



THE **GOOD FOR YOU** GUIDE

City of Cape Town Healthy Food Guideline for Food Service Providers

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BUSINESS
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YOU

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Being **GOOD FOR YOU** certified isn't just good for business — it's about giving people what they want: healthy, fresh, affordable, feel-good food made right.



INTRODUCTION

What we eat plays a key role in our long-term health. Healthy habits—like eating a variety of food and limiting saturated fats, added sugars, and sodium (salt)—can help prevent weight gain, reduce disease risk, and support longer lives.

However, our food choices are influenced by our environment. Many workplaces and public spaces lack healthy options, making it harder for people to maintain a balanced diet. Local governments can help by ensuring that healthier choices are easy to find in places like offices, sports facilities, recreation areas, and more.

This guideline document helps food service providers meet the City's healthy food

standards, which align with global and local best practices. It offers clear guidelines on portion sizes, nutrient content, and ingredient quality to ensure healthier options are available. This document also provides practical tips for the food provider and food handler on menu planning, food preparation, and promoting nutritious choices.

By supporting food service providers with resources and training, the City aims to create public spaces that encourage healthier habits. Working together with food providers and other stakeholders, we can make healthy eating more accessible and help build a healthier, more sustainable future for everyone.

In this document, the following three icons have been used to **provide quick reference** to different types of information:



This icon indicates information that contains useful tips and guidelines for food vendors and food handlers.



This icon highlights interesting facts and information that provides context and background to the guidelines.



This icon denotes where the City can provide support or assistance to food vendors and food handlers.

DEFINITION:

"City" means the City of Cape Town, a municipality established by the City of Cape Town Establishment Notice No. 479 of 22 September 2000, issued in terms of the Local Government: Municipal Structures Act, 1998 (Act No. 117 of 1998), or any structure or employee of the City acting in terms of delegated authority.



PART 1: HEALTHY FOOD GUIDELINES

01 INTRODUCTION TO HEALTHY LIVING THROUGH FOOD



This section explains the importance of healthy food in promoting longer, healthier lives.

Why Offer Healthier Food?



Your Role as a Vendor

As a food vendor, you can provide access to healthier food and also help to educate your customers about healthier food options.



FACT: AN UNHEALTHY DIET CAN SHORTEN YOUR LIFE.

- The world is getting healthier and people are at more risk of chronic (long-term) disease.
- People are consuming more calories (food energy) and obesity is becoming more common.
- People have a lower quality of life, which, in turn, is increasing healthcare costs.

Consumer Demand

It's for these reasons that people are trending toward healthier options. People often know they need to be healthier, but they aren't aware of what "healthy" is and access to healthier food is, at times, limited.

Connection Between Diet and Healthy Lifestyles



Does Healthy Eating = Healthier Customers?

FACT: WHAT YOU EAT IS ONLY ONE COMPONENT OF A HEALTHIER LIFESTYLE. HEALTHY EATING, EXERCISE, AND SOCIAL INTERACTION ALL HAVE THEIR ROLE TO PLAY.

Guidelines for healthy living suggest that we should:

- Enjoy a variety of food.
- Be active!
- Drink lots of clean, safe water.



How Vendors Can Support Healthier Lifestyles

- Offer nutrient-rich, balanced meal options. Be mindful of what you serve and how you sell your food. The pricing of healthy food should be fair but also attractive to customers. Whenever possible, provide nutritional information to help customers make healthy food choices.
- If your establishment is situated in a sports or recreation venue, you should encourage physical activity or movement. Play your part and lead by example – walk more, cycle to work, organise activities to bring customers to your shop and to get them moving. You should also provide access to healthy food and clean, safe water during these activities.
- Facilitate social connections through food-centred activities. Organise events to get your customers to your shop where they can interact with you and other customers. This may involve exercise, or it could be something like a quick quiz event about food or even yourself and your food business.



Support from the City

Our vision is for Cape Town to be a City of Hope for all – a prosperous, inclusive, and healthy city where people can see their hopes of a better future for themselves, their children, and their community become a reality.

The City is committed, through its Five-Year Integrated Development Plan (IDP 2022–2027), to maintaining quality amenities and public spaces to help make our city healthier and more resilient. Segments of the plan, include but are not limited to:

- The Public Space, Environment, and Amenities Priority, where the City strives to create a safe and healthy place to live, free from pollution, with access to quality public amenities and space.
- Foundation of a Resilient City – Integrated Urban Health Programme where the City and its partners will improve and support a healthy environment, addressing disparities in health outcomes, as well as the environments that create them.
- Foundation of a More Spatially Integrated and Inclusive City, with the Social Inclusion and Well-being Programme, which includes the Food Systems Project.

02 UNDERSTANDING “HEALTHY FOOD”



This section clarifies what constitutes healthy food and why it matters.

What is Healthy Food?



FACT: MANY OF US ARE NOT AS HEALTHY AS WE THINK. SOME OF US WEIGH MORE THAN WE SHOULD – OTHERS LESS.

Many of us don't consume enough vitamins and minerals even when we're eating enough (or too much) food. Some of us need special food to help us cope with certain types of illnesses. Having a set of healthy food guidelines can help people make healthier food choices.

Enjoy a Variety of Food (Mixed Meals)

A "mixed meal" contains a variety of food from the different food groups and has three or more food groups in each meal. A mixed meal is usually eaten three times a day (breakfast, lunch, and supper), most days of the week. Eating mixed meals, of a similar size, is key to having a healthy eating plan. It's also important to provide food that is prepared in a variety of ways.



FACT: PROVIDING HEALTHY MEALS DOESN'T HAVE TO BE COSTLY. With strategic ingredient choices and efficient preparation, it is possible to offer healthy, affordable meals without compromising on quality or tradition.



Tips for Planning Mixed Meals

- Make starchy food **part of most meals**.
- Eat **plenty of vegetables and fruit** every day.
- Eat dry beans, split peas, lentils, and soya **regularly**.
- Fish, chicken, lean meat, or eggs can be **eaten daily**.
- Have milk, maas, or yoghurt **every day**.
- Use fat sparingly; **choose vegetable oils rather** than hard fats.



FACT: EATING TOO MUCH SUGAR OR SUGAR-CONTAINING FOOD CAN LEAD TO DIABETES, STROKES, HEART ATTACKS, OR OTHER HEALTH COMPLICATIONS. Too much salt in your diet can also increase blood pressure and lead to heart attacks or strokes.

Using Salt and Sugar in Foods



Use Salt and Food High in Salt Sparingly

The recommended daily salt intake is less than 5 g/1 tsp (or 2000 mg of sodium). While some salt comes from cooking and table use, most comes from processed food, seasonings, and sauces. Food labels list sodium instead of salt because all sources of sodium contribute to overall salt intake.

Ways to reduce salt usage:

- Reduce salt gradually when cooking.
- Use spices, herbs, garlic, ginger, and vegetables for flavour.
- Check food labels to choose low-sodium options and be aware of hidden salt in processed food.
- Avoid providing extra salt (e.g. sachets or table salt) to customers.
- Rinse canned vegetables in clean water to reduce salt, before adding to your dish.



Tips on Choosing Lower Salt Options

- Use fresh or frozen fruit or vegetables **without added salt**, instead of canned or prepared fruit or vegetables with added salt.
- **Check bread labels** for sodium or salt content.
- Use **dry legumes** (e.g. lentils, beans) instead of pre-cooked or canned produce.
- Use **fresh lean meat**, fish, chicken, or eggs instead of prepared or processed meat (e.g. ham, bacon, canned or frozen chicken, or fish with brine).



Use Sugar and Food and Drinks High in Sugar Sparingly

Too much sugar, especially from sweetened drinks and high-fat sugary food, can lead to excess energy intake.

It's recommended that people consume food and drinks containing sugar sparingly, and not between meals. The daily limit of added sugar should be no more than 10% of total energy intake for healthy people and less than 6% for people at a higher health risk, such as those who are overweight or have pre-diabetes. Just one 300 ml sugar-sweetened fizzy drink contains about 30 g of sugar (540 kJ), making up 35% of the guideline daily amount of sugars and 6% of daily energy intake.

Fruit juice is more nutritious than sugary drinks but still high in sugar and low in fibre. Some people may end up consuming too much sugar from fruit juice, because it doesn't make you feel as full.

Sensible swaps for sugary drinks:

- Drink water in preference to sugary drinks.
- Pure vegetable juices are a better option as they have less carbohydrates and a lower glycaemic index (GI). Beware of vegetable juice blended with fruit juice as this can increase the sugar content.
- Dilute 125 ml of fruit juice with 125 ml of water to reduce the sugar content.
- A refreshing homemade drink using chilled water with lemon or cucumber slices is a lower sugar option.
- Prioritise drinks that have no added sugar, are made from fresh ingredients, and emphasise the health benefits of pure, diluted fruit or vegetable juices.

Understanding Food Labels

Reading food labels helps in making healthier choices.

Here are some useful cut-off points when looking at food labels:



Also refer to the National Nutrition Week poster: <https://adsa.org.za/wp-content/uploads/2023/05/NNW-2019-How-Do-I-Read-Food-Labels.webp>

Ingredients are listed by weight, from most to least.

Nutrition information is given per 100 g/ml and per serving. NB: Some packs may contain more than one serving.

Nutrients		Per 100 g	Per serving	%NRV*
Energy	(kJ)	1323	529	
Protein	(g)	10.7	4.3	8
Carbohydrates	(g)	59	2.3	
of which sugars	(g)	1.8	0.7	
Total fat	(g)	1.6	0.6	
of which saturated	(g)	0.3	0.1	
of which trans	(g)	0	0	
of which monounsaturated	(g)	0.3	0.1	
of which polyunsaturated	(g)	0.9	0.4	
Cholesterol	(mg)	<1	0	
Dietary fibre**	(g)	10.7	4.3	
Total Sodium	(mg)	332	133	
Vitamin B1 (Thiamin)	(mg)	0.8	0.3	25
Vitamin B2 (Riboflavin)	(mg)	0.8	0.3	25
Niacin	(mg)	10	4	25
Iron	(mg)	11.3	4.5	25

Energy is measured in kilojoules and comes from carbohydrates, fat, and protein.

