

Food Preference Suggestions by Culture

Last Updated: May 2024

Our Hunger Relief Partners serve clients from many different cultures. To help our partners to make informed choices when customizing their food orders to reflect the communities they serve, we have collected feedback about food preferences by culture. The food lists include information about preferred staples, foods to avoid, and cultural holidays that have important food items. Please use this document as a helpful reference when ordering food.

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Anti-Stereotyping Disclaimer

Culinary traditions, customs, and preferences are nuanced and rich with a sense of place and identity that is impossible to capture in a summary. Food preferences within a culture may vary greatly by individual, age, religion, region or the length of time the person has lived in the United States. Therefore, these food lists should not replace engaging with your community to understand your food pantry user’s individual preferences. However, these lists can help as a starting point to inform your ordering decisions.

Our hope is that these lists can be used to create a community where diverse food preferences and customs of individuals are accepted and honored. These lists can be used as a starting point to bringing dignity to the food pantry experience for all.

FAQ

How did we collect this feedback?

To develop these food lists, we collected feedback from 600+ food pantry users, 100+ partners, and several cultural community organizations. We collected feedback through interviews and surveys and provided translated material.

Why did we choose these cultures?

We piloted this program in eight counties including Denver, Morgan, Pitkin, Garfield, Eagle, Hot Springs, Fremont, and Sweetwater counties. After surveying partners in these counties, we determined that these cultures were most common across our partners. We recognize that this list is not comprehensive and some cultures may not be represented.

How often will this document be updated?

As we continue to have conversations with the community we will add or change information including developing food preference suggestions for additional cultures. We will update this document as needed.

Do you have additional suggestions?

We would love to hear from you. We will continue to collect feedback and update this list. If you have additional feedback about these lists please reach out to CRFI@foodbankrockies.org

Common Trends Across Cultures

While it is difficult to develop a comprehensive summary, we have noticed trends that are common across many cultures.

- **Focus on fresh produce.** The number one requested food category is fresh produce.
- **Avoid canned foods** (in most cases). Many immigrant families may not have had canned foods in their home country and therefore consider them unhealthy.
- **Avoid pre-seasoned or pre-packaged meats or pastas.** This will allow more flexibility to customize the flavor of the meals to fit with cultural preferences.
- **Provide whole foods.** An example of a whole food would be offering a fresh tomato instead of a pasta sauce. By offering whole ingredients, it provides more flexibility on how that item can be used or seasoned.
- **Holidays may change food preferences.** To be culturally responsive, it is important to understand the calendar for cultural holidays. A seasonal or religious holiday may change what foods are used and the quantity needed. A western example would be serving turkey for Thanksgiving. Please see our Holiday Calendar resource for more information.

Cultural Holiday Foods from Food Bank of the Rockies

Food Bank of the Rockies currently sources cultural holiday foods in recognition of Lunar New Year, Ramadan, and Navidad. [Please complete this survey](#) to indicate your interest in purchasing foods to support your neighbors' celebration of these holidays. This will enable

us to do our best to accommodate the amounts needed. You can also provide further information regarding the holidays your neighbors may require specific foods to celebrate.

- **Navidad:** Onions, Tomatoes, Tomatillos, Garlic, Corn Husks, Masa Flour, Dry Pinto Beans, Dry Black Beans, Ground Beef, Ground Pork, Chicken Drumsticks, Dried Ancho Chilies, Dried Guajillo Chilies, Ground Cumin
- **Lunar New Year:** Dried Dates, Oranges, Apples, Canned Pineapple, Peanuts, Cashews, Sunflower Seeds, Banana Leaves, White Long Grain Rice, Ground Pork
- **Ramadan:** Dried Dates, Almonds, Cashews, Pistachios, Broth, Dried Chickpeas, Dried Lentils, Cooking Oil, Jasmine Rice, Raisins, Plain Yogurt, and Halal Meat

Find these items on Partner Express by searching “Culturally Responsive” in the description.

Community Food Preference Survey

If you would like to gain more insight into your community’s food preferences we have a digital multilingual food preference survey available for use by our partners.

By requesting your neighbors to anonymously complete the survey a customized community preference list and report will be generated. The report highlights overall community preferences as well as food preferences by self-identified cultural groups. This will support your organization to prioritize foods most familiar and meaningful to your community and avoid distributing foods that are not preferred. Additionally, you will be supporting Food Bank of the Rockies to better understand what foods to source and where certain foods will be most meaningful across the communities we serve.

If you are interested in learning more please send an email to CRFI@foodbankrockies.org.

Top 15 Foods Across Cultures

Many Hunger Relief Partners serve multiple cultures, so customizing by culture may not be feasible. For this reason, we have compiled a list of commonly requested foods that have a preference across four or more cultures. If you serve a wide-range of cultures, you may consider prioritizing ordering from this Top 15 list.

Food Item	Culture
All- purpose Flour	All
Beef (any)	All
Cabbage (green)	Afghan, Ethiopian, Latino, Northern Arapaho, Russian, Ukrainian, Vietnamese
Carrots	Afghan, Eastern Shoshone, Latino, Mauritanian, Northern Arapaho, Russian, Somali, Ukrainian, Vietnamese
Chicken (any)	All
Cucumber	All
Eggs (fresh)	All
Garlic	Afghan, Ethiopian, Latino, Mauritanian, Northern Arapaho, Russian, Somali, Ukrainian, Vietnamese
Lime	Afghan, Eastern Shoshone, Ethiopian, Latino, Northern Arapaho, Somali, Vietnamese
Cow's Milk	Afghan, Eastern Shoshone, Ethiopian, Latino, Mauritanian, Northern Arapaho, Russian, Somali, Ukrainian
Onions	All
Pasta / Noodles (any, plain)	All
Bell peppers	Afghan, Eastern Shoshone, Ethiopian, Latino, Mauritanian, Northern Arapaho, Somali, Ukrainian, Vietnamese
Sugar (white)	Afghan, Eastern Shoshone, Ethiopian, Latino, Northern Arapaho, Russian, Somali, Ukrainian,
Tomato	Afghan, Eastern Shoshone, Ethiopian, Latino, Russian, Somali, Ukrainian, Vietnamese

Please note: Seasonality and religious differences may impact the usage of these foods. Please reference the individual food preference lists by culture for more details.

Afghan Food List

Items in **bold** are typically available from Food Bank of the Rockies subject to availability.

DAIRY

- Butter
- Ghee
- Feta cheese
- Cheddar cheese
- Mozzarella cheese
- Halloumi cheese
- Buttermilk
- Cow's milk
- Shelf-stable cow's milk
- Goat's milk
- Sheep's milk
- Plain cow's milk yogurt (full fat)
- Cream
- Cream cheese (puck)

Avoid: Some cheese products use an ingredient called rennet that is derived from an animal, therefore the cheese would not be acceptable to Halal-observant communities.

MEATS/PROTEINS*

- **Eggs**
- **Halal Chicken**
- Halal Turkey
- Halal Beef
- Halal Goat
- Halal Lamb/Mutton
- Fish**
- **Canned tuna****
- Shrimp**

**Halal refers to foods that are allowed to be eaten according to Islamic law, and how an animal is slaughtered. Some Islamic people may only eat Halal-certified meats.*

***Seafood does not need to be Halal-certified although it may be unfamiliar as Afghanistan is a landlocked country.*

Avoid: Anything with pork, gelatin, and lard is forbidden in halal-observant communities

FLOURS/GRAINS

- Couscous
- Sorghum
- Semolina/ Farina flour
- Basmati rice (most preferred rice)
- Bulghur
- **Rice (white)**
- **Flatbreads**
 - Pita bread
 - Naan bread
 - Tortillas
- Barley
- Millet
- Ground-chickpea flour
- **Pasta (whole wheat preferred)**
- **All-purpose flour**
- Phyllo dough
- Wheat flour (high protein)
- Breakfast Cereals
- **Oatmeal**

BEANS/LEGUMES

- **Lentils** (green preferred)
- Fava Beans
- Chickpeas (dried)
- Black-eyed peas
- Great Northern beans
- Kidney beans
- Orange split peas
- Green split peas

Dried beans are preferred over canned

FRUITS

- **Jams**
- **Apples**
- Apricots
- Bananas
- Cantaloupe
- Cherries
- Sour Cherries
- Figs (dried or fresh)
- Dates
- Grapes
- Honeydew melon
- **Lemon**
- **Limes**
- Mango
- Oranges
- **Plums**
- Prunes
- Pomegranate
- Tangerines
- Tomato
- **Watermelon**
- Dried fruit (apricot/cherries/plums)
- **Raisins**
- Rhubarb
- Quince

