



IDEAS AND INSPIRATION FOR EMERGENCY FOOD PROVIDERS AND GROUPS SUPPORTING COMMUNITIES LIVING WITH FOOD INSECURITY

How can you be part of the shift from a hand out to a hand up, and take some small steps to help our communities to move out of food poverty?

Open Kitchen in partnership with Onward Homes have created a series of recipe videos. The recipes are low cost in terms of ingredients and can use fresh, tinned or frozen veg (or any mix). The recipes all use a slow cooker to also reduce energy costs associated with cooking. The recipes are all healthy and tasty, and can incorporate most veggies to help reduce food waste.

The recipe videos, along with PDFs of each recipe and method can be found on our website;

<https://www.openkitchenmcr.co.uk/recipes>

The recipes are completely free to share, watch, download, and are available to anyone. Please feel free to share these across your networks if they might be helpful.

To accompany these recipes, we wanted to offer suggestions for emergency food aid providers on how you might use the videos, and other resources to support individuals and families to reduce food and fuel costs this autumn and winter, while staying healthy and eating well.

Obviously not all of these suggestions will be suitable for all communities, and they are all dependent on some level of funding or resource, but we hope some of them might be helpful.



A FULL PACKAGE SUPPORT PROJECT FOR A HEALTHY BODY AND A HEALTHY BUDGET

Your group could apply for funding to provide a package to families or individuals you support to allow them to eat better and reduce costs this winter. The package could include;

- A slow cooker,
- Additional basic kitchen equipment where needed (knife, chopping board, etc)
- Mobile phone data (to watch the recipe videos) or just provide the full set of recipe sheets available to download for free from Open Kitchen's website.
- The set of full ingredients for each recipe (could be provided at a rate of one recipe per week as part of an ongoing project)

A project like this is best delivered by groups who have been working with individuals or families for a sustained period and know them well.

Support workers or volunteers who know their customers well might be better able to identify people who will most benefit from a package like this, and avoid the potential for a large number of people to accept the offer of a slow cooker just because it's free, rather than because it will get used.



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LOWER BUDGET PROJECT OPTIONS

Obviously delivering the above is reliant on securing funding, and could potentially cost over £100 per household supported. Lower budget options might include;

Ingredient Bags & Recipes

All of the recipes in Open Kitchen's new recipe series have been made in a slow cooker, but can be easily adapted to be cooked in a pan on a hob. If the individuals or families you are supporting have working basic kitchen facilities, you could create a project that provides all of the ingredients for each recipe, the PDF recipe and method sheet, and the link to the recipe video (for those who do have data / wifi).

Start a community bulk buying scheme!

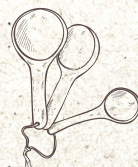
Herbs, spices and flavourings like soy sauce make creating healthy, tasty food at home much easier, and once you have built up that "larder" of a basic range of herbs, spices, stock cubes, lentils, etc, it can make trying new recipes really cheap and easy... But how do you get to that if you're on a really limited budget?

Host a cooking demo or class!

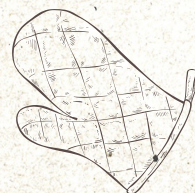
This can be a nice way of teaching people a new recipe, while helping community members to potentially make some new friends locally. People can gather for a demo or a hands on cooking class (depending on space, equipment, etc), and then eat together at the end of the session. Some demos even purposefully make a large quantity of a dish so attendees can take home an extra portion or two for later in the week.

Drystore Ingredients & Recipes

Provide the dry store ingredients for each recipe (herbs, spices, etc). These are usually the most expensive part of trying any new recipe, and can be a significant barrier to successfully cooking from scratch (i.e. cooking healthy dishes that the whole family will actually eat).



Emergency food providers could consider starting a community bulk buying scheme. The food pantry or food bank bulk buys larger bags of herbs and spices, which are generally much cheaper (particularly from wholesalers or international supermarkets), bags them down into smaller containers, and offers them to customers free or at cost.



We hope some of these suggestions are helpful! And we'll keep posting new recipes that are healthy, budget friendly, reduce food waste, and super tasty throughout this season! If you have a suggestion or a specific issue you are tackling that we might be able to provide recipes or support.

Check out the recipes videos & PDFs on our website
<https://www.openkitchenmcr.co.uk/recipes>

Subscribe to our YouTube channel
<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCZ5XF-Rh3lqfQRx-P0mUf6Qw>



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