



GUIDE TO  
SUSTAINABLE  
MENUS



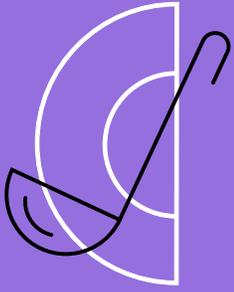
# A guide to sustainable menus

A step by step approach  
to sustainability



**NOURISH**  
The future of food  
in health care.

November 2019



Chapter 7

# Choosing your sustainable soup



# Sustainable soup

## Why eat soup?

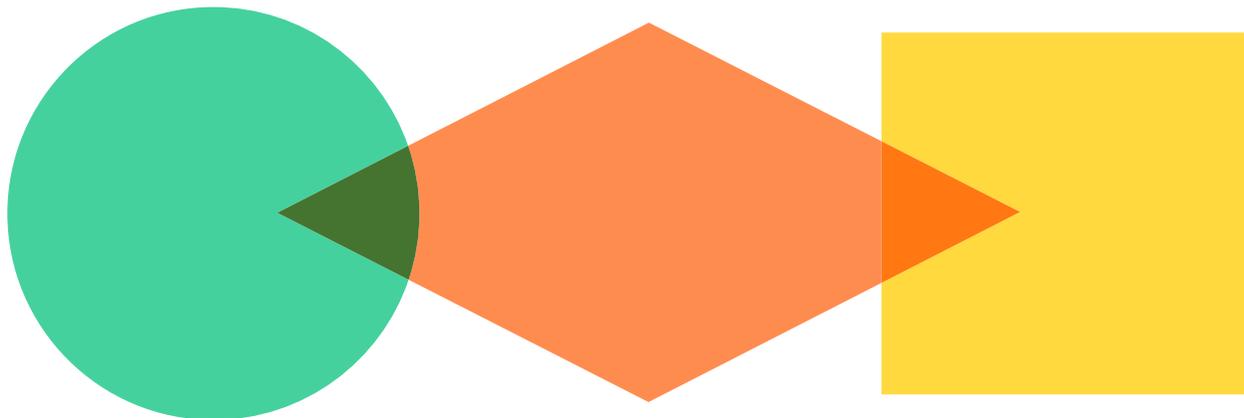
Soups can be used to fill any nutritional gaps left by the main meal—such as starches, vegetables, and proteins. They can also be a comfort food but remain of high nutritional value.

## Why is sustainable soup important?

Sustainable soups use whole food ingredients. In addition, they prevent food waste and make use of leftover ingredients that would otherwise be thrown away.

## What is the impact of sustainable soups on health?

Sustainable soups retain all of the nutritional value of the ingredients used in them. Depending on your ingredients, they can be a good source of protein, carbohydrates, and vitamins and minerals.





## What are my soup standards?

Standards must be defined before choosing the soup for your menu—these are guidelines that you must work with such as dietary restrictions, menu format, kitchen capacities, or the preferences of clientele. Here are some examples of what you could write as a chart standard. If you have different types of clientele who require different standards, use columns such as the last two to show for which clientele items apply (e.g. elderly, youth, acute care, etc.).

Standards	Clientele a	Clientele b
One enriched soup is available per day (protein)	X	X
Three choice of: soup, cream soup, broth available each day	X	X
Do not contain the main meal protein	X	X
Same soup does not repeat more than twice a week	X	X
Vegetable soup or cream soup are made with vegetarian broth only	X	X
One type of soup is always available for low salt and soft texture	X	



# Making sustainable soup choices

## LEGEND FOR CHARTS

Choice of soup	Tips for inclusion in your recipes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Ranking/Order</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· A ranking of food items, in general order of decreasing sustainability. Consideration has been given to the ingredients and energy input needed to produce soup.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· With reference to environmental, social, and economic sustainability, these are tips on integrating soups into your recipes.</li> </ul>

## WHAT DO I NEED TO CHANGE?

Use the table below to consider the changes needed when serving soup as part of your menu