OTHER PRODUCE / VEGETABLES / HERBS

- Avocado
- **Beets**
- Bell peppers
- Butternut Squash
- Grape Leaves
- **Green cabbage**
- **Carrots**
- **Chilies (fresh long green and red, dried red chilies)**
- Jalapenos
- Cauliflower
- Collard Greens
- Cilantro / Coriander
- Cucumber
- Dill
- Eggplant (fresh or pickled)
- Fennel
- Garlic (**minced garlic**)
- **Ginger**
- Green onion
- Jew's Mallow / Egyptian Spinach
- Leeks
- Kale
- Iceberg lettuce
- Endive/Frisee lettuce
- Mushrooms
- Mint
- Okra (fresh or frozen)
- **Onions (red, yellow, white)**
- Parsley
- Peas
- Bell peppers
- **Sweet potatoes**
- **Potatoes**
- Pumpkin
- Radishes
- Spinach
- Olives
- **Yellow squash**
- **Zucchini**
- **Tomatoes**
- Tomato Paste
- Turnips

Fresh produce is usually preferred over canned or frozen

OILS/SPICES

- **Salt** (Kosher)
- Pepper
- **Cinnamon (ground or whole)**
- Turmeric
- Saffron
- Sumac
- Fenugreek
- Caraway
- Cayenne pepper
- Chili powder
- Cloves
- Curry powder
- Berbere spice mix
- **Paprika**
- Nutmeg
- Nigella seeds

- Anise
- Tahini paste
- Cloves
- Cumin
- Cardamom
- Red pepper paste
- Zaatar
- Rosewater
- **Bay leaves**
- Sesame seeds
- Poppy seeds
- Pine nuts
- Oregano
- Corn oil
- Olive oil
- Sunflower oil
- Sesame oil
- **Vegetable oil**
- Apple cider vinegar

OTHER

- **Nuts** (Unsalted nuts preferred)
 - Almonds
 - Chestnuts
 - Hazelnuts
 - Pistachios
 - Walnuts
- Peanuts
- **Peanut Butter**
- **Honey**
- Hibiscus
- Hummus
- Tahini
- Custard powder
- Baking powder
- Baking soda
- Yeast
- Sugar

Avoid: Any food prepared with alcohol is forbidden (i.e. pure or artificial vanilla extract)

BEVERAGES

- Black tea
- Green tea
- Coffee (ground or whole bean)
- **Fruit juice**

Holidays:

Ramadan – Islamic holy month that includes fasting from sunrise to sunset, concludes with Eid al-Fitr, a celebration to break the fast. All Muslims practice fasting during the month of Ramadan, except those who are sick, weak, or pregnant, children aged less than 12 years, and nursing women. During Ramadan, people are not allowed to eat and drink during the daytime; however, they still have three meals per day. They usually have the first light meal at sunset, a large meal after prayer, wake up at midnight to have the third meal before sunrise, and then sleep again. Common foods that Afghan people eat when the month of Ramadan finishes (Eid) are homemade sweets, cakes, nuts, and fruits.

Dastarkhan refers to a large spread of food for ceremonial purposes. It consists of a tablecloth on the floor with the food placed on it. Family and guests sit around the cloth. Celebrations consist of many homemade sweets, cakes, cupcakes, nuts, and fruits. Charcoal-barbequed kebabs, curries, and rice are also common celebration foods.

Eid al-Adha – Islamic "Festival of Sacrifice" that usually involves enjoying meat with family

Milad-un-Nabi – Islamic celebration of the birthday of the Prophet Muhammad

Nau Roz – New Year celebration according to the Islamic calendar

Sources:

Afghan food and cultural profile: dietetic consultation guide <https://metrosouth.health.qld.gov.au/sites/default/files/dietetic-profile-afghan.pdf>

Religious Dietary Restrictions https://www.chapman.edu/campus-life/fish-interfaith-center/_files/religious-dietary-restrictions.pdf

Eat-Halal <http://www.eat-halal.com/food-ingredients/>

Guide to understanding Halal Foods

<https://www.halalrc.org/images/Research%20Material/Literature/Guide%20to%20Halal%20Foods.pdf>

Halal Foods in TEFAP <https://www.fns.usda.gov/tefap/halal>

Suggestions from Downtown Denver Islamic Center

Eastern Shoshone Food List

TOP 5 - SHELF STABLE

- Blue Bird flour
- Cooking oil (vegetable, canola)
- Elbow macaroni
- Oatmeal/ cereal
- Pinto beans

BEANS/LEGUMES

- Pinto beans
- Red kidney beans (can)
- White beans

Avoid: Black beans, fava beans, lentils, garbanzo beans

GRAINS

- All-purpose flour (Blue Bird brand)
- Biscuit mix
- Cereal (any)
- Cornmeal
- Cream of wheat
- Oatmeal
- Pasta noodles (any, elbow macaroni preferred)
- White rice or Minute rice
- Wild rice

Avoid: Whole wheat flour, Whole wheat pasta, brown rice, couscous

Elbow macaroni is used often for ceremony. Flour is used for fresh bread especially during Sundance and Powwows

MEATS/PROTEINS*

- Beef (any, ground or stew meat preferred)
- Chicken (any)
- Fish (salmon, tuna)
- Pork (any, ham hocks preferred)

Avoid: Pre-seasoned meat, tofu, frozen fish (except salmon), and canned meat or fish (except tuna)

Meat is of great importance to the Shoshone Tribe and eaten every day, especially during ceremonies. Boiling meat and ham hock are preferred during this time.

DAIRY*

- Butter
- Cheese (any, American preferred)
- Cream cheese
- Eggs
- Lactose free milk
- Milk, cow (whole, 2%)
- Powdered milk
- Sour cream
- Yogurt (fruited)

Avoid: Buttermilk, goat cheese, liquid eggs in a carton

PRODUCE

- Avocados
- Beets
- Broccoli
- Carrots
- Cauliflower
- Celery
- Corn
- Cucumber
- Green beans
- Green bell pepper
- Green chilies (diced, canned)
- Hominy
- Hot peppers
- Lettuce (any, iceberg preferred)
- Onions (any, yellow preferred)
- Peas
- Potatoes (any, white preferred)
- Red bell pepper
- Squash (any, butternut preferred)
- Stewed tomatoes
- Tomato puree
- Tomato sauce
- Tomatoes

Avoid: Okra, collard greens, turnips

FRUITS

- Apples
- Banana
- Blueberries
- Cantaloupe
- Grapes
- Honeydew
- Lemons
- Orange
- Peaches
- Pears
- Pineapple
- Raspberries
- Strawberries
- Watermelon

Avoid: Dragon fruit, jack fruit, papaya

Watermelon, cantaloupe, honeydew melons are used in all feasts for Sundance, Powwows, and Sweats. Lemons and limes are used for fresh lemonade for summer Sundance feast. Raspberries and blueberries are substitutes for chokecherries for berry gravy.

OILS/SPICES

- Brown sugar
- Chili powder
- Cooking oil (vegetable, canola)
- Garlic powder
- Olive oil
- Onion powder
- Pepper
- Salt
- Sugar
- Vanilla extract

OTHER

- Baking powder
- Baking soda
- Bottled water
- Coffee
- Coffee creamer
- Condiments (any)
- Corn starch
- Crackers for soup
- Honey
- Juice (any)
- Maple syrup
- Nuts

- Peanut butter (creamy)
- Tea (black or peppermint preferred)
- Tortillas (white flour)

CULTURAL FOOD

- Beef guts
- Blue Bird flour
- Boiling meat (beef)
- Buffalo (ground or roast, or stew meat)
- Chokecherries (blueberries can be substituted)
- Deer (ground or roast, or stew meat)
- Elk (ground or roast, or stew meat)
- Ham hocks
- Hominy
- Salmon (frozen or fresh)
- Squash (any, butternut preferred)
- Wild roots
- Wild sage chicken

All these cultural foods are used in ceremonies and feasts throughout the year.

Holidays:

Ceremonies and feasts throughout the year include the Annual Eastern Shoshone Powwow in June, yearly Sundance in July, Chokecherry Harvest Dance in August, Christmas Dance in December, and New Year's Dance in January.

Items that are important during ceremonies include cooking oil, coffee, tea, baking powder, sugar, salt, pepper, garlic powder, onion powder. These items are also used every day in households.

Sources:

Feedback from Eastern Shoshone Tribal Consultant as well as surveys collected from 66 Eastern Shoshone community members via online and phone surveys. Special care was taken to include Elder feedback by calling Elders via phone during COVID-19. A focus group of 10 Eastern Shoshone tribal members reviewed this document and provided additional feedback.

