

A Guide to Ordering Healthier Food and Drink From External Caterers

Workplace catering has the potential to contribute positively to workers' health. **Small changes** such as product substitutions or the use of alternative cooking methods will make a **big difference**.



90

PERCENT

Over 90% of caterers think that they have a role in the provision of a healthy diet for their customers.¹



Healthier catering

When asked about health, over 90% of caterers think that they have a role in the provision of healthy food and drink for their customers¹

Many workplaces are adopting healthy eating policies and implementing wellbeing programs. Healthy catering is another way to promote health and wellbeing in the workplace.

Adding healthier catering options will expand, rather than limit, the range of menu items available. The ability to choose from a greater assortment of menu items appeals to many workplaces.

However, in a busy and hectic catering kitchen there may not be the time to pour over pages of different ideas, ingredients or menus, so the following guidelines seek to provide you with a quick reference guide making workplace catering, healthier catering.

For all of these suggestions provided, they assume the use of ingredients that are consistent with the Australian Dietary Guidelines (www.eatforhealth.gov.au) which seek to promote health and wellbeing and reduce the risk of chronic disease.



¹ Eves, A, Corney, M, Kipps, M, Lumbers, M, Price, M, Noble, C. 1996. The nutritional implications of food choices from catering outlets. *Nutrition and Food Science*, 96, 5, 26-29.

Catering guidelines

Enjoy a wide variety of nutritious foods:

plenty of vegetables, including different types and colours, and legumes/beans, and enjoy fruits

- offer vegetables as a salad, as a side dish or use as a key ingredient in main meals
- incorporate fruit into desserts or offer as an option at morning and afternoon tea

grain (cereal) foods, mostly wholegrain, and/or high cereal fibre varieties such as breads, cereals, rice, pasta, noodles, polenta, couscous, oats, quinoa and barley

- offer wholegrain varieties of breads, rolls, wraps, muffins
- incorporate alternative grains such as polenta, couscous and quinoa as a way of adding variety and texture to menus

lean meat and poultry, fish, eggs, nuts and seeds, and alternatives such as legumes/beans

- use lean cuts of meat or remove visible fat before cooking
- remove the skin from poultry options
- avoid high fat processed meats such as salami, mortadella and polony
- opt for leaner options instead, such as lean ham, roast beef, skinless chicken or turkey and tinned fish in springwater
- incorporate meat alternatives (eggs, legumes and tofu) to cater for wide ranging dietary needs
- offer plain, unsalted varieties of nuts and seeds

milk, yoghurt, cheese and/or their alternatives, mostly reduced fat

- use reduced fat or skim varieties of milk, cheese and yoghurt
- for alternative milks (e.g. almond, rice or soy) choose calcium-fortified varieties

drink plenty of water

- offer plain water, including plain mineral or soda water
- add lemon or orange slices to flavour the water

limit intake of foods and drinks containing saturated fat, added salt, added sugars and alcohol

limit intake of foods high in saturated fat

- avoid using butter, lard and other animal fats
- instead, use small amounts of poly or monounsaturated fats and oils such as olive, canola, sunflower or other plant-based oils
- use reduced fat or skim varieties of milk, cheese and yoghurts
- use filo pastry brushed with milk or egg, wonton wrappers or oven baked bread baskets instead of other pastry varieties
- use healthier cooking methods such as grilling or dry roasting instead of deep frying or roasting in fat

limit intake of foods and drinks containing added salt

- choose no added salt or low salt varieties of sauces, stocks, spreads and other condiments
- use alternative flavourings to season foods:
 - herbs and spices
 - garlic, onions or shallots
 - lemon juice or vinegar

limit intake of foods and drinks containing added sugars

- avoid high sugar drinks
- serve 97-100% fruit juice in small amounts (less than 250mL)
- opt for artificially sweetened cordial and soft drinks



The selection of ingredients has a significant impact on a dish's nutritional quality. Opting for healthier ingredients will help to ensure a more nutritious dish overall.



