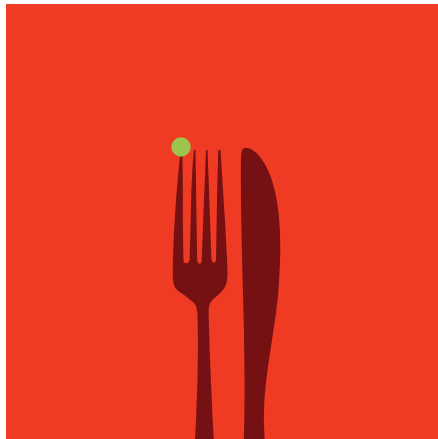


SAFE & HEALTHY

FOOD PANTRIES

PROJECT



“In the wake of rising food insecurity, diet-related disease and foodborne illness, food pantries are increasingly seeking sound guidance on how to further improve the nutritional quality and safety of their inventories. We offer this toolkit as a way pantries can learn the latest research, assess their current practices, review diverse strategies, and develop a road map of actions to improve the nutrition & safety of the foods they provide to households.”

— Jonathan Bader, WISCAP



The Safe & Healthy Food Pantries Project was originally developed under a community-academic partnership between the Wisconsin Community Action Program (WISCAP) and the University of Wisconsin–Madison Division of Extension from 2013–2015. Funding for this project was originally provided by the University of Wisconsin School of Medicine and Public Health from the Wisconsin Partnership Program. FoodWise at UW–Madison Division of Extension has adopted the continuation of the project. FoodWise is federally funded by the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program–Education (SNAP–Ed) and the Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program (EFNEP) and serves Wisconsin residents with limited incomes.

The goal of the Safe & Healthy Food Pantries Project is to improve access to and availability of adequate, appropriate, safe & nutritious food for low-income people who utilize food pantries. This goal is accomplished through the development of a guide for coordinators and volunteers of client choice food pantries to make improvements in the food pantry environment. This guide was informed by information captured through surveys and focus groups of food pantry clients, staff, and volunteers of six pantries in Wisconsin and is complemented by research-based recommendations and best practices for improving the food environment.

Authors

Amber Canto, University of Wisconsin–Madison Division of Extension
Barb Ingham, University of Wisconsin–Madison Division of Extension,
University of Wisconsin–Madison Department of Food Science
Sarah Larson, graduate student, University of Wisconsin–Madison Division of Extension
Jennifer Park-Mroch, University of Wisconsin–Madison Division of Extension
Josset Gauley, University of Wisconsin–Madison Division of Extension

Project Contact Information

Amber Canto, MPH, RDN, CD
Director, Extension Institute for
Health & Well-Being

University of Wisconsin–Madison
Division of Extension
amber.canto@wisc.edu

Dr. Barbara Ingham
Professor & Food Safety
Specialist

University of Wisconsin–Madison
College of Agricultural & Life Sciences,
University of Wisconsin–Madison
Division of Extension
bingham@wisc.edu

Jennifer K. Park-Mroch, Ph.D.
Project & Evaluation
State Specialist

University of Wisconsin–Madison
Division of Extension
jennifer.parkmroch@wisc.edu

Visit us online <https://fyi.extension.wisc.edu/safehealthypantries>



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* Canto, A., B. Ingham, S. Larson. (2015). Safe & Healthy Food Pantries Project. Madison: University of Wisconsin–Madison Division of Extension.

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CONTRIBUTORS

Jonathan Bader, Wisconsin Community Action Program Association
Karen Early, University of Wisconsin–Madison Division of Extension, FoodWise
Mary Kay Warner, Sandhill Studio LLC, graphic design
Kevin Murphy, University of Wisconsin–Madison Division of Extension,
website construction
Central Wisconsin Community Action Coalition
Adams County Food Pantry
Wisconsin Dells Food Pantry
Racine Kenosha Community Action Agency
Love Inc.
Shalom Center
Community Action Coalition for South Central Wisconsin, Inc.
St. Vincent de Paul Food Pantry, Madison
McFarland Food Pantry

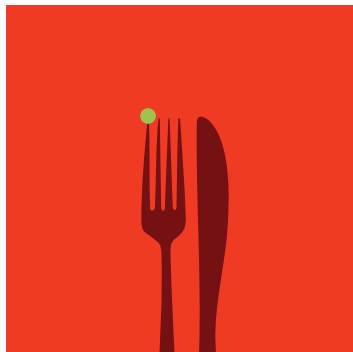
REVIEWERS

Gina Wilson, Second Harvest Food Bank of Southern Wisconsin
Gayle Coleman, University of Wisconsin–Madison Division of Extension, FoodWise
Bev Baker, University of Wisconsin–Madison Division of Extension
Leah Fuehrer, University of Wisconsin–Madison Division of Extension
Theresa Wimann, University of Wisconsin–Madison Division of Extension
Deb Neubauer, University of Wisconsin–Madison Division of Extension
Patti Herman, University of Wisconsin–Madison Division of Extension
Kelli Stader, Wisconsin Department of Health Services
Amy Korth, University of Wisconsin–Madison Division of Extension
Beth Olson, University of Wisconsin–Madison College of Agricultural & Life
Sciences, University of Wisconsin–Madison Division of Extension
Jan Skell, University of Wisconsin–Madison Division of Extension
Mary Lestrud, University of Wisconsin–Madison Division of Extension
Erin Aagesen, University of Wisconsin–Madison Division of Extension, FoodWise
Sheila Deforest, University of Wisconsin–Madison Division of Extension, FoodWise
Erin Eggert, University of Wisconsin–Madison Division of Extension
Jill Hicks, University of Wisconsin–Madison Division of Extension, FoodWise
Angela DeSmith, University of Wisconsin–Madison Division of Extension, FoodWise,
Milwaukee Hunger Task Force

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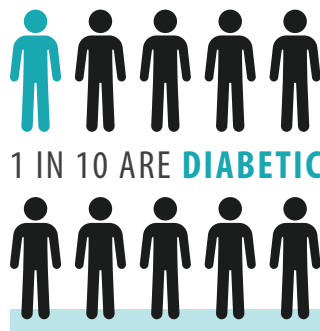
About the Project



Why the Safe & Healthy Food Pantries Project?

The number of individuals who rely on food pantries to meet their food needs has increased 64 percent in Wisconsin since 2007¹. As more Wisconsinites turn to food pantries to meet their food needs, it is important that food pantries consider their role in supporting the health and well-being of their guests. They can do this by working to improve the nutritional quality and safety of the foods they offer.

BURDEN OF FOOD INSECURITY & DISEASE IN WI



(DHS Wish Module and USDA EMS)

More than 1 in 9 Wisconsin households are food insecure, meaning they lack assured access to sufficient foods to support a healthy and active life². Meanwhile, 2 in 3 low-income Wisconsinites are overweight or obese and 1 in 10 has diagnosed diabetes³. Rising rates of obesity and diabetes in recent years have highlighted the burden of these diseases on society, and are calling for action across all community sectors.



- 1) ECONOMIC SECURITY & WELL-BEING**
- 2) STRONG FEDERAL FOOD & NUTRITION PROGRAMS**
- 3) ACCESSIBLE & AFFORDABLE LOCAL FOOD SYSTEM**
- 4) STRONG AND ACCESSIBLE EMERGENCY/CHARITABLE FOOD SAFETY NET**

FOUNDATION FOR ENSURING FOOD SECURITY

Ensuring food security for all households requires a foundation of four strong factors:

- 1)** household economic security and wellbeing;
- 2)** adequate access to healthy and affordable food;
- 3)** use of federal nutrition programs; and
- 4)** access to emergency / charitable food safety net, which includes food pantries.

Food Pantries contribute significantly to the overall quality of foods that low-income individuals consume. A 2014 Feeding America Hunger Study found that nearly 2 in 3 households plan for charitable food assistance as part of their monthly household budget⁴. This means that food pantries contribute significantly to the overall quality of foods that low-income individuals consume.





FOOD PANTRY PATRON HEALTH PROFILES



58% OF HOUSEHOLDS HAVE A MEMBER WITH **HIGH BLOOD PRESSURE**



33% OF HOUSEHOLDS HAVE A MEMBER WITH **DIABETES**

(Feeding America, 2014)

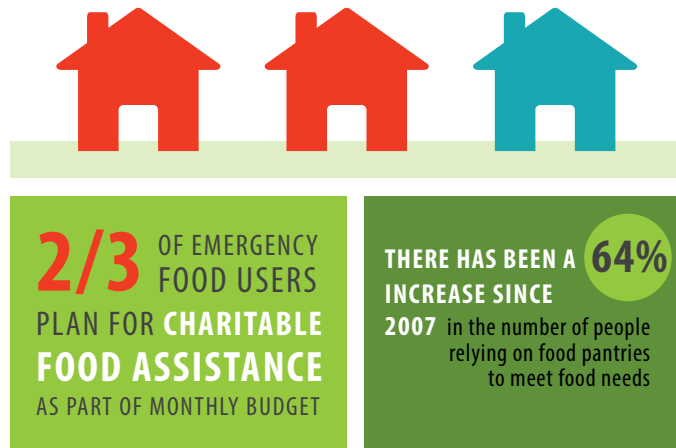
Linking Food Insecurity & Health

Food insecurity has negative impacts on health including nutrient deficiencies, low birth weight, premature birth and chronic stress⁵. It becomes difficult to manage chronic diseases, such as high blood pressure and diabetes, when also struggling to meet basic food needs⁶. Furthermore, food insecurity has been found to be associated with overweight and obesity.

Further, a recent study reports that factors that increase the risk of foodborne illness include stress, pregnancy, age under five years or between 60-65 years, nutritional deficiency, and the ingestion of fatty foods⁷.

Food Pantries can address these risks by providing safe and healthy foods.

MORE PEOPLE ARE RELYING ON FOOD PANTRIES



(Feeding America, 2014)

(WISCAP, 2014)

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 2 Coleman-Jensen, Alisha, Christian Gregory, and Anita Singh. Household Food Security in the United States in 2013, ERR-173, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Economic Research Service, September 2014
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 5 Cook, John T., Deborah A. Frank, Carol Berkowitz, Maureen M. Black, Patrick H. Casey, Diana B. Cutts, Alan F. Meyers, et al. "Food Insecurity Is Associated with Adverse Health Outcomes among Human Infants and Toddlers." The Journal of Nutrition 134, no. 6 (2004): 1432-38.
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 7 Food Research and Action Center. Relationship Between Hunger and Overweight or Obesity. Accessed at <http://frac.org/obesity-health/relationship-hunger-obesity>
 8 Lund, Barbara M., and Sarah J. O'Brien. "The Occurrence and Prevention of Foodborne Disease in Vulnerable People." Foodborne Pathogens and Disease 8, no. 9 (September 2011): 961-73.

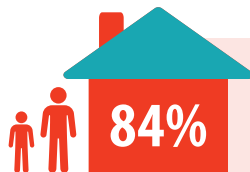


ROOM FOR IMPROVEMENT IN EATING PATTERNS

Only **57.8%** of the American population age 2 years and older are following healthy eating patterns



OF HOUSEHOLDS REPORT PURCHASING **INEXPENSIVE, UNHEALTHY FOOD TO FEED THEIR FAMILY**



OF HOUSEHOLDS **WITH CHILDREN** REPORT PURCHASING **INEXPENSIVE, UNHEALTHY FOOD TO FEED THEIR FAMILY**

(Feeding America, 2014)

Who should use the Safe & Healthy Food Pantries Project guide?

All food pantries play a role in supporting the health of their guests. This guide is intended to assist coordinators and volunteers of food pantries to make improvements in the food pantry environment that optimize the nutritional quality and safety of foods distributed while also supporting food security. While this guide was designed especially with guest choice food pantries in mind, certain strategies presented in this toolkit can be applied to any pantry.

GUEST CHOICE FOOD PANTRIES permit guests to select their own food, much like a grocery store. Guests select from a variety of foods and often the amount of food provided per food group is based on the household size. Guest choice pantries strive to support personal dietary needs and to reduce food waste by allowing guests to choose the foods they prefer.



How do I use the Safe & Healthy Food Pantries Project Guide?

The steps for implementing the Safe & Healthy Food Pantries Project are outlined below. **You can adapt the strategies and tools** presented in this guide so they meet the needs of your pantry — be creative and identify what will work best for you!

step 1: Assess your current food pantry operations with the **Safe & Healthy Food Pantries Assessment** tools. Use the results of these assessments to **identify priority areas** where you can make changes to the pantry environment and **set goals**. Not all areas will need to be addressed immediately and not all areas may be appropriate for your current pantry structure and operations.

step 2: Review the **Safe and Healthy Food Pantry Strategies** sections for research-informed recommendations and best practices for improving the food pantry environment. Once you are familiar with these strategies, move on to developing your Action Plan (Step 3) using the results of your program assessment (Step 1).

step 3: Use the goals you set (Step 1) to develop an **Action Plan** that outlines the desired changes at the food pantry. Include in your plan actions your pantry is willing and able to implement from the **Safe & Healthy Food Pantry Strategies** section (Step 2). Develop written **nutrition and food safety policies** for the food pantry. These policies are critical tools for guiding, communicating and sustaining pantry nutrition and food safety operations.





step 4: Implement the strategies identified in your **Action Plan** using the ideas and materials provided in the **Safe & Healthy Food Pantry Strategies** and **Tools to Support You** sections.

step 5: Use the **Action Plan (Step 3)** to **evaluate** your efforts along the way.

Then, **document your success by re-assessing** your pantry operations. Regular assessments, at least once per year, allow the food pantry to evaluate progress in achieving your goals and success. Future **Action Plans** can be developed to sustain existing changes and expanded to incorporate new strategies for improving the food pantry environment.