Ethiopian Food List

TOP 5 - SHELF STABLE

- Coffee/ black tea (Lipton)
- Fava/ broad beans (dry)
- Pasta noodles (plain)
- Red or green lentils
- Teff flour

BEANS/LEGUMES

- Fava / broad beans (dry)
- Green lentils (dry)
- Red lentils (dry)
- Split peas (dry)
- Yellow lentils (dry)

Avoid: Canned beans

GRAINS

- All-purpose flour
- Barley flour
- Bulgur flour
- Flax seed (yellow/white)
- Oats
- Pasta noodles (wheat-based, plain)
- Rice (long grain white)
- Teff flour
- Whole wheat flour

Avoid: pre-seasoned pasta products

Plain wheat-based pasta noodles including lasagna, macaroni, and spaghetti are preferred. Teff and all-purpose flour are most commonly used while whole wheat, bulgur and barley flour are used less commonly. Oats and flax seeds are often eaten with honey when pregnant.

MEATS/PROTEINS*

- Beef
- Chicken
- Eggs (fresh)
- Fish (fresh or frozen)
- Goat
- Lamb

Avoid: Ground meat, any pork products including sausages or spam, egg whites in a carton, canned fish or sardines. *Subject to religious dietary restrictions during some holidays.

The cut of meat does not matter as long as it is fresh. Often, meat will be chopped up and put in a stew. Ground meat is not eaten unless the grinding process can be observed. Goat meat is only eaten occasionally. Salmon is a preferred fish while canned fish like tuna or sardines would only be eaten by second generation.

DAIRY*

- Butter (unsalted)
- Cow milk
- Sour cream
- Yogurt (plain)

Avoid: If a recent immigrant, avoid cheese. *Subject to religious dietary restrictions during some holidays.

Cheese is not commonly eaten by recent immigrants but a second generation would eat cheese. Yogurt used for breakfast and as a side for many meals. Butter will be boiled and spices added.

PRODUCE

- Banana
- Cabbage (green)
- Collard greens
- Cucumbers
- Dates
- Garlic
- Green beans
- Jalapeño pepper
- Lemon
- Lettuce
- Lime
- Onions (red or white)
- Peppers (green or red)
- Potatoes (white)
- Radishes
- Tomatoes

Avoid: Canned vegetables, canned fruits, parsley, squash

Onions are used daily. Whole tomatoes are also used frequently. Produce should be fresh, not canned. Dates are used during holidays.

OILS/SPICES

- Berbere spice mix
- Canola oil
- Olive oil
- Sugar
- Turmeric (ground)

While there are many spices used, Berbere spice mix is used every day. Other frequently used spices include turmeric and sugar. Occasionally, the following spices would also be used: cumin (ground), coriander, cardamom, cinnamon, cayenne pepper and fenugreek.

OTHER

- Black tea (Lipton preferred)
- Coffee (whole beans preferred)
- Honey
- Jam
- Peanut butter
- Popcorn (plain– no butter or seasoning)
- Raisins
- Tomato paste

Tomato paste preferred for pasta instead of canned spaghetti sauce. Raisins are used with rice or bread. Honey is preferred to be organic or unprocessed.

Additional Notes:

In Ethiopia, most foods are fresh. Canned or frozen foods are uncommon. Therefore, many Ethiopian pantry users will not use canned foods.

In general, most food is made fresh (for instance, homemade salad dressing or spaghetti sauce). Pre-packaged meals like mac & cheese or canned soups are not usually used.

Cooking is often performed by women in Ethiopian culture, so male clients may not know how to cook. In these cases, they may prefer pre-prepared items like sandwich bread.

Holidays:

Ethiopia has many holidays that follow religious dietary restrictions. 40% of the population is Ethiopian Orthodox Christian, 18% are Protestant and 30% follow Islam. The majority of refugees in Denver are of the Oromo culture, who are primarily Muslim, although there are also people of Tigray and Amhara backgrounds. Ethiopia follows a different calendar than most Western countries. Therefore, their major holidays like Christmas and Easter often fall on different dates.

Ethiopian New Years: Occurs on September 11. Meat dishes of chicken, minced beef, liver or lamb are common.

Meskel - True Cross Celebration: One of the most important holidays for Ethiopian Orthodox Christians. Occurs at the end of September. It is celebrated with a feast of flat bread made from teff flour and bull meat (beef).

Eit Al-Fitr and Ramadan: During the month of Ramadan, Muslim Ethiopians will fast from sunrise to sunset. The end of this period and the breaking of the fast is celebrated with a large feast during the Eid al-Fitr festival. Common foods used to celebrate this holiday include flat bread made from teff flour, dates, beef, butter and coffee.

Orthodox Easter: Often occurs two weeks after it is celebrated in the West. During Lent, Ethiopian Orthodox Christians do not eat meat, cheese, butter or eggs. On Easter Eve, it is customary to break this fast with a meat filled feast.

Ethiopian Christmas: Celebrated on January 7. Leading up to the holiday, Orthodox Christians observe a 43-day fasting period beginning on November 25. During this time, they do not eat meat, cheese, butter or eggs. On Christmas, the fast is commonly broken with a meat and egg stew.

Sources:

Interviews with African Community Center of Denver, Tigray-Ethiopia Community Center and Colorado Health Network of Denver

Ethiopian Calendar 2020 | Most Important Public Holidays, <https://www.ethiopiaonlinevisa.com/ethiopian-calendar/>

Latin American Food Lists

TOP 5 - SHELF STABLE

- All- purpose flour
- Masa flour
- Oats
- Pinto beans (dry)
- Rice (white or jasmine)

Colombian Food List

Colombian dishes are normally divided into the 6 different regions Pacific, Amazonian, Andean, Orinoco, Caribbean, and Insular that make up the country, each region vastly different than the others. Although this is the case, there are some common ingredients that are used by most Colombian dishes, rice, and maize, tubers, assorted legumes, and lots of tropical fruits.

BEANS/LEGUMES

- **Black beans (dry)**
- **Pinto beans (dry)**
- Red beans

The most common bean used in Colombian recipes is the red bean, however if not available people can substitute with kidney beans. Black and pinto beans are also preferred but not as popular as red beans. Some other beans that are less commonly used are chickpeas, lentils, and green and yellow peas.

FLOURS/GRAINS

- Cornstarch
- Masarepa (Cornmeal)
- Pasta (any, plain)
- Long-grained White Rice

Tortillas aren't typically eaten in Colombian households, instead they use Masarepa to make Arepas which can be eaten for breakfast, lunch, and dinner.

MEATS/PROTEINS

- **Beef**
- **Chicken**
- **Eggs**
- **Pork**
- Goat
- Ox tail
- Seafood (mainly popular along the coasts of Colombia)

Avoid: pre-seasoned meats, ground chicken, canned meat.

Meat preferences can vary by region but most Colombians prefer beef, chicken, and goat.

DAIRY

- Cheese
 - Cuajada, Quesito, Campesino, Costeño
 - Pera (Known as Colombia's mozzarella)
- Cow's milk
- Creamer
- Butter

Fresh cheese (queso fresco, cuajada, and similar) are popular across cultures. Examples are just there for reference.

PRODUCE

- **Carrots**
- Cassava (Yuca)
- **Corn**
- Garlic
- Habanero
- **Potatoes**
- **Tomatoes**

FRUIT

- Banana leaves (mainly during Christmas time)
- Dragon fruit (Pitaya)
- Guava
- Papaya
- Plantains
- Mango
- Passion fruit

Cape gooseberry, Feijoa, and Lulo are some examples of fruits that are liked by most Colombians but might be hard to find in the U.S. Fresh fruit and produce are preferred as canned products are seen as unhealthy. Acceptable canned items: corn, mixed veggies, tomato sauce, tomatoes, green chilies, fruit. Fresh fruits of any kind are widely requested.

OILS/SPICES

- Black pepper & all spice
- Cinnamon (whole)
- Cumin
- **Sugar (panela, white)**
- **Honey**
- Coriander
- **Vegetable oil**
- Broth stock (chicken or beef)
- Ariquepe (dulce de leche)
- Dark chocolate bars (mainly used for making hot chocolate)
- Coconut milk

Cuban Food List

Unlike Mexican cuisine, Cuban food is not spicy because it's a mix of Spanish, African, and other Caribbean cuisines. Chilies are not traditionally grown in Cuba which is why 'heat' has not been a key ingredient in Cuban cuisine which instead draws its flavor from a few basic spices, such as garlic, cumin, oregano, and bay leaves. Flour and rice are used more than corn, and sandwiches made from Cuban bread, a white bread similar to French bread, and various sliced meats are typical. Being a Caribbean island, seafood and tropical fruits are commonly used in Cuba.

