



## **Good for children and for the environment: We cook organic food**

Whether at the day-care centre or at home – it appears to us that food should taste good and also be good for us and the environment. Since we want to know exactly what it is that makes its way into meals, we cook them ourselves. As early as June 2003, our own central kitchen has started to offer nutritious warm lunches made with 100% certified organic products (inspection authority: DE-ÖKO-006). Our suppliers are certified according to Bioland and Demeter standards. In the interest of ensuring a better quality of life for everyone, we are willing to accept higher costs for purchasing the goods.

Our executive chef Volker Jahr and his team know what children like and what constitutes a healthy choice. They make sure that there is variety in the menus they offer and they are flexible. We consider it important to keep the length of time for which foods are kept warm down to a minimum and thus to maintain maximum nutrition. Consequently, our kitchen has the vegetables, noodles, rice and potatoes delivered partially cooked or par-boiled. Special combination microwave and steam/convection ovens and induction hobs are then used on site in our many locations to gently finish the food preparation process.

For the midday meals, we also procure fresh fruit and vegetables and in order to preserve all the vitamins, these are not prepared until just before their consumption. Children thus always have something wholesome to munch on. Of course, the breakfasts also consist of organic ingredients.

For setting up our menus, we use the recommendations of the German Nutrition Society as a guide, i.e., once every week, saltwater fish (from a certified fishery or organically raised) is served, once meat (Bioland) and dishes with grains and vegetables are on the menu for the remaining days. A strictly vegetarian diet is also possible. The components are chosen with priority being given to wholefood and mostly locally grown fare.

It is also one of our conceptions to familiarise children with the origins of the food they eat. In many of our day-care centres we grow our own vegetables, visit organic farms and regularly carry out projects about nutrition. It is a particularly good way to impart this very important education for sustainable development.

If it is necessary for a child to avoid certain foods because of allergies/ intolerances based on medical conditions, a doctor's certificate must be handed in to the day-care centre. Our kitchen teams and our educators are specially trained to respond to the special needs of children.