Macronutrients (carbohydrates, fat, protein) are in grams.

Micronutrients (vitamins, minerals) are in milligrams or micrograms.

*NRV = Nutrient reference for individuals four years and older.

**Method used to determine total dietary fibre: AOAC 985.29.

The Importance of Healthy Food Guidelines

Around the world and in South Africa, there are food guidelines that can help us choose the right food quantities from all the food groups. These guidelines will help people to ensure that they get all the nutrients that their body needs.

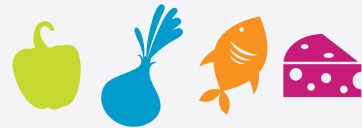
Why “Healthy Food Guidelines” are Important for Vendors

As a food vendor, you can use the guidelines to help you prepare and provide food to your customers, which allows them to make healthier food choices. Knowing these guidelines will also help you to guide your customers about better food choices and inform them about how your food follows these principles.

Food is grouped according to its different purposes in the body. Which is why a daily eating plan should include food from most of the food groups on most days.

By understanding and following these guidelines as a vendor, you can apply these principles in your own life and to help others, including your customers.

FOOD GUIDELINES CAN HELP YOUR CUSTOMERS



Eat a variety of food from each of the food groups in the correct amounts according to their needs (age, gender, activity).

Disclaimer: The guidelines do not apply to people with medical conditions requiring specialised dietary advice, or to frail elderly people who are at risk of malnutrition.

03 FOOD GROUPS AND THEIR BENEFITS



This section provides you with actionable knowledge for creating a balanced menu.



As a food service provider, it’s important to understand the food groups and their roles, so that you can offer a variety of healthy, nutrient-rich food.



STARCHES

Provide energy, support digestive health (fibre), and provide nutrients. e.g. Brown bread, oats, sweet potatoes, maltabella pap (sorghum porridge), samp, mielies.



PROTEIN

Support growth, repair, muscle function, and immunity. e.g. Lean meats such as chicken and fish, eggs, beans, lentils.



FRUITS/VEGETABLES

Provide essential nutrients including vitamins, minerals, antioxidants, and fibre to help gut function. e.g. Leafy greens like spinach and cabbage, and fruit such as apples, grapes, oranges. At least three portions of vegetables and two of fruit daily.



DAIRY

Bone and tooth health, muscle function. e.g. Unsweetened, low-fat milk, maas, yoghurt, cheese in moderation.



FATS

A source of energy, help absorption of nutrients, essential fatty acids help cellular health, and brain function. e.g. Avocado, nuts, vegetable oils, olive, sunflower or canola oils, fatty fish.

FOOD GROUPS AND THEIR BENEFITS

LEARN MORE ABOUT EACH OF THE FOOD GROUPS

More About Starches



Wholegrain Versus Refined Grains

What are wholegrains?

Wholegrains are grains from cereal crops that contain all three parts of the grain: the endosperm, bran, and germ. They can be eaten on their own or as ingredients in other food. Examples include wholegrain cereals, corn on the cob, popcorn, rolled oats, barley, brown rice, cracked wheat, and sorghum.

What are refined grains?

When grains are refined, the bran and germ are removed, leaving only the starchy endosperm, which is then ground into flour. Removing the bran also removes many valuable nutrients, which is why less-processed starchy food is generally recommended.

Why is wholegrain food healthier?

- Wholegrains contain:
- The bran, that is rich in fibre, vitamins, and minerals.
 - The large endosperm that contains carbohydrates, protein, and some vitamin B.
 - The germ that contains vitamins, minerals, antioxidants, and healthy unsaturated fats.

Eating wholegrains regularly reduces the chances of heart disease, stroke, some types of cancer, diabetes, as well as high blood cholesterol. The fibre in wholegrains can also help you to feel fuller.



Using Wholegrains in Food Preparation

- When selecting grains to make food such as fresh bread or serving starches in prepared meals, use wholegrain varieties, for example:
- Wholewheat flour for bread making.
 - Brown or wholegrain rice.
 - Flours or starches that are unrefined, such as wholegrain maize meal, porridges, and pasta.
 - Make sandwiches from wholewheat or brown bread instead of white bread or bread rolls.



Low Versus High GI Foods

Most carbohydrates (starches) that we eat are broken down in our gut into sugars (glucose) and absorbed into the bloodstream. This is then used in the body to provide energy. If more energy is available than is needed by the body, the glucose will be stored as body fat. The glycaemic index (GI) is a measure of how carbohydrates in food are absorbed by the body and how they affect blood sugar. Food with a higher GI raises blood sugar faster than those with a lower GI.

Even when eating low GI food, you still need to keep portions moderate, as eating too much can still affect your blood glucose.

Most advice about eating a diet with low GI food is aimed at people with diabetes, as it helps manage blood sugar levels. However, research shows that the total amount of carbohydrates you eat, not just the GI value, plays a bigger role in how your blood sugar rises after meals. The GI of a food is measured when it's eaten on its own, but these values aren't useful on their own because we typically eat food in combination. For a balanced, healthy diet, it's important to consider the GI values as part of your overall food choices. A healthy way to use the GI principles is to incorporate a range of lower GI carbs that are also rich in fibre and low in saturated fat.

Some healthy everyday examples of low GI food:

- Wholewheat, multigrain, rye, seeded, or sourdough bread.
- Baby potatoes in their skins, sweet potato, cold boiled potatoes.
- Basmati, long grain, or brown rice.
- Bulgur wheat, barley, couscous, quinoa.
- Oats, low-sugar muesli, some low-sugar oat and bran-based cereals.



Mixed meals are important when it comes to our daily GI:

- Eating one large meal a day with refined starches leads to rapid rises and falls in blood sugar.
- Eating smaller, more frequent mixed meals with the correct proportions of food groups should stabilise blood sugar throughout the day, providing steady levels of energy.

For example, including protein such as chicken and fibre-containing food such as vegetables to a meal can lower the GI of the meal.

More About Proteins



Animal Proteins

Animal proteins are foods such as meat, chicken, fish, cheese, and eggs. Although most South Africans eat this food daily, it is not necessary to eat animal proteins every day if you are replacing them with plant proteins. Animal proteins also contain other important nutrients such as iron, zinc, and vitamin B. Fish with fatty flesh, such as pilchards, salmon, and mackerel, are a good choice as they contain omega 3 fatty acids, which is an important nutrient not found in many other foods. Pilchards, with their soft bones, are also a great source of calcium (300 mg of calcium per 100 g).



Be Mindful of Fat and Salt

- These types of products should not be used often as they are high in fat and salt:
- Cheese.
 - Processed meat (sausages, salami, and polony).



The Quality of Meat

Cheaper cuts and grades of meat and chicken are not necessarily less nutritious than expensive cuts, however, they may have extra fat, which should be trimmed before cooking. Good choices include liver (chicken and ox liver), kidneys, offal, heart, and chicken giblets. However, these should be eaten in moderation, since some are high in cholesterol and should be avoided by people with heart disease or high cholesterol. Cuts like chicken heads, necks, and feet may be better since they're lower in fat. Fresh cuts of meat are healthier options than processed meat.



Vegetable Proteins

Dry beans, split peas, lentils, and soya are nutritious foods. This food was seen as a substitute for animal protein when meat, fish, or chicken was unavailable or too expensive. In South Africa, they're in their own food group as they have health benefits beyond just protein. We should eat this food regularly, even if we eat animal protein.

They are also low in fat and high in fibre, helping you feel fuller for longer, which also helps to avoid weight gain. They are low GI foods, so they help to maintain healthy blood sugar levels.



Using beans, lentils, peas, and soya in meals:

- Use dry beans, lentils, peas, and soya as an ingredient in mixed dishes, such as samp and beans, rice and lentils, and beans in vegetable sauce with pasta.
- Dry beans or soya can be cooked with meat or chicken dishes - this will improve the overall nutritional value of the dish (less fat, more fibre) and reduce the cost of each serving.
- Plan ahead when using dry beans to allow time for them to be soaked overnight before being cooked. During cooking, the taste improves and the product becomes more digestible.
- With little planning, you can ensure that you have beans ready when needed. Dry beans can be cooked in a slow cooker or "wonder box" where no electricity is required or to save on cooking costs.
- Cooking beans in a pressure cooker reduces cooking times markedly. Cooked beans can be frozen: cover the cooked beans with water and freeze in a sealed container for up to six months.
- When using canned beans, rinse them after they have been drained to reduce the salt content.
- When cooking dry beans, lentils, and peas, only add salt and acidic ingredients (such as tomatoes) at the end of the cooking time.

More About Vegetables and Fruit



A variety of vegetables and fruit should be a part of every meal and snack. Vegetables should be eaten every day, and not only on weekends. Prepare vegetables and fruit with little (if any) added fat, sugar, and salt.



Beta Carotene

FACT: EVERYONE SHOULD HAVE ONE VEGETABLE OR FRUIT A DAY THAT PROVIDES BETA CAROTENE.

- Why? The body uses “carotenoids” like beta carotene to make vitamin A. But they’re not absorbed as well as once thought. This means people need to eat more vegetables and fruit to get enough vitamin A, especially if their diet relies on plant-based sources.
- Examples are carrots, pumpkin, butternut, spinach, imifino, mango, pawpaw, yellow peaches, and nectarines. (Note: oranges and cabbage do not contain beta carotene).



Vegetables with beta carotene should be lightly boiled and served in a meal that has a little fat or oil added. This will enable the body to absorb the beta carotene.



Here are some ways to include more vegetables and fruit in meals or snacks:

- Add to or serve cut fruit with cereal or low-fat, unsweetened yoghurt.
- Add chopped vegetables such as onions, tomatoes, and spinach to eggs or potatoes.
- Put vegetables in sandwiches such as cucumber, tomato, and lettuce.
- Replace starchy food with vegetables such as mashed gem squash or cauliflower.
- Add cabbage, spinach, or pumpkin to pap.
- Prepare lunch boxes with veggie sticks like carrots, beans, cucumber, and tomato as a refreshing snack for your customers.