BEANS/LEGUMES

- **Black beans (dry)**
- Garbanzo beans (can)
- **Lentils (dry)**
- **Pinto beans (dry)**
- Peanuts

Black beans are normally used for many Cuban recipes, but sometimes red beans or pinto beans can be substituted. Garbanzos, lentils, and peas are used in many soups and stews as well but not as popular as black beans.

FLOURS/GRAINS

- Wheat Flour
- Cassava Flour
- **Rice (white)**

In Cuba, tortillas are different than in other countries; instead of being made of corn or flour, they are made with eggs and filled with a variety of ingredients, from sausage to plantains.

MEATS/PROTEINS

- **Beef (on occasion)**
- **Chicken**
- **Eggs**
- Fish, shrimp, others
- Pork

*Avoid: pre-seasoned meats, ground chicken, canned meat. *Subject to religious dietary restrictions during some holidays.*

Since Cuba is an island, seafood is found in many recipes because of availability. Pork is a very popular meat choice and is cooked in many ways, especially during the holidays or celebrations. Beef is less common but still a favorite of most.

DAIRY

- Butter
- Powdered milk
- Cow's milk (when available)
- Condensed milk
- Goat cheese
- White cheese (Swiss is very popular)

Dairy products in Cuba are slightly more difficult to come by but milk is enjoyed with their coffees, as well as certain deserts which use dairy products.

PRODUCE

- Cilantro
- **Corn**
- Garlic
- Lime
- Onion
- Parsley
- Bell peppers
- **Potatoes**
- **Tomatoes**
- Cassava (Yucca)
- Malanga (yautia)
- Zucchini

FRUITS

- Apple
- Banana
- Guava
- Mango
- Pineapple
- Soursop (Guanabana)

Lots of tropical fruits are eaten in Cuba as well as tubers, squashes, and other native veggies. Fresh fruit and produce are preferred as canned products are seen as unhealthy. Acceptable canned items: tomato sauce, and tomatoes.

OILS/SPICES

- Bay leaves
- **Black pepper/ salt**
- Coriander
- Cumin
- Garlic powder
- Lime or lemon zest
- Oregano (dried)
- Pepper flakes
- **Sugar (white, piloncillo/ panela)**
- Olive oil

Mexican Food List

Although Mexican foods are very diverse, there are three core staples: corn, beans, and chilis. These three items mixed in with a variety of spices, many of which make the food spicy, reflect the complex identity of Mexican dishes. Although fresh chilies, such as serrano, jalapenos, and poblanos, are commonly used there are also many dishes that require dry chilies which may be the same pepper. For instance, a dried chipotle pepper is the counterpart to a jalapeno. Another key food item for many Mexicans are tortillas, which are often made with masa but it's not uncommon to see tortillas made with flour. Tortillas are very important and in some communities a meal isn't a meal without tortillas; they serve wrappers, edible plates and utensils.

BEANS/LEGUMES

- **Black beans (dry)**
- Garbanzo beans (can)
- **Lentils (dry)**
- **Pinto beans (dry)**

Sometimes canned refried beans can be acceptable but often families prefer to prepare refried beans themselves. Bean preferences can vary by region, but the most common beans used are pinto beans. Families prefer to cook and season dry beans but canned (plain, unseasoned) beans can be substituted.

FLOURS/GRAINS

- **Corn tortillas**
- **Masa flour (Maseca brand, corn flour)**
- Oats
- **Pasta (any, plain)**
- **Rice (Jasmine)**
- **Rice (white)**

Tortillas are preferably made at home using the Maseca brand of masa corn flour. Flour tortillas are not typical but may be preferred over low-quality corn tortillas.

MEATS/PROTEINS

- **Beef**
- **Chicken**
- **Eggs**
- Fish
- Pork
- Shrimp
- **Canned Tuna**

Avoid: pre-seasoned meats, ground chicken, canned meat. *Subject to religious dietary restrictions during some holidays.

Whole chickens are preferred when used, but beef and eggs are the primary staples. Ground pork is not used frequently but ground beef is very common. Most households utilize many portions of a pig, including head, stomach, and feet, so portions not as commonly preferred in the U.S. may still be welcomed.

DAIRY

- Butter
- Cheese (white or fresh)
 - Panela, Cotija, Fresco, Oaxaca
- Cow's milk
- Sour cream (Crema Mexicana)
- Condensed milk (Some people will call it La Lechera, which is a popular brand familiar to most Mexicans)
- Fruit yogurts

White medium-firm cheeses (white American, Swiss, etc.) are usually preferred over yellow cheeses. Fresh cheese (queso fresco, cuajada, and similar) are popular across cultures. Examples are just there for reference; Oaxaca cheese slightly resembles mozzarella, and is a popular melting cheese.

PRODUCE

- **Avocado**
- Broccoli
- Green cabbage
- **Carrots**
- Cauliflower
- Cilantro
- **Corn**
- **Cucumber**
- Garlic
- Jalapeño peppers
- Iceberg lettuce,
- Limes
- Onion
- Parsley
- Bell peppers
- Potatoes
- Radishes
- Spinach
- Tomatillo
- **Tomatoes**
- Zucchini

Fresh fruit and produce are preferred as canned products are seen as unhealthy. Acceptable canned items: corn, mixed veggies, tomato sauce, tomatoes, green chillies, fruit. Fresh fruits of any kind are widely requested. Although limes are preferred, lemons can sometimes be used instead.

OILS/SPICES

- Bay leaves
- **Black pepper/ salt**
- Bouillon (sometimes found in cubes)
- Cinnamon (whole)
- Cloves
- Corn husk
- Cumin
- **Honey**
- Lard
- Mexican chocolate
- Oregano (dried)
- Peppers (dried, many specific varieties)
 - Guajillo, Arbol, Chipotle, Ancho
- Rosemary
- **Sugar (white, piloncillo/ panela)**
- Thyme
- **Vegetable oil**

Spices in Mexico are very important because it's what really brings flavor to many traditional dishes. Mexican chocolate is not only used to make a hot beverage for the cold weather, but is also sometimes used in Mole (a popular meat dish). Cinnamon and oregano have Mexican siblings that have a notable distinction in their flavors, and although the Mexican versions are preferred they might be difficult to find in many areas so the ones commonly found here will work as well.

Avoid: Canned soup, canned chili

Venezuelan Food List

Venezuelan food takes inspiration from several other places, such as Spain, Italy, the Caribbean, and West Africa, which has resulted in a wide variety of distinct and delicious dishes. Food staples in Venezuela include corn, rice, plantains, beans, pasta, and a various of meats.

BEANS/LEGUMES

- **Black beans (dry)**
- Arvejas (dry)

Bean preferences can vary by region but the most common bean used are black beans. Families prefer to cook and season dry beans but canned (plain, unseasoned) beans can be substituted.

FLOURS/GRAINS

- Masarepa (Harina P.A.N)
- Corn flour (Masa harina)
- **Pasta (any, plain)**
- **Rice (white)**
- Wheat

People from Venezuela often prefer to eat arepas with their meals rather than tortillas. Unlike arepas from Colombia the arepas in Venezuela usually contain a filling. Venezuela is the second highest consumer of pasta in the world.

MEATS/PROTEINS

- **Beef**
- **Chicken**
- **Eggs**
- Seafood
- Pork (mostly eaten during Christmas time)
- Goat
- Game (deer, rabbit, ect.)

Avoid: pre-seasoned meats, ground chicken, canned meat.

Meat/protein choices can vary by region. Eastern, Southeastern, and Northern states prefer eating seafood due to the high availability, while Western states prefer goat and rabbit meat. In the Llanos region a lot of beef and game is eaten because of the plains. Finally, in the Andean region beef, lamb, and chicken are preferred, as well as trout which are usually raised in farms.

DAIRY

- Powdered cow's milk
- Butter
- Cheese (white or yellow)
- Cow's milk
- Sour cream
- Fruit yogurts

PRODUCE

- **Corn**
- **Cucumber**
- Eggplant
- Garlic
- Lettuce
- Onion
- Sweet peppers
- **Potatoes**
- Spinach
- Squashes
- **Tomatoes**
- Yams
- Zucchini

FRUIT

- Banana
- Banana leaves
- Coconut
- Plantains
- Prunes
- Raisins

Fresh fruit and produce are preferred as canned products are seen as unhealthy. Acceptable canned items: corn, mixed veggies, tomato sauce, tomatoes, green chilies, fruit. Fresh fruits of any kind are widely requested.

