



Healthy
Eating
Advisory
Service

The Catering for Good Toolkit

Supporting the health promotion workforce to engage and enable caterers to be listed on the Catering for Good Directory.



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What is the Catering for Good Directory?

The [Catering for Good Directory](#) (the Directory) is an online map helping organisations throughout Victoria to find catering options that are good for people, good for the environment and good for the community.

‘good for people, good for the environment and good for the community’.

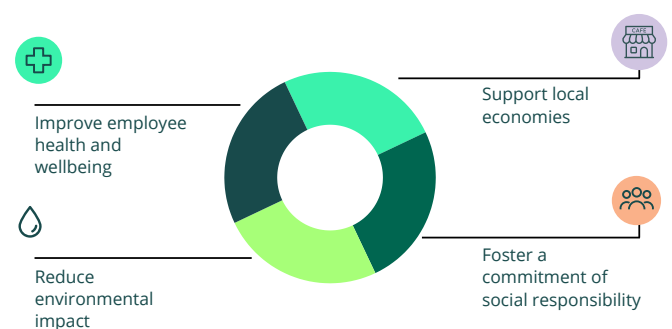
The Directory promotes catering organisations who offer healthier food and drink options according to the [Healthy Choices guidelines](#). The Directory also promotes caterers that are:

- implementing sustainable business practices,
- certified social enterprises (social enterprises that have been certified by Social Traders), or
- Victorian Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people
- businesses (Victorian Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander owned businesses that have been certified by Kinaway).

Why is healthier and more sustainable food procurement important?

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), established by the United Nations, are a global blueprint to achieve a better and more sustainable future for all. They address global challenges, including poverty, inequality, climate change, environmental degradation, peace, and justice.

Healthier, more sustainable food procurement aligns with several SDGs, and is described by the World Health Organisation (WHO) as a ‘game changer’ in its potential to influence and contribute to building a food system that promotes good health, responsible consumption, economic growth, climate action, and reduced inequalities. By prioritising healthy and more sustainable food procurement, organisations can:



Healthier and more sustainable food procurement practices have the power to minimise waste, and lower carbon footprints, and in addition, when procuring catering from certified social enterprises and Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander-owned businesses, it can address social inequality by creating jobs, fostering inclusivity and economic growth within communities. Overall, healthier and more sustainable food procurement not only benefits individual health and wellbeing, but also supports the environment and local economies, creating a more resilient and equitable food system. Through such efforts, organisations can demonstrate their commitment to health, sustainability, and social justice, creating a positive ripple effect across society.

With this, the Victorian Government is leading by example, with the launch of their Good food policy in 2023, shifting the way food and drinks are ordered for meetings, functions, and events. This policy commits Victorian Government departments to delivering health, social and environmental outcomes through food and drink purchasing, and the Victorian Government are also encouraging other organisations across Victoria to do the same. You can find a policy template for your organisation [here](#).



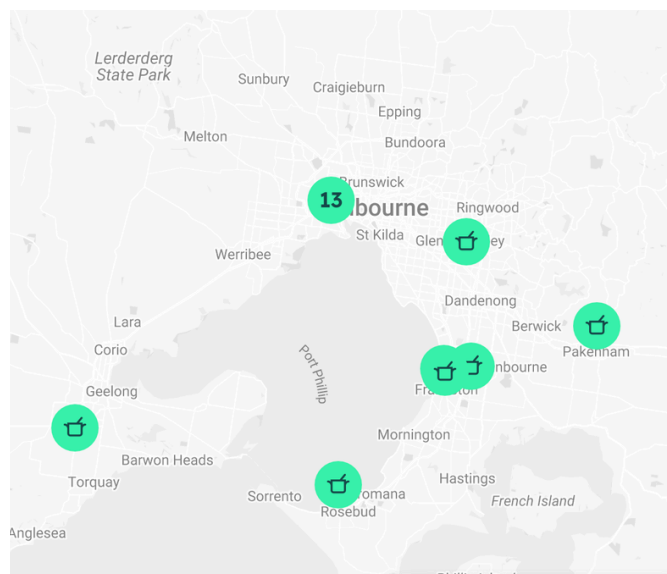
Who is this toolkit for?

