

Food Preparation & Service Guidelines

OSU Recognized Student Organizations

OSU maintains alignment with Benton County Environmental Health while establishing best practice for public food service on campus. The following guidelines provide an overview of best practice for the University community and OSU [Recognized Student Organizations \(RSOs\)](#).

Locations

Some campus facilities have their own food guidelines, so always be sure to check in advance of reserving space and always let the facility know that you plan to have food.

- **Memorial Union:** mu.oregonstate.edu/reservations/catering
- **Conference Services:** oregonstate.edu/conferences/catering
- **Cultural Resource Centers:** (see reservation policy): dce.oregonstate.edu/webform/crc-reservations
- **Rec Sports:** recsports.oregonstate.edu/rentals/approved-caterers
- **Academic buildings:** Food is not allowed in general purpose classrooms. If your organization has access to class space managed by a department, be sure to check with the administrators or your faculty advisor from that department.
- **Off-campus events:** RSOs must comply with the regulations of Benton County Environmental Health: www.co.benton.or.us/health/page/food-establishment-licenses

Beverages and Alcohol Service

Due to a University wide “Pepsi” contract, no other brand of canned or bottled beverage is allowed during any food event. To see a list of products that fall under the Pepsi brand, see the list maintained by the Memorial Union: mu.oregonstate.edu/reservations/catering

For information about serving alcohol at your event, visit: risk.oregonstate.edu/alcohol-service

Open and Closed Activities

The first step in understanding available food options is to determine if your event is “open” or “closed.”

Criteria for Closed Activities:

- Only student organization members and formally invited guests are present, and a guest list should be made available upon request
- The guest list for a closed activity should be limited (if you expect hundreds of guests, it is likely not a closed activity)
- The activity is not publicly advertised

Activities should be considered “open” when **any** of the following are true:

- Activity is publicly advertised
- There is no invited guest list
- There are no limits or restrictions on access to attend the activity

CLOSED EVENTS

Even for closed events, it is important to be cautious with food. If you are serving food to members/guests at a closed event, you should use a licensed and insured caterer or serve lower-risk food items, which are those that have been commercially produced and prepared, do not require refrigeration, and are individually wrapped or served with appropriate serving utensils. Any canned or bottled beverages served must be manufactured by “Pepsi.”

Many facilities on campus do not allow potlucks or most homemade foods, even for closed events. If you do include homemade food at a closed activity, it should be clearly identified, so that participants can make an educated choice to consume it or not. Never present homemade food as if it were commercially produced. If allowed by the facility, consider having members bring their own food to meetings rather than bringing food to share.

OPEN EVENTS

When hosting open events, organizations can choose one of the following options:

- Self-cater the event through the Global Community Kitchen
- Hire an approved caterer with appropriate license and insurance
- Contract with a food vendor licensed to sell food directly to the public
- Serve or sell limited non-hazardous food items

All food at open events must be distributed from a food safe environment. Proper food handling must be followed, and attention must be given to maintaining all foods at the proper temperatures. Other requirements may include: a canopy, table covers, access to a handwashing station, off-ground storage, and trash/recycling receptacles available on site.

Self-Catering through the Global Community Kitchen

By working with the [Global Community Kitchen](#) program, students are able to develop their own menu and serve food produced entirely by the student organization and their volunteers. Global Community Kitchen staff provide advising throughout this process and oversee safety and sanitation during food production.

What you need to know:

- Student orgs may work with the Global Community Kitchen for small service, such as a hot chocolate fundraiser in the MU Quad, or for large-scale meal service at events.
- Put in your request to reserve the Global Community Kitchen as soon as you know that you want to host a self-catered event, and in advance of deadlines.
- Depending on the scale of the event, you may need to work with the program advisor as early as 12 weeks in advance.

- Make sure that you will have enough committed volunteers to carry out your plan, from start to clean-up.
- Follow all other requirements and deadlines of the program:
 - <http://sli.oregonstate.edu/orgs/culturalfoods>

Hiring a licensed caterer

Hiring a caterer is the best option for student organizations that do not have the time, people, or desire to self-cater through the Global Community Kitchen. The student org contracts with the caterer to provide food for a set number of expected guests in exchange for a pre-set fee.

The student org is responsible for:

- Selecting a caterer that is pre-approved by the facility manager, or working with the facility manager to determine whether a new caterer may be approved
- Providing an accurate estimate of guests within the caterer's requested timeline
- Paying the caterer in a timely manner
- Being on-site at the event at all times, available to answer questions from the caterer or, if applicable, from the Health Inspector

Caterers are responsible for:

- Licensure, Safety, and Sanitation
 - Obtaining a Benton County "Temporary Restaurant License for Open Events"
 - <https://www.co.benton.or.us/health/page/food-establishment-licenses>
 - Maintaining all of Benton County health and sanitation guidelines for handling, preparing, cooking, transporting, holding, and serving food.
 - Maintaining the setup and service area in a clean and orderly fashion.
 - Serving the food on site: no self-service is allowed. The student organization can only assist in serving if supervised by the caterer.
 - Assuming all responsibility of liability that arises from the service of the food.
- Insurance
 - Having in effect a General Liability Insurance policy with a minimum limit of \$1,000,000.00 per occurrence. An insurance company licensed to do business in the State of Oregon must issue the insurance. OSU, its officers, employees and agents shall be named as an additional insured in this insurance policy.
- Providing service ware.

Some facilities on campus have established agreements with caterers that meet these base guidelines, plus any additional guidelines that they choose to include.

Contracting with a food vendor

A food vendor is similar to a caterer, except that they are allowed to sell food products on campus directly to the public. Food vendors pay a fee to the student organization, with the expectation of earning a profit from

these sales. Student orgs might consider a food vendor/s when planning events such as festivals, outdoor concerts, or any other event where guests wander around or come and go throughout. In most cases, guests should be able to enjoy the event even if they choose not to purchase items from food vendors. For events like those described above, contracting with a food vendor may be a good choice for keeping event costs low, especially when doing so allows the group to not charge admission to the event. Keep in mind that food vendors may be restricted in where they can set up on campus, so it is critical to work with the facility manager early on.

The student org is responsible for:

- Seeking advance approval from the facility manager to bring the food vendor
- Being available at all times and ensuring that all university policies and procedures are followed.
- Entering into a contract with the food vendor (Sponsored Student Organizations should consult with their department appointed faculty advisor)

Food vendors are responsible for:

- Paying the student organization either a flat fee or a percentage of actual sales, as contractually agreed upon with the student org
- Maintaining all licensure, insurance, safety and sanitation, as described for caterers
- Assuming all responsibility for liability that arises from service/selling of food
- Providing all needed service ware
- Cash handling at the point of sale

Serving or selling non-hazardous food items

Some food items are not considered hazardous, which the student org may give away at an event or sell as a fundraiser, at the discretion of the facility manager. Always check policies specific to the event facility, and consult with the Global Community Kitchen program advisor for any specific questions.

These include:

- Baked goods/confections that do not require refrigeration and are individually wrapped
 - If produced at home, a sign must be posted stating: "Not produced in a commercial kitchen"
- Whole fruits
- Commercially pre-packaged, individual bags of snacks or candy
- Canned or bottled beverages manufactured by "Pepsi"

In order to self-produce any food or beverage item that requires any form of production (mixing, slicing, chopping, or cooking), the student org must work with the Global Community Kitchen. This includes things like chopped fruits and hot chocolate.