OILS/SPICES

- **Black pepper/ salt**
- Coriander
- Cinnamon (whole)
- **Honey**
- **Mayonnaise**
- Oregano (dried)
- Rosemary
- **Sugar (white, piloncillo/ panela)**
- Worcestershire sauce
- **Vegetable oil**

Holidays:

In Colorado and Wyoming, Latino cultures represented are primarily Mexican, Salvadoran, and Guatemalan. These cultures generally celebrate similar or identical holidays and Catholicism is the dominant religion. Día de los Muertos, Navidad, and Semana Santa will likely see the highest demand for foods. Generally speaking, while no specific new ingredients are used, all common foods will be needed in a greater quantity.

Día de los Muertos: Day of the Dead- November 1. Sweets and pastries are associated with its celebration.

Navidad: Christmas- Holiday festivities extend from the Feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe on December 12 through Three Kings' Day on January 6. In Mexico, tamales are a special staple during this time and are typically filled with pork, beef, or occasionally chicken thighs/legs with cheeses and/ or vegetables. Tamales are made using masa and wrapped in corn husks (or plantain leaves in parts of Mexico and Venezuela.)

Holy Week/Easter: Semana Santa- After following a 40-day period of fasting (Lent), Catholics celebrate a two-week period in late March or April. During this season, people abstain from eating pork or red meat especially on Fridays between Ash Wednesday and Easter Sunday, and including Holy Week. Food traditions during Semana Santa vary by country but typically include seasonal sweets, fresh fruit juices, and fish or other non-restricted proteins.

Latin Food List Sources:

Interview with SANA and One Morgan County
Food recommendations from Kaizen and Metro Caring
150+ client and community surveys.

Valerino-Perea S, Lara-Castor L, Armstrong MEG, Papadaki A. Definition of the Traditional Mexican Diet and Its Role in Health: A Systematic Review. *Nutrients*. 2019; 11(11):2803. <https://www.mdpi.com/2072-6643/11/11/2803>

Gutiérrez, J.P.; Rivera-Dommarco, J.A.; Shamah-Levy, T.; Villalpando-Hernández, S.; Franco, A.; Cuevas-Nasu, L.; Romero-Martínez, M.; Hernández-Ávila, M. Encuesta Nacional de Salud y Nutrición 2012. Resultados Nacionales, 2nd ed.; Instituto Nacional de Salud Pública: Cuernavaca, México, 2013

Secretaría de Salud. Guía de Alimentos para la Población Mexicana. Available online: <http://www.imss.gob.mx/sites/all/statics/salud/guia-alimentos.pdf>

Mauritanian Food List

TOP 5 - SHELF STABLE

- Pasta
- White Rice
- Vegetable Oil
- Dry Black Beans
- Mac & Cheese

Avoid: Pork, alcohol and foods prepared with alcohol e.g. candies and cakes that include alcohol such as rum cake, with pure or artificial vanilla extract

In early February 2024, the Food Bank of the Rockies' Culturally Responsive Team held a listening session with 11 Mauritanian community members. The listening session asked questions about food access and availability and included a card sorting activity focused on understanding each individual's overall food preferences. During our conversation, community members named **oil, white rice, potatoes, and onions** as the most helpful items to receive during distributions. They also emphasized not wanting to receive any pork products. Above are the top 5 most preferred shelf-stable food items identified through the card sorting activity and items to avoid. Close to 100% of the population of Mauritania identifies as Sunni Muslim, the majority of the surveyed group expressed a preference for Halal foods. Please see "[Guide to Understanding Halal Foods](#)" linked in resources for further information on how to support this groups' dietary needs.

The list is further expanded by food category. Food items that were preferred by at least 50% of the group are listed below. Items in **bold** are typically available from Food Bank of the Rockies. All items subject to availability.

DAIRY

- Almond milk
- **Cow milk**
- Creamer
- **Fruit cow's yogurt**
- Goat milk
- Lactose free milk
- Plain cow's yogurt
- Powdered cow milk
- Shelf-stable cow's milk
- Sour cream
- **Yellow cheese**

MEATS/PROTEINS

- **Beef**
- Canned chicken
- **Canned tuna**
- **Chicken**
- Chicken broth
- **Chicken eggs**
- Fish
- Goat
- Halal meats*
- Plant-based "eggs"
- **Turkey**

Note: Anything with pork, gelatin, and lard is forbidden in Halal-observant communities.

**Halal refers to foods that are allowed to be eaten according to Islamic law based on how an animal is slaughtered. Some Islamic people may only eat Halal-certified meats.*

FLOURS/GRAINS

- **All-purpose flour**
- Corn tortillas
- Cornmeal
- Couscous
- Crackers
- Popping corn
- **Flour tortillas**
- Fufu/Cassava flour
- Millet
- **Pasta**
- Pita Bread

BEANS/LEGUMES

- **Black beans- dry**
- **Pinto beans- dry**
- **Kidney beans- canned**
- Kidney beans- dry

Dried beans are overall more preferred than canned.

RICE

- **Basmati**
- **Brown rice**
- Instant rice
- **Jasmine**
- Sticky rice (Thai sweet rice)
- Vermicelli (rice noodles)
- **White rice**

PRODUCE

- Anaheim Pepper
- Avocado
- Bell Peppers*
- Big Jim Pepper
- Brussels Sprouts
- Butternut Squash*
- **Carrots**
- Cassava / Yuca
- Cilantro
- Corn*
- Eggplant
- **Garlic**
- Ginger
- Green Beans
- Green Cabbage
- Habanero Peppers
- Hatch Pepper
- Indian Corn
- Lettuce - Iceberg
- Napa Cabbage
- Okra
- **Onions - Red**
- **Onions - White**
- **Onions - Yellow**
- Parsley
- Parsnips
- Pasilla Pepper
- Peas
- **Potatoes**
- Radishes
- Spaghetti Squash*
- Squash Acorn*
- Sweet Potatoes
- Turnip
- Yams
- Yellow Squash*

Fresh produce is usually preferred over canned or frozen.

**Items are sourced seasonally.*

FRUITS

- **Apples**
- Applesauce
- Apricots
- Banana
- Blackberries
- Blueberries
- **Canned Fruit**
- **Canned Tomatoes**
- Cantaloupe Melon*
- Cherries

- Currants
- **Dates**
- Dragon Fruit
- Durian
- **Fruit Jam / Jelly**
- Grapefruit
- Grapes
- Guanabana (Soursop)
- Honeydew Melon
- Kiwi
- Kumquat
- Lemon
- Lime
- Lychee
- Mango
- Nectarine
- Oranges*
- Papaya
- Peaches*
- Pears*
- Persimmon
- Pineapple
- Plantains
- Plums
- Pomegranate
- Quince
- Raisins
- Strawberries
- Tangerine
- **Tomato Paste**
- **Tomato Sauce**
- Tomatoes
- Watermelon*

**Items are sourced seasonally.*

HERBS/SPICES/BAKING

- Baking Powder
- **Bay Leaves**
- **Black Pepper**
- **Chili Powder**
- Coconut - Dried
- Condensed Milk
- Garlic Powder
- **Honey**
- Onion Powder
- Onion Salt
- **Salt**
- **Sugar - White**
- Yeast

Note: Avoid pure or artificial vanilla extract.

OILS/SAUCES/VINEGARS

- **Canola Oil**
- Coconut Oil
- **Ketchup**
- Mayonnaise
- Mustard
- Olive Oil
- Oyster Sauce
- Peanut Oil
- Rice Vinegar
- Sesame Oil
- Sunflower Oil
- **Vegetable oil**
- White Vinegar

SEEDS/NUTS

- **Almonds**

BEVERAGES

- Black Tea
- Bottled Water
- **Coffee - Ground**
- Coffee - Whole Beans
- Flavored Carbonated Water
- **Fruit Juice**
- Green Tea
- Mint Tea
- **Orange Juice**
- Soda

Close to 100% of the population of Mauritania identifies as Sunni Muslim. The country celebrates several of the same feasts and holidays observed in other Muslim countries.

Observed Holidays:

Ramadan: Ramadan is the ninth month of the Islamic Calendar and the official month of fasting for Muslims around the world. During Ramadan, individuals eat a pre-dawn meal (suhour), fast from sunrise to sunset, and then enjoy a post-sunset meal (iftar) each day. Ramadan concludes with a feast known as Eid-al-Fitr, where families and relatives gather to celebrate, pray, and share a meal together. Food items commonly used during Ramadan include dates, dried nuts, Halal meats, and sweets.