This toolkit is intended to be used by the health promotion workforce and professionals working in community health and local government.

What is the purpose of a Catering for Good Toolkit?

‘Increasing healthy eating’ and ‘tackling climate change and its impacts on health’ to support the health and wellbeing of all Victorians are priority focus areas of the [Victorian public health and wellbeing plan 2023–27](#). For organisations including local government and community health services, providing healthier and more sustainable catering for staff and visitors is an evidence-based action that can be taken to support and promote healthy eating and climate action.

This toolkit is designed to provide you with the resources and knowledge you need to effectively engage with and support caterers in your community to be listed on the Catering for Good Directory. This toolkit will also provide you with the tools and knowledge to embed use of the Directory within your own and other organisations’ healthy and sustainable food procurement policies, promote the uptake of the Directory to organisations in your community, and support building demand for a healthier and more sustainable food system.



The Catering for Good Directory

Step 1: Identity and engage caterers

Getting started

If your organisation has already committed to supporting Catering for Good in its' strategic plan, it is time to begin identifying and engaging with caterers. However, if not, prior to working with caterers in your community, you will need to gain support from your organisation to allocate time to progress Catering for Good. A project proposal is a good way to promote the overall purpose and vision of being engaged in this work, and how it links with Government guidelines and your organisational plans and policies. Present this to your manager and seek their support.

Identify and engage caterers in your community

With support from your organisation, the first step in working on Catering for Good, is to identify and engage with the caterers you hope to support to be listed on the Directory. Successfully identifying and effectively engaging with caterers can result in a smoother journey to being listed on the Directory. This in combination with taking a highly tailored approach to supporting your caterer can build stronger rapport and trust. Below are some suggestions as to how you may go about identifying caterers in your community, and 'best-practice' methods of engaging caterers.



Identifying Caterers:

- Complete an environment scan to understand what catering organisations exist in your region by searching online and asking colleagues who order catering what providers they use.
- Look for caterers 'leading the way' in social and environmental benefits.
 - Search for potential caterers that are certified social enterprises and Victorian Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander owned business via the following websites:
 - [Social Traders](#) (for certified social enterprises)
 - [Kinaway](#) (for Victorian Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses)
- Identify existing caterers used by your organisation for events, functions, meetings.
- Write an e-newsletter article promoting the Directory and asking for caterers to contact you for support if interested.
- Promote on your organisation's website and social media that you are seeking caterers who are interested in applying for the Directory and the free support that is available to them.



Engagement:

Once you have identified a caterer you wish to support, it is time to engage them. The following methods are a means to an initial engagement with caterers, whereby you can provide an introduction to the Catering for Good Directory, as well as introduce yourself and the support you are offering. It is considered best-practice to take a highly tailored approach, such that you can meet a caterer's needs in a more effective and timely manner. This can look like a combination approach of the methods listed below, use these recommendations as a guide to support caterers.



- A ‘combination’ approach: Often, more than one format or method of engagement is required, and it can be a good idea to plan on using a combination of methods to successfully initially engage caterers in your community. For example, if planning to engage with lots of caterers in your network, you could:
 - a. Start with an email to introduce yourself and the Catering for Good Directory.
- 1.
 - a. If no response is received within a week, call those ones as a follow up. And if you are successful in calling, but are still sensing hesitation, you may wish to visit.
- In person (face-to-face) visit: An initial face-to-face visit can build greater rapport between a health promoter and caterer, which can lead to greater participation. It is a great opportunity to see the caterer’s venue firsthand, to describe the opportunity of being listed on the Directory, and to show an appreciation, interest and understanding of the business. Health promoters and caterers can learn, share and collaborate more easily with this format. Remember to ask the caterer about the best time to visit.