Taking a Community Approach to Implement the Safe & Healthy Food Pantries Project

Any volunteer or pantry coordinator can confirm that finding ways to creatively engage your community in your pantry is a win-win. As you promote food security in your community, your pantry will strengthen existing relationships or uncover partnership opportunities, volunteers and donors along the way. Involving your guests in food pantry operations and connecting them to community resources will support the pantry and the households you serve. As you implement the steps of the Safe & Healthy Food Pantries Project, consider ways to engage community members and guests in meeting your nutrition and food safety goals.





WAYS TO INVOLVE AND RECOGNIZE MEMBERS OF THE COMMUNITY IN SUPPORTING A SAFE AND HEALTHY FOOD PANTRY INCLUDE:

- Organize food drives that focus on donations of healthy and safe foods.
- Fundraise so the food pantry can purchase nutritious foods.
- Provide emergency food storage for overflow inventory.
- Offer a variety of volunteer opportunities.
- Refer guests to other services such as Women, Infants and Children (WIC) program, school meals/summer meal program, senior meal sites, Meals on Wheels, jobs, housing, childcare, transportation, health insurance, mental health, drug/alcohol recovery, child support, energy assistance, home repairs, education, domestic violence and more. 2-1-1 Wisconsin is a free call service that provides information and resources to Wisconsin residents.
- Connect guests to agencies conducting FoodShare (SNAP) outreach. These organizations can provide information on how to apply and assist guests with online applications.

WAYS TO ENGAGE FOOD PANTRY GUESTS IN DAILY OPERATIONS INCLUDE:

- Provide new guests with a written pantry overview to orient them to
 - + your pantry's hours and days of service,
 - + procedures,
 - + description of where the foods come from,
 - + how food is allocated to households,
 - + basic food safety and nutrition information.
- Establish a bulletin board or another method to share community and pantry events and opportunities.
- Regularly invite guests to give feedback on the food and services provided and to suggest changes using a suggestion box. Or, conduct guest satisfaction surveys.
- Create a guest advisory board to engage them in decision-making. Your guests have great ideas and some are more than willing to share them with you. Facilitating communication between guests and yourself provides an opportunity to learn from each other. Everyone is empowered when all voices are heard and recognized.

Provide other services to support food pantry guests by collecting and distributing items such as toiletries and other non-food items, toys and books for children, free clothing and/or furniture, holiday gift programs, etc



Training Volunteers

Volunteer training is your opportunity to:

- orient new helpers,
- clarify job duties,
- outline your expectations,
- explain pantry procedures,
- review civil rights standards and non-discrimination principles,
- establish the culture and tone of your food pantry.

It may seem strange to talk through job descriptions and expectations with people who are freely giving you their time. In actuality, volunteer training prevents problems from arising in the first place. Volunteer training also helps put new volunteers at ease by clarifying expectations and responsibilities. **Creating a volunteer handbook will guide your training**, ensure it is consistent and thorough and gives volunteers a written document to refer to. An example volunteer handbook is available from the River Food Pantry in Madison, WI: www.riverfoodpantry.org/volunteer.html.

A Team Approach

Working alongside other community partners to implement the Safe & Healthy Food Pantries Project is recommended. This team approach may come in the form of a local food resource/food pantry network, hunger prevention taskforce, or healthy living coalition. A team approach may also engage critical community partners along the way to support the implementation of your action plan. Examples of partners you might consider engaging to support your efforts include:

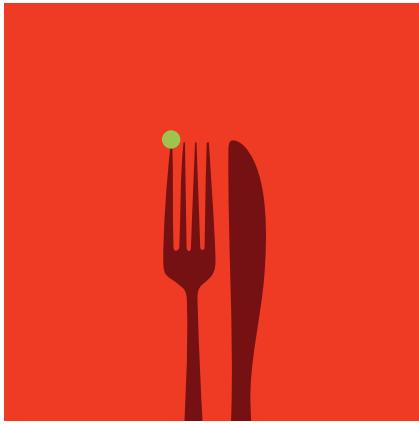
- Your county Extension office and FoodWise representative
- Local dietitian
- Community hospital or clinics
- Local university or technical college
- PK-12 schools
- Local businesses such as grocers, fitness centers, banks, etc.
- Public health department
- Social and human services department
- Farmers and community gardeners
- Library



Josie Montañez-Tyler,
Saint Vincent de Paul Food Pantry,
Madison, WI

STEP 1

PROGRAM ASSESSMENT



Your pantry's decision to focus on safe and healthy food pantry practices is an important first step. Assessing pantry practices ensures that the strategies your pantry implements are reasonable and appropriate for the pantry and will have the most impact for food pantry guests. Some pantry assessment ideas and tools are described below. You might consider partnering with your county Extension office or other local educational institution to help collect this information.



**IMPLEMENTATION
TOOLS** 

**FOOD PANTRY
ASSESSMENT TOOLS**

... pages 19 and 20

Safe & Healthy Food Pantries Assessment

This self-assessment tool is designed to allow pantries to assess **current practices and policies** that support a safe and healthy food pantry environment and suggests areas for improvement. Use this self-assessment tool to guide the development of your Action Plan.

Food Source Self-Assessment

This self-assessment tool is designed to help you explore the **relative percentage of food** received from each of these sources to better understand points of leverage for improving the safety and nutritional quality of the foods you offer. That is, if you receive a majority of your inventory from a food bank, your action plan might look different than if you are primarily dependent on community or commercial donations.





Inventory Assessment

The *What's on the Shelf? Inventory Snapshot Tool* roughly estimates current food inventory and allows you to better understand how food destined for distribution aligns with the amount of food per category necessary to meet the Dietary Guidelines for Americans. In turn, this information can be used as a **general** guide for your food procurement and acquisition strategies. It is important to remember that this inventory assessment will only provide a snapshot in time, and may not always be an accurate reflection of what you have on hand. Therefore, you might consider conducting an assessment at least once per quarter (summer, winter, fall and spring) to capture seasonal changes in inventory. If you choose to use this tool, please read the caveats and cautions closely to understand the current capacity of the tool. This tool can be found online at <https://fyi.extension.wisc.edu/safehealthypantries>

Food pantries that receive a significant portion of their inventory through community food drives might consider conducting an assessment of food donated through these channels. An example is Brown County's Food Drive Inventory Tool. This tool was developed to establish a baseline from which to measure the impact of donor education messages on increasing healthy food donations.

These food pantry inventory assessments may require a significant amount of time. The amount of time dedicated for each will depend on the size of your food pantry inventory and the amount of food received from a community food drive or the detail in existing inventory records kept. Seeking out the help of community volunteers to assist you with these efforts is recommended.



IMPLEMENTATION TOOLS



INVENTORY ASSESSMENTS

... can be found on the
Safe & Healthy Food
Pantry website at:
<https://fyi.extension.wisc.edu/safehealthypantries>



Other Ideas for Assessment

Community Asset Map

A community asset can be people, places or services that exist in the community. Making a list or an asset map helps you better understand your community and identify partnership opportunities and other resources that can support your pantry. Refer to the University of Kansas Community Toolbox for more information on how to create a community asset map:

<https://ctb.ku.edu/en>

Guest Interviews or Survey

Use a questionnaire to ask guests for feedback on general pantry operations and to get more information about safe and healthy food pantry strategies. Examples of information you might seek from pantry guests include:

- Special dietary needs or restrictions
- Food preferences
- Food safety concerns
- Ideas for improving food pantry operations



SOURCES OF FOOD PANTRY FOODS SELF-ASSESSMENT

Use this self-assessment to estimate the relative percentage of food received from each of these sources to better understand points of leverage for improving the safety and nutritional quality of the foods you offer.

Estimate the percentage of food available at the food pantry coming from each of these sources. Reflect upon the level of control you feel you have to influence the types of food you receive from each of these sources.

SOURCE	PERCENT (%) OF TOTAL FOOD INVENTORY	LEVEL OF CONTROL		
		no control	some control	a lot of control
TEFAP (USDA commodities)				
Food drives				
Food banks				
Commercial donors				
Other sources: (specify)				
Total	100%			

For the sources where you feel you have some or a lot of control, why do you think that is?

- What strategies might you use to influence what is received from these sources?

For the sources where you feel you have little or no control, why do you think that is?

- What would you need to do to feel you have more influence on what is received from these sources?
- What strategies might support you in doing this?



SAFE & HEALTHY FOOD PANTRIES SELF-ASSESSMENT

Use this self-assessment to identify current practices and policies that support a safe and healthy food pantry environment. The results of this self-assessment can guide the development of your action plan. Involve key staff members or volunteers that may assist in providing accurate responses to questions.

Give your pantry a healthy boost

Overarching goal: Provide healthier food choices to pantry guests.

Strategy	In place		
	Yes	To some extent	No
Stock a healthy food pantry			
Adopt, post and communicate a nutrition policy	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Educate your donors	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Find fresh produce	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Encourage healthy choices at the food pantry			
Be flexible with selections	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Offer incentives to encourage healthier choices	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Provide a shopping list	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Make healthy choices more visible	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Provide options for special diets and food preferences	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Nutrition education for food pantry guests			
Provide nutrition education	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Prompt healthy choices	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Support guests while shopping	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Offer recipes	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>



continued... SAFE & HEALTHY FOOD PANTRIES SELF-ASSESSMENT

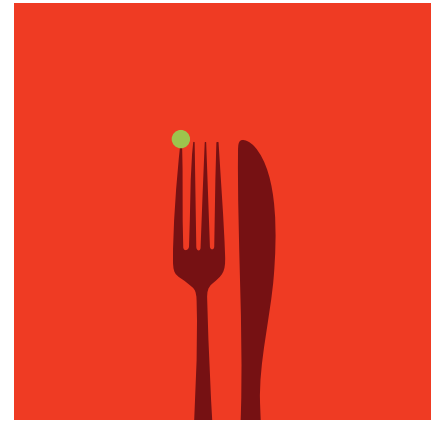
Promote food safety in your food pantry

Overarching goal: Provide safe food to pantry guests.

Strategy	In place		
	Yes	To some extent	No
Put safe food on the shelf			
Adopt, post, and communicate a food safety policy	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Train pantry staff and volunteers in safe food handling practices	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Educate your donors	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Accept foods that are safe to eat	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Accept safe produce	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Transport, handle and store food properly			
Keep hot foods hot	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Keep cold foods cold	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Handle and store food safely	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
When in doubt, throw it out			
Discard unsafe food	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Support guests in handling food safely			
Educate guests about food safety	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

STEP 2

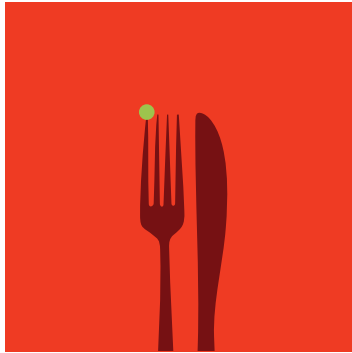
STRATEGIES



GIVE YOUR FOOD PANTRY A HEALTHY BOOST



As more Wisconsinites turn to food pantries to meet their food needs, it is more important than ever that food pantries consider their role in supporting the health and well being of guests by working to improve the nutritional quality of the foods they offer. Healthy eating patterns, alongside regular physical activity, can help people attain and maintain a healthy weight, reduce the risk for chronic disease, and promote overall good health.

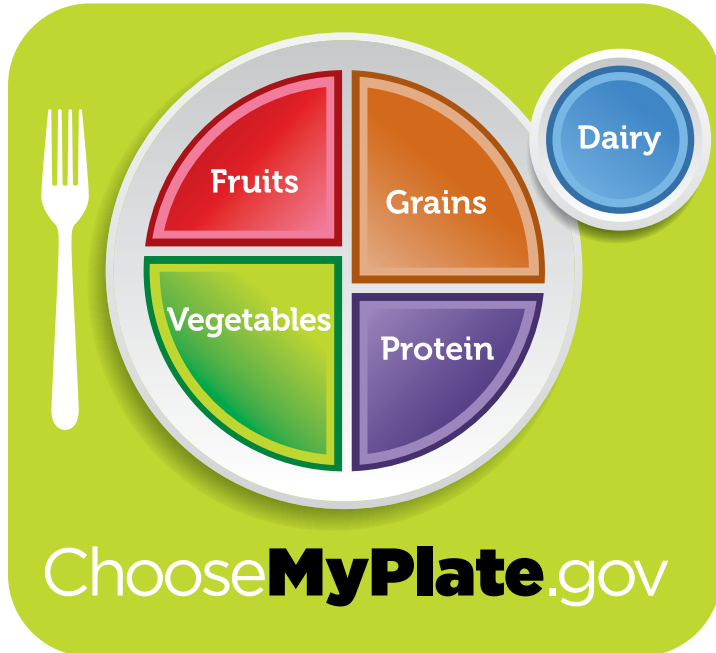


How do I know what's healthy?

The *Dietary Guidelines for Americans* (DGA) provide advice for making food choices that promote good health for Americans over 2 years of age. The DGA recognize that food insecurity limits a household's ability to acquire adequate food to meet their nutritional needs, and therefore seeks to maximize the nutritional content of meals.

Most Americans consume too much sodium and too many calories from solid fats, added sugars, and refined grains. Examples of items high in these food components include highly processed items such as soups, cookies and cakes, and soda and fruit drinks. A healthy eating pattern limits intake of foods and beverages high in these food components, and focuses on consuming a variety of fruits and vegetables, whole grains, fat-free or low-fat milk and milk products, lean meats, poultry, and fish, eggs, beans and peas, and nuts and seeds.





How do I help my pantry provide healthier food choices to guests?