Islamic New Year: Islamic New Year marks the day the prophet Mohammed fled from Mecca to escape religious prosecution. It signifies the first day of the Islamic calendar and is sometimes observed with vegetarian diets or periods of fasting.

Mauritania Independence Day: November 28th signifies Mauritania's independence from France. *Thieboudienne* is considered the national dish of Mauritania and is prepared with fish, rice, and cooked vegetables in a tomato sauce.

Cultural Holiday Foods from Food Bank of the Rockies

Food Bank of the Rockies currently sources cultural holiday foods in recognition of Lunar New Year, Ramadan, and Navidad. [Please complete this survey](#) to indicate your interest in purchasing foods to support your neighbors' celebration of these holidays. This will enable us to do our best to accommodate the amounts needed. You can also provide further information regarding the holidays your neighbors may require specific foods to celebrate.

- **Items sourced in recognition of Ramadan:** Dried Dates, Almonds, Cashews, Pistachios, Broth, Dried Chickpeas, Dried Lentils, Cooking Oil, Jasmine Rice, Raisins, Plain Yogurt, and Halal Meat.
- **Find these items on Partner Express by searching “Culturally Responsive” in the description.** You may want to consider providing larger quantities per household during Ramadan as extended family and community often gather to eat.

Sources:

Guide to Understanding Halal Foods by Toronto Public Health

<https://www.halalrc.org/images/Research%20Material/Literature/Guide%20to%20Halal%20Foods.pdf>

Religion of Mauritania

<https://www.britannica.com/place/Mauritania/Religion>

Ramadan: A Month of Fasting

<https://nmaahc.si.edu/explore/stories/ramadan>

1st of Muhurram (Islamic New Year)

<https://provost.umich.edu/wp-content/uploads/2022/07/1st-of-Muharram.pdf>

Northern Arapaho Food List

TOP 5 - SHELF STABLE

- Blue Bird flour
- Coffee
- Oatmeal
- Pasta (plain)
- Vegetable oil or lard

BEANS

- Lima beans
- Pinto beans

Avoid: black beans, garbanzo beans, lentils

GRAINS

- All-purpose flour (Blue Bird brand)
- Cereal (Cheerios, Frosted Flakes, Malt-o-Meal preferred)
- Oatmeal
- Pasta (any, plain)
- Rice (white)

Bread is often made fresh, especially during ceremonies. Pasta especially macaroni, egg noodles, and spaghetti, are preferred.

MEATS/PROTEIN

- Beef (any, boiling meat and ground beef preferred)
- Chicken (any)
- Eggs (fresh)
- Pork (any, ham hocks, chops, or roasts preferred)

Avoid: tofu, frozen fish, processed meats, pre-seasoned meats

Meat is very important and is eaten every day. There are additional types of meats used during ceremony. Certain cuts of meat are preferred over others. Please reference cultural foods below.

DAIRY

- Butter
- Cheese (any)
- Cow's milk
- Powdered milk

Avoid: goat cheese, liquid eggs whites in a carton, almond milk

PRODUCE

- Avocados
- Bell peppers
- Cabbage
- Carrots
- Celery
- Corn (can)
- Cucumbers
- Green beans (can)
- Green onion
- Hominy
- Lemons
- Limes
- Onions
- Squash
- Sweet peppers
- Yams

FRUITS

- Apples
- Blueberries
- Oranges
- Pears
- Raspberries
- Red/ purple grapes
- Strawberries

Blueberries are very important. They are often used during ceremonies as substitutes for chokecherries.

OILS/SPICES

- Black pepper
- Garlic
- Lard
- Onion salt
- Seasoning salt
- Sugar
- Vegetable oil

Salt, black pepper, seasoning salt, and onion salt are used every day. White sugar is also used frequently.

OTHER

- Baking powder
- Coffee
- Corn starch
- Creamer
- Orange juice
- Tea (any, mint preferred)
- Water
- Yeast

Coffee is used every day. Some households may not have adequate running water so bottled water is often important to provide.

NON-FOOD ITEMS (Requested if available)

- Cleaning supplies
- Dog/ cat food
- Hygiene products
- Shampoo

CULTURAL FOOD

- Boiling meat (beef)
- Chokecherries
- Dry meat (a type of processing, usually using game or beef cuts)
- Fruits & veggies
- Indian corn
- Game meat: buffalo, elk, deer
- Salt pork
- Wild rice

Additional Notes:

The Northern Arapaho people make most foods fresh. They have also adopted some traditional Mexican foods into their diet.

In the Northern Arapaho tribe, the majority of the people are children and youth under the age of 24. They live on the Wind River Reservation and surrounding areas. There are multi-generational families that live in one home, with grandparents, children, and grandchildren. In some homes there are up to 16 people that live together.

Ceremonies:

Ceremonies are extremely important for the Northern Arapaho people. The Northern Arapaho have 5 major ceremonies. The dates of these ceremonies may vary from year to year.

Important Food Items:

Coffee, bread (fry bread ingredients: flour, milk, baking powder/ yeast, salt, oil/ lard), **meat** and **fruit**. Other important items include: Indian corn with ham shanks/ hocks. Water is essential during these times. Below is a list of important food items. Also reference the cultural food item section above.

Coffee (Any)

Bread – Fry bread, biscuits, pan bread. These are usually homemade fresh daily.

Meat – Boiling meat for soup, hamburger, roast. Primarily use beef and elk meat.

Fruit – Traditionally chokecherries are used but can be substituted with blueberries. Additional fresh fruit preferences include watermelon, bananas, oranges, strawberries.

Sources cited:

Feedback from Northern Arapaho Tribal Consultant

Surveys collected from Northern Arapaho Business Council

Surveys collected from 100+ Northern Arapaho community members through online surveys distributed on Wind River Reservation Northern Arapaho website and facebook page. Special care was taken to include Elder feedback. A focus group of 10 Northern Arapaho tribal members reviewed this document and provided additional feedback.

Russian Food List

TOP 5 - SHELF STABLE

- Buckwheat (groats/ kernels)
- Pasta (egg noodles preferred)
- Flour (any)
- Sunflower oil (unrefined)
- Yellow split peas

BEANS/LEGUMES

- Kidney beans
- Lima beans
- Yellow split peas

FLOURS/GRAINS

- All-purpose flour
- Barley (pearl)
- Buckwheat (dry groats/ kernels, flour)
- Oats (whole grain)
- Pasta (dry, egg noodles preferred)
- Rice (white)
- Rye flour
- Whole wheat flour

Avoid: White bread, bread older than 2 days

Buckwheat groats are a critical pantry staple. Breads must be within a day or two old or are considered stale and will not be eaten. This includes almost all bread from standard supermarkets. White bread is never preferred and may not be consumed. Many Russians make bread from scratch because of this.

MEATS/PROTEINS*

- Beef
- Bones (pork or beef)
- Chicken
- Eggs
- Fish (can herring, sprat/ sardine, or cured)
- Pig feet (frozen)
- Pork
- Sausage (fresh or cured)

Avoid: *Subject to religious dietary restrictions during pre-Christmas lent.

Whole and ground meats and cured meats are common. Tinned fish are also widely consumed with “sprats” and herring being preferred. Pig feet are used during Christmas for making traditional Aspic.

DAIRY*

- Butter
- Condensed milk
- Cow’s milk
- Eggs
- Sour cream

Avoid: Yellow/ cheddar cheese, *Subject to religious dietary restrictions during pre-Christmas lent.

Sour cream is used very often and families acquire it in larger volume containers. Sweetened condensed milk is used for traditional holiday desserts.

PRODUCE

- Apples
- Beets
- Berries (any)
- Cabbage (green)
- Carrots
- Corn
- Cucumber
- Dill
- Garlic
- Green onions
- Mushrooms (fresh, jarred, or dried)
- Onions
- Parsley
- Pears
- Peas
- Peppers (sweet, bell)
- Persimmons
- Potatoes
- Tangerines
- Tomato
- Zucchini

Persimmons are typically expensive in an American supermarket but are used extensively when in season (winter) and purchased from international markets/ ethnic grocers.

OILS/SPICES

- Horseradish
- Lard
- Mayonnaise
- Mustard
- Poppy seeds
- Rosemary
- Salt
- Pepper
- Sunflower oil (unrefined)

Sunflower oil is the primary oil used for cooking and is preferably unrefined.

OTHER

- Black tea (Ceylon preferred)
- Dried fruits and nuts
- Honey
- Pickles (natural)
- Sauerkraut (natural)
- Yeast

Avoid: Peanut butter

For all pickled and jarred products, those without added food coloring, vinegar, or sugar are preferred.

