



CATERING AND ALLERGY MANAGEMENT

CATERING AND ALLERGY MANAGEMENT

The Outdoor Education Group has a dedicated Catering Department who provides healthy meals for active students from fresh, locally sourced produce. All our menus are carefully tailored to the program's location, duration, focus, anticipated weather conditions and students in terms of age, gender and specific dietary needs and preferences.

The health and safety of all participants is of paramount importance to The Outdoor Education Group. In line with our Inclusive Learning Policy, we support participation in positive outdoor experiences for all individuals. We are conscious of the challenges faced by those with allergies and pre-existing dietary conditions especially in new and sometimes challenging situations. To support in this, we collect and review medical information, ensure our staff are suitably qualified in first aid, and provide a variety of dietary menus.

Communication between all parties involved in program delivery is vital. We liaise with participants, parents/guardians and schools to identify control measures and strategies to effectively support participants in the field. Our staff are always available to discuss catering options for participants to allow parents/guardians to make informed decisions on the appropriateness of menus.

Mealtimes are a crucial component of an outdoor education program; our participants can develop useful life skills by cooking and sharing meals, in addition to gaining necessary nutrition to sustain them throughout programmed activities.

Throughout journey-based programs, staff provide a thorough safety briefing and demonstration regarding camp stove use and allergy management including cross-contamination, safe food preparation and cleaning procedures. Students are provided with a menu and cooking method/instructions to ensure the cooking process is both enjoyable and inclusive.

Throughout centre-based programs, participants are catered for by an experienced catering team who prepare high quality and nutritious meals. These meals are not your usual camp fare; they are sometimes supplemented by fresh produce grown onsite, in addition to an ethos of using seasonal produce and local products where possible.

Our Catering Department is experienced in catering for participants with a wide variety of food allergies and intolerances. To allow for adequate preparation and planning, please support us by ensuring any medical information is completed a minimum of twenty days prior to program commencement. If direct communication from the Catering Department is requested, this communication will typically occur the week prior to the program start date. If information is received outside of these timelines, we may not be able to accommodate requirements. Further information on dietary management can be obtained from the school via an Outdoor Education Group staff representative.

A TYPICAL DAY ON A PROGRAM MAY INCLUDE:

BREAKFAST: Cereals with milk, fruit loaf with spreads, tinned or dried fruits such as peaches and bananas.

LUNCH: Meat (e.g. tuna or salami), salad wraps and crackers. Fillings may include cheese, capsicum, cucumber, carrot, avocado, dips/mayonnaise and fresh fruit is also provided.

MORNING AND AFTERNOON TEA: Designed to provide a much-needed energy boost in between activities; it may include dried fruits and seeds, dried broad beans, pretzels, soy crisps, biscuits and fresh fruit.

DINNER: Dinners always contain a carbohydrate such as pasta, rice, noodles or potato with a protein such as meat or legumes and a range of fresh vegetables. These meals are designed for easy cooking in one or two pots. Where food may spoil, freeze-dried vegetables and meats may replace fresh items.

DESSERT: Varies from simple pre-prepared items such as lamingtons or hot chocolate and marshmallows.



NUT MANAGEMENT ON OEG PROGRAMS

- The Outdoor Education Group maintains a policy of no peanut, tree nut, or their derivative as listed ingredients (e.g. peanut oil or almond meal) in any food items provided, this includes dietary substitutes.
- The Outdoor Education Group catered food will not contain any peanut, tree nut, or their derivative as a listed ingredient.
- Products carrying variants of ‘may be present’ or ‘contains traces’ warnings are used in The Outdoor Education Group catering. These warnings indicate that whilst nuts or nut derivatives are not ingredients; traces may still be present. For example, the product has been processed on the same equipment that processes products containing nuts. These items are used in OEG catering.
- This policy applies during any program including but not limited to subcontractor catering, journey-based catering and catering in our hardtop centres.
- We request that any food items supplied from home comply with this policy. This includes snack foods and any food provided for self-catered programs.