When cooking with vegetables and fruit, remember to avoid:

- Overcooking vegetables and fruit so that their important nutrients are not lost.
- Products that have added salt or sugar, if you’re using canned or dried vegetables or fruit in your food preparation.

Try cooking different recipes that include vegetables:

- Use pumpkin or butternut to make soup.
- Use extra vegetables in meals at times when fruit is expensive or not available. For instance, carrot sticks as snacks instead of apples or bananas.
- Serve a salad as a snack or side dish.
- Add frozen mixed vegetables to meat dishes, such as lasagne, bolognese sauce, or stews.

More About Dairy Products



Milk, Maas, and Yoghurt

Milk, maas, and yoghurt are important in this food group.

- Always choose sugar-free options, if possible, choose low-fat or fat-free.
- Flavoured yoghurt often contains added sugar. Plain, unflavoured yoghurt, and milk products are better choices.
- Cheese can be included but should be eaten less often due to its high-fat and salt content.



Yoghurt or Dairy Snack?

In South Africa, for a product to be called yoghurt, it must meet certain standards. It must contain a high level of live, healthy bacteria (at least 10 million per gram). It also needs to have at least 2.7 g milk protein per 100 g (when measured without the fat). Products that don’t meet these standards may be labeled as “dairy snacks” or other descriptions and might not have the same health benefits as yoghurt.



Using dairy products in your food preparation:

- When possible, use low-fat or fat-free milk and milk products; this is to lower the amount of saturated fats.
- Use milk and milk products with no added sugar – flavoured milk products often contain added sugar.
- Be mindful of flavoured yoghurts and certain dairy drinks that may contain hidden calories from sugar and added fats or oils. Rather purchase plain varieties.
- Enriched soya milk can be used as an alternative to milk.
- Some dairy products are high in fat and sugar, and low in important nutrients, such as ice cream or milk-based frozen dessert. These products are not considered part of this food group.



A Note on Lactose Intolerance

Some people may struggle to digest lactose, the sugar in milk, due to low levels of the enzyme lactase in the gut. Most people with lactose intolerance can still tolerate small amounts, like milk in tea, or fermented products like maas and yoghurt.

More About Fats



Use Sparingly – Fats, Oils, Salt, and Sugar

The body needs some fats and oils, which can come naturally from plant food like avocado, olives, nuts, and seeds or animal food like meat – or they can be added during cooking. However, eating too much fat can lead to weight gain and high cholesterol levels.



As part of a healthy diet, you should try to cut down on food and drink that is high in saturated fats and trans fats and replace some of them with unsaturated fats.

Saturated fats are found in both sweet and savoury food, mainly from animal sources like meat and dairy, and some plant oils like palm and coconut oil.

Cholesterol, made in the liver, travels in the blood as LDL (“bad”) and HDL (“good”) cholesterol:

- Too much saturated fat raises LDL cholesterol, increasing heart disease and stroke risk.
- HDL cholesterol helps remove excess cholesterol, carrying it to the liver for disposal.

Trans fats are found naturally at low levels in some foods, such as meat and dairy products. They can also be found in partially hydrogenated vegetable oil, which is an industrially processed ingredient used in other types of processed food. Like saturated fats, trans fats can raise cholesterol levels in the blood.

Unsaturated fats found mostly in oils from plants and fish should replace saturated fats to lower your cholesterol level. They can be either monounsaturated or polyunsaturated:

- **Monounsaturated fats** help protect your heart by maintaining levels of “good” HDL cholesterol while reducing levels of “bad” LDL cholesterol in your blood. They are found in olive oil, avocados, and some nuts, such as almonds and peanuts.

- **Polyunsaturated fats** can also help lower “bad” LDL cholesterol in your blood. There are two main types of polyunsaturated fats: omega 3 and omega 6.

Some types of omega 3 and omega 6 fats cannot be made by your body, which means it’s essential to include small amounts of them in your diet. They are important for a healthy brain.



Fats and Oils in Food Vending

- Fried food is high in fat; deep frying should not be a regular cooking method.
- It’s better to use lean types of meat and to remove the fat or the skin from chicken.
- Fatty fish is high in unsaturated and essential fats.
- Coconut oil is not considered a “healthy” fat and should be avoided. Olive or sunflower oil is a better choice.
- People who require extra energy can choose to add healthy fats to their meals, such as margarine on wholegrain bread, peanut butter in porridge, or snacking on avocado. However, when preparing food, you should offer these options to customers as extra choices, rather than as a standard addition.



A Note on Air Frying

Air frying has become popular in recent years. Studies show that air frying results in less fat consumption and less fat oxidation than deep frying, especially when using olive oil. It also offers economic and environmental benefits since it uses less oil and doesn’t produce leftover frying oil.



Air Fry, Oven, or Deep Fry?

Air frying is healthier than deep frying, but it depends on what you’re cooking. If you’re air frying food that doesn’t usually need added fat, like oven chips, bacon, sausages, or crumbed chicken, it may not be any healthier. However, air frying or oven baking is great for healthy food like fish, plain chicken, vegetables, and baked potatoes. Compared to oven cooking, air frying is only healthier if you use less oil than you would in a conventional oven.

Food Sources of Fats

SATURATED FATS
Use less of these:

- Fatty cuts of meat e.g. chicken with skin on, red meat with fat
- Coconut cream
- Some popcorns
- Chocolate

Some dairy:

- Butter, ghee, and lard
- Cheese, especially hard cheese like cheddar
- Cream, sour cream, and ice cream

Some processed food:

- Savoury snacks like cheese crackers
- Meat products, including sausages and pies
- Biscuits, cakes, and pastries

Some oils:

- Palm oil
- Coconut oil

UNSATURATED FATS
Replace saturated fats with these:

MONOUNSATURATED FATS

- Olive oil, canola oil, and spreads made from these oils
- Avocados
- Some nuts, such as almonds, Brazil nuts, and peanuts

POLYUNSATURATED FATS

OMEGA 3

Fatty fish e.g.:

- Trout
- Sardines
- Salmon
- Mackerel

OMEGA 6

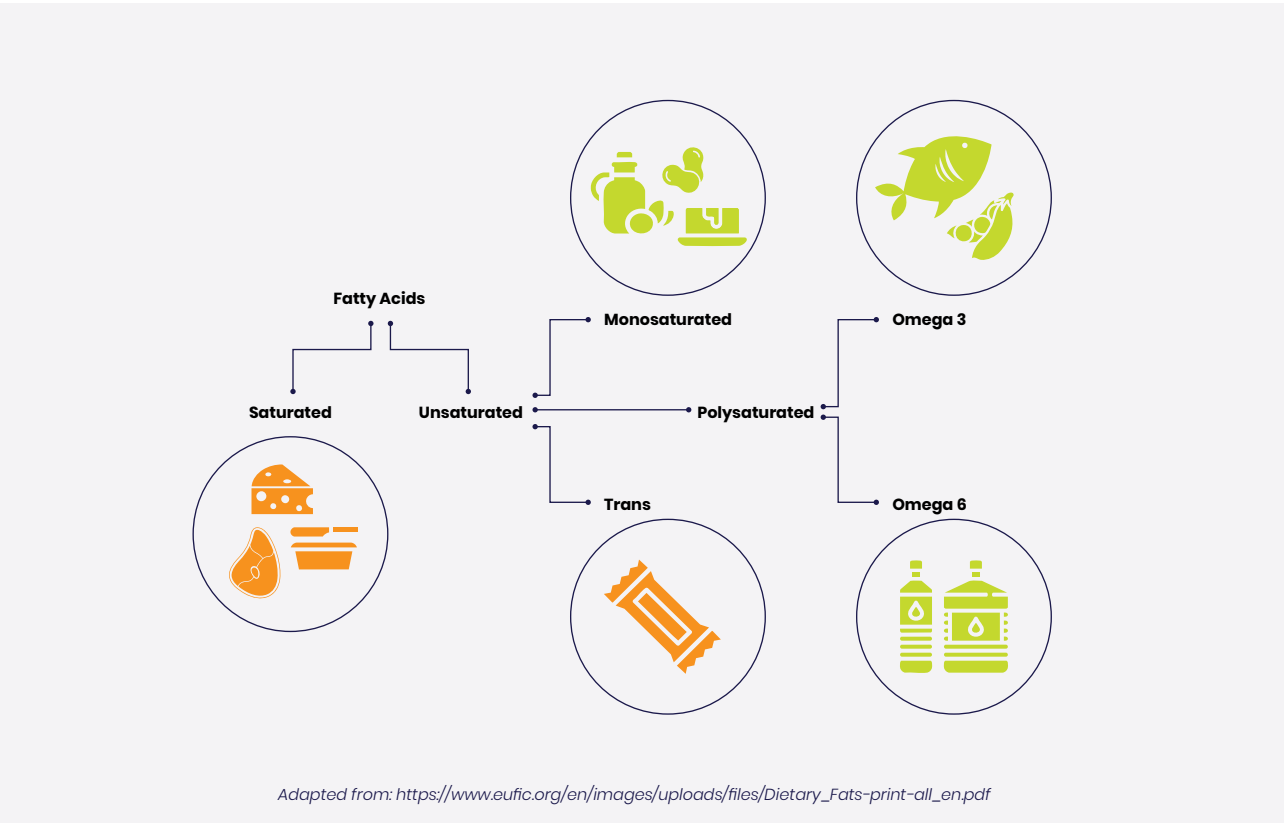
Vegetable oils e.g.:

- Maize
- Sunflower

Nuts:

- Almonds
- Cashews
- Walnuts

What are Dietary Fats?



04 HEALTHY FOOD GUIDE – TIPS FOR VENDORS



Do’s and Don’ts for Healthier Food Preparation

This section provides you with actionable guidelines that should be followed to meet healthy food requirements.

