

DINNER ON THE GROUNDS: Some tips

(including excerpts from *Blessings at Noon* cookbook published by Missouri Sacred Harp singers)



- "Food should be kept rather simple. I have found that items that are hard to identify are eaten last."
- Picnic-type foods, finger food, salads and cold dishes are ideal for warm weather singings without a kitchen. [Note: such as Angels Gate]
- "At Southern singings, food is not heated before dinner. Folks bring their dishes in coolers, covered with towels, covered with newspapers, etc."
- "Make it as easy on yourself as you can and as easy for your guests to 'help themselves' as is possible."



- Nothing is wasted! Bring food your family already likes to a singing. If any is left after lunch, cover and return to the cooler to bring home and enjoy.
- "Make food that can be served with one hand and eaten without major cutting. Bring serving pieces for your food unless you are certain that such tools will be available at the singing."
- "Don't expect the folks on the committee setting out the food at a singing to prepare your dish for you. Mix your own salads, etc."

"COOLER TIPS"

How to maximize the use of your cooler:

WARM DISHES

"Most folks take things right out of the oven or microwave and wrap them in at least one towel or a blanket. Some folks then wrap that 'package' in newspaper and another towel.

"The cooler is lined with a thick towel, each wrapped dish is put in, and the whole batch is covered with either a blanket or another towel before closing the cooler. Anyway, using this approach, their hot dishes are still quite warm when they arrive. . . even in Minnesota winters! "

COLD DISHES / ROOM TEMP DISHES

Cold dishes would of course require a separate cooler from the hot stuff, but the same principles apply. Bring cold food in containers with lids that can easily be covered and returned to cooler after the dinner hour if necessary.

CLEANUP

Cleanup is much easier with something that size available to just toss things into .

For more links to Dinner on the Grounds, recipes, anecdotes, browse the Sacred Harp homepage at **fasola.org**