Here is a potential phone call script you could use for your next initial phone call to a caterer:

“Hello [Recipient’s Name],

My name is [your name] and I’m calling from [your organisation]. I hope you’re doing well today.

I’m reaching out to discuss an exciting opportunity to list your business on the [Catering for Good Directory](#)! This online map is designed to make it easier for Victorian workplaces to order healthier and more sustainable catering options, promoting positive environmental and social outcomes.

By being listed on this Directory, you can:

- **Increase your business’ visibility among organisations seeking healthier and more sustainable catering.**
- **Attract new clients by showcasing your commitment to nutritious and sustainable catering.**
- **Be recognised as a leader in providing healthier food choices.**

This is a fantastic opportunity for your organisation. The Victorian Government now has a policy requiring staff to order healthier, more sustainable catering and other workplaces will follow. Staff will be heading to this Directory as the one-stop-shop to order their catering. You won’t want to miss the opportunity to be listed/showcase. I’m here to provide free support to you throughout the application process and answer any questions you may have if you are interested.

I will follow up shortly by sending an email with some further information.

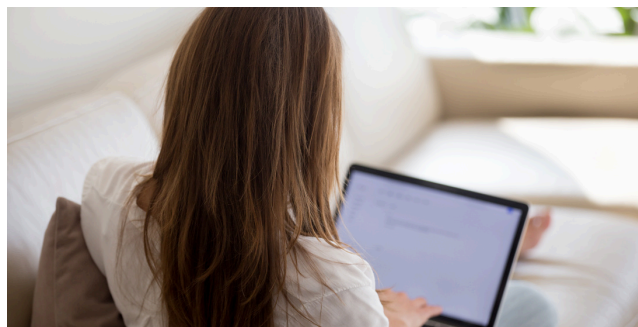
Thank you for taking the time to talk! I’m looking forward to the possibility of working together to promote healthier catering options.

Take care, [Recipient’s Name]. Have a wonderful day.”

- Phone call: Phone calls are an effective way of, initially engaging caterers and introducing the Directory. Phone calls also allow a health promoter to listen to a caterer and understand their position and offer support. Try calling a caterer in the afternoon, to avoid peak busy periods and the morning or lunch time rush.



- Email: An initial email is a great way to introduce the Directory and support available from you as a health promoter, to a large number of caterers.



If sending an initial email to engage with a caterer, here is a template you can modify to get you started!

Subject: “Introducing the Catering for Good Directory!

Dear [Recipient’s Name],

My name is [your name], and I am a Health Promotion Officer from [insert organisation].

As one of [insert community]’s valued local caterers, I am reaching out to you today to offer my free support in having your organisation apply to be listed on [the Catering for Good Directory!](#)

The Catering for Good Directory is a searchable map of caterers in Victoria, helping workplaces across Victoria access healthier and more sustainable catering.

Watch the [Catering for Good video](#) to learn more about the Directory and what it means to be listed.

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This is a fantastic opportunity for your organisation. The Victorian Government now has a policy requiring staff to order healthier, more sustainable catering and other workplaces will follow. Staff will be heading to this Directory as the one-stop-shop to order their catering. You won’t want to miss the opportunity to be listed/showcase. If you are interested in applying for the Directory and receiving free support, please respond to this email and we can book in a time to meet [face to face or via Teams].

I look forward to hearing from you soon.

Kind Regards,
[your name].”



Resources to support your engagement with caterers

To prepare and support your engagement of caterers, the Healthy Eating Advisory Service has additional resources available, you can use these to:

- Bolster your method and format of initial engagement
- Understand how to communicate and respond to the caterers you are working with
- Build your own understanding of the Catering for Good Directory.



Tips!

- Showcase the [Catering for Good video](#) to your caterer so that they understand what the Directory is all about and what it means to be listed.

