

# #feedthehomelessBRISTOL

## Food Guideline (v1.0)

Firstly, thank you very much for signing up to provide food to the homeless hungry people in the streets of Bristol. Without your support and time, we would not be able to reach those in need of a hot meal, so you really are very important to us!

Just as important is to ensure that the food meets health and nutritional the needs of our service users, and is prepared and packed in a manner that will make sure the quality of what you cook isn't compromised. Based on our experiences, talking to the homeless and in consultation with health and safety guidance, we have prepared the following that is to suit to assist you when deciding what to cook and how to pack it

### What to cook?

1. Firstly, please, avoid the following Items:

- **Fish**
- **Pork**
- **Alcohol**

This will ensure that the meal appeals to the widest variety of pallets, whilst ensuring there is still some variety.

2. we want to make sure every meal is balanced and nutritional, as this might be the only meal that the service user will eat that day. Please, therefore, consider the following when planning what to cook

- Protein

There are a large variety of sources of protein such as Eggs, dairy, soya, pulses, beans and meat. You can also get protein from nuts, but we would recommend that these are avoided to minimize the risk of an allergic reaction and also because some homeless people struggle with hard food due to their dental issues

- Vegetables can be incorporated very cheaply and easily into most dishes, for instance, a diced carrot in a pasta sauce. We would just ask that you make sure the vegetables haven't gone passed their best and are prepared carefully and cooked until soft.
- Starchy carbohydrates are useful for slow release energy which also helps stave off hunger for longer. These are foods such as potatoes,

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bread, rice, pasta and cereals and this should make up just over a third of the meal.

- Fresh fruit, where possible is a lovely additional treat for the homeless and particularly popular soft fruit, such as plums, bananas, and pears. Again, please make sure the fruit hasn't started to go off or over ripe, as we won't be able to give it out.
- Fat is the final ingredient and we all know that fat is good, if eaten in moderation. The same rule applies to people on the street and in fact the healthy 'good fats', such as unsaturated oils, will help to build them up. So please don't feel that you should avoid 'good fats'.
- Seasoning: The meal should cater for the widest variety of pallets as possible, and whilst a lot of people like spicy food, most people, especially if they are homeless and have limited access to toilets etc , would happily eat lightly seasoned food, so keep it seasoned and mild, please!

finally, please make sure the meal is prepared as close to the pickup/drop off time as possible. This enables us to distribute it whilst it's still warm and ensures it's as fresh as possible. We know this isn't always possible, so if you do have to reheat anything, please note that we can only accept reheated vegetarian meals. It looks like a lot to consider, but it's probably something that you do every day without even thinking about it! If you would like more information you could take a look online, which NHS eat well guide which is a useful source of information. The main priority is healthy and fresh meals, cooked with the same love and care that you always give when cooking for friends and family as this meal might be the only one that a homeless person will eat that day.

## Packing

### 1. Containers

We will be able to supply containers for you (please contact Any of the Admin, if needed), but please feel free to buy your own if preferred. We'd ask that you ensure the containers are spill proof for normal usage. To help ensure that no food goes to waste, please keep the meals as dry as possible to avoid the risk of spillages and contamination of other meals.

### 2. Labelling

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We often have lots of batches of meals that we give out each night, provided by various volunteers, so it's important that we know what's in the packages that we're handing out. So please make sure you label each container, with at least a meal title and whether it's vegetarian or meat (please state whether that's chicken, lamb or beef). Extra information is also useful, such as if the meal contains bones. We would also ask that you state whether the meal contains cheese, egg or milk based products so we can pass that on to the service user and make sure that it suits their dietary needs.

Finally, when labeling, choose the method that suits best, but please remember those other volunteers will need to be able to read what you've written in sometimes poorly lit places, so large writing is appreciated and if you're using a marker please make sure it's permanent!

The Golden Rule:

**We only cook/give out meals to homeless, which we can eat ourselves.**

The above are guidelines that we hope will help us to make the most impact on the quality of food we deliver.

We would also recommend that you consider obtaining a Basic food & Hygiene Certification, which will help you to have the confidence that what you prepare is done; so in the right manner. This also helps us, as we can then demonstrate that we are taking our obligations towards the homeless in Bristol very seriously and taking every step to meet the prescribed standards.

A Basic food & Hygiene Certification course can be completed online in 2 to 3 hours for £15. Further information can be provided on request.

Thank you for your continued support and please don't hesitate to get in touch with the admins ([admin@feedthehomeless.org.uk](mailto:admin@feedthehomeless.org.uk)), if needed.

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