Criteria	Details
Soup must complete the meal (taste, colour, nutrition)	The soup is the completion of the meal. It should be chosen to fit the type of meal or to add nutritional value such as a source of vegetable or protein if the main meal does not include a lot of them. Soup is the fourth item that should be added to the menu (after the main meal, starch, and vegetable).
Soups are a way to reuse leftovers	Soup should be planned in anticipation of leftover vegetables, starches, or protein from the main meal. For example, side dish vegetables can be kept in the refrigerator up to three days after being cooked: a soup recipe can be planned within these days to make use of these leftovers. Ensure that specific diets, allergies, and textures are taken into account when planning soup recipes. A tip is to include all possible ingredients (allergens) in the recipe (including 1 g of each as a possible ingredient) so that production management software recognizes the possible existence of allergens.
Soups (particularly broths) are a way to prevent waste	Vegetable trimmings and animal bones can be saved from going to waste and instead find a second life as broth. Making home made broth is easy and environmentally friendly, brings a wonderful smell in the kitchen, and forms the basis of a delicious soup. Tips for use are found below. Ensure that specific diets, allergies, and textures are taken into account when planning soup recipes. A tip is to include all possible ingredient (allergen) in the recipe (put 1 g of each as a possible ingredient).

## HOW CAN I CHANGE?

CHOICE OF SOUP  
(listed from most  
to least sustainable)

## 1. Homemade broth

LEFTOVERS FROM: **VEGETABLE - FISH - CHICKEN - PORK BEEF**

TIPS FOR INCLUSION  
IN YOUR RECIPES

Broths are a good base for other soups and main dishes.

- **Make your own broth:**
  - Making homemade broth (instead of using dried stock or broth powders) is the ultimate way to repurpose leftovers: boil meat leftovers with wilted greens, carrots tops, celery, onions. Add in herbs and spices, bring to a boil, and simmer for an hour.
  - Keep or buy bones (fish, animal): boil and simmer for at least 4 hours. Animal bones contain trace amounts of valuable nutrients such as calcium and magnesium<sup>136</sup>, as well as amino acids.<sup>137</sup>

See Chapter 6 (on vegetables) and Chapter 9 (on condiments) for more information.
  - Any broth recipe can be followed as a baseline: for additional flavour, add condiments as desired. Adapt as necessary; if salt is an issue for your clientele, do not add salt at all.
- **Plan ahead to use your leftovers to make broth.**
  - This is easier than it sounds: in a pot, place all the vegetables, protein, and bones that cannot be served. Add seasoning as needed and place in the refrigerator. Every three days (cooked meat cannot be kept in the refrigerator for more than three days), boil everything together. A cook should taste the broth after one hour of boiling to adjust the recipe.
- **Store well.**
  - Broth keeps well in a large container stored in the refrigerator. It can also be frozen if too much is produced.

## 2. Puree

LENTILS - VEGETABLES - SEAFOOD - MEAT

PUREE WITH CREAM: **PLANT-BASED MILKS - DAIRY**

Pureed soups, particularly vegetable soups, are a great way to introduce more fibre into the diet. They are also an easy way to repurpose leftovers and can be very nutritious for clientele with modified diets.

- **How to make pureed soups:**

- When possible, use homemade broth and add leftovers or fresh regional ingredients.
- Boil everything until cooked to perfection, then purée to a good consistency.
- Ensure that the vegetables, starches, and proteins you are using are clean and cooked well.

The addition of dairy or plant-based milks can make cream-based soups a good source of protein.

- **How to make cream-based soups:**

- Cream-based soups can be a good source of fat and protein.
- If using dairy, try to look for organic and/or grass-fed dairy.
- If using plant-based milk, ensure that it is fortified with sufficient nutrients.

See Chapter 10 for more information on sustainable creams.

CHOICE OF SOUP  
(listed from most  
to least sustainable)

### 3. Processed

FROZEN - CANNED - POWDERED

TIPS FOR INCLUSION  
IN YOUR RECIPES

Processed soups—both canned and dried—require more energy and produce more waste than homemade soups.<sup>138</sup> In addition, they can be high in sodium—even those claiming to be “sodium-reduced.”