Key benefits for caterers listed on the Catering for Good Directory:

1. Increased visibility:

- Gain exposure to a larger audience looking for reputable catering services.
- Boost your online presence and Search Engine Optimisation (SEO) ranking through the Directory's high traffic.

2. Targeted marketing:

- Reach customers who prioritise businesses that give back to the community.
- Benefit from the Directory's marketing efforts and campaigns aimed at socially and environmentally conscious consumers.

3. Social and environmental impact highlight:

- Showcase your commitment to social and environmental responsibility and community support.
- Differentiate your business by highlighting your contributions and initiatives.

4. Customer trust and loyalty:

- Build a loyal customer base that values and supports businesses that are delivering social and environmental outcomes.
- Increase customer retention by aligning with their values and preferences.

5. Promotion opportunities:

- Feature in social media promotions from the Healthy Eating Advisory Service which showcase and highlight your business.

6. Competitive advantage:

- Stand out from competitors by highlighting your listing on the Catering for Good Directory.
- Use your Directory's listing in your marketing materials to attract clients.

‘Applying for the Catering for Good Directory’ Introduction PowerPoint presentation

- To use when meeting with a caterer who is interested in knowing what the steps are to applying and being listed on the Directory. (a slide deck to help guide discussions with caterers)



Visit the Catering for Good Directory FAQs page [here](#)

Refer to these FAQs which may help to support you to respond to any questions from caterers.



‘How to apply for the Catering for Good Directory’ PowerPoint presentation








Step 2: Discuss Directory requirements

Discuss the caterer's menu.

- 1 To be eligible for the Directory, the caterer's menu (including recipes and/or products) will need to:
 - Be assessed against the [Victorian Government's Healthy Choices guidelines](#) (via the online FoodChecker tool). Menu items classified as GREEN (Best choice) or AMBER (Choose carefully) will be listed on the Directory. Any RED items assessed will not be displayed on the Directory.
 - Contain a minimum of four items, of which a minimum of two are required to be GREEN classified menu items.

Discuss sustainable business practices.

- 2 To be listed on the Catering for Good Directory, they will need to be implementing a minimum of 2 sustainable business practices from the list below:

-  Implements a sustainability policy, plan, strategy or circular business practices
-  Implements strategies to reduce food waste (e.g., donates food from cancelled orders, composts organic waste, repurposes food scraps to create new ingredients or menu options, provides food ordering quantity advice to customers to avoid food waste from over-ordering)
-  Preferences locally grown produce where possible
-  Changes up menus based on seasonal produce
-  Uses renewable energy and/or implements other practices to reduce greenhouse gas emissions
-  Provides vegetarian and/or vegan options (that are classified as either GREEN or AMBER in the FoodChecker assessment)
-  Provides food on or in re-useable or returnable, non-disposable serving platters or containers.

When discussing a caterers menu, look for simple changes caterers can make. For example: can they switch to seasonal ingredients or could they replace a meat-based dish with a vegetarian option.

If the caterer is interested in learning how they can implement more sustainable business practices, refer them to the following document where they can find resources: [Update to Victorian Government department food purchasing: Information for catering providers.](https://www.health.vic.gov.au/public-health/healthy-and-more-sustainable-food-procurement) <https://www.health.vic.gov.au/public-health/healthy-and-more-sustainable-food-procurement>



Tips!

- An easy way to include both healthier and more sustainable menu options is to include GREEN and AMBER vegetarian and/or vegan options on the catering menu. Look [here](#) for recipe inspiration.

3 Discuss business type (as relevant).

Although not a requirement for a caterer to be listed, the Directory seeks to promote certified social enterprises and Victorian Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander owned businesses. The application form will ask organisations/caterers to select, if they are a:

- Certified social enterprise*, or
- Victorian Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander business*

*Certified social enterprises are social enterprises that have been certified by Social Traders, and Victorian Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander businesses are Victorian Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander owned businesses that have been certified by Kinaway.