DON'T	DO	HELPFUL TIP
Cook chicken with skin on and chicken fat.	- Remove the skin from the chicken. - Lemon and herbs can be used to enhance the flavour. - Marinate the chicken for hours or even overnight to achieve the desirable flavour before cooking. - Ensure the temperature of the food is kept low (preferably below 5°C) by refrigerating it during the marinading.	Chicken skin is high in fat; 28 g of skin (on the chicken breast) contains: - An energy value of 795 kJ (10% of an inactive adult woman's daily energy requirement). - A fat content of 11 g which is 30-40% of the daily saturated fat allowance for an average adult.
Cook red meat without trimming off the fat.	Trim fat off meat before cooking or choose lean cuts.	Fat around red meat is high in saturated fat, which can raise bad cholesterol levels and increase the risk for heart disease.
Glaze, deep fat fry, or add batter and cream to vegetables.	- Roast, steam, simmer, or stew vegetables. - Add little seasoning, and add or brush lightly with oil. - Use herbs, lemon, and low-salt spices. - Replace full-cream milk with low-fat milk in sauces.	1 cup of low-fat milk, thickened with cornstarch, has 2646 kJ and 53 g less saturated fat than cream.
Peel vegetables and fruits that do not need peeling e.g. apples, pears, peaches, potatoes, sweet potatoes, carrots, tomatoes, and butternuts.	- Leave the skin on vegetables to reduce loss of nutrients during cooking. - Ensure vegetables are washed in clean running water before using them.	The nutrient-rich part of a vegetable and fruit is often right underneath the skin. The skin of vegetables contains a considerable amount of fibre or roughage, which eases digestion and prevents constipation. It also reduces bad cholesterol thereby reducing risk of heart disease.
Soak/boil vegetables in water.	Avoid cutting vegetables and soaking them. Wash vegetables in a colander or under running water just before use.	Soaking vegetables in water for more than two minutes can cause excessive leakage of nutrients.
Use salty and sweetened ready-made sauces when cooking.	Make your own sauces by using ingredients such as vegetables, herbs, flour, and spices that do not contain salt, such as paprika, curry powder and/or nutmeg.	Some ready-made sauces are high in fat, salt, sugar, preservatives, and additives. e.g. 1 small sachet of tomato sauce has 2 teaspoons of sugar.
Use white flour for baking bread or making steamed bread.	Use wholewheat flour, which is rich in fibre, when making dumplings or for baking.	During processing, white flour is stripped of its healthy fibre, which is essential for good digestion.
Use coffee creamers instead of milk for cooking.	Use low-fat or fat-free milk.	Coffee creamers are not dairy products and are high in saturated fats, which are not good for heart health.
Add fat to starchy food.	Make starchy food tastier by adding other cooked food such as beans and mixed vegetables.	Starchy food provides energy. Adding any fat including cream increases the amount of energy consumed.
Use refined cereals e.g. white pasta, white rice etc.	Rather use wholegrain cereals in salads or main dishes.	Wholegrain cereals are high in fibre and nutrients. Fibre eases digestion, prevents constipation, and protects the body from more serious conditions like cancer of the colon and heart disease. 1 cup of plain, cooked spaghetti provides 928 kJ and 2.5 g of fibre. 1 cup of cooked wholewheat spaghetti has 730 kJ and 6.3 g of fibre.

Ways To Make Affordable Food Swaps

- Healthy eating can be achieved on a budget by preparing most meals from scratch, which is often healthier than processed options.
- Adding dry beans to meat dishes can lower costs per serving.
- While lean meats, fish, and chicken are more expensive, plant-based meals are cost-effective.
- Slow cooking methods save money, as some use less or no electricity.
- Healthy starches, when portioned correctly, are affordable additions to meals.
- Create your own vegetable or herb garden and you'll have your own produce for free, all year round. Seeds, pips, stems, and old plants can generate new plants.

To Save on Vegetables and Fruit

- Buy in-season produce.
- Plan meals to avoid waste.
- Freeze excess vegetables and fruit for later use.
- Store produce properly to extend shelf life.
- Consider storage space when buying in bulk.
- Pre-processed food is more expensive (e.g. pre-cut or packaged items).
- Compare costs between fresh and frozen options.
- Match food quality to its intended use.

Here are a few examples where food swaps can save money:

Grated cheese → Whole cheese (block/pack)
Almonds → Peanuts
Fresh berries → Frozen berries
Brussel sprouts → Cabbage
Mango → Bananas or apples
Vegetable crisps → Popcorn kernels
Breakfast granola → Rolled oats
Mixed roast vegetables → Whole butternut and baby marrows

Source: Checkers Sixty60 & Woolworths pricing, February 2025



Tips for Catering in the Workplace

Depending on the duration of the meetings, lunch menus or platters can be offered. Menus should be developed to ensure that people only consume the required amount of energy. To control portions, it's recommended that only one meat and one starch option is served per meal. Vegetarians should always be catered for.

At all times:

- Only one menu option should be selected.
- People with special dietary preferences should be accommodated.
- The vegetarian option can be accompanied by a salad, but in cases where starch is not one of the main ingredients (ratatouilles, bean curries, vegetable stews), the selected starch of the day should serve as a starch accompaniment.

For ideas on how to offer healthy menu options and platters when catering for meetings in the workplace, download the "National Guide for Healthy Meal Provisioning in the Workplace" from the National Nutrition Week website (2023) [here](#):



Tips on Healthy Food Swaps

It's better to swap out highly processed food options with food that provides more nutrients.

Examples of swaps that can be made, include:

- Use brown bread instead of white to offer sufficient whole grains.
- Use fresh fruit instead of fruit juice; it is more filling and has more fibre and micronutrients.
- Cook meals using fresh ingredients instead of ready-made or highly processed ingredients; these are likely to be cheaper, more nutritious, and have a lower fat, salt, and sugar content.
- Offer fruit, yoghurt, or unsalted nuts (peanuts) as snacks for people to enjoy between meals instead of a packet of chips – these options contribute to the day's nutrient intake and do not contain excess fat and salt.
- Make soup from fresh vegetables instead of offering packet soup; this will be nutritious and low in salt.

Minimise the Use of Processed Foods



What is Ultra-Processed Food?

Ultra-processed foods are industrial products mainly made from ingredients extracted from food (like oils, fats, sugars, and starches), modified food ingredients (such as hydrogenated fats and modified starch), or lab-made additives (like flavour enhancers and colours) to make them more appealing. Production methods include processes like extrusion, moulding, and frying. Examples of processed food include crisps, chocolate, sweets, instant pudding, sweetened breakfast cereals, tinned meat, and cold or deli meats.



Why Should you Avoid Using Ultra-Processed Food in your Kitchen?

- Ultra-processed food is often high in unhealthy fats, sugar, and salt. Salt is commonly added to extend shelf life and improve flavour, while some fats that don't oxidise are used to stop food from spoiling. However, these fats can block arteries and often contain unhealthy saturated or trans fats. Ultra-processed food usually doesn't contain as much fibre, vitamins, and minerals as can be found in whole or minimally processed food, increasing the risk of heart disease, diabetes, and some cancers.
- This food may be marketed as "healthy" with labels like "low-fat" or "high-fibre," but it remains highly processed and nutritionally unbalanced, potentially contributing to health risks and deficiencies. Additionally, while individual additives in this food are tested, the long-term effects of consuming many additives together are not fully understood.



Why do People Find it Difficult to Avoid Ultra-Processed Food?

Ultra-processed food is made with combinations of fats, sugars, salt, and additives that make them especially tasty and difficult to resist. They're often available as convenient, ready-to-eat items that you can consume anywhere, like while watching TV, working, or walking.

This food is also typically sold in large portions or "super-sizes" at discounted prices, which can lead to overeating. Drinks with added sugars, like soft drinks and energy drinks, also encourage over-consumption because they don't make you feel full the way solid food does.

Tips to Limit Ultra- and Processed Foods

→ Use processed food like canned vegetables, fruits in syrup, cheese, or bread sparingly.

These products often lose nutrients or gain unhealthy additives during manufacturing, so include them only as part of meals based on fresh, natural ingredients.

→ Make whole or minimally processed food the foundation of your meals.

Use a wide variety of mostly plant-based ingredients to create nutritious, delicious, and sustainable dishes.

→ Use small amounts of oils, fats, salt, and sugar for seasoning and cooking.

When used moderately, they enhance flavour without compromising the healthiness of the meal.



How to Identify Different Types of Processed Food

CATEGORY	DESCRIPTION	PROCESSES USED	EXAMPLES
 UNPROCESSED OR MINIMALLY PROCESSED FOOD	Lightly altered for storage and consumption without significant nutrient loss.	Refrigeration, freezing, pasteurisation, grinding, fermenting, and vacuum packing.	Fresh fruit, vegetables, wholegrains, nuts, meats, plain yoghurt (no added sugar or sweeteners), fresh and dried pasta, tea, coffee, and milk.
 PROCESSED CULINARY INGREDIENTS	Derived from minimally processed food, these ingredients are used to season or cook other food.	Pressing, refining, grinding, or milling.	Plant, seed or nut oils; vinegar (made by fermentation), honey from honey combs, syrup from maple trees (without added flavours or stabilisers).
 PROCESSED FOOD	Made from two or three ingredients, using either of the above two categories, with added salt, sugar, or fat to enhance flavour, texture, and shelf life; ready-to-eat with minimal prep.	Processes that increase durability, and modification to enhance flavour or texture.	Some canned fruits and vegetables, some cheeses, freshly made bread, and canned fish.
 ULTRA-PROCESSED FOOD	Highly modified, multiple ingredients often low in fibre and nutrients with additives designed for convenience, long shelf life, and may also increase cravings to stimulate purchase.	Multi-step mass production processing methods, with added artificial colours, flavours, preservatives, thickeners, emulsifiers, and artificial sweeteners.	Sugary drinks, cookies and biscuits, some crackers or savoury biscuits, chips or crisps, breakfast cereals, some frozen dinners, and some deli cold meats such as polony. Some canned fruits and vegetables, and bread that contain further additives to the above processed version of the food.





Healthy Eating Facts and Myths

Myth: Eating healthy is expensive.
→ **Fact:** Cooking with fresh, whole ingredients can save money and offer healthier options.