A food pantry filled with a variety of nutritious foods supports **making the healthy choice the easy choice** for food pantry guests. Pantries can create a healthy food environment by:

1. Stocking a healthy food pantry
2. Encouraging the selection of healthy food choices
3. Providing nutrition education



Healthy eating patterns limit foods high in sodium, solid fat, added sugars and refined grains and include a variety of fruits and vegetables, whole grains, low or no fat dairy, and a variety of protein foods.

— U.S. Departments of Agriculture and Health and Human Services, Dietary Guidelines for Americans, 2015

Stocking a Healthy Food Pantry



“We have always tried to make healthy choices available to our guests. After drafting our nutrition policy, we pay more attention to the items we are purchasing and prioritize the healthier products.”

—Chris Kane and Josie Montañez-Tyler
Saint Vincent de Paul Food Pantry,
Madison, WI

IMPLEMENTATION TOOLS



DEVELOP YOUR NUTRITION POLICY

... page 30

SAMPLE NUTRITION POLICY

... page 32

Ensuring a wide variety of healthy foods are available to meet the diverse nutritional needs of the guests the pantry serves can seem like a daunting task. **Strategies to consider for stocking a healthy food pantry include:**

- Establish a nutrition policy
- Educate your donors
- Find fresh produce

Establish a Nutrition Policy

Adoption of a **nutrition policy** allows pantries to clarify the steps they'll take to **promote their guests' health**. A nutrition policy can guide food purchases made to supplement donated foods. A strong nutrition policy might also include language restricting the types of food donations the pantry is willing to receive. In general, nutrition policies should follow a healthy eating pattern as outlined by the DGA.

Educate your Donors

Community food donations can be a major source of food for pantries. It is important to educate donors about the types of food the pantry wishes to receive. **Donors often prefer to give to a pantry what it needs** and are grateful for any ideas offered. Making the pantry's needs and principles clear helps others to be a part of the vision, kindness, and generosity that makes a community strong.

Strategies may be different for reaching commercial donors (for example, a local grocery store) versus community donors (such as those involved with a community food drive). Be sure to let regular donors know of changes you make to critical and preferred donation lists.



Here are some ideas for building relationships and educating donors:

COMMERCIAL DONORS

- Meet with donors to build relationships.
- Provide donors with a copy of your nutrition policy; be sure to explain why it was created and what your pantry hopes to accomplish.
- Provide donors with a list of critical and preferred foods and post this information on your website.
- If arranging for a “Sack Hunger” food drive with a local grocery store, provide the store with a list of preferred foods to include in the packages.

COMMUNITY DONORS

- Provide food drive organizers with a copy of your nutrition policy; be sure to explain why it was created and what your pantry hopes to accomplish.
- Educate food drive organizers about how their donations can help the pantry meet the nutritional needs of the guests.
- Distribute press releases to local media about desired food donations.
- Provide donors with a list of critical and preferred foods and post this information on your website.
- Invite civic groups and businesses to support a “healthy foods initiative” and publicize their names on your website.
- Finally, remember to thank your donors. Recognize your donors where possible and continue to involve them in your work.

IMPLEMENTATION TOOLS



FOOD DONATION CHECKLIST

... page 33

SAMPLE PRESS RELEASE

... page 34

DONOR LETTER

... page 36


SAMPLE “SACK HUNGER SUGGESTIONS

... page 37

- BROWN COUNTY** developed a simple messaging campaign to help support their Healthy Food Pantry Initiative. The **FOOD DRIVE FIVE** is promoted in flyers, social media, and press coverage. The “Food Drive Five” includes:
1. Protein foods: peanut butter, nuts, seafood and poultry
 2. Fruits packed in 100% juice, dried or sauced fruits
 3. Soups that are low in sodium and that contain proteins and vegetables
 4. Whole grain cereals and pastas
 5. Colorful vegetables



This example flyer is shared with permission from Riverwest Food Pantry, Milwaukee, WI.

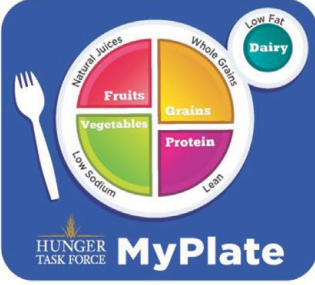


Are you wondering why the Riverwest Food Pantry requests specific items each week?

Nutritious food matters and families need healthy food to thrive!

Yet 79% of families that utilize pantries report buying groceries they know are unhealthy because their food dollars are limited.

We support the dignity of our shoppers by providing access to healthy foods. That is why we have embraced the MyPlate Food Model.



You Can Help By:

Donating the requested items of the week or by making selections from the Preferred Food Items below to enhance our available inventory.

or

Designating a monetary contribution to our Healthy Food Fund, which allows us to improve our inventory.

The Riverwest Food Pantry partners with two local food banks, Hunger Task Force and Feeding America, in an effort to offer more nutritious food than ever before to our community.

Riverwest Food Pantry Preferred Food Items:

FRUITS	VEGETABLES	GRAINS	PROTEIN	DAIRY	HEALTHY CONDIMENTS
NO-ADDED SUGAR CANNED FRUITS 100% JUICE DRINKS DRIED FRUITS	LOW- AND NO-SALT CANNED VEGETABLES TOMATO PRODUCTS SPAGHETTI SAUCE	WHOLE GRAIN PASTA BROWN RICE NO-SUGAR ADDED CEREAL WHOLE GRAIN FLOUR COUSCOUS QUINOA	LOW- AND NO-SALT CANNED CHICKEN TUNA & SALMON DRIED BEANS VARIOUS NUTS CANNED BEANS PEANUT BUTTER	LOW FAT SHELF STABLE BOXED MILK OF ALL TYPES	OLIVE & CANOLA OIL DRIED HERBS SALT-FREE SEASONINGS LOW-SALT SALAD DRESSINGS

"We come together around food to relieve hunger, improve lives, and grow community well-being."

Come Volunteer!

Saturdays: St. Casimir
8:00 a.m. - 11:00 a.m.
924 E. Clarke St.
Milwaukee

Tuesdays: Gaenslen School
4:00 p.m. - 6:30 p.m.
1250 E. Burleigh St.
Milwaukee

Wednesdays and Fridays: St. Casimir
8:30 a.m. - 11:00 a.m.
924 E. Clarke St.

Phone Number: 414-301-1478 www.riverwestfoodpantry.org
Volunteer Information email: volunteer@riverwestfoodpantry.org



Find Fresh Produce

In a recent survey conducted by UW–Madison Division of Extension, food pantry guests expressed an overwhelming desire for more fresh produce. Here is a list of ideas to consider for finding more fresh produce for your pantry:

- Work with local partners and Extension Master Gardener Volunteers to establish and maintain a Plant a Row for the Hungry program in your community.
- Partner with a local farmers' market to glean produce at the end of a weekly market. Youth-service and other community groups might be willing to support your pantry in collecting and delivering the produce to the pantry.
- Partner with a local farmer and community groups to glean un-harvested "seconds" from fields. Some farmers may also be willing to sell their fresh local produce at a reduced price to food pantries.
- Let local Community Supported Agriculture (CSAs) farms and drop-off sites know that your pantry would be willing to accept unclaimed and extra weekly produce shares.
- Register your pantry at www.ampleharvest.org to inform local gardeners and farmers of your desire for more fresh produce. Ample Harvest provides fliers and publicity for pantries and community partners.
- Committed farmers can also invest directly in an acre of produce or share excess produce with food banks.
- Contact local grocers or food processing plants about donating excess quality produce.
- Contact your local food bank to ask about the availability of fresh produce. The amount of available fresh produce at food banks has grown tremendously in recent years.





DEVELOP YOUR NUTRITION POLICY

Develop your nutrition policy

Establishing a nutrition policy is the best way to demonstrate that you are committed to protecting the health of the people that you serve. A nutrition policy can serve as a mechanism for educating donors on acceptable food donations as well as guide food procurement practices. It is also a tool to communicate to food pantry guests about pantry operations.

Engage stakeholders

Prior to drafting your nutrition policy, involve your stakeholders in developing the policy (example: donors, guests, staff, board, volunteers, etc.). Having stakeholder input from the beginning will help ensure successful adoption and implementation of your nutrition policy.

How to write a nutrition policy

Consider utilizing the language below to guide you in developing a nutrition policy for your food pantry. You don't have to use all of the suggested items but one or two can give you a start!

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

[FOOD PANTRY NAME] will:

- Commit to supporting the health of our guests by prioritizing the distribution of recommended USDA MyPlate foods and nutrients such as:
 - fruits and vegetables,
 - whole grains,
 - low-fat or no-fat dairy and milk products,
 - a variety of protein foods and
 - foods low in sodium.
- Limit the distribution of foods with refined grains, solid fats, trans fats, added sugars, and sodium.
- Provide basic staples to support meal planning and preparation such as cooking oils, flour, spices, etc.

[FOOD PANTRY NAME] will not distribute:

- Sugar-sweetened beverages (soda, fruit drinks, energy drinks, etc.)
- Candy

Donated products

[FOOD PANTRY NAME] will:

Encourage donations in line with USDA's MyPlate recommendations by regularly communicating with donors.

- Actively seek fresh produce donations from community partners.
- Consider the nutritional value of bulk donated products and refuse any donations that fall under food categories of products that [FOOD PANTRY NAME] will not distribute.

Non-donated products

[FOOD PANTRY NAME] will:

- Secure whole grain cereals, breads, rice, crackers, pastas and other grains (“whole” grain listed as the first ingredient on product package).
- Secure a variety of fresh, canned and frozen fruits and vegetables.
- Secure canned fruits packed in 100% fruit juice.
- Purchase a variety of lean protein food items such as meat, fish, poultry, beans and nuts.
- Secure low-fat and non-fat dairy products.
- Secure low-sodium or no-salt-added canned and processed products.
- Prioritize the inclusion of basic staples in product purchases.
- Take into consideration the cultural preferences and special dietary needs of guests.

Product placement and selection

[FOOD PANTRY NAME] will:

- Communicate guest choice/selection practices to all new pantry guests.
- Provide flexibility with choice selections to accommodate special dietary needs and cultural food practices.
- Prominently place food products meeting USDA’s *MyPlate* recommendations and make them more visible to pantry guests.
- Highlight USDA’s *MyPlate* recommended foods to increase with a symbol indicating a smart choice.
- Incentivize the selection of fruits and vegetables.
- Distribute all fresh fruits and vegetables as a “free choice”.

Identify policy authority

Identify an authoritative body responsible for the oversight and implementation of your nutrition policy. Specify the name/title of this individual directly in your drafted nutrition policy so that it is clear to whom questions should be directed.

Adopt your nutrition policy

Discuss your desire to adopt and implement a nutrition policy with your board of directors and include them in the development of the policy. Once drafted, share your nutrition policy with your organization’s board of directors, leadership or other decision makers to obtain approval. Once they sign off on the policy it will be necessary to communicate changes in your food procurement and distribution practices with all stakeholders involved in the process, including volunteers, donors and guests. Create excitement about the nutrition policy, reinforcing the purpose and guiding principles surrounding the document.

Implement your nutrition policy

Start making changes to your food procurement and distribution practices as outlined by your nutrition policy. Document noticeable changes in inventory and guest selection following your policy implementation, and continually evaluate what aspects of the nutrition policy are working well and what may need to be improved. Keep in mind that some changes may take time to fully implement.

Review and revise your nutrition policy

At least once a year, review your nutrition policy and consider any necessary revisions. Regularly connect with stakeholders and gather their input on how well they think the nutrition policy has been implemented.



SAMPLE NUTRITION POLICY FOR FOOD PANTRIES

WELCOME TO CARITAS FOOD PANTRY

Caritas is committed to supporting the health of our guests by prioritizing the distribution of recommended USDA's MyPlate foods and nutrients such as:

- ✓ Fruits and Vegetables
- ✓ Whole Grains
- ✓ Low-fat or no-fat dairy and milk products
- ✓ A variety of protein foods
- ✓ Foods low in sodium

We're limiting the distribution of foods with refined grains, solid fats, added sugars, and sodium.

We seek to provide basic staples to support meal planning and preparation such as cooking oils, flour, sugar, etc.

Caritas does **not** distribute:

- Sugar sweetened beverages (soda, fruit drinks, energy drinks, etc.)
- Candy

The number of food items provided is determined by your household size and should be sufficient to provide 3 days of meals (breakfast, lunch, and dinner). Quantities and availability may vary.

Please let us know if you have any special dietary needs. We'll do our best to accommodate you!

shared with permission from Caritas Food Pantry, Beloit, WI



STOCKING A HEALTHY FOOD PANTRY CHECKLIST

Fruits and vegetables

- Fresh or canned vegetables, low-sodium or no-salt added (carrots, sweet potatoes, corn, green peas, lima beans, asparagus, beets, green beans, mushrooms, tomatoes, mixed vegetables, etc.)
- Fresh or canned fruit in 100% juice, or no sugar added
- Applesauce, no sugar added
- Dried fruit, no sugar added
- 100% fruit juice
- 100% vegetable juice

Whole grains

(first ingredient listed should say “whole” wheat, corn, etc.)