- **Processed soups should not be served “as is”:** they must be improved with the addition of fresh vegetables or proteins.
- **How to choose processed soups:**
  - Read the list of ingredients: it should consist of whole foods. Avoid soups with long ingredient lists containing additives and preservatives. See the appendix for more information.
  - Whenever possible, priority should be given to seasonally appropriate regional ingredients.
  - Prioritize low-sodium options.
  - Dried, powdered soups should be considered as a last option.



# 4

## Learning about traditional Indigenous soups

**The examples that follow may represent foods of a specific geographical location or Indigenous territory. Please be mindful of the Indigenous territory you are on: make connections, build relationships and learn what foods are original to this territory.**

A soup native to First Nations such as the Iroquois and Ouendat is the *Three Sisters Soup*, made out of corn, beans, and squash. These three vegetables are grown, harvested, and cooked together. They are companion crops: corn grows tall, allowing bean vines to climb and grow, while squash stays low to the ground, its large leaves providing shade to prevent the growth of weeds. All three are indigenous to North America, with thousands of varieties found across the continent.<sup>139</sup>

Bone broth is also integral to traditional culture. Hunters boiled the bones of carcasses to ensure that nothing went to waste. This resulted in a flavourful broth filled with nutritional benefits, including protein, minerals, and vitamins.<sup>140</sup> Nourish Innovator [Leslie Carson](#) has been successful in sourcing local bone broth for clients at Yukon Hospital.

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Midland Mirror, 2010.  
Gimbar, 2017.

# Appendix

## ADDITIVES

See [Health Canada's complete list of approved additives.](#)

## ARTIFICIAL FLAVOURINGS

The chemical composition of artificial flavours and natural flavours are the same. The only difference is the source of the chemicals: synthesized from numerous chemicals in the former or derived from numerous chemicals found in plants and/or foods in the latter.<sup>141</sup> Natural does not necessarily mean “good” or “safe” and neither does artificial. Ultimately, dosage dictates toxicity: flavourings are safe for consumption in appropriate amounts.

## ARTIFICIAL COLOURING, ARTIFICIAL FOOD COLOURANTS (AFCs)

Most of the controversy surrounding artificial food colourants (AFCs) involve links between its consumption and children's behaviour, and attention deficit disorder in particular. It is statistically challenging to come to a hard conclusion of the effect of one variable on the other because of the variance in data collection and methodologies over the past 35 years.<sup>142</sup> Ultimately, the United States Food and Drug Administration along with the European Food Safety Authority have concluded that there is no substantial link between the tested colourants and behavioural effects.<sup>143</sup> Again, dosage dictates toxicity: artificial colourants are safe for consumption in appropriate amounts.

## ARTIFICIAL SWEETENERS

Artificial sweeteners are a sugar substitute which can either come in low-calorie or zero-calorie forms. They are commonly used by diabetic patients and those looking to lose weight.<sup>144</sup> However, few studies support their efficacy: most provide evidence of their contribution to high blood sugar and obesity as a result of altering the gut microbiota.<sup>145 146</sup>

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Bloom, 2017.

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Nigg et al., 2012.

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International Food Information Council (IFIC) &amp; U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA), 2010.

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Dietitians of Canada, 2018.