Myth: Starchy food is fattening.
→ **Fact:** Unrefined starches provide fibre that aids digestion, lowers bad cholesterol, and keeps you full longer.

Myth: Brown sugar is healthier than white sugar.
→ **Fact:** Brown sugar is just less refined white sugar with no added health benefits.

Myth: Vitamin water is healthier than soft drinks.
→ **Fact:** Vitamin water also contains sugar, with some bottles having up to 7 teaspoons per 500 ml.

Myth: Stock cubes and seasoning salts are healthier than regular salt.
→ **Fact:** They still contain sodium, which should be limited as part of daily salt intake.

Myth: Fruit juice has less energy than soft drinks.
→ **Fact:** Juice has natural sugars like fructose and little fibre. A glass of 100% juice has about the same energy as a sugary soft drink. Vegetable juices generally have a lower GI value.

Myth: One big meal a day is better than three meals.
→ **Fact:** Large meals cause blood sugar spikes and crashes. Smaller, more frequent meals help maintain steady energy levels.

Myth: Coconut oil is healthier than other vegetable oils.
→ **Fact:** Coconut and palm oils are high in saturated fats. Opt for oils with more unsaturated fats, like olive, sunflower, and canola oils.

Myth: “Low-fat” food is always healthy.
→ **Fact:** Lower-fat versions can still be higher in fat than their regular counterparts. Food that is lower in fat is not necessarily lower in calories, as it may have added sugar, keeping calorie content similar to regular versions. Always check the nutrition label. Your daily intake of fat should be less than 30% of your total energy intake (calorie or kilojoule intake).



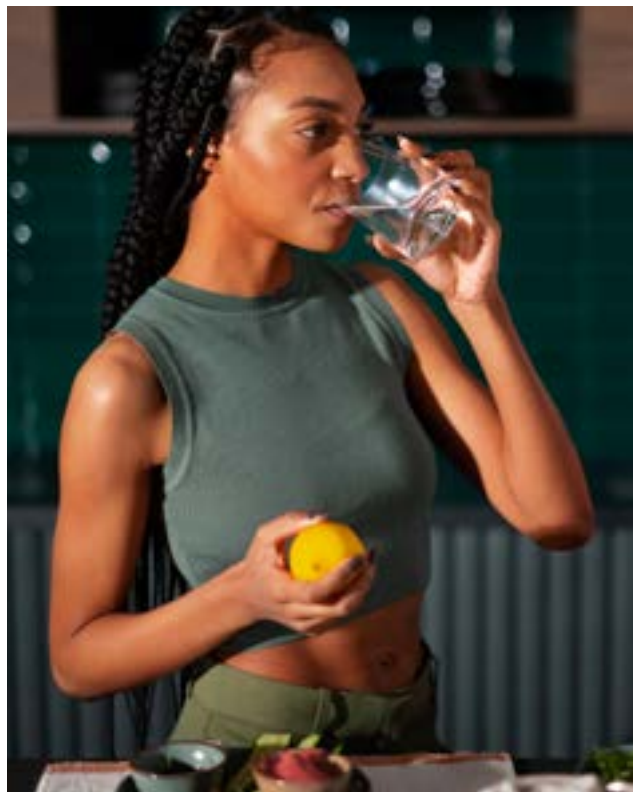
Hydration Tips

FACT: TIREDNESS, IRRITABILITY, AND HEADACHES ARE SOME OF THE SIGNS OF DEHYDRATION. Feeling thirsty is usually a sign that the body is already dehydrated.

Children and adults need about 6 – 8 glasses of liquid a day; most of that should be from water and drinks made with clean, safe tap water.

Here are some useful tips on how you can help customers consume enough liquids:

- Offer bottled water, as this can be a useful alternative if tap water is unavailable or the available water has an unpleasant taste.
- You can offer tea and coffee, since they are both popular drinks and can form part of the daily liquid intake. They provide the body with water, without containing extra energy (unless they have too much sugar added). These drinks can be enjoyed as part of healthy eating plans.
- However, be mindful of how much caffeine your customers consume – people should limit themselves to a maximum of 4 cups of coffee per day (or 400 mg of instant coffee in 24 hours).
- Encourage customers to add as little sugar as possible to drinks and to avoid energy drinks containing high amounts of sugar and/or caffeine.
- If you offer vegetable and fruit juices, remind your customers that these can be drunk occasionally, but they shouldn’t replace fresh fruits and vegetables since they have too much sugar and not enough fibre.



Tips for Meal Planning



How Much is a Portion?

Here’s an easy guide to follow to estimate how much food to serve for meals and snacks of different food types:

FOOD TYPE	EXAMPLES	PORTION: HAND MEASUREMENT	PORTION: SIZE OR WEIGHT
STARCHY FOOD	Cooked pap, samp, rice, potato or sweet potato, and pasta.		1/2 cup
PROTEIN	Skinless chicken, baked or grilled fish, or lean meat.		90 g (cooked)
FRUITS AND VEGETABLES, NUTS AND BEANS	Cooked or raw vegetables, grapes or berries, cooked or dry beans, split peas, or lentils.		1 cup
	Raisins, dried fruit, or nuts.		¼ cup
	Whole fruit (1 medium or 2 smaller pieces such as plums, apricots, or figs).		1 cup
FATS	Oils, margarine, or mayonnaise.		1 teaspoon
DAIRY OR NUT BUTTER	Milk		1 cup
	Maas or yoghurt		1/2 cup
	Hard cheese or peanut butter.		1 tablespoon or 3 teaspoons



Guideline for Serving Lunch or Dinner

When serving lunch or dinner food portions (main meals), follow this guideline:

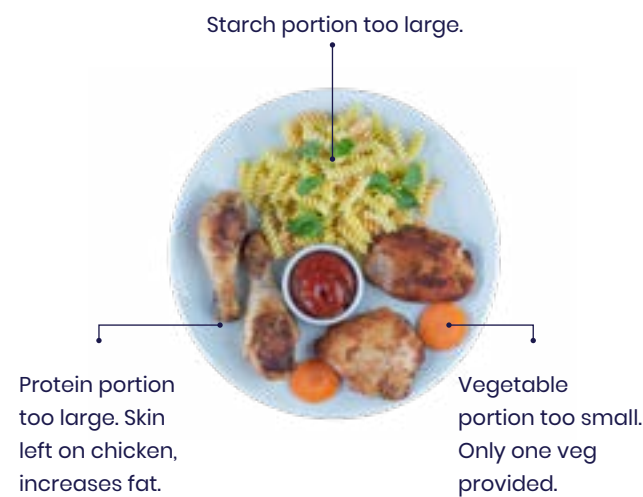
- Half a plate of vegetables or salad.
- Quarter of a plate of skinless chicken, baked or grilled fish, lean meat, eggs, cooked dry beans, peas, or lentils.
- Quarter of a plate of starchy food such as rice, samp, pap, potatoes, sweet potatoes, or brown bread.



Tips for Portion Control

- Using smaller plates, bowls, and serving utensils encourages customers to dish up sensible portion sizes, which can also prevent overeating and reduce food waste.
- Avoid offering second helpings or “super-size” portions. Offer half portions or regular sizes only.
- When dishing up for customers, avoid dishing up heaps of food or food on top of one another on a plate. The pictures below depict a correctly portioned plate and an incorrectly portioned plate:

INCORRECT PORTIONS



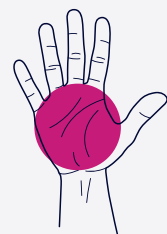
CORRECT PORTIONS



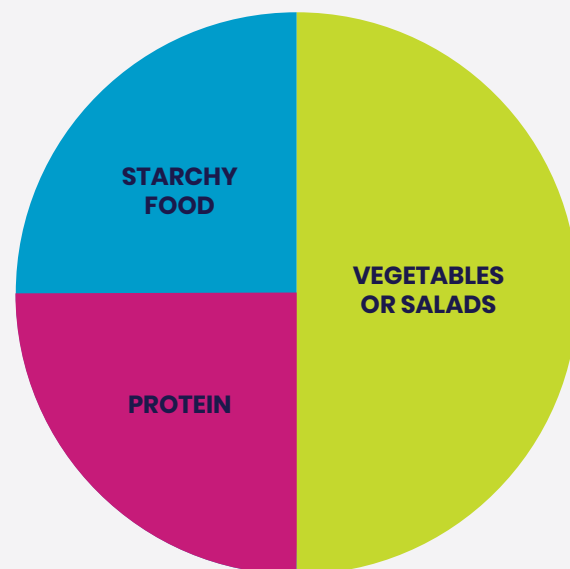
Here's a rough guide for portion size per plate:



A cupped hand of starchy food such as rice, samp, pap, potatoes, or brown bread.



Palm of your hand of protein such as skinless chicken, baked or grilled fish, lean meat, eggs, cooked dry beans, peas, or lentils.



2 cupped hands full of fruit or vegetables, such as cooked or raw vegetables, grapes, or berries.



Tips for Serving Portions Responsibly

These simple steps promote healthier eating habits and minimise waste:

- Use smaller tableware: Choose smaller plates, bowls, and serving utensils to encourage serving of sensible portions, helping to reduce overeating and food waste.
- Portion options: Provide options for half portions and regular sizes instead of large servings.
- Avoid overloading plates: Serve food in reasonable portions without stacking or piling it excessively. Aim for a well-balanced plate.



Support from the City

As part of the City's Employee Assistance Programme (EAP) and Wellness Standard Operating Procedure, promoting healthy lifestyles is a key focus. To support this, the EAP and Wellness team collaborates with internal and external role-players to ensure best practices. City employees and external stakeholders are encouraged to seek guidance on developing healthy menus.

Source: City of Cape Town. EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAMME (EAP) AND WELLNESS STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURE, V4, January 2025



Tips for Healthy Menu Design

You can design menus to educate consumers about healthy food options. Try implementing the following strategies:

→ Label Healthy Choices:

Use icons or symbols to identify nutrient-rich options, such as “heart-healthy,” “low-calorie,” or “high-fibre” dishes.