- Whole grain and enriched pasta
- Brown or wild rice
- Whole grain cold cereals with low sugar
- Whole grain hot cereals, oatmeal, Cream of Wheat, grits
- Whole grain crackers
- Corn or whole-grain tortillas, non-refrigerated
- Quinoa
- Barley
- Popcorn
- Whole grain granola bars

Dairy

- Low-fat or non-fat shelf stable milk, powdered or UHT
- Low-fat soy milk, unflavored
- Low-fat pressurized cheese made from milk, non-refrigerated

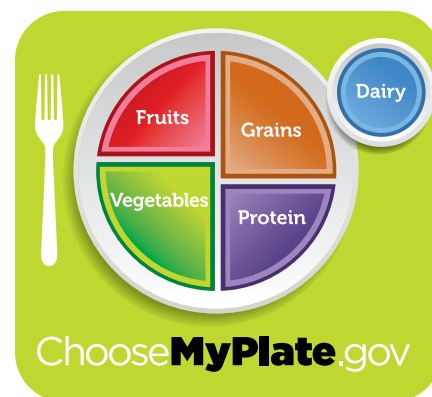
Protein food items

- Fresh or canned meats and fish packed in water (chicken, tuna, salmon, sardines, etc.)
- Canned beans, low-sodium or no-salt added
- Dried beans/peas (black beans, black-eye peas, chickpeas (“garbanzo beans”), kidney beans, navy beans, lentils, etc.)
- Nuts and seeds, low-sodium or no-salt added (almonds, peanuts, sunflower seeds, pumpkin seeds, pecans, etc.)
- Nut butter (peanut, almond, etc.)

Other items

- Spaghetti sauce, tomato sauce, low-sodium or no salt-added
- Canned and shelf-stable soups and broths, low-sodium or no salt-added
- Vegetable oil
- Flour
- Spices

Please do not donate: rusty or unlabeled cans, homemade items, noncommercial canned or packaged items, open or used items, alcoholic beverages and outdated or expired products.



Adapted from NYC *Healthy Food Donation Initiative Food Donation Checklist* accessed online at www1.nyc.gov/site/doh/health/health-topics/healthy-food-donation.page



SAMPLE PRESS RELEASE — COMMUNITY FOOD DRIVES

[DATE]

Boost the value of your food drive donations

[YOUR NAME AND CONTACT INFORMATION]

{YOUR TOWN} Community groups and social organizations often host food drives to fill local food pantry shelves this time of year. By keeping a few simple tips in mind, you can enhance the value of the food donations you make.

“It’s important to remember that donated food is most helpful if it is both safe and high quality,” says Barbara Ingham, food safety specialist with the University of Wisconsin-Extension [OR YOUR NAME AND TITLE].

Make sure to check the dates on packages of foods that you donate, advises Ingham [YOUR NAME].

[IF AVAILABLE, YOU COULD ADD INFORMATION ABOUT HOW MANY PEOPLE USE THE PANTRY; HOW MUCH FOOD IS NEEDED, ETC. OR SOMETHING SPECIFIC TO THE LOCAL PANTRY.]

Here are some things to look for:

- **Quality or pack dates** often designated on packages by the words “Better if used by...” and a date. Look for these dates on packaged mixes, cold cereals, peanut butter, and increasingly, on canned items like fruits and vegetables. These dates mean that after the quality date, the food will begin to lose its flavor and may even develop an off flavor. Donate only foods that are well within the quality dates marked on the package.
- **Expiration dates**, such as “Expires 2/15/19” or “Do not use after 7/9/19.” Look for these dates on vitamins, yeast, baking powder and cake mixes. Do not donate foods that are past their expiration date.

- **Pull dates.** Example: “Sell by May 16.” Look for these dates on perishable, refrigerated foods such as milk, yogurt, cottage cheese, cream, eggs, lunch meat and packaged salad mixes. Perishable foods, with the exception of garden produce, are usually not included in a food drive. If they are, choose foods that are well within the pull date.

Besides looking for a date, be sure to check the integrity of the package. To ensure that the food has not been contaminated, donate only foods from unopened packages. Avoid foods with packaging that shows signs of leakage or damage. Ingham [YOUR NAME] urges consumers not to donate canned items that have broken seams or large dents.

Your donation only makes a difference in the life of someone in need if the product donated is within the date marked and of good quality. If you question the integrity of the product or wouldn’t feed it to your household—it is probably best not to donate it.

Are home-canned foods, fresh eggs or produce safe to donate? Food pantries often welcome donations of fresh produce. However, home-canned foods, meat or eggs that have not been handled by licensed food processors should not be donated.

“If you have a question about a proposed donation, contact the food pantry. Staff there will be happy to discuss whether they can accept or store the donation that you have in mind,” suggests Ingham [YOUR NAME].

Amber Canto, State Coordinator for FoodWise, a program of University of Wisconsin-Extension [OR YOUR NAME] suggests avoiding sugary cereals, salty noodle mixes, and fruit-flavored beverages that might be easy to donate, but difficult for households to include in nutritious meals. Instead, Canto [YOUR NAME] urges consumers to donate foods that have a stable shelf life, are full of nutrients and are easy to prepare.

**continued... SAMPLE PRESS RELEASE — COMMUNITY FOOD DRIVES****Good examples of foods to consider are:**

- Canned vegetables, especially those without added salt.
- Fruits canned in juice, unsweetened applesauce, 100% fruit juice and dried fruit such as raisins or raisins.
- Canned meats and fish, such as chicken, ham or beef, tuna, and salmon. Do not donate meat canned at home.
- Peanuts and peanut butter.
- Whole grain, low-sugar cereals such as plain instant oatmeal, whole grain Os, and bran flakes.
- Whole grain or enriched pasta and instant rice— either brown or enriched. Boxed noodle and rice dishes can be an easy starting point for a one-dish meal.
- Whole grain crackers (especially reduced-sodium) and popcorn.
- Spaghetti sauce, salsa and canned beans, including baked beans.
- Reduced-sodium broth and soups.
- Salad dressings or spreads, and condiments such as ketchup or mustard lower in fat and added sugars.
- Baby food is a very welcome donation. Just be sure to donate well within the date marked on the containers.

“Food pantry guests are extremely grateful for the help that they receive through the pantries. Pantry guests welcome your donations of safe, high quality foods so that they can feed themselves and their households healthy, nutritious meals,” says Canto [YOUR NAME].

Consider donating cash to food pantries. “Pantries can often get more for their dollars, address shortages and needs and focus on high quality products with some extra financial assistance,” says Canto [YOUR NAME]. “Cash donations help food pantries offer the widest possible array of products to the individuals that they serve.”

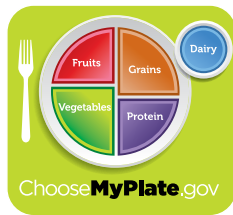
[ADD SPECIAL NEEDS FOR YOUR PANTRY, OR OTHER INFORMATION.]



STOCKING A HEALTHY FOOD PANTRY DONOR LETTER

We thank you for your organization's interest in hosting a community food drive. The [NAME] food pantry is committed to supporting the health and well-being of our guests and our community by offering healthier food choices at our pantry. Please assist in stocking our food pantry shelves with more nutritious foods and limiting donations of less nutritious foods.

Please consider giving more of the following foods:



Fruits and vegetables

- Fresh or canned vegetables, low- or no-salt added
- Carrots, sweet potatoes, corn, green peas, lima beans, asparagus, beets, green beans, mushrooms, tomatoes, mixed vegetables, etc.
- Fresh or canned fruit in 100% juice, or no sugar added
- Applesauce, no sugar added
- Dried fruit, no sugar added
- 100% fruit juice
- 100% vegetable juice

Dairy

- Low-fat or non-fat shelf stable milk, powdered or UHT
- Low-fat soy milk, unflavored
- Low fat pressurized cheese made from milk, non-refrigerated

Whole grains

- Whole grain and enriched pasta
- Brown or wild rice
- Whole grain cold cereals with low sugar
- Whole grain hot cereals, oatmeal
- Cream of Wheat, grits
- Whole grain crackers

- Corn or whole grain tortillas, non-refrigerated
- Quinoa
- Barley
- Popcorn
- Whole grain granola bars

Protein food items

- Fresh or canned meats and fish packed in water (chicken, tuna, salmon, sardines, etc.)
- Canned beans, low-sodium
- Dried beans/peas (black beans, black-eye peas, chickpeas ("garbanzo beans"), kidney beans, navy beans, lentils, etc.)
- Nuts and seeds, low- or no-salt added (almonds, peanuts, sunflower seeds, pumpkin seeds, pecans, etc.)
- Nut butter (peanut, almond)

Other items

- Spaghetti sauce, tomato sauce, low- or no salt-added
- Canned and shelf-stable soups and broths, low- or no salt-added
- Cooking oils such as olive, vegetable, or canola oil

Please limit donations of the following foods:

- Sugary drinks (soda, fruit-flavored drinks, energy/sports drinks, sweetened teas, etc.)
- Candy
- Unhealthy snacks (chips, cookies, and other foods high in fat, sodium, sugar, calories)

Please do not donate: rusty or unlabeled cans, homemade items, noncommercial canned or packaged items, open or used items, alcoholic beverages, and outdated or expired products.

Adapted from NYC Healthy Food Donation Initiative, Food Donation Letter www1.nyc.gov/site/doh/health/health-topics/healthy-food-donation.page



HEALTHIER SAMPLE SACK HUNGER DONATION DRIVE PACKAGES

breakfast

- Oatmeal
- Canned fruit or 100% fruit juice

lunch

- Canned tuna
- Mayonnaise
- Canned vegetable
- Canned fruit

dinner

- Pasta
- Pasta sauce
- Canned vegetable
- Canned meatball

breakfast

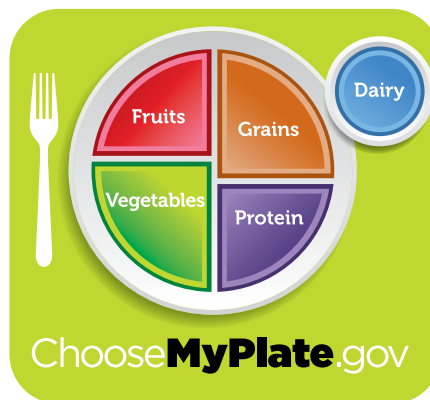
- Box of cereal
- Shelf-stable milk
- Canned fruit or 100% fruit juice

lunch

- Peanut butter
- Jelly
- Rice cakes
- Canned vegetable
- Canned fruit

dinner

- Rice
- Canned chicken
- Canned vegetable
- Seasoning packet



Encourage Healthy Choices at the Food Pantry



There are a number of strategies that pantries can adopt to support and encourage guests to make healthier choices:

- Offer flexibility
- Incentivize healthier choices
- Provide a shopping list
- Make healthy choices more visible
- Meet special dietary needs and preferences

Provide Guests With Flexibility in Making Selections

Food preferences, dietary needs and cultural food practices vary widely by individual. Even in choice pantries, there may be selection guidelines or practices that lead some guests to take home products they cannot use and will ultimately let go to waste. Guests may be reluctant to speak up about special dietary needs, concerns or preferences, or feel rushed to make a quick selection from the foods available at the pantry. By providing some flexibility in choices within food categories and supporting guests in making their selections, food pantries can ensure the food they make available to guests will be consumed. Keep in mind that not all guests may be aware of pantry policies that offer flexibility in selection. Consider posting a sign telling guests to let a volunteer know if they have questions or concerns about what is offered at the pantry.

“We are small and have more flexibility. Our guests shop on their own and are able to take what they want and need.”
—Sue Steinmetz,
McFarland Food Pantry



Offer Incentives to Encourage Selection of Healthier Choices

Giving rewards or incentives for making healthy food choices has been shown to be a successful strategy for improving dietary behavior in other settings like grocery stores and farmers' markets. Because food pantry guests are likely motivated by the overall quantity of food received during their visit, incentives would work best when additional food items are given as a result of selecting a particular product. For example, you might provide an unlimited selection of fresh fruits and vegetables and restrict the amount of sweets or pastries that could be selected. You might offer an extra can of vegetables for every two cans of vegetables selected. Incentives can be included in the pantry nutrition policy and accompanying shopping list documents.

Provide a Shopping List to Guests

Some pantries must limit the amount of food per food category guests are able to receive based on household size. This "shopping list" or guide provided to guests directly influences the type and quantity of food chosen. An example can be found on page 40. Making improvements to your guide to account for recommended dietary patterns as well as rewarding healthier choices can encourage guests to make healthier choices. In addition, this shopping list can serve as a mechanism to guide food procurement.

Ohio State University Extension developed a choice pantry shopping guide based on the DGA. Foods are shelved according to color-coded food groups and guests are allowed a predetermined number of choices per food group based on household size. The system ensures that guests choose a variety of different foods so that they can provide healthy, balanced meals and snacks for themselves and their households. To fully support this system, the pantry should be arranged so that food items are shelved according to food groups. The shelves should be color-coded using signs or stickers to designate food groups according to *MyPlate*. Color coding assists the guests in associating nutrition education messages delivered through *MyPlate* with the foods they are selecting at the pantry. See *Sample Guest Shopping List* on next page and Food Group Categories Product Listing on page 43.

IMPLEMENTATION TOOLS



SAMPLE GUEST SHOPPING LIST

... page 42

FOOD GROUP CATEGORIES AND PRODUCT LISTINGS

... page 43



SAMPLE GUEST SHOPPING LIST								
Household Size	Fruits	Vegetables	Meat and Beans <i>(peanut butter, eggs)</i>	Dairy <i>(yogurt and cheese)</i>	Grains	Meal Makers <i>(soups, meals in a box)</i>	Misc. <i>(oils, snacks & sweets, condiments, staples)</i>	Personal Items
1	2 items	3 items	4 items	1 item	2 items	3 items	3 items	3 items
2	2 items	3 items	4 items	1 item	2 items	3 items	3 items	3 items
3	3 items	3 items	5 items	1 item	2 items	4 items	4 items	3 items
4	5 items	3 items	5 items	1 item	2 items	4 items	5 items	4 items
5	5 items	5 items	5 items	2 items	3 items	5 items	6 items	4 items
6	5 items	6 items	5 items	2 items	3 items	6 items	6 items	5 items
7	6 items	7 items	5 items	3 items	3 items	7 items	7 items	5 items
8	6 items	8 items	8 items	3 items	3 items	8 items	8 items	5 items

Adapted from the Rainbow of Colors Choice System developed by Ohio State University Extension



Make Healthy Choices More Visible

The way food is organized in a grocery store has been shown to impact purchasing behavior. For example, when more shelf space is given to a particular product, it increases sales of that product. In addition, strategic placement of one product over another can encourage its selection. The same principles can be applied in food pantries.

