

Wild and local food potluck guide



We all need to rest and replenish our energy, but often our meals are eaten in a flash while we check our phones. But when we take the time to enjoy our food, with like-minded people and in a warm and welcoming space, it can inspire us, help us tell a story, and nourish not just our bodies but our souls. The environment movement is built on this sharing and coming together, as much as it is built on organising and taking action.

The goals of an ACF wild and local food potluck

So why is this important to do? How does it help us build people power, change the story and fix the system? A good potluck gathering will:

- Provide a fun, welcoming and relaxing space to chill out and spend some leisure time together after all the hard work we've put in.
- Allow volunteers to come together to share stories and feelings, reflect on what we've achieved, and feel supported in a safe space.
- Connect with your local environment and community by sourcing your food locally.
- Help to build and strengthen the relationships and community that we'll need to rely on in order to take powerful actions in the future.

What is a potluck, and where should you host it?

Traditionally, everyone brings one dish to share that will feed around 8-10 people, so you'll end up with plenty of food (and leftovers!). For a big group, you may need to ask guests to bring their own cutlery, crockery or drinking vessel as well. When it comes to set up and clean up, a group effort will take the pressure off the host/s, so don't forget to ask for help!

Welcoming your ACF community into your home is a beautiful way to bring everyone together, and is always greatly appreciated. But you may not have the space or live in an area that is difficult to get to, in which case, look for another venue that is more central and appropriate, such as a community hall, public library or school/university space. It really depends on how big you want the event to be, versus how intimate. This is up to you and your group.

Wild and local food

Connect with your environment and community by sourcing your food locally and in keeping with the seasons.

- You can have a seasonal theme to your potluck – Winter, Spring, Summer or Autumn!
- Guests may have fruit trees with abundant harvests to share.
- Your local farmers' market will have food packed with amazing taste and stories too!
- A participant may know where to forage for wild foods.
- Telling stories about the food you bring is a great way to create a sense of community and shared culture for your group, as well as acknowledging our connection to nature.

Roles

These roles might seem obvious, but it's good to think about these simple things so that the night runs smoothly. It's best to divide the tasks so that no one feels overwhelmed and everyone can enjoy themselves.

Host/s

This person will organise the venue, create an invite and promote the event. They may also suggest places where guests can find locally-grown, sustainable produce (see guidelines on page 4).

Facilitator

This person is responsible on the night for supporting the Host, and may choose to step into the role of facilitator for moments when the group comes together. They can also help in the lead-up to the event with promotion and venue.

Photographer (where necessary)

Is there someone in your group who can take photos and put them on the ACF Community Slack Channel?

Organisation Checklist

A Few Weeks Before

- ☐ **Find someone to lead this with you.** You'll need everyone to pitch in with set up and clean up on the night, but there's also work to be done in the lead up. Ask for help!
- ☐ **Choose a venue** - someone's home, or a public room. Consider distance to public transport, appropriateness for your group size, and accessibility for your group needs. If there is a cost for the venue, you can ask guests to contribute towards this fee (a few dollars each is ok).
- ☐ **Register your gathering [here](#).** Then:
 - a) If you're an ACF Community Group, set up your event webpage in Action Centre, or
 - b) If you're not (yet!) in an ACF Community Group, an ACF People Power team member will get in touch to help you set up an event webpage and help you promote your gathering.
 - You don't need to list your private address - you can send this to guests in a private message or we can send it in an email only to people who RSVP.
- ☐ **Promote your event:** (but consider how big you want the event to be verses how intimate)
 - Online on social media.

- You can design flyers using our templates [here](#). You can leave them in local coffee shops or other places that allow flyers.
- Send an email out to your friends, your ACF community group, or other ACF supporters in your area who we'll get you in touch with.
- Give people a text or a call - it's the best way to make sure they know about your event!