SELF-CATER PROGRAMS

During a self-catering program, students will plan, purchase, pack and prepare their meals. This is usually undertaken in tent groups of three. The Outdoor Education Group staff assist students when preparing and cooking meals. For reasons of safety, The Outdoor Education Group maintains some specific procedures regarding food that is permitted on self-catering programs. It is important that you read and understand the information below. Please do not hesitate in contacting us if you have any questions.

MENU PLANNING

Plan for breakfasts and lunches to be consumed without extensive preparation or cooking, as time is valuable (e.g. boiling water for porridge is realistic while cooking bacon and eggs or pancakes is unrealistic). For dinner, it is important that participants effectively plan to ensure that they have a filling and enjoyable meal. For example, if the weather is likely to be cold, soups, pastas and hearty casserole style meals would be appropriate. Refrigeration is not typically available and as such participants should not bring any fresh meats (see details below under ingredients). Dehydrated meals, such as those available from [Campers Pantry](#) provide a lightweight option with the necessary calories for being active outdoors.

In some instances, the needs of a participant in a group and any serious food-related allergies they have may dictate that certain food groups are not present on program. Should this be necessary, your school will inform you.

TOTAL FIRE BAN IDEAS

During the declared fire season (Typically Term One and Term Four), menus need to be adapted to include several meals which can be prepared and eaten either cooked or uncooked. Foods such as couscous, Hokkien noodles or cooked rice pouches are recommended.

EQUIPMENT

Cooking will occur on camp stoves called a ‘Trangia’. It is important to plan meals that can be prepared in one or two pots. Consider the number of utensils individual participants bring; the stirring spoon can be the same spoon utilised to eat with. A lightweight plastic chopping board is recommended and please take care to ensure that any sharp knife is sheathed (plastic case or secured in a tea towel works well).

PACKAGING

Ingredients should be in plastic or lightweight containers. Participants will need to carry all rubbish out of the field, so look for containers that can be flattened once used. Avoid bringing foods in glass or cans as they are heavy, do not compact, and can break if you fall or knock your pack.



INGREDIENTS:

TWO MINUTE NOODLES: Two-minute noodles, whilst a tasty snack, are not suitable as a stand-alone meal on program. The energy required to fully participate in the program's activities will not be gained from this type of meal.

MEATS (PROTEIN): Pouch tuna or salmon is a great source of protein, along with any meats that have been processed (e.g. a stick of salami, small cans of shredded chicken, spam, Hormel's crumbled bacon, Chinese style sausage). Do not bring raw meats as there will be no refrigeration.

MILK/CHEESE AND PERISHABLES: Perishable items should be limited, particularly in the summer months. Parmesan cheese or Kraft cheddar blocks can be found on the shelves of most supermarkets and can be used year-round. Powdered milk is best and can be found in skim, full cream or soy styles.

VEGETABLES AND FRUIT: Look for items that are easily transported. Hard fruits and vegetables such as: apples, oranges, pears, carrots, broccoli, potato and pumpkin work well. Light vegetables such as zucchini, bok choy and onions are best. Fruits such as berries, melons or bananas can be squashed or bruised easily. Dehydrated foods can help limit the weight and space of your food. Dehydrated potato, peas, beans and corn and a whole range of fruits are readily available.

FLAVOURING

Spices such as cinnamon, curry powder, oregano, paprika, chili and mixed herbs are extremely light and add great flavour. Soup sachets, stock cubes and powdered sauces are also highly recommended (no satay or pesto as these CONTAIN NUTS). Wet sauces such as pasta sauce can be brought in plastic containers although can be heavy.

RECIPE IDEAS

BREAKFAST

- Cereals with milk, fruit loaf with spreads, dried fruits such as peaches and bananas. Rice cakes are also good and make an easy snack during the day.