Regular ingredients

Healthier ingredients

Breads and cereals

White, refined varieties of breads, bagels, crumpets, English muffins and rolls

Wholegrain, wholemeal, multigrain, high-fibre white, rye sourdough, lavash and other flat breads, bagels, wholemeal crumpets, plain foccacias and English muffins

Crackers and savoury biscuits

Wholegrain varieties of plain crispbreads, corn and rice cakes, lavash and water crackers

Savoury breads, twists and pull-aparts containing high fat meats and cheeses

Wholegrain bread with reduced fat cheese, lean meat and vegetable toppings

Fruit, vegetable and/or nut breads containing confectionary or icing

High fibre, wholegrain varieties containing added vegetables, dried fruit and/or nuts without icing or confectionary

Breakfast cereals

Cereals with added confectionary (e.g. chocolate)

Bran, breakfast biscuits, oats/porridge, wholegrain puffs, wholewheat flakes and muesli with or without added fruit

Dairy products and alternatives

Cream

Evaporated skim milk, ricotta or cottage cheese, reduced fat vanilla yoghurt

Cream cheese

Blended cottage cheese or ricotta

Full fat cheese

Varieties such as cottage, paneer, ricotta or reduced fat varieties of cheddar, fetta, mozzarella and cream cheese

Full fat varieties of milk

Plain or flavoured fresh, UHT and long life reduced fat varieties of milk

Reduced fat evaporated milk

Reduced fat buttermilk

Full fat varieties of yoghurt

All plain and flavoured reduced fat varieties of yoghurt

Sour cream

Reduced fat natural yoghurt

Meat and alternatives

Meat with visible fat or the skin on

Lean options (skinless chicken and turkey, roast beef, kangaroo, lamb, pork)

Processed meats such as bacon, mortadella, polony and salami

Skinless chicken or turkey meat, lean ham or lean beef cuts

Regular ingredients

Healthier ingredients

Eggs

Eggs fried in butter/fat

Eggs fried on a non-stick surface with a mono or polyunsaturated spray oil

Scrambled eggs made with cream

Eggs scrambled with reduced fat or skim milk and without the addition of fat (e.g. cream)