To encourage the selection of healthier foods, consider the following strategies:

- Increase the overall shelf space for foods that fall under the category of “foods and nutrients to increase”: fruits and vegetables, whole grains, low-sodium, no- or low-fat milk and milk products, and lean proteins such as beans and nuts, poultry, fish and eggs.
- Place healthier food products at the beginning or front of the food pantry so they are the first things that people see and select. This will help ensure guest carts or bags are not too full for healthier products once they reach the end of the pantry.



- Separate low-sodium and whole-grain packaged foods from regular items and use signage to clearly label these alternate products. This will allow guests with special dietary needs, such as high blood pressure or diabetes, to identify these preferred products.
- Display fresh produce in an appealing and accessible way with attractive containers like baskets or wood crates.
- Highlight local and garden produce.
- See page 43 for Food Group Categories and Product Listings

Meeting Special Dietary Needs and Preferences

Guest food preferences will vary widely depending on a number of factors including health conditions or cultural and religious beliefs. By taking into consideration common dietary needs, food pantries can ensure they are being inclusive of all possible audiences served. Please see tool on page 44. Common dietary needs include:

- Low-sodium
- Gluten Free
- Vegetarian and Vegan
- Halal
- Kosher

It is recommended that pantries gather feedback about what dietary needs and preferences are most common. This can be done formally by distributing a survey to all pantry guests, or informally by placement of a suggestion box or by capturing guest requests.

It is important that food packages include information such as Nutrition Facts and ingredients lists to help guests with special dietary needs or preferences. Please see tool on page 46.

IMPLEMENTATION TOOLS



MEETING SPECIAL DIETARY NEEDS HANDOUT

... page 44

HOW TO READ NUTRITION FACTS LABEL HANDOUT

... page 46-47

“I myself have to be more on the healthy side. I had a heart attack in June, [my husband] had a heart attack in January, and I am diabetic. So in theory I’m supposed to really be watching what I am eating.”

— Food pantry guest



GUEST SHOPPING CHECKLIST

Use the chart below to guide the development of your guest shopping checklist that meets the USDA's *My Plate* recommendations. The number of food items listed by household size should be sufficient to provide 3 days of meals (breakfast, lunch and dinner). A full listing of food items per category follows.

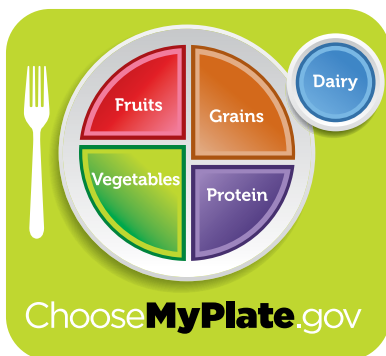
Consider providing seasonal fresh produce as a free choice (i.e. does not count towards limits in table).

Build in incentives to promote fruit and vegetable, whole-grain and low-sodium product selections.

Ideally, the pantry should be arranged so that food items are shelved according to the food groups specified below. Signs and stickers can be used to color code the shelves according to food group and to reinforce the messages delivered by *MyPlate*.

Household size	Fruits	Vegetables	Meat, beans, peanut butter, & eggs	Dairy, yogurt & cheese	Grains	Meal makers (soups, meals in a box)	Misc. (oils, snacks, sweets, condiments, staples)	Personal items
1	2 items	3 items	4 items	1 item	2 items	3 items	3 items	3 items
2	2 items	3 items	4 items	1 item	2 items	3 items	3 items	3 items
3	3 items	3 items	5 items	1 item	2 items	4 items	4 items	3 items
4	5 items	3 items	5 items	1 item	2 items	4 items	5 items	4 items
5	4 items	5 items	5 items	2 items	3 items	5 items	6 items	4 items
6	5 items	6 items	5 items	2 items	3 items	6 items	6 items	5 items
7	6 items	7 items	5 items	3 items	3 items	7 items	7 items	5 items
8	6 items	8 items	8 items	3 items	3 items	8 items	8 items	5 items

Adapted from the Rainbow of Colors Choice System developed by Ohio State University Extension





FOOD GROUP CATEGORIES AND PRODUCT LISTING

Fruits

- Applesauce
- Canned and shelf stable fruits
 - Fruit cocktail
 - Peaches
 - Pears
 - Pineapple
 - Grapefruit
- Dried fruit
 - Raisins
 - Apricots
 - Cranberries
 - Banana chips
- 100% fruit juice
- Fresh fruits

Vegetables

- Canned vegetables
 - Dark greens
 - Carrots
 - Pumpkin
 - Sweet potatoes
 - Corn
 - Green peas
 - Lima beans
 - Asparagus
 - Beets
 - Green beans
 - Mushrooms
 - Tomatoes
- Potatoes
- 100% vegetable juice (i.e. carrot, tomato)
- Fresh vegetables

Dairy

- Fluid milk
- Evaporated or canned milk
- Non-fat dry milk
- Cheese
- Cottage cheese
- Yogurt
- Soy milk

Grains

- Bread
- Rice
- Pasta
- Oatmeal
- Grits
- Cream of Wheat
- Cold cereal
- Breakfast or granola bars
- Crackers
- Muffin, cornbread, or pancake mix
- Pitas
- Bagels
- Pretzels
- Stuffing Mix
- Tortillas
- Popcorn

Protein foods

- Eggs
- Frozen or refrigerated meat/fish
- Canned meats and fish packed in water
 - Chicken
 - Tuna
 - Salmon
 - Sardines
 - Vienna Sausages
 - Spam
- Canned and dry beans
 - Black beans
 - Black-eye peas
 - Chickpeas (garbanzo beans)
 - Kidney beans
 - Navy beans
 - Lentils
 - White beans
- Nuts and seeds
 - Almonds
 - Peanuts
 - Sunflower seeds
 - Pumpkin seeds
 - Pecans
 - Walnuts
 - Sesame seeds
 - Pistachios
 - Mixed nuts
- Nut butter (peanut, almond, etc)
- Chunky soup with meat, chicken and chili

Meal makers & condiments

- Vegetable soup
- Broth
- Creamed soups
- Canned stews
- Spaghetti sauce
- Meal mixes (Tuna Helper, Hamburger Helper, sloppy joe mix, Macaroni & Cheese)

Staples, spices & condiments

- Baking mixes
- Baking soda
- Baking powder
- Sugar
- Flour
- Oil (Vegetable and Olive)
- Mayonnaise
- Ketchup
- Mustard
- Gravy
- Salsa
- Salad dressings
- Spices



MEETING SPECIAL DIETARY NEEDS

Guest food preferences will vary widely depending on a number of factors. Certain health conditions may require special diets. Cultural and religious beliefs and practices may also influence what an individual chooses to consume. By taking into consideration common dietary needs, food pantries can ensure they are being inclusive of all possible audiences served.

Below you will find listings of sample food products meeting specific dietary needs.

Low sodium

Most Americans consume more sodium than recommended. While we could all lower our sodium intake, some individuals may have to be particularly careful about how much sodium they consume for health reasons. This includes individuals with hypertension, diabetes or chronic kidney disease, as well as individuals over the age of 51. Look for "Low sodium" or "No salt added" on labels of the following products:

- canned chicken in water, no salt added
- canned beans, no salt added
- tomato paste, sauce, and stewed tomatoes, no salt added
- green beans, sweet peas, no salt added
- various soup varieties, no salt added

Gluten intolerance

Gluten is a protein found in certain grains. Individuals with diagnosed celiac disease cannot eat foods containing gluten. They need to avoid the following grains: wheat, barley and rye. Some processed foods will also contain gluten. Possible sources of gluten in processed food products include: bouillon cubes, brown rice syrup, candy, deli meats and hot dogs, gravy, rice mixes, sauces, seasoned snack foods and soup.

Make sure to check labels carefully for ingredients containing gluten and err on the side of caution if unsure. The following food items are generally okay for those with a gluten intolerance:

- fresh eggs, fresh meats/fish and poultry (not breaded, battered or marinated)
- fruits and vegetables
- grains: amaranth, buckwheat, rice, quinoa, flax, cornmeal, oats
- soy

Vegetarian and vegan

There are many types of vegetarians. Most vegetarians follow a mostly plant-based diet and never or rarely eat meat, fish or poultry. Individuals following a vegan diet avoid any animal-based products, including milk and dairy, and other foods with ingredients from animal sources, like gelatin. Some common acceptable items for vegetarian and vegans include:

- fruits and vegetables
- nuts and seeds
- beans and legumes
- grains: quinoa, oats and rice
- meat and dairy free soups
- soy and tofu

continued... MEETING SPECIAL DIETARY NEEDS**Dietary beliefs**

There are certain beliefs people have about how food is prepared, processed and consumed whether for personal, cultural or religious reasons. To ensure foods meet the criteria defined by these beliefs, third-party certification agencies exist to approve, monitor and regulate foods. We will look at Kosher and Halal below.

Remember that not all items by a certified brand will be Kosher or Halal. It is important to check labels carefully.

- If the label does not clearly state that a product is Halal or Kosher, then assume it is not unless you have received written confirmation from the company that produces that product or their approved third-party certifier.
- Third-party certifiers have websites that are a great resource allowing you to search for certified products and/or contact customer service if you have a question.

Halal

Halal foods are those that Muslims are allowed to eat or drink under Islamic law, which dictates both what foods are permitted and how the food must be processed and prepared. Pork is the most common example of non-Halal food.

Common brands are Abbot, Baskin Robbins, Organic Valley, Campbell, English Biscuits, Nestle, Olympia, Wonderful and National.

Popular certifiers

- IFANCA
www.ifanca.org
- USA Halal Chamber of Commerce, Inc
www.ushalalcertification.com

Remember that Halal is a third-party certification. This means that any Halal certified product would have to state that on the label. This can be called out in many different ways, some examples are below:

**Kosher**

Kosher foods are those that follow Jewish dietary law. Kosher foods must also meet specific criteria for how it is processed and prepared, and may forbid certain animal products from being consumed.

Common brands are Athenos, CapriSun, Dalla Costa, Dasinu, Nantucket Nectars, Hunt's Tomatoes, Yoplait, Tropicana, Country Time Lemonade, Rose's, Upper Crust Bakery, Crown Naturals, Matt's, MegaFood, Eden, Ortega, Swiss Miss, Blue Diamond and Minute Maid.

Remember that Kosher is a third-party certification. This means that any Kosher-certified product would have to have a symbol on the label notating that the product is Kosher. There are multiple third-party certifiers who have symbols that denote a product is Kosher. Some examples are below:

Popular certifiers

- OK Kosher,
www.ok.org
- Orthodox Union (OU)
<http://oukosher.org>





GET THE NUTRITION FACTS (PRE-2020)

Whether you're looking for foods with fewer calories, more fiber or less sugar, Nutrition Facts information on food packages is the place to go.

Start at the top to find the number of **servings per container** and the **serving size**. Remember that one package may contain more than one serving. The information that follows serving size such as **calories** is for one serving of this food.

Below the serving size and calories, you will find key **nutrients** in this food and **Percent Daily Value (%DV)**. Use this information to compare similar products and find which product has more or less of the nutrient(s) that interests you. Foods are considered **"low"** in a nutrient if they have 5% DV or less of that nutrient. For example, a food with 4% DV Total Fat is "low in fat". They are considered **"high"** in a nutrient if they have 20% DV or more for that nutrient. For example, a food with 20% DV Calcium is "high in calcium."

Nutrition Facts			
Serving Size 1 package (272g)			
Servings Per Container 1			
Amount Per Serving			
Calories 300		Calories from Fat 45	
% Daily Value*			
Total Fat	5g		8%
Saturated Fat	1.5g		8%
Trans Fat	0g		
Cholesterol	30mg		10%
Sodium	430mg		18%
Total Carbohydrate	55g		18%
Dietary Fiber	6g		24%
Sugars	23g		
Protein	14g		
Vitamin A			80%
Vitamin C			35%
Calcium			6%
Iron			15%
* Percent Daily Values are based on a 2,000 calorie diet. Your Daily Values may be higher or lower depending on your calorie needs:			
	Calories:	2,000	2,500
Total Fat	Less than	65g	80g
Saturated Fat	Less than	20g	25g
Cholesterol	Less than	300mg	300mg
Sodium	Less than	2,400mg	2,400mg
Total Carbohydrate		300g	375g
Dietary Fiber		25g	30g



GET THE NUTRITION FACTS – NEW LABEL (2020)

Whether you're looking for foods with fewer calories, more fiber or less sugar, Nutrition Facts information on food packages is the place to go.

Start at the top to find the **number of servings per container** and the **serving size**. Remember that one package may contain more than one serving. The information that follows serving size such as **calories** is for one serving of this food.

Below the serving size and calories, you will find key nutrients in this food and Percent Daily Value (%DV). Use this information to compare similar products and find which product as more or less of the nutrient(s) that interest you. Foods are considered "low" in a nutrient if they have 5% DV or less of that nutrient. For example, a food with 4% DV Total Fat is "low in fat". They are considered "high" in a nutrient if they have 20% DV or more for that nutrient. For example, a food with 20% DV Calcium is "high in Calcium".

Limit Saturated Fat, Sodium and Added Sugars. Eating less saturated fat, sodium and added sugars may help reduce your risk of disease.

Eat more Fiber, Vitamin D, Calcium, Iron and Potassium to improve your health and reduce risk for disease.

Before 2020, some manufacturers used a different looking label.

