....</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Swap butter for margarine made from polyunsaturated or monounsaturated oils such as olive, canola, safflower, sunflower, linseed/flaxseed, soybean • Swap frying for a spray of oil or oven baking • Swap jam for 100% spreadable fruit • Swap cream and butter for vanilla yoghurt on pikelets and scones