

CULTURALLY VALUED FOOD

A Guide for Community Food Providers

WHY IS IMPROVING ACCESS TO CULTURALLY VALUED FOOD IMPORTANT?

We share a commitment to the right to food, where everyone can access and afford food which is adequate according to their cultural preferences. Food providers support people from many different cultures and backgrounds in their local community.

Each person will differ in their cultural choices and preferences - what's good for you might not be good for me.



Access to culturally valued food reduces food waste

Offering food that people are not familiar with can lead to food waste. In many cultures, it is considered rude to say no, so people will accept food that is provided and throw it away when they get home.

Culturally valued food improves health

Each of our cultures determines how we nourish our bodies and what we consider healthy and tasty. Providing more fresh produce allows people to choose foods that nourish their bodies and minds.

KEY GUIDANCE FOR COMMUNITY FOOD PROVIDERS

Understanding the cultural preferences and religious dietary needs of your community members is crucial to inclusion and promoting the dignity of everyone. There are some core standards that all providers should meet. We have some basic guidance and information on culturally valued food, however we think it's up to people to decide for themselves what's culturally valued and this guide is designed to help community food providers work this out with their community members. The first step is to ask the right questions.



THINGS TO KNOW

What cultures and nationalities are present in the local community

General religious dietary restrictions

Allergen labelling, ingredients lists, Halal and Kosher labelling

IT'S OK TO ASK ABOUT

What food items and vegetables are eaten in someone's country of origin

If someone's religion affects their dietary preferences, e.g. in your registration form

If someone has any other health-related dietary restrictions

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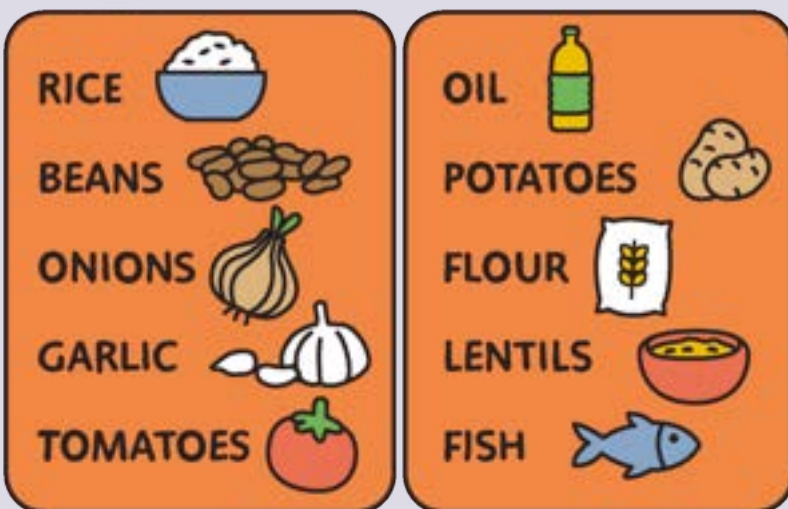
COMMON ACROSS DIFFERENT CULTURES

- Most cultures prefer fresh vegetables and wholefoods to canned, frozen or processed foods
- Dried beans and pulses are generally preferred over canned
- Herbs and spices, such as fresh ginger, or dried cumin and cinnamon are frequently used
- Most cultures prefer white rice. African people generally prefer long grain varieties, whereas Asian people generally prefer basmati rice

KEY COMMONALITIES

Preferences and restrictions vary by culture, but there are some key common preferences that will meaningfully enhance the dignity of all community members living in Scotland. Providing the basic components to cook a meal, for example cooking oil, enables people to prepare food according to their individual preferences and taste.

TOP 10 FOODS EATEN ACROSS DIFFERENT CULTURES



TIPS FOR SOURCING CULTURALLY VALUED FOOD

- Start small and offer what you can - just a few familiar items can make a huge impact on someone's dignity
- Request specific items in food drives, e.g. from the Top 10 list.
- Partner with international grocery stores
- Partner with faith groups
- Source fresh produce from local growers, farmers, markets
- Grow fresh food with your community

BEST PRACTICE SUGGESTIONS

- Be curious and interested in your community members
- Understand who lives in your local community
- Recruit a 'cultural liaison' volunteer
- Partner with New Scots and faith organisations
- Have a notice board of local events such as community meals and cooking workshops
- Ongoing reassessment of community's needs
- Staff and volunteer training around cultural sensitivities