1 Serving Size

2 Amount of Calories

3 Limit these Nutrients

4 Get enough of these Nutrients

5 Percent (%) Daily Value

Nutrition Facts	
2 servings per container	
Serving size 1 1/2 cup (208g)	
Amount per serving	
Calories	240
% Daily Value*	
Total Fat 4g	5%
Saturated Fat 1.5g	8%
Trans Fat 0g	
Cholesterol 5mg	2%
Sodium 430mg	19%
Total Carbohydrate 46g	17%
Dietary Fiber 7g	25%
Total Sugars 4g	
Includes 2g Added Sugars	4%
Protein 11g	
Vitamin D 2mcg	10%
Calcium 260mg	20%
Iron 6mg	35%
Potassium 240mg	6%

* The % Daily Value (DV) tells you how much a nutrient in a serving of food contributes to a daily diet. 2,000 calories a day is used for general nutrition advice.

Pre-2020 label

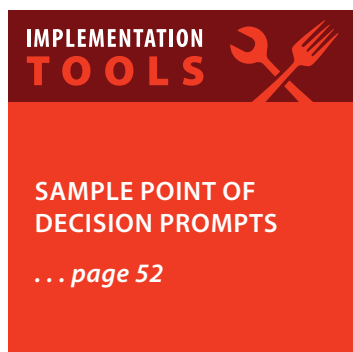
2020 label

Nutrition Facts	
Serving Size 1 package (272g)	
Servings Per Container 1	
Amount Per Serving	
Calories 300	Calories from Fat 45
% Daily Value*	
Total Fat 5g	8%
Saturated Fat 1.5g	8%
Trans Fat 0g	
Cholesterol 30mg	10%
Sodium 430mg	18%
Total Carbohydrate 55g	18%
Dietary Fiber 6g	24%
Sugars 23g	
Protein 14g	
Vitamin A	80%
Vitamin C	35%
Calcium	6%
Iron	15%
* Percent Daily Values are based on a 2,000 calorie diet. Your Daily Values may be higher or lower depending on your calorie needs:	
	Calories: 2,000 2,500
Total Fat	Less than 65g 80g
Saturated Fat	Less than 20g 25g
Cholesterol	Less than 300mg 300mg
Sodium	Less than 2,400mg 2,400mg
Total Carbohydrate	300g 375g
Dietary Fiber	25g 30g

Nutrition Facts	
2 servings per container	
Serving size 1 1/2 cup (208g)	
Amount per serving	
Calories	240
% Daily Value*	
Total Fat 4g	5%
Saturated Fat 1.5g	8%
Trans Fat 0g	
Cholesterol 5mg	2%
Sodium 430mg	19%
Total Carbohydrate 46g	17%
Dietary Fiber 7g	25%
Total Sugars 4g	
Includes 2g Added Sugars	4%
Protein 11g	
Vitamin D 2mcg	10%
Calcium 260mg	20%
Iron 6mg	35%
Potassium 240mg	6%

* The % Daily Value (DV) tells you how much a nutrient in a serving of food contributes to a daily diet. 2,000 calories a day is used for general nutrition advice.

Nutrition Education for Food Pantry Guests



To assist food pantry guests in making healthy choices, food pantries can also provide education about making healthier choices. The following strategies can be used to provide nutrition education to guests:

- Partner with your county Extension FoodWise Program
- Prompt people to make healthier choices
- Support guests while shopping
- Offer recipes

Partner with your county Extension FoodWise Program

The University of Wisconsin–Madison Division of Extension runs a SNAP-Ed funded nutrition education program that reaches individuals and households with limited incomes in almost all of Wisconsin counties. The goal of this program is to improve the likelihood that persons eligible for SNAP (known as FoodShare in Wisconsin) will make healthy food choices within their limited budgets and choose physically active lifestyles consistent with the current Dietary Guidelines for Americans. To learn more and discuss partnership opportunities contact your county Extension FoodWise Coordinator:

<https://fyi.extension.wisc.edu/foodwise/county-listing>

Prompt People to Make Healthier Food Choices

Point-of-decision prompts (sometimes known as point-of-purchase prompts or shelf-talkers) have been shown to influence dietary behavior. Often posted as a sign or symbol next to a product, decision prompts provide a nudge to select one particular product over another.



This strategy might also be effective in the food pantry setting. **The food pantry could post simple signs that reinforce key nutrition messages** such as, “make half your grains whole” or “eat a variety of fruits and vegetables every day.” Signs might also indicate **healthier choices** with placement of a check mark or star, for example. Check with your local Public Health Department to see if any point-of-decision prompts have been implemented in your community’s grocery stores or restaurants. If so, you could build off of the criteria established for that program and utilize the same images and messages to reinforce branding. More suggestions can be found on page 52.



Additional nutrition messaging can be achieved by placing posters and other educational materials around the food pantry. The USDA has developed consumer-messaging materials in both English and Spanish. Materials are available to download and print for free. Learn more at: www.choosemyplate.gov/print-materials-ordering.html

“Our county Extension office helped us place apple cutouts next to the healthier products in our pantry. Some of the apples even have a little message, like ‘reduce sodium by rinsing canned veggies’. Our customers notice them when making their selections.”

—Holly Weber,
Adams and WI Dells Food Pantry



IMPLEMENTATION TOOLS



SELECTING RECIPES FOR USE AT FOOD PANTRIES

... page 56

Support Guests While Shopping

Volunteers are regularly cited as an important factor in determining the success of a food pantry's operation. Consider how you can use volunteers in new ways to provide support to guests as they make their food selections. Volunteers could be trained in the food pantry layout and distribution and accompany guests through their visit to provide support in making healthy choices. Combined with a guest-shopping list that aligns with the DGA, volunteers can answer guest questions about unfamiliar food products, provide ideas on safe storage and preparation and encourage the selection of healthier products.

Offer Recipes alongside Food Distribution

Providing recipes is a great way to ensure that guests select certain products (such as uncommon fruits, vegetables or dried beans). In fact, food pantry coordinators and volunteers, as well as guests, have all indicated an interest in having recipes available at the food pantry. Whenever possible, it's even better to prepare a sample recipe that guests can smell and taste. Plus, TEFAP allows taste testing as a form of nutrition education!

“...say we had a recipe that took about two or three of these items and combined them with something else for a meal. That way we could take some odds and ends that we would never have looked at before and throw them into the same pot. That way we could say, okay, this is weird, that's weird, and that's weird, but together they don't taste half bad.” —Food pantry guest

Not all recipes are created equal. Recipes containing a small number of common ingredients are easier to read and prepare. Many recipes have been developed and are available for free online. **Review the sites posted in our “Selecting Recipes for Use at Food Pantries” guide for more ideas on locating appropriate recipes.**





SHELF TALKER INSTRUCTIONS: For best results, print these shelf talkers on heavyweight paper, such as card stock. Cut out each card along the dashed black lines, and fold along dashed gray line. Score them to make them easier to fold, and laminate them so they will last longer. Scoring and lamination can be done at most copy centers.



(Back of folded card)

(Back of folded card)



Look for this symbol
to guide you in making healthy
food selections today!





POINT OF DECISION PROMPTS

Point-of-decision prompts, such as a sign or symbol next to a product, can be utilized to highlight healthy food choices and encourage food pantry guests to select these items. Many communities have begun to implement point-of-decision prompts in grocery stores and restaurants.

Contact your local Public Health Department to learn about existing initiatives and how they can be adapted to the pantry setting.

Highlight the following food items with a symbol:



English	Spanish
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fruits and vegetables 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Frutas y verduras
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Whole grains (items with the first ingredient listed as “whole” wheat, corn, etc.) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Granos integrales (artículos cuyo primer ingrediente en la lista aparece como trigo integral, maíz, etc. Por ejemplo, “whole wheat” quiere decir “trigo integral”)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Low-fat or non-fat dairy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Productos lácteos bajos en grasa o sin grasa
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lean protein foods, such as lean beef and pork, chicken, turkey, beans, fish, or tofu 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Alimentos con proteínas magras, como carne magra de res, cerdo, pollo, pavo, frijoles, pescado o tofu

Be sure to communicate to pantry guests what the symbol stands for to guide their decision making when making food selections. Add the symbol to your guest shopping list and/or post a sign letting guests know to look for this symbol to guide them in making healthier choices at the food pantry.



Look for this symbol to guide you in making healthy food selections today!

¡Busque este símbolo como guía para escoger alimentos saludables hoy!

In addition to highlighting certain food products with a symbol, you might consider posting nutrition education messages next to key food products to reinforce the recommendations established by USDA’s *MyPlate*. USDA has tested consumer education messages and has a 10 tip series available for free download on their website.

<https://www.choosemyplate.gov/resources/myplate-tip-sheets>

Examples of key messages include:

English	Spanish
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Make half your plate veggies and fruits 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Llene la mitad de su plato con verduras y frutas
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Add lean protein 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Aumente el consumo de proteínas magras
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Include whole grains 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Incluya granos integrales
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Don’t forget the low-fat dairy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No se olvide de los lácteos bajos en grasa
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Avoid extra fat 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evite el consumo excesivo de grasa
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Try new foods 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pruebe alimentos nuevos
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Satisfy your sweet tooth with naturally sweet fruit 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Satisface el apetito por los dulces con fruta con azúcar natural

*continued...* MORE IDEAS FOR POINT OF DECISION PROMPTS

English	Spanish
Whole Wheat Pasta	Pasta de trigo integral
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Make a healthy swap – Choose whole grain pasta. Make half your grains whole – Choose whole wheat pasta. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Haga un cambio saludable: Elija pasta integral. Haga que la mitad de los granos que usted coma sean integrales: Escoja pasta de trigo integral.
Unsweetened Applesauce	Puré de manzana sin azúcar
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use to make granola bars or pie. Dip graham crackers. Put in kids' lunches. Use in baking instead of oil. Make pork chops and applesauce. Make applesauce pancakes. Use as ice cream topping. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Úselo para hacer barras de granola o pastel de manzana. Úselo para remojar galletas tipo graham. Póngalo en las loncheras de los niños. Úselo para cocer en el horno en lugar de aceite. Haga chuletas de cerdo y puré de manzana. Haga panqueques (pancakes) de puré de manzana. Sabe rico encima del helado.
Canned Tuna	Atún enlatado
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> It's ready to eat. Add tuna to your salad! Make tuna patties. Make cold sandwiches or tuna melts. Make wraps, tortilla or lettuce. Use in casseroles. Fry patties. Bake patties. Put on salad. You can eat it plain. Eat on crackers. Put between grilled cheese sandwiches. Make noodle casserole. Make tuna noodle salad. Put in an omelet. Make tuna tacos. Make creamed tuna over toast. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Está listo para comer. ¡Agregue atún a su ensalada! Haga hamburguesas de atún. Haga sándwiches fríos o sándwiches calientes de atún con queso derretido. Haga wraps con tortillas o lechuga. Úselos en cacerolas. Haga pastelitos de atún para freír. Haga pastelitos de atún para cocer al horno. Ponga la carne de atún encima de las ensaladas. Puede comerlo solo. Cómalo con galletas saladas. Póngalo entre los sándwiches de queso a la plancha Haga una cacerola de fideos. Haga una ensalada de atún y fideos. Póngalo dentro de un omelet. Haga tacos de atún. Haga una crema de atún para comer con tostadas.

**continued... MORE IDEAS FOR POINT OF DECISION PROMPTS**

English	Spanish
Canned Potatoes	Papas en lata
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Put on the bottom of an egg bake. Slice them and fry. Put them in soup. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Agréguelas al fondo de un pastel de huevos. Pícalas y fríalas. Póngalas en la sopa.
Green Bean Pouches	Bolsas de ejotes (judías verdes / vainitas)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Add to minestrone. Make green bean casserole. Make fried rice. Add to stew! Add to soup! Easy, convenient – No can opener needed! 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Agréguelos a una sopa de menestrón. Haga una cacerola de ejotes. Haga arroz frito. ¡Agréguelos a los guisados! ¡Agréguelos a la sopa! Fácil y práctico. ¡No se necesita abrelatas!
Canned Peas	Chícharos (guisantes / arvejas) en lata
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Add to cold or hot pasta. Use in omelets. Add to soup. Make split pea soup. Add to rice dishes. Puree for baby food. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Agréguelos a la pasta fría o caliente. Úselos en omelets. Agréguelos a la sopa. Haga sopa de chícharos (arvejas partidas). Agréguelos a platos en base a arroz. Hágalos puré y déselos de comer al bebé.
Canned Beans	Frijoles en lata
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> You can use to make brownies! Wow! Add to canned soups for a hearty meal. Add me to chili. Mash me up and make your own dip! Use me on top of baked potatoes. Beans + Rice = True Love Add me to soups for a hearty treat (or blend to make your own soup)! I go great in salads! 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ¡Los puede usar para hacer brownies! ¡Guau! Agréguelos a las sopas enlatadas para hacer una comida sustanciosa. Agréguelos a un plato de chili. ¡Prepárelos en puré y haga su propio dip o salsa! Póngalos encima de papas al horno. Arroz + Frijoles = Amor Verdadero ¡Agréguelos a las sopas y obtenga una comida sustanciosa (o haga un puré para preparar su propia sopa)! ¡Sirven como un ingrediente excelente para las ensaladas!