One Week Before

- ☐ **Ask guests to post** what they are planning to bring in the Facebook event, if you have one - this will help to avoid 15 lasagnas and no salad!
- ☐ **Confirm roles** of who from your group will be playing supporting roles on the night.

Day Before

- ☐ **Send a confirmation text** that the potluck is going ahead, with a reminder of the details, such as what to bring other than a plate of food, if needed (drinks, cutlery, cups, plates etc).

Day of the Potluck

- ☐ **Arrive/set up early**, together with your helpers of course! Hosts/facilitators could wear something that identifies you as being with ACF (a t-shirt, badge, etc) if you choose.
- ☐ **Greet and sign-in group members.** It can be intimidating for people when they are still getting to know a group. It is the Facilitator's main priority to welcome people, and connect them to others as they arrive. Use this [sign in form](#) so that your group as well as ACF can get in touch with new members to welcome them.
- ☐ **Create a fun and safe culture for volunteers** and one that strengthens the ACF Community. Make connections with and between participants. Find out how they are connected to ACF. You could suggest some 'getting to know you' questions like these:
 - What's your favourite place to be in nature?
 - How did you get involved with ACF?
 - What gives you hope?
 - What's the best/most recent conversation you've had with a stranger (or through your work with ACF)?
- ☐ **Encourage guests to talk about** the food they've brought and how it is connected to the local area. Provide some paper or cards for guests to write down the ingredients of their dish, paying attention to food intolerances/allergies.
- ☐ **Take some time** to talk about ACF, what we work on and how it is connected to your community. There's a briefing on page 5 that you can follow. Make sure that you invite people to the next community group event.

☐ **Take pictures!** Make sure that you get a group shot. Put them up on the ACF Community Slack channel, or on your personal page. Don't forget to ask people if they're happy for you to take their photos and post on social media.

☐ **Make sure people have a way to get home** - encourage and facilitate carpooling.

After the potluck

☐ **Add the attendees to your group list** by uploading the sign in-sheet [here](#) or marking the attendance on Action Centre.

☐ **Send a follow up email** to participants thanking people for coming, and giving them some extra information about ACF's campaigns, how to get involved in your group and what activity you've got happening next (with a way for them to RSVP).

Guidelines

- **Encourage people to shop for local produce** by suggesting farmers markets in your area. See our recipe suggestions at the end of this guide for some ideas - but always check if this produce is in fact native or farmed close to you! You can also check out this great Australia-wide guide to local, sustainable produce: www.localharvest.org.au
- **Check for dietary requirements, including food intolerances/allergies.** In your invite, ask guests to provide you with this information, and share it with the group in your reminder email or text (1 week before) so they can prepare a dish accordingly.
- **Ask guests to come prepared.** They should bring everything needed to serve their dish. As host, you have already loaned out a kitchen and a dining room, and there will be plenty to clean when all the guests have departed, so they can help out by bringing some things from home. Let your guests know if they should bring their own cutlery, plate or cup as well.
- **If your guests don't have time to make something, tell them not to worry.** It's more important that they be there to meet with everyone than stay at home worrying about what to bring. You could suggest buying some local wine, desserts from a bakery, or helping out with hosting duties on the night.

Potluck Welcome & Briefing

2min	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Welcome everyone, introduce yourself and ACF. Explain that ACF is Australia's national environment organisation. We are half a million people who speak out for a world where forests, rivers, people and wildlife thrive. Explain your role with ACF and make it clear that you are a volunteer host/facilitator. • Explain that you'll be doing a short briefing, and that people should sign in if they haven't already while you are doing so.
2mins	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Acknowledge the Traditional Owners of the land you are meeting on. There are lots of places you can find out more about which Country you're on or how to do an Acknowledgement of Country.
3mins	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Get everyone to introduce themselves. Those that have formal roles or are part of an ACF community group should mention so.
1min	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ask everyone to introduce their dish, sharing the source if possible (e.g. local farmers' market, their own garden, or wild, foraged ingredients)
2mins	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explain that the goal of a wild and local food potluck is to connect people to nature and the food grown near you, to build a sense of community around our common values, and to better understand the places we're trying to protect, and how ACF seeks to do so.

