



### Useful kitchen equipment

Providing safe, good quality, healthy foods and drinks requires adequate kitchen equipment to prepare and serve menu options. Sufficient equipment allows outlets to prepare meals that are appealing, flavoursome and can help to ensure foods are ready for service in peak times.

The following examples include useful appliances that may help to provide a greater range of healthier choices.

#### *Under \$500*

- non-stick cookware – reduces the amount of added fat required for cooking;
- rice cooker – allows staff to cook batches of steamed rice with minimal impact on duties;
- soup kettle – provides bench top heated storage and serving;
- vegetable slicer or mandolin – reduces time to prepare sandwich and salad ingredients.

#### *Under \$1,000*

- sandwich press – toasts sandwiches, rolls or kebabs;
- pasta cooker – a bench top appliance that cooks fresh pasta and similar products in two minutes; can also be used to blanch vegetables;
- salamander or toaster griller – grills, toasts and finishes off toppings such as cheese;
- stainless steel benches – allows additional preparation area.

#### *Under \$3,000*

- char-grill plate – grills meats or patties separating excess fat from food during cooking;
- convection microwave – allows convection (dry heat to produce crisp browned finish) or microwave heating; also allows for combination cooking that alternates between both heating methods to reduce cooking times.

#### *Over \$3,000*

- refrigerated salad bar or sandwich well with air curtain – allows safe preparation of sandwiches, wraps or salads at less than 5°C;
- high-speed ovens – uses standard convection, microwave and high-speed heated air which can cook a range of oven-baked products in a short time eg. a fresh pizza can be fully cooked with a crisp base in two minutes;
- refrigerated display cabinet – allows refrigerated storage and display of pre-made menu items eg. sandwiches, salads, fruit salad, yoghurt and fruit cups.

Making healthier choices also involves sound management and good organisation of food outlets. Other aspects to consider include:

- prepare rosters that are tailored to busy times and include breaks for staff;
- maintain well functioning equipment;
- submit requests for additional or replacement equipment when required;
- ensure sufficient preparation space is available;
- ensure appropriate and sufficient storage areas to maintain the integrity of menu items.

Changing the way foods are prepared is another way to increase the variety of healthy choices on a menu if new equipment is not accessible. Examples include:

- use a spray oil on flat grill plates;
- use baking paper on trays for baked items;
- consider oven baking or steaming foods that were deep-fried (ie. dim sims, chips or wedges);
- use minimal oil when pan frying;
- serve dressings and condiments separately.