*continued...* MORE IDEAS FOR POINT OF DECISION PROMPTS

English	Spanish
Canned Carrots	Zanahorias en lata
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Try me in a soup with curry powder! 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ¡Pruébelas en una sopa con curry en polvo!
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Invite me to dessert. I promise to be sweet! 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Como son dulces, se puede comer las zanahorias para el postre!
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What's up doc? Carrots are healthy for you! 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ¿Qué tal, doctor? ¡Las zanahorias son saludables para usted!
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Add to casseroles. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ¡Agréguelas a las cacerolas.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Add to stir fry! 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ¡Agréguelas a los salteados!
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Add to homemade fried rice! 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ¡Agréguelas al arroz frito hecho en casa!
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Make vegetable soup! 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ¡Haga sopa de verduras!
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Add some maple syrup to me and roast for a delicious glazed treat! 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ¡Agregue jarabe de arce y cocer al horno para hacer un delicioso dulce de zanahorias glaseadas!
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Try it in a smoothie. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pruébalo en un batido.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Great in stews or soup. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Excelente en los guisados o sopas.





HOW TO SELECT RECIPES FOR THE FOOD PANTRY

When you consider providing recipes to food pantry guests, use the following checklist to guide your decision.

Are the recipes consistent with the Dietary Guidelines for Americans?

- Encourage eating fruits, vegetables, whole grains, skim or low-fat milk and lean meats.
- Use salt sparingly or designate “optional” if possible.
- Minimize the use of foods with low nutritional value and high in solid fat and/or added sugar such as whipped topping, chocolate syrup or cream cheese.
- Follow food safety guidelines. Recipes should not include unsafe practices, such as using uncooked eggs in the finished product or marinating meat at room temperature.

Are the recipes appropriate for your guests?

- Ingredients should be familiar and readily available.
- The recipe should not specify brand names.
- Choose recipes that do not use expensive equipment or ingredients.
- Consider the cultural preferences of your guests.
- Consider guest’s experience with food preparation.
- Choose recipes that are quick and easy. If possible, choose recipes with fewer than eight ingredients that can be prepared in less than 45 minutes.
- Pre-testing recipes is highly recommended to make sure the product is the quality you expect.

Are the recipes written clearly?

- The ingredients are listed in the order they will be used.
- Measurements are spelled out rather than abbreviated (i.e. use tablespoon rather than Tbsp.)
- The recipe specifies sizes of cans.
- The method of preparation is described using short, simple, numbered steps. Pan sizes, temperature and baking time are specified.
- The recipe states expected yield in number and size of servings.
- The recipe includes Nutrition Facts.

Use recipes from public sources such as the U.S. Department of Agriculture or National Institutes of Health.

Get permission to reprint any recipes that are copyright protected.

State your source on the recipe.

Examples of public sources for recipes:

<https://fyi.extension.wisc.edu/foodsense>

<https://snaped.fns.usda.gov/nutrition-education/recipes>

<https://spendsmart.extension.iastate.edu>

Adapted from: *How to Select and Use Recipes in Nutrition Education*, FoodWise, UW–Madison Division of Extension, 2007.





RESOURCES



General Healthy Foods Strategy

USDA: MyPlate

www.choosemyplate.gov

Donations with a Difference

extension.illinois.edu/foodbaskets

NYC Healthy Food Donation Initiative

www1.nyc.gov/site/doh/health/health-topics/healthy-food-donation.page

Cooking Matters in your Food Pantry

cookingmatters.org/sites/cookingmatters.org/files/CMYFP.pdf

CHOP: Choosing Healthy Options

www.pittsburghfoodbank.org/resources/nutrition/chop

Hunger and Health Feeding America

hungerandhealth.feedingamerica.org

Eating Better on a Budget '10 Tips' from ChooseMyPlate

www.choosemyplate.gov/ten-tips-eating-better-on-a-budget

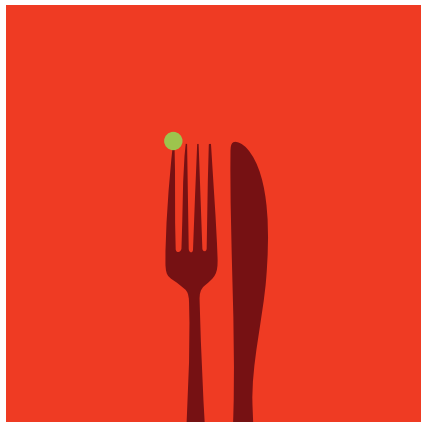
Choose MyPlate '10 Tips'

www.choosemyplate.gov/myplate-tip-sheets

WISCAP WI Guide to Resources for Food Pantries

wiscap.org/pdfs/WISCAP%20Guide%20to%20Resources%20for%20Wisconsin%20Food%20Pantries%202.pdf

safety
STRATEGIES



PROMOTE SAFETY IN YOUR FOOD PANTRY



How do I help my pantry provide safe food for guests?

An important part of offering healthy food at your food pantry is making sure the food is safe to eat. Every year, foodborne illness affects more than 48 million individuals in the United States alone, and food pantry visitors may be more susceptible to serious consequences from foodborne illness than the general population. Pantries can create a safe food environment by:

1. Putting Safe Food on the Shelf
2. Transporting, Handling and Storing Food Properly
3. Following the Rule: When in Doubt, Throw it Out
4. Supporting Guests in Handling Food Safely

Putting Safe Food on the Shelf



IMPLEMENTATION TOOLS



DEVELOP YOUR FOOD SAFETY POLICY

... page 63

The guests that visit your pantry will be grateful that you are providing safe, high quality food for them and their households. Federal, state and local food safety laws help to ensure that companies that manufacture food for sale in the United States and farmers that grow fresh produce follow rules with the goal of guaranteeing a safe food supply. Food banks and food pantries are an important part of our food safety system, helping to ensure that safe food is distributed to those most in need. Strategies to help ensure that the food you put on the shelf is safe include:

- Establish a food safety policy
- Educate your donors
- Accept safe foods
- Accept safe produce

Establish a Food Safety Policy

A **food safety policy** can be used to guide decision making and ensure that the foods you are distributing are both safe and of high quality. A food safety policy is a statement of your commitment to procure and distribute foods that meet certain standards for safety and quality. A food safety policy can make it easier to communicate the standards you have set to donors, partner organizations and guests. Adopting a food safety policy is the best way to communicate to your guests, members of your organization and partners that you are **dedicated to food safety**. Sample Food Safety Policy language can be found on page 63.



Educate your Donors

You can help ensure safe food on the shelf by providing donors with guidelines for donating safe, high quality foods. Whether a large multi-national food company, a local retailer or a concerned citizen, everyone will feel better about their food donation if they know that the food will be safe for you to distribute to those in need.

Accept Safe Foods

Foodborne illness can affect anyone. But those who are elderly, the very young, those with compromised immune systems, and pregnant women have an even greater risk of getting sick from contaminated food. Many of the guests visiting your food pantry are in these high-risk groups. One of the most important ways you can help maintain the health of your guests is to only accept foods into your pantry that are safe to eat. Help your donors learn more about food safety by giving them a **checklist** of foods that are safe for you to pass-on to guests, and by helping them to understand that there are some foods that may be unsafe for you to distribute. For tool see page 64.

// ...expiration dates really puts a time limit on. It's like hurry, hurry, hurry, I gotta make this. And then when I do make it, is it even going to be good? As it's cooking: Is it going to sour everything else?"

—Food pantry guest



IMPLEMENTATION TOOLS



DONATED FOODS CHECKLIST

... page 64

TEN MOST UN-WANTED POSTER

... PAGE 65



Accept Safe Produce

Fresh produce is such a treat for food pantry guests, and state and national initiatives are working to increase the availability of fresh produce for those most in need. However, increasingly fresh produce has also been linked to foodborne illnesses. There are several tips that can help **ensure that you offer safe produce to those you serve**:

- For fresh-from-the farm fruits and vegetables, get to know the growers that will supply your food pantry and encourage them to use Good Agricultural Practices in growing their crops.
- Set standards for produce gleaned from farmers' markets or local retailers.
- Carefully inspect fresh produce at the time of donation and do not accept visibly rotten or spoiled produce.
- Monitor produce carefully while it's in your inventory and discard anything that becomes visibly rotten or spoiled.
- Store fresh fruits and vegetables in a cool area and away from direct sunlight.
- Fresh-cut produce (produce that is peeled, sliced or cut) should always be **kept cold (40°F or below)**.
- The tool on page 82 can help you develop a Fresh Produce Policy.



DEVELOP YOUR FOOD SAFETY POLICY

Establishing a **food safety policy** is the best way for your food pantry to ensure that you are protecting the health of the people that you serve. Having a food safety policy in place will encourage donations and will help your pantry operate smoothly.

[Food Pantry name] will accept the following foods:

- Foods in their original, sealed package with an ingredient label and code date
- Manufactured food that is clearly within the 'Use By' or 'Sell By' date
- Perishable foods in sealed packages with donor information and product dating
- Perishable foods where temperature control has been strictly maintained
- Fresh produce grown using good agricultural practices, that is free of decay, and reasonably clean

[Food Pantry name] will not accept the following foods:

- Home canned or home preserved foods
- Home prepared meals or desserts
- Foods with evidence of spoilage
- Rotten fruits and vegetables
- Opened packages of food
- Foods in crushed, dented, rusted or broken/open containers
- Foods where there is evidence of product leakage
- Foods where there is evidence of insect damage or infestation
- Foods past their 'Best By' or 'Use By' date
- Packages of food that are excessively dirty or soiled
- Foods not from a retail business

[Food Pantry name] will:

- Maintain a clean, well-kept facility
- Transport, handle and store food in a food-safe manner
- Handle, store and distribute produce safely
- Keep up-to-date records of food inventory
- Keep appropriate temperature records
- Update policy documents as needed and keep signed health policy documents on hand
- Store non-food items and chemicals away from food
- Repackage food only where allowed and following a food-safe policy
- Discard food that is potentially unsafe for distribution (not place it on the 'free' shelf for pantry guests)

Signed: _____
Food Pantry representative

Date: _____



DONATED FOOD CHECKLIST FOR SAFETY & QUALITY

Both **safety** (whether a food is free of disease-causing bacteria and their toxins) and **quality** (whether a food looks and smells acceptable to eat) should be kept in mind when examining donated food.

Signs that food may be **UNSAFE** to eat.
Discard these foods.

Foods stored at room temperature

Cans

- Crushed so they will not stack
- Crushed at the end seam
- Dents with sharp edges
- Dents deep enough to rest a finger in
- Severe rust pits
- Swollen or bulging ends
- Holes, fractures or punctures
- Evidence of leakage
- Signs of spoilage when opened (spurting; unusual odor or appearance)
- Baby food or formula past expiration date
- Missing label

Glass jars

- Home-canned foods
- Raised, crooked or loosened lid
- Damaged tamper-resistant seal
- Cracks or chips
- Signs of spoilage (discolored food or cloudy liquid)
- Dirt under the rim
- Baby food past the expiration date

Paperboard cartons

- Packages that are opened
- Evidence of insects
- Baby food past the expiration date

Plastic containers

- Damaged tamper-resistant seal
- Signs of spoilage (mold, off odor)
- Baby food past the expiration date

Foods stored in the freezer

- Evidence of thawing and warm-holding (ice crystals on food that is soft to the touch, leaking packages)
- Unsuitable packaging

Foods stored in the refrigerator

- Lukewarm food (above 40° F)
- Signs of spoilage (unusual odor or appearance, molds)
- Unsuitable containers (and/or covers)
- Uncertain handling "history" (questionable reputation of food source)
- Damaged tamper-resistant seals (commercially packaged foods)

IF IN DOUBT, THROW IT OUT!

- Don't rely on look or smell. Foods that cause food poisoning may look fine and smell acceptable. Never taste suspicious foods!
- **Never** accept food that is home-canned or prepared by an unlicensed food processor.
- **Never** place potentially unsafe food products on the 'free' shelf for guests to take if they wish. Products which do not meet distribution standards should be **discarded**.



10 MOST UNWANTED

STOP! Don't donate these foods to the pantry.

1. Home-canned or home-preserved foods
2. Home-prepared meals or desserts
3. Spoiled foods
4. Rotten fruits and vegetables (or those close to spoiling)
5. Opened packages of food
6. Foods in crushed, dented or rusted containers
7. Foods past their 'best by' date
8. Foods past their 'use by' date
9. Packages of food that are dirty or soiled
10. Foods not from a retail business



Transport, Handle and Store Food Properly



You can help keep donated food safe by transporting them to your pantry in a food-safe environment. Handling and storing foods in the proper way will help keep food safe for guests to enjoy. Proper temperature control is key for maintaining the safety of perishable foods such as fresh produce, prepared meals, meats and eggs, and dairy. The **Danger Zone** is the range of temperatures between 40°F and 140°F. This is the temperature range at which harmful bacteria grow most rapidly.