→ Add Descriptions:

Explain the health benefits of key ingredients, e.g. “Rich in omega 3 fatty acids for heart health.”

→ Visual Guidelines:

Use images or diagrams, such as the “Healthy Eating Plate,” to show the proper portions of proteins, grains, and vegetables.

→ Allow for Customisation:

Offer build-your-own meal options, allowing customers to select wholegrains, lean proteins, and fresh vegetables.

→ Incorporate Educational Menu Features:

Include tips like “Choosing wholegrains supports long-term energy and digestive health” or “Fresh vegetables provide essential vitamins and minerals.”

→ Seasonal and Local Emphasis:

Highlight dishes that use seasonal, locally-sourced ingredients to promote sustainability and health.

→ Menu Placement:

Position healthy options prominently at the top or in dedicated sections of your menu.

→ Descriptive Naming:

Use appealing names for healthy dishes, such as “Garden Fresh Salad” instead of “Vegetable Salad.”

→ Default Healthy Sides:

Offer vegetables or wholegrains as default sides rather than fried food and processed or refined ingredients.

→ Healthy Challenges:

Create initiatives like “Try 5 Colours” to encourage customers to choose dishes with a range of fruits or vegetables.



This section explains the importance of healthy lifestyles and the link between movement, eating, and wellness.

The Link Between Activity and Healthy Eating

Physical activity is just as important as healthy eating. The way a person eats will affect how active they are, and their amount of activity will influence how much they can eat. The human body is designed to be active, and not being active is harmful to our health.

Being active means making your heart beat faster and increasing your breathing. It can be from activities that are part of daily living or work, from sport, or from doing exercises.

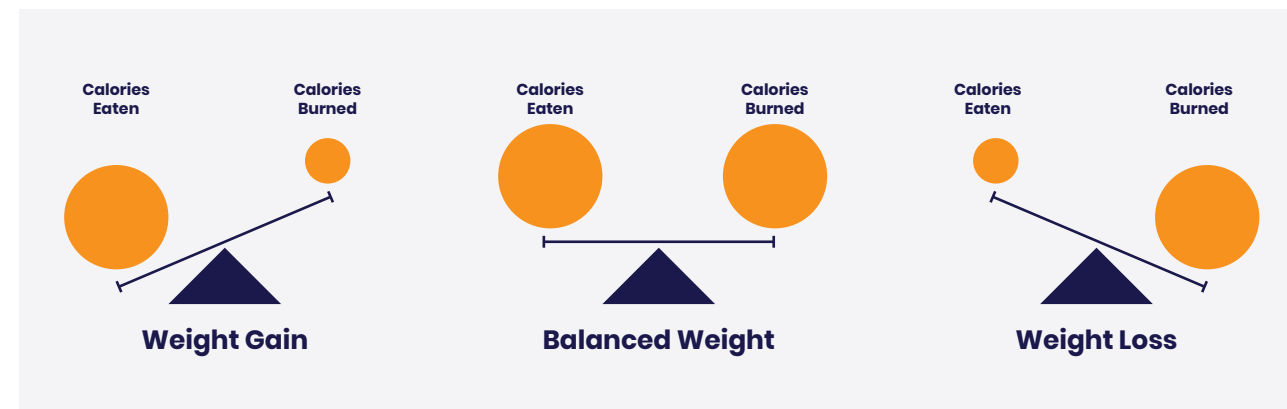
To maintain a healthy weight, you need to eat food that supplies all the nutrients needed and that also provides the right amount of energy.



Becoming Overweight Can Happen When

- A person is eating more than their body needs, especially food containing a lot of energy (energy-dense food). Food that contains a lot of fat and/or sugar and/or alcohol can be high in energy, but may be low in nutritional value (called “empty calories”).
- A person does not get enough exercise from activities such as sport, walking, or physical work.

You’re likely to gain weight if you eat more energy than you use. People who are overweight should try to spend more energy by exercising and eating less high-energy food. That means they need to eat the correct types of food, in the correct amounts, and be physically active.



How Much Energy Do We Need?

The amount of energy needed is measured in kilojoules (kJ). It’s the average amount needed by our bodies in 24 hours. It’s calculated based on a person’s age, gender, weight, and activity levels. This energy is supplied by the carbohydrates, fats, and proteins in food and drinks (including alcohol). An active, average woman weighing 70 kg requires around 8500 kilojoules and an active, average man weighing 80 kg requires 10500 kilojoules of food energy per day, however, this may vary depending on their activity levels.



Kilojoules Versus Calories – What’s the Difference?

The joule (J) is the standard unit of energy in the International System of Units (SI). Since food energy is typically measured in larger quantities, nutritionists and food scientists use kilojoules (kJ), where 1 kJ equals 1000 joules. Historically, food energy has been measured in calories, which is not part of the SI system, however, calories remain widely used by both scientists and the general public. Although we usually use the word “calories”, the measurement is actually kilocalories or kcal. In South Africa, most food labels list kilojoules (kJ) as the food energy measurement.

To convert kilojoules to calories:

1 kJ = 0.239 calories (kcal)

To convert calories to kilojoules:

1 calorie (kcal) = 4.184 kJ

How Vendors And The City Can Help People To Be More Active

Exercise, healthy diet, and social interaction can improve health – vendors and the City can play their part by providing environments for social interaction.



The City organises wellness days. These can be tailored to encourage people to participate in fun, physical activities in or around City buildings during break times.

The City can further encourage participation by incentivising staff to attend, and subsidising refreshments and snacks provided by vendors.



Vendors can support wellness days by providing refreshment tables and healthy snacks to fortify participants.

Vendors can include healthy eating and exercise tips with their products to create awareness and drive sales.



SOURCE DOCUMENT LIST (PART 1): HEALTHY FOOD GUIDELINES

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PART 2:

FOOD SAFETY AND HYGIENE PRACTICE GUIDELINES

IMPORTANT: If you intend to manufacture, store, distribute, prepare, transport, or sell any kind of foodstuffs intended for public consumption then you must apply for, and be in possession of a valid "[Certificate of Acceptability](#)" (COA)

An application for a COA must be made via the City's online portal:

- If you are already registered on the City's e-Services portal you can click [here](#).
- If you are not registered on the City's e-Services portal click [here](#) to register.

01 WHAT IS FOOD SAFETY?



This section explains the importance of food safety in the preparation and consumption of food.

Food safety minimises risks from foodborne illnesses caused by eating contaminated or unsafe food:



Germs in the environment and on food can easily multiply and contaminate food.



To reduce the risk of food poisoning it's important to always follow the basic rules of good hygiene when handling food. Refer to the [WHO's "Five Keys To Safer Food"](#).



The Definition of Food Safety

Food safety is a method, which ensures that food will not cause harm when prepared or consumed as intended.

02 IMPORTANCE OF FOOD SAFETY



People have a right to expect their food to be safe to eat.

Here we explain why food safety is important to your business.



Food Safety is Important Because it Influences

- **Health:** Prevents foodborne diseases or injury that can range from mild to life-threatening.
- **Business integrity:** Foodborne outbreaks can hurt trade (your brand and business), jobs, and result in legal issues.
- **Consumer trust:** Ensuring food safety helps you maintain a high quality of food. Spoiled food wastes money, affects trade, and lowers consumer trust.



Five Main Reasons Why Food Safety is Important to Your Business



→ Waste:

Unsafe food cannot be used or served. It will have to be thrown away, wasting both your time and money.



→ Danger to vulnerable people:

Unsafe food will affect and cause sickness to the elderly, young, pregnant, and immune-compromised members of our society, such as those living with HIV or cancer.



→ It makes business sense!

Customer complaints about your food may cause you to lose clients and revenue.



→ Penalties:

Legal action may be taken, should the business fail to comply with legislation.*



→ Sustainable business:

Failure to meet or maintain food safety standards could result in a business being closed.

*For more information, about food safety standards, please refer to the most recently published version of the Department of Health (RSA), FOODSTUFFS, COSMETICS AND DISINFECTANTS ACT.



03 GUIDELINES AND CHECK LISTS FOR FOOD SAFETY



This section provides some guidelines and actions that should be adopted by vendors and all food handlers to ensure food safety.



A. Hygiene Practices



Food Handler Hygiene

Food preparation facilities must include:

- A place to hygienically wash and dry hands such as wash basins, a supply of hot and/or cold water, hand soap, and paper towels.
- Access to clean ablution facilities and separate changing area for food handlers, with storage for clothing.

Food handlers should wear clean aprons or overalls, beard covers, arm covers, and hair nets at all times during food preparation, handling, and serving. They should change personal protective equipment before leaving the premises, for smoking or lunch breaks and their hands must be washed on return.

Food handlers' nails should be short and clean.

Six Steps to Thorough Hand Washing:



1 WET

Wet your hands with clean water.



2 LATHER

Lather your hands by rubbing with soap.



3 RUB FOR 20 SECONDS

Rub your hands, in between your fingers, and under your nails for at least 20 seconds (whilst the water supply or tap is turned off).



4 RINSE

Rinse your hands under clean running water.



5 DRY

You can also air dry them but do not wipe them on your clothing.



6 REPEAT

Wash your hands as often as necessary, especially before and after handling raw and cooked food, handling money, or after going to the toilet.



Cleanliness and Equipment Maintenance

- Establishments and equipment should have a cleaning schedule and be well-maintained to allow for effective cleaning, proper functioning, and to prevent food contamination from issues like foreign materials.
- Cleaning should remove food residues and dirt to prevent contamination. Disinfection may be needed after cleaning, depending on the type of food business.
- Food grade cleaning chemicals should be used and stored carefully, following instructions and keeping them away from food to prevent contamination risks.



Food Handling

- Wash hands before handling food.
- Separate raw meats, chicken, and seafood from other food.
- Rinse fruit and vegetables under running water. Disinfect, if needed.
- Keep food in dust- and insect-proof containers or packaging for protection, and at safe temperatures.
- Maintain a clean, organised kitchen and regularly clean surfaces and appliances.
- Cooked, ready-to-eat food should not be handled with bare hands, as far as possible. Clean tongs, forks, spoons, or disposable gloves should be used when handling, serving, or selling food.
- A food handler should not touch ready-to-consume, non-prepacked food with his or her bare hands. During preparation, ready-to-consume food must be handled in accordance with food safety practices.



