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**Karuk Community Health Clinic**

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# Karuk Tribe

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## KARUK TRIBE FOOD POLICY

The Karuk Tribe is a sovereign government and nation that regularly provides food to tribal members through Head Start, senior lunches and summer youth programs, as well as other Tribe-sponsored events. This food policy is a vision for maintaining excellent nutrition and health for our members, that is in alignment with USDA dietary regulations, and that supports the development of a food system that supports the Karuk economy, cultural traditions and our Territory's ecological sustainability. The following policy serves as a guide for food-related purchases and preparations when food is served at any Tribe-sponsored event.

Food provided will strive to meet the following guidelines upon availability:

***Fresh and minimally pre-processed when purchased***

Processed and packaged foods typically contain more preservatives, less nutritional value and generate more waste materials than fresh foods. Heavily processed sugars like high-fructose corn syrup and granulated sugars involve large-scale industrial processing, and contribute to diseases like diabetes. Industrially processed oils and preservatives often disguise fat content, and are new to the Karuk diet, thus they run the risk of causing unknown harm to an individual's health.

***Locally grown, sourced and prepared***

Foods obtained from within the Karuk Ancestral Territory support tribal families who hunt, gather, grow and prepare foods for a living, reduce transportation and fuel costs, and support the maintenance of cultural traditions and self-determination. This also supports the Karuk Tribe's TERO ordinance<sup>1</sup>. Foods that are acquired from nearby tribes in the Klamath watershed support inter-tribal trade and exchange, which supports tribal sovereignty.

***Pesticide and Hormone free***

Crops that are exposed to pesticides and livestock that are fed hormones or feed grown with pesticides pose a greater risk to human and environmental health.

***Wild or Cage-free meats, fish, poultry and dairy products***

The consumption of non-domesticated animal meats such as deer and elk, and wild-caught fish such as salmon and eel, help preserve Karuk cultural traditions, and support sustainable management of their populations. Farmed fish are not as nutritious, and result in increased water pollution and habitat destruction. Livestock grown in cages have higher fat content and often generate concentrated sources of animal waste that can cause bacteria-growth such as *Salmonella* and *E.coli* in food products. Free-range animals have a more varied diet, which make them more nutritious.

***Culturally relevant and appropriate***

Karuk food culture is intertwined with our ceremonies, worldview and social norms. It is a result of our longstanding relationship with our land, water and the other species that we share it with. Our food traditions have been passed to us from our ancestors, and are thus tried and true practices that are well adapted to our environment and are vital components of our traditional stories. If we are to maintain our traditional skills associated with food, we should integrate them into our meals regularly.

***Seasonally appropriate***

Food that ripens or is available locally should be integrated into meals to promote understanding of local ecological cycles and to reap the potential of our region's bounty. Instead of importing produce from other countries and regions that could be grown locally, we should preserve our local foods by canning, smoking or drying them when they are abundant so that we can eat them year round.

***Therefore: It shall be the goal of the Karuk Tribe to seek funding to assist with the development and implementation of the Karuk Tribe Food Policy.***

***Future Development may include the following actions, subject to availability of staff and program funds:***

- The Karuk Tribal staff who manage or implement food distribution programs will review these guidelines and make menus available to the respective Tribal Program Coordinator or authorized designee, who will coordinate the implementation of these guidelines. The Tribal Program Coordinator or authorized designee will identify food suppliers who can provide foods that meet these criteria, and establish communication between them and Karuk Tribal cooks and food distributors.
- A nutrition specialist will support the respective Tribal Program Coordinator or authorized designee in evaluating the implementation of the food policy and its efficacy in reducing diet-related health problems and diseases.
- An evaluator, ideally from a neighboring Tribal government, will be contracted to annually assess the implementation of the aforementioned guidelines. This evaluator will visit food distribution locations and will provide feedback in the form of a report, which will be provided to the respective Karuk Tribal Program Coordinator, the Chief Executive Officer of the Karuk Health and Human Services Department, and Tribal Council.

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<sup>i</sup> Indian Preference will apply in the selection process in accordance with the Tribal Employment Rights Ordinance (TERO) and/or Indian Preference Act of 1934 (Title 25, USC, Section 47), based on funding source requirements.

All contracts that exceed \$2,500.00 shall be subject to a two percent (2%) Tribal Employment Rights Fee in accordance with the TERO Ordinance.

If applicable, construction contracts in excess of \$2,000, when required by Federal grant program legislation, are subject to compliance with the Davis-Bacon Act (40 USC 276a to a-7) as supplemented by Department of Labor regulations (29 CFR part 5).