Holidays:

The Russian Orthodox Church uses the Julian calendar to determine the dates of religious holidays. Therefore, Christmas and Easter are often observed on later dates than most western countries. Russian Orthodox religion also has some holidays that follow religious dietary restrictions. Below is a selection of important holidays.

Christmas: As the Russian Orthodox Church keeps to the Julian Calendar, Christmas is celebrated on January 7 with traditional preparations of aspic (gelled meat), meat pies,

savory dumplings, fish, and pickled vegetables. A period of fasting prior to Christmas day eliminates meat, dairy, and oil from Orthodox diets. The 12 fasting foods usually served on Orthodox Christmas Eve include barley, honey, stewed prunes, pierogi, sauerkraut, potatoes, lima beans, garlic, Lenten bread, mushroom soup, and salt.

New Year: Secular New Year celebrations on January 1 often include red or black caviar, citrus fruits (especially tangerines), pickled vegetables, “Olivier” potato salad, and baked duck with apples and pears.

Sources:

Interview with Colorado Russian Center for the Arts and Humanities

12 Christmas Dishes in Traditional Russian Cuisine at <https://www.topuniversities.com/where-to-study/europe/russia/12-christmas-dishes-traditional-russian-cuisine>

Living Orthodox Traditions: Russian Christmas Eve Supper at <http://orthodoxtraditions.blogspot.com/2013/12/russian-christmas-eve-supper-holy-supper.html>

Somali Food List

TOP 5 - SHELF STABLE

- Basmati rice (sela/ parboiled)
- Coffee/ black tea (Lipton)
- Lentils
- Pasta noodles (plain)
- Teff flour

BEANS/LEGUMES

- Adzuki beans (dry)
- Peas (dry)
- Lentils (dry)

Avoid: Canned food

GRAINS

- All-purpose flour
- Basmati rice (sela/ parboiled)
- Cornmeal
- Flour tortillas (fresh and refrigerated)
- Fufu (made from cassava flour)
- Millet (hulled)
- Pasta noodles (plain)
- Sorghum flour
- Teff flour

Bread is often made fresh. Many different types of flour are used but teff and all-purpose flour are most common. Flour tortillas, kept refrigerated, are often used as a replacement for the dough used to make sambusas, a traditional and commonly eaten fried pastry with a savory filling. Rice should be “sela” aka parboiled, and is often of the basmati varietal. Dried wheat-based pasta noodles, including lasagna and spaghetti, are commonly used.

MEATS/PROTEINS

- Beef (any, stew beef preferred)
- Chicken
- Eggs (fresh)
- Goat

Avoid: Any pork products including sausages or spam, egg white cartons. *Subject to religious dietary restrictions during some holidays.

The cut of meat does not matter as long as it is fresh. Often, meat will be chopped up and put in a stew. All meat must be processed halal in keeping with Islamic law. Goat meat is the primary protein staple and is eaten daily in Somalia, however, immigrants often supplement for other proteins like chicken.

DAIRY

- Butter
- Camel's milk (powdered)
- Cow's milk
- Eggs (fresh)
- Goat milk (fresh)
- Yogurt

Cheese is not commonly eaten by recent immigrants but a second generation would eat cheese. Camel milk is the preferred milk followed by cow milk and goat milk.

PRODUCE

- Banana
- Banana leaves
- Carrots
- Cilantro
- Cucumbers
- Eggplant
- Garlic
- Ginger
- Green beans
- Green chilies
- Green peppers
- Jalapeno pepper
- Lemons
- Lettuce
- Lime
- Onions
- Oranges
- Red peppers
- Tomatoes
- White potatoes

Avoid: Canned food

Onions, bananas, and potatoes are staple foods and are used frequently.

OILS/SPICES

- Berbere spice mix
- Black pepper
- Canola oil
- Cardamom
- Cayenne pepper
- Cinnamon
- Cloves
- Coriander
- Cumin
- Cumin seeds
- Fenugreek
- Olive oil
- Turmeric

Whole spices are generally preferred over ground.

OTHER

- Black tea (Lipton brand preferred)
- Coconut milk
- Coffee (any)
- Honey
- Peanut butter
- Sugar (white, powdered)
- Tomato paste

Additional Details:

In Somalia, most foods are fresh. Canned or frozen foods are uncommon. Therefore, many Somali pantry users will not use canned foods.

In general, most food is made fresh (for instance, homemade salad dressing or spaghetti sauce). Pre-packaged meals like mac & cheese or canned soups are not usually used.

Cooking is often done by women in Somalia, while monetary transactions and driving are typically performed by men. Single male clients therefore may prefer pre-prepared or pre-packaged items like sandwich bread. In some cases, an individual man may be responsible for acquiring food for the entire household.

Holidays:

Somalia has some holidays that follow religious dietary restrictions. While Somalia has a variety of religions, the majority of recent Somali immigrants to Morgan County follow Islam. Due to this, pork is never eaten in keeping with Islamic law and all meat must be halal.

Eid al-Fitr and Ramadan: During the month of Ramadan, Muslim Somalis will fast from sunrise to sunset. Many traditional foods are prepared for the pre-dawn and evening meals, including staples such as sambusas and spiced meat-centered dishes with rice, pasta, and vegetables as sides. Eid al-Fitr marks the breaking of the fast and is commonly celebrated with Cambaabur bread topped with sugar and yogurt, dates, beef, butter and coffee.

Sources:

Interviews with One Morgan County and Rocky Mountain Welcome Center

Food recommendations from Metro Caring

Decker, Jennifer. Eating Habits of Members of the Somali Community: Discussion Summary

Hassan, Hawa. 2020. In Bibi's Kitchen: The Recipes and Stories of Grandmothers from the Eight African Countries that Touch the Indian Ocean

Gravitt, Kaitlin. Food Insecurity within Immigrant Communities in Georgia

Ukrainian Cultural Foods List

Items in **bold** are typically available from Food Bank of the Rockies subject to availability.

DAIRY*

- Butter
- Cottage cheese
- Sour cream
- White cheese
- Cow's milk (full fat)
- Plain cow's milk yogurt (full fat)
- Fruit cow's milk yogurt
- Condensed milk

Avoid: Processed cheese.

*Subject to religious dietary restrictions during fasting periods.

Sour cream is used very often and families acquire it in larger volume containers. Sweetened condensed milk is used for traditional holiday desserts.

MEATS/PROTEINS*

- **Eggs**
- **Chicken**
- Fish
- **Canned tuna** / herring / sardines
- **Beef**
- Turkey
- **Pork**
- Bones (pork or beef)
- Pig feet (frozen)
- Sausage (fresh or cured)
- Ham/Salami

*Subject to religious dietary restrictions during fasting periods.

Whole and ground meats and cured meats are common. Tinned fish are also widely consumed, with "sprats" and herring being preferred. Pig feet are used during Christmas for making traditional Aspic.

FLOURS/GRAINS

- Quinoa
- Couscous
- **Rice (white)**
- **Wheat bread**
- Rye bread
- Buckwheat (groats/kernels)
- Millet
- **Pasta (dry)**
- **All-purpose flour**
- Rye flour
- Wheat flour (high protein)
- **Oatmeal**
- Granola

Avoid: White bread and bread older than 2 days.

Buckwheat groats are a critical pantry staple/everyday meal in Ukrainian cuisine. Bread must be within a day or two old or is considered stale and will not be eaten. This includes almost all bread from standard supermarkets.

BEANS/LEGUMES

- **Lentils**
- Kidney beans
- Yellow split peas
- Green split peas

FRUIT

- **Apples**
- Apricots
- Bananas
- Blackberries
- Blueberries
- Cantaloupe
- Cherries
- Currants
- Dates
- Grapes
- Honeydew melon
- Kiwi
- **Lemon**
- Mango
- **Nectarines**
- Oranges
- Peaches
- **Pears**
- Persimmons
- Pineapple
- **Plums**
- Pomegranate
- Strawberries
- Tangerines
- Tomato
- **Watermelon**
- Dried fruit (apricot/cherries/plums)
- **Raisins**

OTHER PRODUCE/VEGETABLES/HERBS

- Asparagus
- Avocado
- Basil
- **Beets**
- Broccoli
- **Green cabbage**
- **Carrots**
- Cauliflower
- Celery
- Chives
- Cilantro
- Corn (fresh or **canned**)
- Cucumber
- Dill
- Eggplant
- Garlic (**minced garlic**)
- **Ginger**
- Green beans
- Green onion
- Leeks
- Iceberg lettuce
- Endive/Frisee lettuce
- Mushrooms (fresh, jarred, or dried)
- **Onions (red, yellow, white)**
- Parsley
- Peas (fresh or **canned**)
- Bell peppers
- **Sweet potatoes**
- **Potatoes**
- Radishes
- Snap peas
- Spinach
- **Yellow squash**
- **Zucchini**

OILS/SPICES

- **Salt**
- **Pepper**
- **Cinnamon (ground or whole)**
- Turmeric
- Berbere spice mix
- **Paprika**
- **Bay leaves**
- **Rosemary**
- **Oregano**
- Garlic powder
- Horseradish
- Lard
- Mayonnaise
- Mustard
- Sesame seeds
- Flax seeds
- Poppy seeds
- Pine nuts

- Olive oil
- Sunflower oil (unrefined)
- Sesame oil
- White vinegar
- Soy sauce
- Fish sauce
- **Ketchup**

Sunflower oil (preferably unrefined) is the primary oil used for cooking.

