

# MUSICAL FOODS

Great food to eat at music rehearsal break times!\*

CHOIRS  
AOTEAROA NEW ZEALAND

## 4 PLATTERS

### Hot & Protein



### Carbs



### Fruit & Seeds



### Vegetables



Don't forget to hydrate!

\*DISCLAIMER: this work is a result of our own research and findings from working with our Aotearoa New Zealand national choirs. While we have consulted various experts, we are not trained nutritionists, so please use this guide using your own knowledge and with the specific dietary requirements of your singers in mind.



# NUTRITION

For Singers

When providing food for choirs, you can aim to have:

- Both carbs & proteins available
- Avoid nuts to make it easy for anyone who is allergic
- Always include at least one fruit option e.g. mandarins, apples, bananas
- Have plenty of gluten-free options so no one feels singled out
- Vegetarian & vegan options
- A range of colours across what you provide for visual stimulation
- If possible, a item hot available, to give a hearty feeling.

## What you can achieve with great food at choir rehearsals:

- Lifting spirits of singers with a visual treat after a sustained rehearsal effort.
- Stimulate singer focus with experiences of contrasting textures and tastes such as crunchy, smooth, sweet, tart, etc.
- Create excitement between singers and promote singer interaction which builds rapport for the choir as a “team”.
- Introduce choir members to better nutrition options for them to try at home.
- Ensure all choir members have options regardless of any food allergies, so there is an inclusive environment.
- Put out an ‘out of the box’ menu item that creates interest and stimulates non-rehearsal based conversation.
- Provide sufficient fluids as when young singers are with their choir, you are controlling their fluid intake to a certain extent – even though all singers should take their own water bottles into rehearsals if the venue allows!

## What to Avoid

- Sugar tends to dehydrate, create phlegm, mucous, gas and isn’t good for reflux.
- Dairy can trigger some people’s reflux and can decrease vocal fold flexibility.
- Caffeine is a diuretic and dries the vocal folds
- Fried foods can congest the vocal fold and trigger reflux.
- Spicy foods can trigger reflux and may increase nasal drainage and can cause hiccups
- Soft drinks can create gas and sticky saliva
- Alcohol can be dehydrating, can create sticky saliva, and decrease vocal control. Of course, alcohol is probably not provided at any youth choir rehearsal, in any case!!

## Dietary Options & Allergens

- Have plenty of options so people don’t feel left out.
- Avoid nuts
- Gluten Free options include rice products or popcorn!



## Hygiene

- Have hand sanitizer on each end of the tables and make it very visible.
- Provide tongs on all platters.
- Have napkins available so people don’t put food directly onto surfaces.
- Clean surfaces regularly e.g. toilet taps, doorknobs, tables – do every breaktime.
- Encourage those who feel sick to sit to the side or back or go home.
- Encourage people to go outside at break times where there is more ventilation. You could set up your food table outside if it works at the venue.
- Ensure your venue is well-ventilated.



During the pandemic, we provided individually wrapped foods to minimise contact. This included bananas, mandarins, muesli bars, popcorn & chip bags and boxes of raisins.

**Incorporating fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and lean proteins into meals supports overall health and provides essential nutrients for young adults.**

# 4 PLATTERS

Platters can work really well, to bring different colours together. They can be easier to carry and look visually generous. Here's what you can include to create four balanced platters:

## Carbs

Crackers & cheese, popcorn (individual snack bags), gluten free muffins, raw slice cut into squares, vege crisps, prawn crackers, rice cakes, pita chips, plain biscuits. Dark chocolate is a superfood, so individual squares of this are good as a very small treat.

## Proteins

Protein choices help us feel fuller for longer. Proteins include cheeses, salami, avocado and sausages. You can also choose high protein dips and pop onto vege platters.

## HOT option

If possible, have a hot item available to give a hearty feeling. Try items such as hot rice, soup, noodles, egg fried rice, hot cross buns that you heat in the oven, hot sausages in a bowl.

## Fruit & Veg

You can mix dried & fresh fruit together. Fruit kebabs with marshmallows are a popular hit – we've found diced pineapple on a skewer alternated with marshmallows has gone down really well. It's good to provide some kebabs with just one thing e.g. just pineapple, to give choice. Pineapple is really good for voices too! Other options include half bananas, little apples, cranberries, kiwifruit, banana chips, grapes, mandarins. You can pile up two types of fruit in a bowl for colour contrast.

Mix vege colours such as carrot sticks, celery sticks, capsicum, cucumber, avocado. These can be on a platter with a protein-based dip or a salsa and rice crackers. Think of mixing crunchy, sour, sweet, spicy, chewy as this will stimulate people to be alert e.g. gherkins, olives, pickles, salsa, lemon slices. Lemon slices can be eaten straight – it's surprising how many choir members do this! Or squeezed into water bottles. Tomatoes are a fruit but can work well on a vege platter in quarters, or a sundried tomatoes option.

## Liquids

As well as the food, supply a LIQUID option. Jugs of cordial will have Vitamin C. Milo/Hot chocolate is good for energy, and herbal teas are soothing. You can provide jugs of lemon water and home-made squeezed juices - and LOTS of water!



# Example Plate

Double up the platters  
across the table, to avoid  
congestion!

Corn chips for gluten free  
option

Marshmallow and  
pineapple skewers!

Carbs!

Bright  
colours

Fresh  
Fruit!

Tongs  
for  
hygiene!

Vitamin  
C!

Protein Option!