LUNCH

- Meat (e.g. packaged tuna, chicken or salami) and salad wraps. This typically includes cheese, capsicum, cucumber, carrot, avocado, dips/ mayonnaise. Fresh fruits that travel well are also a great idea.

DINNER

Honey Soy Vegetable Stir Fry

- Assorted Vegetables – i.e. carrots, zucchini, broccoli, beans, capsicum, corn, bok choy etc. Hokkien Noodles, honey and soy sauce.
- Heat noodles according to packet directions. Chop vegetables finely and stir fry in a little oil until tender. Add honey and soy sauce to taste. Mix with noodles and serve.

Napoli Pasta

- Pasta, salami, carrot, zucchini, capsicum, onion, garlic, dehydrated peas, tomato paste (or tomato-based pasta sauce) and dried mixed herbs.
- Boil water, add pasta and dehydrated peas, cook until tender then drain. Chop remaining vegetables and stir through tomato paste and herbs, add to pasta and peas and serve.

Burritos

- Canned red kidney beans or 4 bean mix, tomatoes, tomato salsa, mushrooms, capsicum, onion, garlic, cheese and soft tortillas.
- Chop tomatoes, mushrooms, capsicum, onion, garlic, add peas and kidney beans. Heat in pot, add salsa and cook until vegies soft. Serve mixture wrapped in tortillas with cheese.



SELF-CATER ADVICE

SNACKS/TRAIL MIX:

Any snacks participants bring will need to be free of nuts. Trail-mix needs to be lightweight, portable and filled with energy-rich ingredients such as the items in the list below. As a rule of thumb, the general ratio is 50% dried fruit, 30% seeds and 20% other. Place all ingredients in a zip-lock bag and seal:

| | | | | | | |
|------------|----------------|-----------------|-------------|-----------------|---------|----------|
| Apricots | Flaked Coconut | Banana chips | Cranberries | Chocolate chips | Chia | Dates |
| Pretzels | Dried papaya | Dried pineapple | Carob chips | Dried ginger | Prunes | Raisins |
| Dried figs | Pumpkin seeds | Sunflower seeds | Dried apple | Goji berries | Popcorn | Sultanas |

SAMPLE MENU FOR 24 HOURS

| BREAKFAST | |
|--|---|
| PRODUCT | QUANTITY PER PERSON |
| Powdered Milk | 120g (measure and put in snap lock bag) |
| Cereal (muesli or Weet-Bix, avoid sugary cereal) | 1 – 2 cups |
| Rice cakes, margarine and spread | 2 |
| Fresh fruit | 1 piece |

| LUNCH | |
|--|----------------------|
| PRODUCT | QUANTITY PER PERSON |
| Wraps / Mountain bread | 4 (2 double wrapped) |
| Cheese (Kraft cheddar is good) | 100g |
| Avocado | Half |
| Capsicum | One Third |
| Carrot | Half |
| Cucumber | One Third |
| Salami/Tuna | 100g |
| Tomato | Half |
| Mayonnaise (repackaged into plastic tub) | As per liking |

| DINNER | |
|---|---------------------|
| PRODUCT | QUANTITY PER PERSON |
| Pasta | 150g |
| Meat (pre-packaged salami/tuna/chicken) | 100g |
| Carrot | Half |
| Capsicum | One Third |
| Zucchini | Half |
| Bok Choy | One Third |
| Onion | One Third |
| Garlic | One clove |
| Sauce (pre-packaged) | 1 (for 3 people) |
| Herbs and Spices | Pinch |
| Tim Tams | Easy dessert |
| Milo (in zip lock bag) | For Hot Chocolate |

| SNACKS | |
|---------------------------------|---------------------|
| PRODUCT | QUANTITY PER PERSON |
| Rice Cakes | From breakfast |
| Dried fruit/Trail Mix (no nuts) | 150g |
| Fruit | 1 piece |
| Muesli Bar | 2 |