4 Caterers needs to be based in Victoria.

Step 3: Complete FoodChecker menu assessment

It is now time to begin the application process, of which the first step is to complete a FoodChecker menu assessment. A useful resource to refer to prior to getting started, is [Applying for the Catering for Good Directory](#).

[FoodChecker](#) is a free online tool developed by the Healthy Eating Advisory Service, that assesses menus, recipes, and products against the [Victorian Government's Healthy Choices guidelines](#).

FoodChecker produces a report with your menu items classified as **GREEN** (Best choice), **AMBER** (Choose carefully), and/or **RED** (Limit), as well as recommendations on how to make your items healthier.

Completing a FoodChecker menu assessment is required as part of a caterer's application for the Catering for Good Directory. This is an opportunity to showcase their **GREEN** and **AMBER** category food and drink options on the Directory, for workplaces to order from. Any **RED** items assessed will not be displayed on the Directory.

If a caterer has agreed to have you complete their FoodChecker menu assessment on their behalf, follow the below steps:

1 Complete the Pre-FoodChecker Checklist for Catering for Good

To ensure that you have all the information you need, use this Pre-FoodChecker Checklist. This will prevent/reduce the number of times you go back and forth collecting recipe information.



A caterer's menu with all items they would like to have listed on the Directory. Ensure this menu includes specific details of all ingredients used in the menu and all recipes (e.g. bread: wholemeal, white, or multigrain bread).

- ☐ The quantities for each ingredient used in the menu and all recipes (options include: grams, kilograms, cups, millilitres, litres, tablespoons, teaspoons, number of whole fruits and vegetables).
- ☐ Information regarding the type of dairy products, e.g. regular or reduced fat varieties.
- ☐ Does the caterer have any deep-fried ingredients in the menu or recipes provided?
- ☐ Does the caterer have an existing FoodChecker account? If yes, ask for the log in details and skip step 2 below.

2 Create a FoodChecker account for each caterer

Visit FoodChecker and, with the caterer's permission, register a new account under the caterer's name. Ensure they have access to this account by passing on the login details.

3 Start the menu assessment

In the caterer's FoodChecker account, click 'Start assessment', then select Victoria – all other retail outlets, catering and vending.

4 Select 'Assess full menu' and follow the prompts

5 When asked 'What type of menu assessment is this?' select 'Catering menu'

6 Complete the assessment and save the PDF report



Catering for Good FoodChecker FAQs

Why is a FoodChecker menu assessment required?

It identifies a caterer's healthier food and drink options so they can be displayed on the Directory.

Do all menu items need to be put through FoodChecker?

A caterer is only required to assess the items they would like to have promoted on the Directory. A caterer may wish to submit a small handful of items to start, and choose to add more items at a later date.

What if the caterer has RED items?

A caterer can assess menu items which may be classified as RED, however, any RED items assessed will not be displayed on the Directory. There is no need to remove these from the assessment in FoodChecker.

How do you assess packages or platters?

All food and/or drink items within packages and/or platters should be entered once, and as individual items, into the same FoodChecker menu assessment with the other menu items. This means you will have just one menu assessment to submit as part of a Catering for Good Directory application.

Example of how to add items within a 'Fruit Platter' into a caterer's menu assessment:

- In the caterer's menu assessment, start by selecting 'Add a recipe', then select 'Cold Foods' (or another category) and title the recipe as the piece of fruit you wish to add from the platter, e.g. 'Kiwi Fruit'. Select 'Add to assessment'.
- Add the remaining types of fruit from the platter as separate items by repeating the process listed above.
- If the fruit platter is seasonal, just use the most common fruits provided. All fruit is classified GREEN.