OTHER

- **Nuts (pistachios, almonds, walnuts)**
- **Jams**
- **Honey**
- Sugar (white)
- Pickles (natural)
- Sauerkraut (natural)
- Baking powder
- Baking soda
- Yeast

Avoid: Peanut butter

For all pickled and jarred products, those without added food coloring, vinegar, or sugar are preferred.

BEVERAGES

- Black tea
- Orange juice
- Bottled water
- Coffee (ground or whole bean)
- **Fruit juice**

Holidays:

Many Ukrainians practice Eastern Orthodox Christianity (over 88% of the religious population). The second most common religion is Catholicism (16%) followed by Islam and Judaism. The Eastern Orthodox Church uses the Julian calendar to determine the dates of religious holidays. Therefore, Christmas and Easter are often observed on later dates than most western countries. Eastern Orthodox religion also has some holidays that follow religious dietary restrictions.

Fasting:

There are four major fasting periods in the Orthodox liturgical calendar:

- Christmas Fast, lasting 40 days from November 15 to December 24 (fish can be eaten up to December 17, except on Wednesdays and Fridays)
- Fast of Lent, the 40 days leading up to Holy Week and the week itself
- Fast of the Holy Apostles, which runs from All Saints’ Day (which depends on the date of Easter) up to the eve of the Feast of Saints Peter and Paul on June 28
- Fast of the Dormition of the Virgin Mary, lasting from August 1 to August 15

Below is a selection of important holidays.

Christmas: Christmas is celebrated on January 7 with traditional preparations of aspic (gelled meat), meat pies, savory dumplings, fish, and pickled vegetables. A fasting period before Christmas Day eliminates meat, dairy, and oil from Orthodox diets. The 12 fasting foods usually served on Orthodox Christmas Eve include barley, honey, stewed prunes, pierogi, sauerkraut, potatoes, lima beans, garlic, Lenten bread, mushroom soup, and salt.

The main dish at the Christmas table is kutia – a mix of boiled grains, honey, nuts, poppy seeds, dried fruits, and other toppings.

New Year: Secular New Year celebrations on January 1 often include red or black caviar, citrus fruits (especially tangerines), pickled vegetables, “Olivier” potato salad, and baked duck with apples and pears.

Masnytsia (aka Butter Week): Masnytsia is an ancient Eastern Slavic holiday that celebrates the end of winter and welcomes spring. Masnytsia doesn’t have a designated date – it is usually celebrated in late February or early March, before the beginning of the Great Fast, the most important fasting season. The celebration lasts for one week. Masnytsia has existed in Slavic cultures since pagan times. It is believed that this holiday was dedicated either to Jarilo, the god of the sun, or Veles, the god of livestock and welfare. Traditional food on Masnytsia includes dishes made with cheese and butter. During Masnytsia, Ukrainians eat varenyky (dumplings), pancakes, syrnyky (cottage cheese pancakes), and various desserts.

Easter: Orthodox Easter is the most significant and sacred season of the Eastern Christian church’s calendar. The date of Orthodox Easter changes every year between April 4 and May 8, following the first full moon after Passover. The annual holiday consists of a series of celebrations or movable feasts commemorating the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Easter begins with Great Lent, 40 days of self-examination and fasting (including Sundays), which starts on Clean Monday and culminates on Lazarus Saturday. Clean Monday falls seven weeks before Easter Sunday. In many Eastern churches, the Lenten fast is still observed with considerable strictness, meaning no meat is consumed, nor any animal products (eggs, milk, butter, cheese), and fish only on certain days. Holy Saturday is a day of strict fasting for Eastern Orthodox Christians, while families stay busy preparing for the Easter meal. Usually, the Lenten fast is broken after the midnight mass with traditional Paskha Easter bread cake.

Sources:

<https://vidviday.ua/blog/en/ukraine-traditions-holidays/>

<https://www.learnreligions.com/orthodox-easter-overview-700616>

Food Preference surveys completed by members of Ukrainians of Colorado <https://www.ukrainiansofcolorado.org/>

Vietnamese Food List

TOP 5 - SHELF STABLE

- Mung beans (dry)
- Jasmine rice
- Fish sauce
- Soy sauce
- Pasta noodles (plain)

BEANS/LEGUMES

- Mung beans (dry)

Dried mung beans are an important protein source and also used for sprouting.

MEATS/PROTEINS

- Beef
- Bones (any)
- Chicken
- Eggs (fresh)
- Fish (canned tuna or frozen fish)
- Pork
- Shrimp
- Spam (canned)

Avoid: Pre-seasoned meat, egg white cartons

Any type or cut of meat can be used as long as it is not pre-seasoned (aka no “taco meat.”) Soups are often made using beef or pork bones or chicken feet. Pork belly is a celebratory cut that is especially important during Lunar New Year.

GRAINS

- All- purpose or bread flour
- Glutinous rice flour
- Jasmine rice
- Pasta noodles (plain)
- Rice noodles (dry)
- Sticky rice (aka Thai sweet rice or glutinous rice)

Avoid: Pasta with added flavoring, plain white rice

Jasmine rice is a critical staple, eaten daily. A 5lb bag will last 1 week for a family of 4. Sticky rice is used to make desserts especially during Lunar New Year celebrations. Dried, plain pasta of any kind, but especially macaroni or seashell shape, are used in soups. Pasta that contains additives (box macaroni and cheese, for example) would not be used.

DAIRY

Vietnamese generally do not eat dairy due to dietary intolerance. They will typically throw away any cheese, milk, or milk products with the exception of condensed milk.

- Condensed milk

Avoid: All other dairy products

PRODUCE

- Bean sprouts
- Beets
- Broccoli
- Carrots
- Cauliflower
- Celery
- Cilantro
- Cucumber

- Garlic
- Ginger
- Green cabbage
- Green onion
- Leafy/ salad greens
- Lemongrass
- Lime
- Mustard greens
- Napa cabbage
- Onion (white preferred)
- Parsley
- Salad greens
- Tomatoes
- Yellow or green bell pepper

Avoid: Potatoes

Leafy salad type greens of any kind are frequently used but mustard greens are preferred. Potatoes are not eaten.

OILS/ SPICES

- Baking powder
- Coconut milk
- Fish sauce
- Rice vinegar
- Salt
- Sesame oil
- Soy sauce
- Sugar (palm or rock)
- Turmeric
- White vinegar
- Yeast

Fish sauce and soy sauce are critical pantry staples and used in high volume. A small 15oz bottle of soy sauce may last a family 1 week only.

Additional Details/Holidays:

Lunar New Year: Lunar New Year is a nature holiday celebrated in Vietnamese culture through feasting and festivities over 5-7 days usually in January or February. Large quantities of food are cooked and shared between families and friends to usher in good luck for the coming year. The specific dishes prepared vary depending on the region. Many consider it bad luck to work or cook during the first 3 days of the Lunar New Year, and businesses are often closed during this time.

Lunar New Year feasts often include pork belly in a sauce cooked overnight and served with an egg and Jasmine rice. Consuming bitter melon soup symbolizes good luck. Platters of dried fruits and nuts are offered to guests and family alongside savory bánh chưng cakes made out of pork, mung beans, glutinous rice, and banana leaves. For many Vietnamese families, these square cakes represent the Earth, the reunion of families, and gratitude for ancestors.

Mid- Autumn Festival: Also known as the Children's Festival or Moon Festival, this celebration occurs in either September or October depending on the Lunar Calendar. Preparations begin weeks in advance including creating decorations, practicing traditional dance, and making foods. Citrus and other fruits are especially important as symbolic table pieces and specialty items like Moon Cakes (made out of either sticky rice or a wheat flour and lard dough with savory or sweet fillings) are customarily enjoyed. Traditional foods vary by region.

Sources:

Interview with Denver Health Vietnamese American Community Liaison

Food recommendations from Kaizen Food Rescue and Metro Caring