Transporting Food*

- Vehicles and containers used to transport food should be kept clean, in good condition, and at the right temperature to prevent contamination.
- They must be well-maintained and meet hygiene standards, whereby that part of the vehicle has been thoroughly cleaned to prevent possible contamination or exposure to any types of harmful or poisonous chemicals, contact with other food stuffs, live animals, physical items, or harmful germs (microbiological) that may spoil the food being transported.

*For more information, about food transportation standards, please refer to the most recently published version of the Department of Health (RSA), FOODSTUFFS, COSMETICS AND DISINFECTANTS ACT.



Selecting Food

- Buy from clean, City Health-certified food providers including markets, shops, butchers, and fishmongers.
- Check fruit and vegetables for spoilage, mould, unusual colours, or texture changes.
- Choose fresh meat (fish, poultry, and pork) that is firm, without odour or discolouration.
- Select fish with clear eyes, rosy gills, and tightly bonded scales; avoid packages with ice buildup.
- Ensure packaged food is within durability dates (i.e. best before, sell by, or use by dates), fully sealed, and undamaged.



Storage Practices

- Food facilities should have places designated for the storage of food, ingredients, and non-food chemicals (e.g. cleaning materials, lubricants, and fuels). The type of storage facilities will depend on the kind of food e.g. dry storage, cold storage etc. There should be separate, secure storage facilities for cleaning materials and hazardous substances.
- Store long-lasting food (rice, beans, and oils etc) in a cool, dry place away from sunlight.
 - Refrigerate perishable items like meat, dairy, vegetables, and most fresh produce.
 - Freeze raw meats and poultry, and refrigerate leftovers promptly.
 - Store food in protective containers at safe temperatures (e.g. a cool box with ice blocks for storing raw meat and other perishable products – always keep the temperature below $\pm 5^{\circ}\text{C}$).



Pest Control

Pests threaten food safety by contaminating it. Infestations happen when there are breeding spots and food sources. Maintaining good hygiene, inspecting incoming goods, and regular monitoring can help prevent pest activity, which reduces the need for costly and unsafe pest control interventions that may also cause food contamination.



Safe Water Use

- Water used in food preparation, like for cleaning, heating, or cooling must be safe to drink such as municipal water.
- Ice used in drinks or for cooling food or drinks must be made from clean water and handled and stored properly.
- Steam used in food processing should be free from any contaminants.



Waste Management

- Waste should be bagged, tied, regularly removed, and stored properly. Waste bins must seal properly with tight closing lids.
- Waste should not be allowed to build up in areas where food is handled, stored, or prepared.
- Waste storage areas should also be kept clean and waste bins should be cleaned and disinfected after waste removal.

Food Temperatures

FOOD CATEGORY	FOOD TYPE	REQUIRED CORE TEMPERATURE OF FOOD PRODUCTS THAT ARE STORED, TRANSPORTED, OR DISPLAYED FOR SALE:
FROZEN PRODUCTS	Ice cream and sorbet, excluding sorbet which is used for soft serve purposes, and frozen fish and fishery products.	Minus 18°C or colder ($\geq -18^{\circ}\text{C}$)
	Any other food which is marketed as a frozen product.	Minus 12°C or colder ($\geq -12^{\circ}\text{C}$)
CHILLED PRODUCTS	Raw unpreserved fish, mollusks, crustaceans, edible offal, poultry, meat, and milk.	Plus 4°C or colder ($\leq +4^{\circ}\text{C}$)
	Any other perishable food that must be kept chilled to prevent spoilage.	Plus 5°C or colder ($\leq +5^{\circ}\text{C}$)
HEATED PRODUCTS	Any perishable food not kept frozen or chilled.	Plus 60°C or hotter ($\geq +60^{\circ}\text{C}$)

Adapted from: Department of Health (RSA), FOODSTUFFS, COSMETICS AND DISINFECTANTS ACT, 1972 (ACT NO. 54 OF 1972) R638, Annexure E "Food Temperatures".

B. Facility and Equipment Standards

This section guides vendors in upholding facility hygiene standards.

Equipment for Food Preparation

- Food equipment and containers (except single-use items) should be designed for easy cleaning, disinfecting, and maintenance to prevent food contamination.
- Materials used should be non-toxic and safe for food contact.
- Equipment should be durable and, when needed, easy to move or take apart for cleaning and inspection.
- Raw food should be handled with separate utensils, and all utensils should be cleaned thoroughly. This includes washing in warm, soapy water, then rinsing in clean water.
- Clean utensils should be stored away from dirty ones and kept in a clean, pest-free area.
- Table condiments should be kept clean and safe from pests.
- Items like napkins and hand wipes should be stored correctly and be disposable.



Containers for Waste and Other Items

- Waste and hazardous containers should be clearly labelled, sturdy, and made from leak-proof materials.
- Containers for dangerous substances should be stored in a clearly identifiable and lockable area to prevent unauthorised access and accidental or harmful contamination of food.
- Vendors must remove and discard any appliances or dishes that are damaged, cracked, rusted, or otherwise unsuitable for safe use.

Lighting in Facilities

Food preparation and service facilities must be adequately illuminated with natural or artificial lighting to allow for working in a hygienic manner. Lighting fixtures should, preferably, be covered to prevent food contamination from glass caused by light bulb breakages and their covers should be removable and easy to clean.

C. Hygiene Training for Staff

This section outlines the importance of educating staff to uphold safety standards.

Food-handling staff need training in food hygiene to understand the requirements of their tasks and the standards for maintaining clean premises.

- The person in charge, and any other person working on the food premises must be suitably qualified or adequately trained in the principles and practices of food safety and hygiene, and the training must be accredited.
- Why? Proper training is crucial for food safety. Without it, there's a risk of unsafe food handling practices and food that may not be suitable for consumption.

Training Creates Awareness and Responsibility in Food Handling

All staff should be aware of their role and responsibility in protecting food from contamination or deterioration.

- Food handlers should have the necessary knowledge and skills to enable them to handle food hygienically.
- Those who work in food environments, who handle strong cleaning chemicals or other potentially hazardous chemicals should be instructed in safe handling techniques.



04 WHO: FIVE KEYS TO SAFER FOOD



Five Keys to Safer Food

The World Health Organisation (WHO) has produced a publication called "Five Keys to Safer Food". It provides messages on how to promote a safe food supply. Use this easy to follow summary of the five important food safety principles.



→ Keep Clean

- Wash your hands before handling food and often during food preparation.
- Wash your hands after going to the toilet.
- Wash and disinfect all surfaces and equipment used for food preparation.



→ Separate Raw and Cooked

- Separate raw meat, chicken, and fish from other food.
- Use separate equipment and utensils such as knives and cutting boards for handling raw food.



→ Cook Thoroughly

- Cook food thoroughly (especially chicken, fish, meat, and eggs) to kill bacteria, and spores.
- Bring food like soup and stew to the boil to ensure they have reached 70°C.
- For meat and chicken, make sure that juices are clear, not pink.
- Reheat previously cooked food thoroughly.



→ Keep Food at Safe Temperatures

- Do not leave cooked food at room temperature for more than two hours.
- Keep cooked food hot prior to serving.
- Refrigerate all cooked and perishable food promptly.
- Do not store food too long, even if in the refrigerator.
- Do not thaw frozen food at room temperature.



→ Use Safe Water and Raw Materials

- Use safe water.
- Select fresh and wholesome food.
- Choose food processed for safety, e.g. pasteurised milk.
- Wash vegetables and fruit under clean running water, especially if eaten raw.

SOURCE DOCUMENT LIST (PART 2): FOOD SAFETY AND HYGIENE PRACTICE GUIDELINES

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PART 3: FOOD SUSTAINABILITY GUIDELINES

01 WHAT IS FOOD SUSTAINABILITY?



Food sustainability means making choices that **protect the environment, support communities, and ensure food security** for the future.

Current food systems harm both the environment and people's health.



Why is it Important?

Sustainable food practices help reduce environmental harm, improve public health, and create stronger local economies. To tackle these challenges, global diets must become healthier and more sustainable. This requires understanding what these diets involve and taking steps to encourage better food choices.

Diets that are good for the environment can also support health. These diets address overeating and poor nutrition in wealthier countries and hunger or lack of variety in others. Variety is an essential part of sustainable eating.

02 WHAT IS A SUSTAINABLE DIET?



The Challenge

Many current food systems harm the planet and people by causing overproduction, waste, and unhealthy eating habits.



Sustainable Diets are

Diets with low environmental impact, which contribute to food and nutrition security and to a healthy life for present and future generations. Sustainable diets are protective and respectful of biodiversity and ecosystems, culturally acceptable, accessible, economically fair, and affordable; nutritionally adequate, safe and healthy; while optimising natural and human resources.

In short, sustainable diets are good for the planet and people, minimising environmental damage while supporting health.



Features of a Sustainable Diet:

- Affordable and accessible for everyone.
- Protects ecosystems and promotes a healthy lifestyle.
- Uses resources efficiently.

03 GUIDELINES FOR SUSTAINABLE EATING



This section provides simple tips as general guidelines for eating sustainably.