Example of how to add items within a 'Lunchbox Package (sandwich, piece of fruit, orange juice)' into a caterer's menu assessment:

- In the menu assessment, add the lunchbox package items individually by selecting 'Add a recipe', then select 'Cold Foods' (or another category) and title the recipe of the first item within the package you would like to assess, e.g. a 'Chicken & Salad Sandwich'.
- Add all of the ingredients in the sandwich to the recipe, then select 'Save to recipe bank', and then 'Add to assessment'.
- Add other items from the package such as an apple or an orange juice, as separate recipes, and follow the process above.



Catering for Good FoodChecker FAQs

If you require further support with your caterer's menu assessment, please do not hesitate to email cateringforgood@nnf.org.au.

Or, if you require technical assistance or believe there is an issue with your FoodChecker account, email foodchecker@nnf.org.au.

How do you account for recipes which incorporate seasonal produce?

- To encourage the use of seasonal produce, fruit and vegetables on a caterer's menu may be substituted for different seasonal fruit or vegetables in the same quantity and the menu item will maintain the same classification.
- In a menu assessment, use the most common produce.

What should I do if I can't find the ingredient I'm looking for?

Contact the Healthy Eating Advisory Service at cateringforgood@nnf.org.au to get support with finding the ingredient you are looking for. If it isn't an existing ingredient in our database, we will aim to add it as soon as possible.

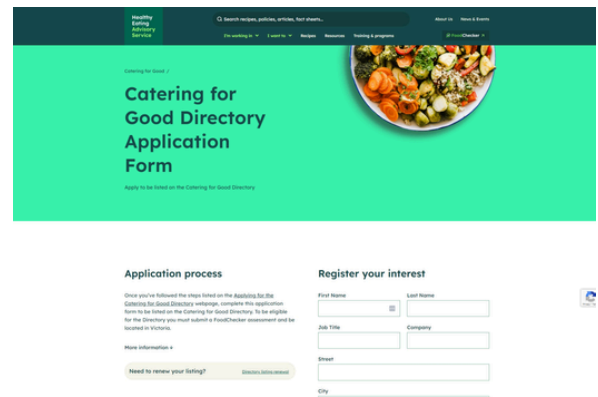
How do you add a recipe as an ingredient in a recipe?

- If there is a 'base' recipe that a caterer uses often (such as a sauce), you don't have to enter all of the ingredients to a new recipe each time. You can save the base recipe once, then add it to any other 'full' recipe with one click!
- Head to [FAQs \(foodchecker.au\)](https://foodchecker.au) to find out more.

Step 4: Complete the application form

Application Form

Once you have completed your FoodChecker menu assessment and have the FoodChecker ID number, it is time to organise a meeting (online or face-to-face) with the caterer and [complete the application form here](#) to get the caterer listed on the Catering for Good Directory.



The screenshot shows the 'Catering for Good Directory Application Form' page. The header is dark green with a search bar and navigation links. The main content area has a green background with a bowl of salad. The form is divided into two sections: 'Application process' and 'Register your interest'. The 'Application process' section includes a paragraph about the application process and a 'More information' link. The 'Register your interest' section includes a 'First Name' field, a 'Last Name' field, a 'Job Title' field, a 'Company' field, a 'Street' field, and a 'City' field. There is also a 'Need to renew your listing?' link.



Step 5: Celebrate!

Celebrate and promote your caterer's listing

Once you and the caterer have submitted the application and received an email from the Healthy Eating Advisory Service that the application has been approved,

It is time to celebrate and promote!



The following are some examples of how you can celebrate and promote a caterer's listing, and support a caterer to promote their own listing:



Social Media Shoutouts: →

[Find Social Tiles Here](#)

Encourage your caterer to announce and celebrate their listing on their organisation's social media platforms.

- [Here](#) are 2 x editable social media tiles you can use for a caterer to promote their listing.



E-Newsletters:

Feature the caterer in your next email newsletter. Highlight their specialties, share their story, and include a direct link to their listing.