Potluck Debrief & Close

1min	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Thank everyone for coming. Note that you will be following up with everyone via email. Ask if everyone has a way of getting home.
2min	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Give them a pitch about joining your group (or starting one with you). There'll be more info on how to do this in ACF's Community Group webinar, which you can invite them to here. Or, invite them to the next thing that is happening!
3mins	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do a closing circle, where everyone shares (for example, asking people to share in one sentence something that they learnt about local food, ACF's work or someone in the group).

Stir-fried Australian native greens

Chef Kylie Kwong says, "It's my favourite dish. It celebrates the diversity and beauty of native Australian plants and is incredibly wholesome. Use a mixture of greens depending on what's available. Seek these beauties out at growers markets and specialist greengrocers - the more we ask for them, the more available they'll become."

INGREDIENTS

- 60 ml peanut oil (¼ cup)
- 3 garlic cloves, bruised
- 50 gm saltbush leaves (see note)
- 50 gm warrigal green leaves (see note)
- 2 tbsp tamari
- 50 gm karkalla leaves (see note)
- 50 gm bower spinach leaves (see note)
- ½ tsp sesame oil

METHOD

1. Heat oil in a wok over high heat until shimmering, then add garlic and ½ tsp salt flakes and stir-fry until fragrant (30 seconds).
2. Add saltbush and warrigal greens and stir-fry until just wilting (2-3 minutes).
3. Add tamari and reduce slightly (30 seconds to 1 minute), then add 60ml water and stir-fry for another 30 seconds to reduce.
4. Add karkalla, bower spinach and sesame oil, and stir-fry to combine (30 seconds), then serve immediately.

NOTES

Saltbush and warrigal greens are available from select specialist greengrocers; karkalla (also known as pig-face), is available from select nurseries; bower spinach is available from select farmers' markets.

Keep in mind that these ingredients might not be native to or farmed in your area, so you'll need to do a bit of research to find what's available and sustainably sourced near you.

Source: Gourmet Traveller

<https://www.gourmettraveller.com.au/recipes/chefs-recipes/stir-fried-australian-native-greens-8619>

Macadamia, Bush Tomato and Pumpkin Scones

Bush tomato is a small native berry and when dried it has a caramel-like flavour and slightly tangy acidity.

Ingredients

- 2 cups self-raising flour
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1 tablespoon sugar
- 60g butter, cold, diced
- 1/2 cup macadamias, roasted, roughly chopped
- 1 cup bush tomatoes, finely chopped
- 3/4 cup pumpkin, cooked, mashed
- 3/4 cup buttermilk
- extra buttermilk, for brushing

Method

1. Preheat oven to 200°C fan-forced. Line a baking tray with non-stick baking paper.
2. Sift the flour and salt into a large bowl, stir in the sugar. Use your fingers to rub in the butter until the mixture resembles fine breadcrumbs. Stir through the macadamias and bush tomatoes.
3. Make a well in the centre and pour in the pumpkin and buttermilk. Using a flat bladed knife, stir until a sticky dough forms. Turn onto a lightly floured surface and knead lightly until smooth. Using a lightly floured rolling pin, gently roll dough out to a 2cm thickness.
4. Cut into rounds with a 6cm cutter, dipping the cutter into the flour each time before cutting. Place the scones close together on the lined baking tray. Brush the tops with a little buttermilk and bake for 12 to 15 minutes or until golden and hollow when tapped on top.

NOTES

Keep in mind that these ingredients might not be native to or farmed in your area, so you'll need to do a bit of research to find what's available and sustainably sourced near you.

Source: Lifestyle

<https://www.lifestylefood.com.au/recipes/25120/macadamia-bush-tomato-and-pumpkin-scones>