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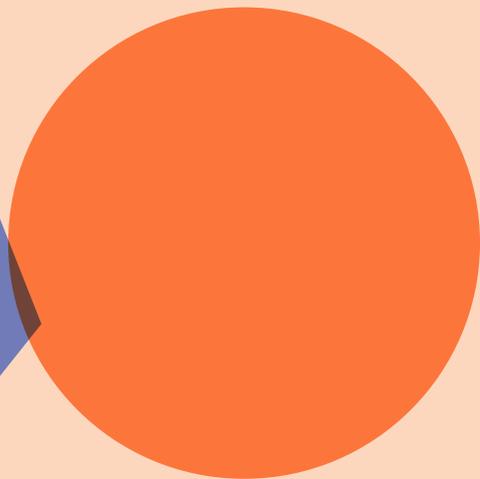
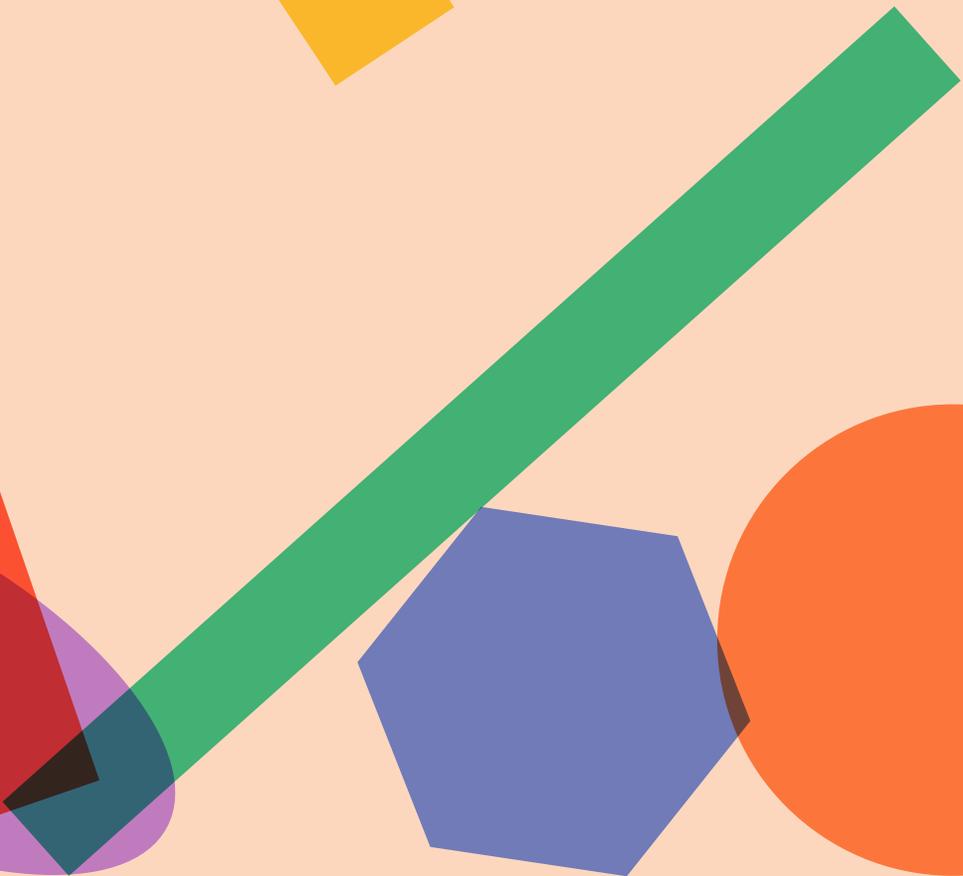
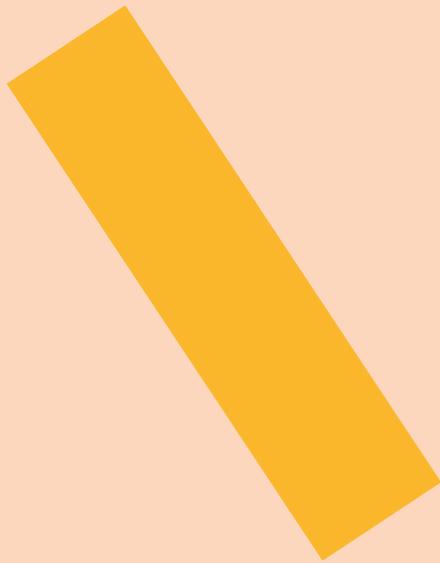
Suez et al., 2014.

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Feehley &amp; Nagler, 2014.

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