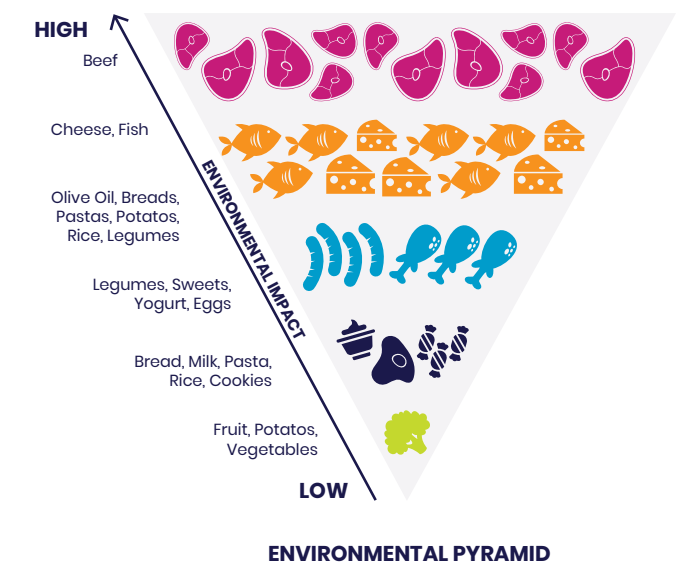
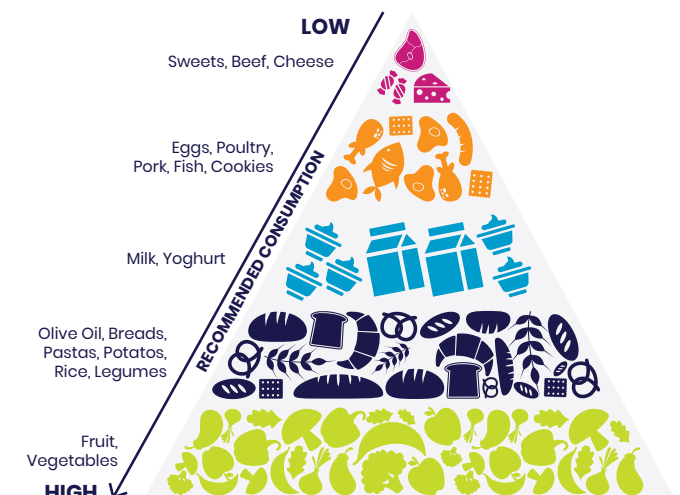
→ Four Simple Tips for Sustainable Eating:

- 01** Eat a variety of food for balanced nutrition.
- 02** Focus on plant-based meals with wholegrains, legumes, fruits, and vegetables.
- 03** Eat less meat and dairy, and choose sustainable sources when consuming them.
- 04** Avoid ultra-processed food and sugary drinks.



Food and its Impact on the Environment

The illustration to the right shows how sustainable diets support health goals by focusing on food with a lower environmental impact.



04 HOW FOOD CHOICES AFFECT THE ENVIRONMENT



The purpose of this section is to provide information on how food habits impact the environment.



The Impact of Food Production

Food production is harming the environment and threatening its own future. It is responsible for 20–30% of human-caused greenhouse gas emissions, leads to deforestation, biodiversity loss, and land degradation, and uses 70% of the world's freshwater. Unsustainable fishing is depleting marine species and disrupting ecosystems. Climate change is also making food production harder and less predictable.

Agriculture, especially livestock farming, is the biggest contributor to these problems. Livestock farming alone produces 14.5% of global greenhouse gas emissions and takes up 70% of agricultural land, including a third of arable land needed for crops. Livestock grazing and feed production are major drivers of deforestation and environmental damage.

If no action is taken, these problems will worsen. As the global population grows, becomes wealthier, and moves to cities, the demand for resource-heavy food like animal products increases. This could further harm the environment and contribute to rising rates of obesity and chronic diseases.



Ways We Can Reduce Environmental Impact

- Improving the food system: Producing more food is not the answer. Some actions can improve power imbalances by supporting small-scale farmers, fair trade markets, and suppliers upholding fair working conditions.
- Reducing food waste: A third of all food is wasted across the supply chain, wasting resources like land and water and creating unnecessary emissions. Reducing this waste improves food security and resource efficiency.
- Changing diets: What we eat influences how food is produced. Shifting towards healthy and sustainable diets can help tackle health issues and reduce environmental harm.

Things you can do to reduce environmental impact:

- Avoid single-use packaging; use reusable or recyclable options.
- Buy in bulk to avoid single-packaged items and reduce waste.
- Consider the environmental impact of the types of food you're purchasing e.g. beef, fish, and cheese.

05 PRACTICAL STRATEGIES AND CHECK LISTS FOR VENDORS



This section provides some guidelines and actions you can take and check lists to help you meet sustainability goals.



What You Can Do as a Food Vendor

- Reduce food waste by planning meals.
- Choose plant-based or sustainably sourced animal products.
- Cut back on selling ultra-processed food and sugary drinks.



→ BUY MORE

- Locally produced food
- Seasonal fruit and vegetables
- Organic and/or fair-trade food
- Vegetables, grains, and fruit (low GHG emissions)
- If meat, choose chicken or pork
- Food with a longer shelf-life

→ BUY LESS

- Vegetables grown in heated greenhouses (high GHG emissions)
- Food involving air transport (high GHG emissions)
- Beef (high GHG emissions)
- Processed/convenience food (unhealthy)



Work Together with Local Suppliers and Build Sustainable Partnerships

Replace imported goods with locally-sourced alternatives.

- Build strong, long-term relationships with local suppliers and communities.
- Use tools like scorecards to evaluate suppliers on factors like waste, emissions, employee well-being, and social impact, based on the City's goals.
- Discuss sustainability topics with suppliers, such as working conditions, environmentally friendly products, and avoiding endangered species. Collaborating on solutions helps build stronger partnerships.



Simple Guidelines for Producing Healthy, Low Environmental Impact Diets

- Make or offer a variety of food for balanced nutrition.
- Be mindful of portion sizes and offer energy dense food in moderation – customers should match the food they eat to their energy needs to avoid overeating.
- Focus on plant-based food, including:
 - Wholegrains, tubers, and legumes.
 - Fruit and vegetables that are hardy, easy to transport, and grown in fields.
- Offer meat dishes in moderation and try to use all edible parts.
- Moderate dairy or alternatives like fortified milk substitutes and calcium-rich food.
- Include unsalted nuts and seeds in your product offering.
- Offer seafood in small amounts, and only from sustainable sources.
- Minimise food high in fat, sugar, or salt like chips, candy, and sugary drinks.
- Use healthy oils like olive, sunflower, or canola oil, rich in omega 3 and omega 6.
- Prioritise water in low impact packaging over sugary or soft drinks.



Recipe Inspiration

Find "Healthy Recipes" on the [Western Cape On Wellness](#) pages, provided by the Western Cape Government website, for examples of some delicious local recipes.

Also visit "[The Sustainable Kitchen](#)" for recipes from retailers around the world. This is a coalition of global industry leaders, spotlighting industry best practice to inspire healthier cooking and less food waste.





This section provides guidelines on how the City can support vendors to meet sustainability goals.

The City's Environmental Strategy

As part of our long-term desired outcomes for environmental sustainability, the City supports a green economy by creating jobs, using resources efficiently, protecting the environment, making the most of natural resources, and ensuring everyone benefits. All citizens are encouraged to know how to live in a more sustainable way and make environmentally and socially responsible choices. The City promotes localised food production and/or urban agriculture to reduce the impact of food distribution costs and losses and to improve food security.

Green Procurement Principles

The City through its Environmental Strategy, is committed to green procurement in its operations and projects.

- When making procurement decisions, consider the entire life cycle of a product or service. Avoid options that may seem cheaper now but cause long-term environmental harm or other negative impacts. Ensure compliance with environmental laws and best practices at every stage of the product or service's life cycle.
- Procurement decisions should also prioritise resource efficiency, including saving electricity, water, fuel, and reducing waste.
- Follow circular economic principles: reduce waste and pollution, keep materials in use through durability and recycling, and support rebuilding natural systems.
- Procurement decisions should prevent or reduce environmental and social harm. If harm cannot be avoided, it must be minimised or managed. Providers must take responsibility for the costs of pollution or damage, following the "Polluter Pays" principle.



Training and Education

The following provides guidelines for the City on how to upskill food service and procurement stakeholders to act more sustainably.

- Provide training to procurement staff, caterers, chefs, and nutritionists on sustainable sourcing, diets, and menu planning.
- Set clear, measurable targets with deadlines to track progress and hold food service providers accountable.
- Monitor procurement processes, performance, and budgets effectively, using digital tools.
- Share best practices and encourage innovative ideas through a network.
- Encourage contractors to use energy- and water-efficient kitchen equipment.
- Require catering companies to adopt food waste reduction targets as part of public procurement agreements.
- Promote environmental education, such as teaching vendors about food waste and low-carbon diets.
- Support knowledge sharing, peer learning, and creative solutions for sustainable food practices.

Read more about the City's food sustainability and international best practice:

- ["How cities can support access to healthy, sustainable food" C40 Cities Climate Leadership Group, C40 Knowledge Hub](#)
- [State of the City Food System Report, Cape Town, 31 May 2024. \(Haysom, G. & Pulker, A. AfriFOODlinks project, Cape Town, South Africa.\)](#)



This simplified guideline helps vendors, the City, and individuals understand food sustainability and take meaningful steps to support it.

Sustainable Food Systems Benefit Everyone:



Our new climate change response and resilience campaign, "Let's ACT for a stronger Cape Town", aims to enable and support everyone to take action for a stronger, healthier, and more resilient Cape Town.



Actions You Can Take in Your Homes and Workplaces

- Buy energy efficient appliances.
- Buy sustainably produced and organic food, where possible. Let your local shops know that you demand more sustainable products.
- Change the light bulbs in your home and place of work to more energy-efficient ones.
- Empower colleagues with knowledge about sustainability and practical solutions in the workplace, such as reducing paper printing.
- Investigate how your community, neighbourhood watch, and community organisations can get involved in climate and community action to make us all, and our city, more resilient.
- Invest in solar, where possible, to save on electricity bills.
- Plant indigenous water-wise plants and trees in your garden.
- Reduce, re-use and recycle, including organic waste through home composting.
- Reduce water usage in the home and at your place of work.
- Start or support a neighbourhood food garden.
- Switch off non-essential lights.
- Teach children about living more sustainably.
- Walk or cycle to your local shop.

Join us and take action against climate change, for a stronger Cape Town.

Read more [here](#) about the "Let's Act" campaign, tackling climate change.

**Start small,
but aim big.**

**Every choice
contributes to a more
sustainable future.**



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Images: Kurt Ackermann – Food Indaba 2005, Cape Town





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