Provide a caterer with a certificate as proof of listing: →

[Find Certificate Here](#)

Provide the caterer with a digital certificate, which they can display and promote on their website and social media, indicating they are listed on the Catering for Good Directory.

- Access an editable Catering for Good Directory Listing Certificate [here](#).



Step 6: What's next?

Maintaining a caterer's listing on the Directory

Listings on the Directory expire after 12 months, at this point the caterer will need to submit a Listing Renewal Form which can be accessed here: [Catering for Good Listing Renewal Form | Healthy Eating Advisory Service](#). If their menu offering has not changed, they can submit the same FoodChecker menu assessment, however, if their offering has changed, they may need further support to create a new menu assessment.

A caterer will also be required to resubmit which sustainable business practices they are implementing.

What if a caterer's menu needs updating between listing renewals?

Contact the Healthy Eating Advisory Service at cateringforgood@nnf.org.au to get support with updating any menu items.

HEAS will notify caterers via email, 6 weeks and 1 week prior to their listing expiry.

To maintain the relationship with caterers you have recruited, we recommend you check in with them once per quarter to understand if they have altered their menu offering and to seek any feedback about their Directory listing.



Tips!

- This is a great opportunity to work with your caterer on implementing more sustainable business practices. Review the resources listed above in this toolkit for further support.





Step 7: How to support the uptake of Catering for Good in organisations

You can promote the use of the Catering for Good Directory in your organisation by encouraging other workplaces in your community to use the Catering for Good Directory. Below are several avenues to further promote and support Catering for Good:



1. Encourage healthier and more sustainable catering

1.1 Creating and/or embedding procurement requirements in your organisation's policy.

1.1.1. The Victorian Government has created a healthy and more sustainable food procurement policy template and guide to healthy and more sustainable food procurement to help get you started: [Healthy and more sustainable food procurement | health.vic.gov.au](https://www.health.vic.gov.au/healthy-and-more-sustainable-food-procurement/).

1.2. Encourage businesses to incorporate references to the Directory when selecting catering services, highlighting its role in facilitating access to healthier and more sustainable food options.

2. Promote directory to local businesses:

Develop targeted outreach campaigns to local businesses, emphasising the advantages of using the Catering for Good Directory. This might involve creating promotional materials, such as social media posts or e-newsletters, that highlight the benefits of healthier and more sustainable food options for employees and the environment.

3. Host a Catering for Good information session:

Organise or run information sessions to introduce healthier and more sustainable food procurement policies within organisations (see Policy Template as per point 1.1.1).

These sessions can promote the positive impact on employee well-being, productivity, and corporate social responsibility. You could showcase catering via one of the local businesses listed on the Directory.

3. Catering for Good Promotional Poster

Promote healthy catering options within your organisation using this Catering for Good poster. This poster can be co-branded with your organisation's logo and is relevant to anyone who may be looking to provide healthier catering. Download poster [here](#).

With these strategies, you can support the uptake of the Catering for Good Directory and healthier and more sustainable food procurement policies. Collectively these changes will drive demand for a healthier, more sustainable shift in our food system.



Support from the Healthy Eating Advisory Service

The Healthy Eating Advisory Service is here to support you in engaging and supporting caterers in your community. Please [contact us](#) for further support, or if you would like us to connect you with other health promotion and industry professionals to share learnings and experiences.

Feedback on this toolkit

We'd love to hear from you. Please email us with any questions or feedback: cateringforgood@nnf.org.au.



Acknowledgements

This toolkit was developed by the Healthy Eating Advisory Service with support from the Victorian Department of Health, and the health promotion workforce involved in Catering for Good across Victoria. We would like to thank everyone who contributed their valuable time and insights to the development of this toolkit.



Healthy Eating Advisory Service

Visit our website:

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Written and reviewed by dietitians and nutritionists at the National Nutrition Foundation with support from the Victorian Government.

**To receive this document in an accessible format
phone 1300 22 52 88 or email heas@nnf.org.au**

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