Fish and seafood

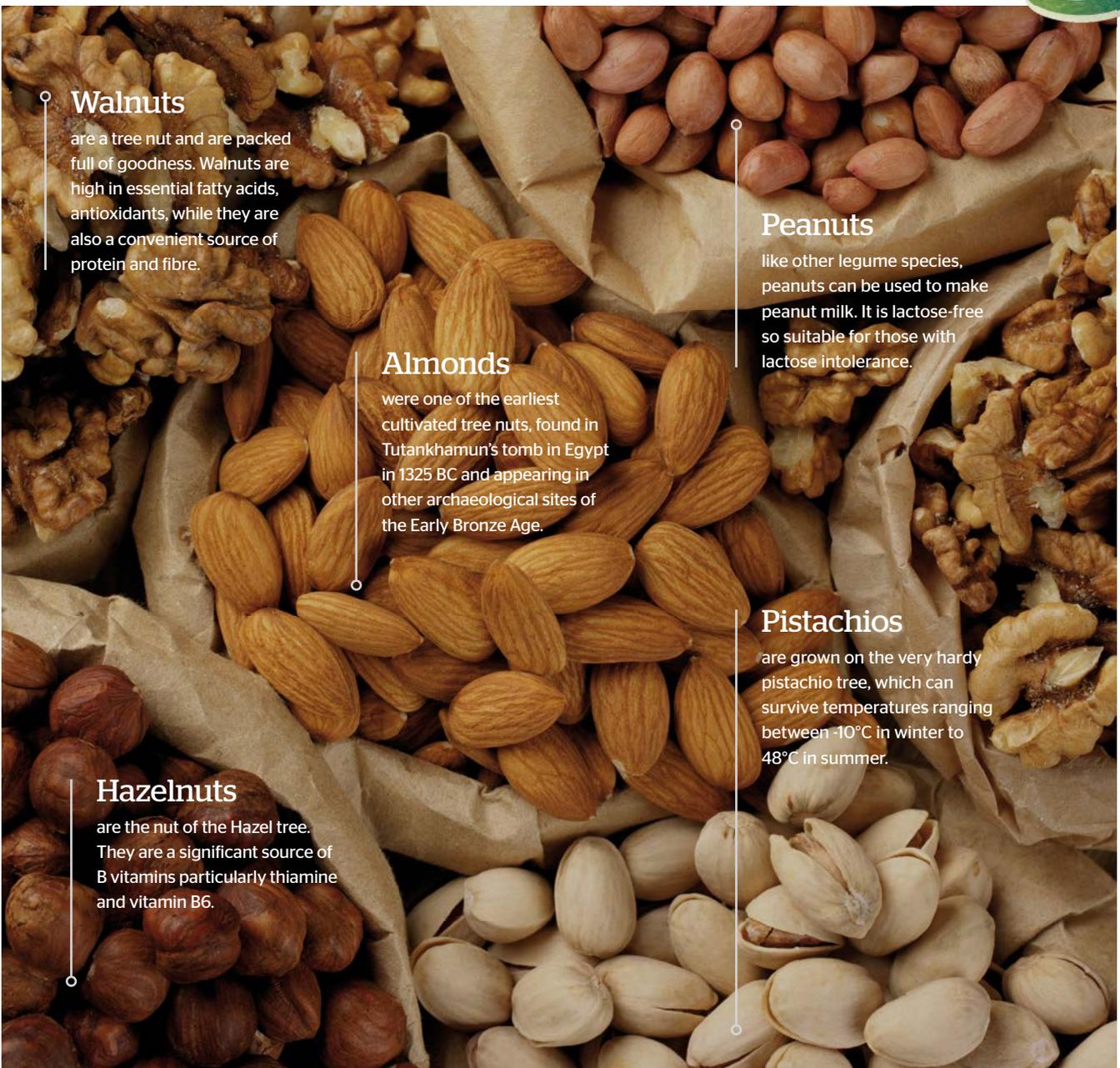
Fish canned in oil or brine

Fish canned in springwater

Nuts and seeds

Nuts or seeds roasted in oil and salted or coated in confectionary/honey/sugar

Plain and dry roasted nuts and seeds with no added fat or salt



Walnuts

are a tree nut and are packed full of goodness. Walnuts are high in essential fatty acids, antioxidants, while they are also a convenient source of protein and fibre.

Almonds

were one of the earliest cultivated tree nuts, found in Tutankhamun's tomb in Egypt in 1325 BC and appearing in other archaeological sites of the Early Bronze Age.

Hazelnuts

are the nut of the Hazel tree. They are a significant source of B vitamins particularly thiamine and vitamin B6.

Peanuts

like other legume species, peanuts can be used to make peanut milk. It is lactose-free so suitable for those with lactose intolerance.

Pistachios

are grown on the very hardy pistachio tree, which can survive temperatures ranging between -10°C in winter to 48°C in summer.

Regular ingredients

Healthier ingredients

Oils, condiments and spreads

Butter and butter blends, cophera, dairy blends, ghee, lard, palm oil, tallow

Poly or monounsaturated fats (e.g. margarine) and oils (e.g. canola, olive, sunflower, soybean, grapeseed)

Chocolate spreads, honey, jam (regular, full sugar varieties of jam)

Jam - artificially sweetened

Coconut cream, milk and/or oil

Reduced fat evaporated milk flavoured with coconut essence

Cream-based dressings (e.g. Caesar, ranch, thousand island)

Dressings made with poly or monounsaturated oils or dressings based on lemon juice, balsamic vinegar or reduced fat yoghurt

Full fat and high salt varieties of savoury spreads e.g. peanut butter and other nut spreads (e.g. almond paste), chicken, fish and meat pastes; yeast and vegetable extract pastes (e.g. Vegemite, Marmite)

Reduced fat and no added salt varieties of spreads e.g. peanut butter and other nut spreads (e.g. almond paste), chicken, fish and meat pastes; yeast and vegetable extract pastes (e.g. Vegemite, Marmite)

Gravies made from fatty meat juices and thickened with added fat or based on a roux; or regular packaged varieties

Gravies made from meat juices, drained of fat and thickened with corn/plain flour; or no added salt/fat packaged varieties

Mayonnaise

Reduced fat mayonnaise

Regular varieties of condiments (e.g. barbeque, HP, soy, sweet chilli, tomato sauce)

No added salt varieties

Stock

No added salt varieties



Pastry

All types of pastries (choux, flaky, puff, shortcrust, filo brushed with butter)

Filo pastry brushed with egg, milk or spray oil

Wonton wrappers or oven baked bread cases

Sandwich fillings

Processed meats (e.g. salami, polony, mortadella)

Skinless chicken or turkey meat, lean ham or lean beef cuts

Meat alternatives

Eggs, fish (tinned in springwater) or reduced fat cheese

Drinks

Regular sugar sweetened soft drinks

Soda water flavoured with fruit juice, fresh fruit and herbs such as fresh mint

Artificially sweetened soft drinks

Sugar sweetened fruit or vegetable juices

100% fruit or vegetable juice varieties

Tea and coffee made with full cream milk

Use reduced fat milk for preparing tea and coffee

Of course, the way a dish is prepared/cooked will also have a significant impact on its overall nutritional quality. Refer to [Healthier cooking methods](#) for more information.

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