Strategies to help ensure that the food that you provide to guests is safe include:

- Keep hot foods hot
- Keep cold foods cold
- Transport food safely
- Handle and store food safely

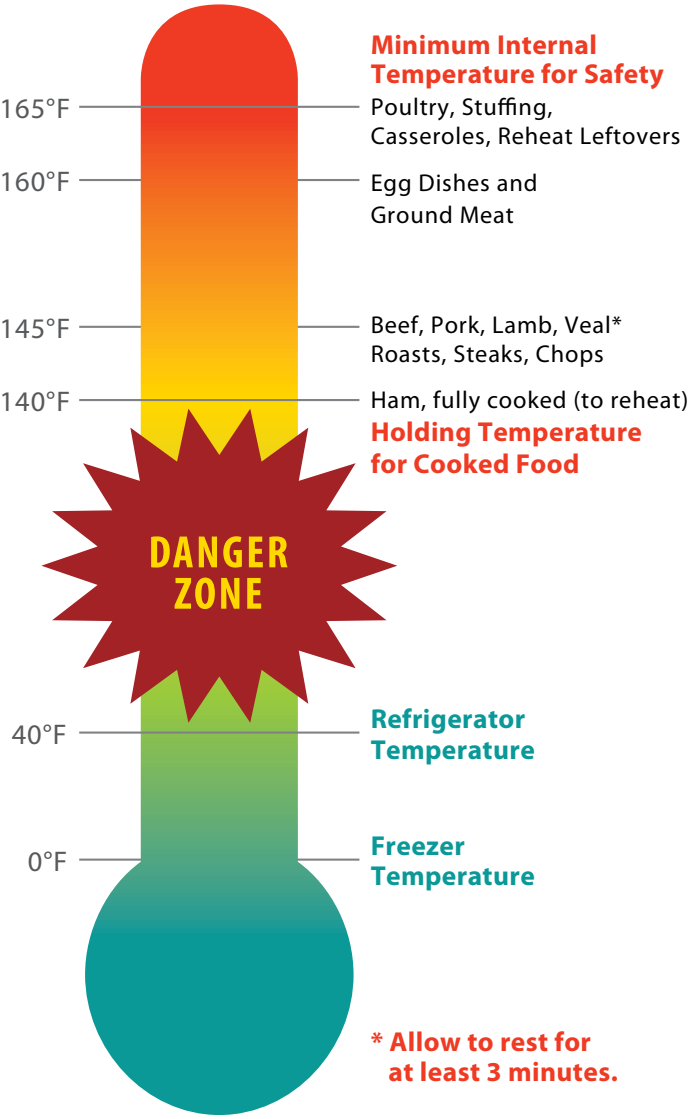
Keep Hot Foods Hot

Prepared meals that are delivered hot to the food pantry, or that you are transporting, must be kept hot, 140°F or higher, or cold to 40°F. Harmful bacteria will not grow as long foods are kept either too hot or too cold.

Help keep hot foods hot by placing them in a warming tray on a serving line. Cover with foil or a lid to help maintain temperature and prevent the food from drying out. If you are reheating



casseroles or other dishes, **cook at a temperature of 165°F, then keep warm at 140°F or higher.** Do not use a slow cooker to re-heat foods. A slow cooker does not heat up fast enough to warm foods that are cool or room temperature, but these appliances can be excellent ways to prepare soups and stews from scratch.



based on an image from USDA-FSIS



IMPLEMENTATION
TOOLS 

MAKE YOUR
DONATION COUNT
... page 70

MAINTAIN A WELL-KEPT
FOOD-SAFE PANTRY
... page 71

SAMPLE PRESS RELEASE
... page 72

REPACKAGING HANDOUT
... page 74

POLICY FOR ACCEPTING
AND TRANSPORTING
FOODS
... page 76

Keep Cold Foods Cold

Keep perishable foods such as meats, eggs and dairy products cold, stored at 40°F or below. An acceptable **temperature for a refrigerator is 32° to 40°F. A freezer should be set to -10°F**, or even colder. Foods that require refrigeration should not be out of cold temperature storage for more than two hours. See tool on page 77.

Transport Food Safely

In addition to keeping hot food hot and cold food cold, it's important to transport food safely. Whether it's **remembering to pack ice packs** that you will need, having a **clean vehicle** (leave the pets at home for this trip), or **planning a driving route that will keep food from sitting out of refrigeration too long**, food safety is key when transporting food.

Handle and Store Food Safely

Storing food safely is essential. Whether maintaining the proper temperature for perishable foods or having a clean pantry environment, food pantries maintain the safety of food in their care. A health policy for volunteers, a policy on sanitation or a policy on food repackaging can all help to ensure that food that you have worked hard to source remains safe to distribute. The tools on page 76 can support your efforts to accept, transport, handle and store food properly.



“You can tell volunteers over and over again what they need to do. Once you put [the hand washing sign] up on the wall, they see it, they comment on it and they are constantly reminded what they need to do.**”**

— Chris Kane, Saint Vincent de Paul Food Pantry, Madison, WI



“Many of our guests are concerned about the safety of their food. We posted information and we talk to our guests about how long food is good for. This seems to help ease concerns.”

— Sue Steinmetz,
McFarland Food Pantry



When in Doubt, Throw it Out!

Discard Unsafe Food

Sometimes even the best-motivated donors contribute foods that a pantry should not distribute. There may be good food safety reasons to discard food that is donated. See tool on page 78.

Support Guests in Handling Foods Safely

Educate Guests about Food Safety

Helping your guests make good food safety decisions is an important part of protecting public health. The UW–Madison Division of Extension FoodWise Program has county-based educators who are knowledgeable about food safety and trained in educating low-income audiences. **Contact your county Extension office** today to discuss opportunities for **food safety education** for pantry guests. FoodWise educators also have handouts and other materials to support food safety messaging.

IMPLEMENTATION TOOLS



KEEP OR TOSS
... page 78

FOOD PRODUCT
DATING
... page 80

FRUIT AND VEGETABLE
HANDLING
... page 82

SAFE FOOD FOR THOSE
YOU SERVE, HEALTH
POLICY
... page 84



MAKE YOUR DONATION COUNT

Your food pantry donation is an important contribution to those in need in your community. Many pantries have food safety policies that will not allow them to distribute foods that are of poor quality or that may be unsafe. Make your donation count by donating only safe, high quality foods. Not all pantries can accept perishable items—call ahead to **Make your Donation Count! Give:**

Shelf-stable foods

- Shelf-stable packaged foods in their **original packages** with the **label intact**. Packaging should be unopened and not damaged.
- Packaged foods that are within the sell-by or use-by date.
- Fresh fruits and vegetables grown using good gardening practices.
- Bakery items that can be safely stored at room temperature. Check with the pantry before donating custard- or crème-filled bakery items or desserts topped with whipped cream. Do not donate home-prepared bakery items or those from an unlicensed retailer.

Perishable foods

- Perishable foods such as deli items, frozen meats and fresh-cut produce in their **original packages** with the label intact. Packaging should be unopened and not damaged.
- Perishable foods should be within the sell-by or use-by date.
- Meat, poultry, seafood and eggs should come from a licensed processor.
- Milk and juice must be pasteurized.

Fresh fruits and vegetables

- Fresh-cut fruits and vegetables that have been kept cold and in their original/unopened package.
- Fresh fruits and vegetables that are free of visible dirt, are ripe and with a remaining shelf life of at least 3-5 days.
- Donated garden produce grown using good gardening practices. **Do not use fresh, uncomposted manure for fertilizer.**

DO NOT DONATE:

- Home-canned or home-prepared foods
- Foods from unlicensed dealers
- Foods that are spoiled or rotten (or getting that way)
- Foods past their 'use by' or 'sell by' date



MAINTAIN A WELL-KEPT FOOD-SAFE PANTRY

Having a clean, well-kept food pantry will help your guests feel good about visiting your pantry and accepting the food that you offer.

Maintain your facility

- Keep food at least 6 inches off the floor, stored on pallets, platforms or shelves.
- Keep food at least 4 inches away from walls.
- Keep food at least 2 feet away from the ceiling.
- Keeping floors, pallets and shelving clean.
- Discard broken shelving units or pallets.
- Keep carts, bins and other food storage units clean.
- Keep doors, windows and roofs well sealed to prevent pest entry and water damage.
- Keep the exterior of the building well-maintained to discourage pests.
- Establish a schedule to remove garbage or waste.

Best practices for food storage

- Rotate stock: first in, first out!
- Keep non-food items separate from food.
- Keep thermometers in freezers, refrigeration units and dry storage areas.
 - Dry storage areas should be maintained at 50° to 75°F
 - Refrigerated storage areas should be maintained at 36° to 40°F
 - Frozen storage should be maintained at 0°F or colder
- Maintain temperature logs for all areas of the facility.
- Maintain records of sanitation and pest control.
- Maintain records of foods received.
- Store foods so as to minimize the impact of light, steam, water or heat on food products.
- Sweep and clean floors, including under pallets, **at least monthly**.
- Clean high-traffic areas like entrance ways and walkways in front of shelves regularly.
- Immediately clean areas that are soiled by spillage or breakage.

Signed: _____
Food Pantry representative

Date: _____



SAMPLE PRESS RELEASE FOR COMMUNITY FOOD DRIVES

[DATE]

Boost the value of your food drive donations

[YOUR NAME AND CONTACT INFORMATION]

{YOUR TOWN}--Community groups and social organizations often host food drives to fill local food pantry shelves this time of year. By keeping a few simple tips in mind, you can enhance the value of the food donations you make.

"It's important to remember that donated food is most helpful if it is both safe and high quality," says Barbara Ingham, food safety specialist with the University of Wisconsin-Extension [OR YOUR NAME AND TITLE].

Make sure to check the dates on packages of foods that you donate, advises Ingham [YOUR NAME].

[IF AVAILABLE, YOU COULD ADD INFORMATION ABOUT HOW MANY PEOPLE USE THE PANTRY; HOW MUCH FOOD IS NEEDED, ETC. OR SOMETHING SPECIFIC TO THE LOCAL PANTRY.]

Here are some other things to look for:

- **Quality or pack dates** often designated on packages by the words "Better if used by..." and a date. Look for these dates on packaged mixes, cold cereals, peanut butter, and increasingly, on canned items like fruits and vegetables. These dates mean that after the quality date, the food will begin to lose its flavor and may even develop an off flavor. Donate only foods that are well within the quality dates marked on the package.

- **Expiration dates**, such as "Expires 2/15/19" or "Do not use after 7/9/19." Look for these dates on vitamins, yeast, baking powder and cake mixes. Do not donate foods that are past their expiration date.
- **Pull dates.** Example: "Sell by May 16." Look for these dates on perishable, refrigerated foods such as milk, yogurt, cottage cheese, cream, eggs, lunch meat and packaged salad mixes. Perishable foods, with the exception of garden produce, are usually not included in a food drive. If they are, choose foods that are well within the pull date.

Besides looking for a date, be sure to check the integrity of the package. To ensure that the food has not been contaminated, donate only foods from unopened packages. Avoid foods with packaging that shows signs of leakage or damage. Ingham [YOUR NAME] urges consumers not to donate canned items that have broken seams or large dents.

Your donation only makes a difference in the life of someone in need if the product donated is within the date marked and of good quality. If you question the integrity of the product or wouldn't feed it to your household—it is probably best not to donate it.

Are home-canned foods, fresh eggs or produce safe to donate? Food pantries often welcome donations of fresh produce. However, home-canned foods, meat or eggs that have not been handled by licensed food processors should not be donated.

"If you have a question about a proposed donation, contact the food pantry. Staff there will be happy to discuss whether they can accept or store the donation that you have in mind," suggests Ingham [YOUR NAME].

*continued...* **SAMPLE PRESS RELEASE FOR COMMUNITY FOOD DRIVES**

Amber Canto, State Coordinator for FoodWise, a program of University of Wisconsin-Extension [OR YOUR NAME] suggests avoiding sugary cereals, salty noodle mixes, and fruit-flavored beverages that might be easy to donate, but difficult for households to include in nutritious meals. Instead, Canto [YOUR NAME] urges consumers to donate foods that have a stable shelf life, are full of nutrients and easy to prepare.

Good examples of foods to consider are:

- Canned vegetables, especially those without added salt.
- Fruits canned in juice, unsweetened applesauce, 100-percent fruit juice and dried fruit such as raisins or raisins.
- Canned meats and fish, such as chicken, ham, beef, tuna and salmon. Do not donate meat canned at home.
- Peanuts and peanut butter.
- Whole grain, low-sugar cereals such as plain instant oatmeal, whole grain Os and bran flakes.
- Whole grain or enriched pasta and instant rice—either brown or enriched. Boxed noodle and rice dishes can be an easy starting point for a one-dish meal.
- Whole grain crackers (especially reduced-sodium) and popcorn.
- Spaghetti sauce, salsa and canned beans, including baked beans.

- Reduced-sodium broth and soups.
- Salad dressings or spreads, and condiments such as ketchup or mustard lower in fat and added sugars.
- Baby food is a very welcome donation. Just be sure to donate well within the date marked on the containers.

“Food pantry guests are extremely grateful for the help that they receive through the pantries. Pantry guests welcome your donations of safe, high quality foods so that they can feed themselves and their households good, nutritious meals,” says Canto [YOUR NAME].

Consider donating cash to food pantries. “Pantries can often get more for their dollars, address shortages and needs and focus on high quality products with some extra financial assistance,” says Canto [YOUR NAME]. “Cash donations help food pantries offer the widest possible array of products to the individuals that they serve.”

[ADD SPECIAL NEEDS FOR YOUR PANTRY, OR OTHER INFORMATION.]



REPACKAGING BULK FOOD PRODUCTS POLICY

Pantries occasionally repackage root vegetables such as onions, carrots or potatoes, which can be affordable in bulk, and safely re-bagged in smaller quantities. But most other repackaging introduces health risks that accelerate without proper training. Repackaging puts the responsibility on you to label the repackaged food appropriately. It requires a protected, sanitary space and equipment. Anyone considering repackaging for public consumption should take an on-line food handling course at <https://wisconsin.foodhandlerclasses.com> and get food handler certification. At minimum, repackaging should be supervised by a certified food handler.

Take care that you don't repackage ANY food your pantry receives from The Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP) or from the Feeding America network's food banks; these programs prohibit repackaging of ALL foods they supply.

Consider that repackaging exposes your pantry to liability; *the TEFAP liability waiver does not protect your pantry's repackaged food, so, you may need additional insurance. Check your policy before you risk repackaging. And make sure your board of directors is informed; members may need additional Directors and Officers Liability Insurance to cover them in the event that someone becomes ill.*

Facility and equipment

A clean room will be set aside for repackaging. Appropriately **clean and sanitize** all work surfaces prior to repack. Repeat this process between all product changeovers, and once every 8 hours for shelf-stable foods, and once every 4 hours for foods requiring temperature control.

- Ensure that the temperature of the room is suitable for the food being repacked.
- Hand wash stations must be operational and stocked with soap and paper towels, and a policy must be in place to ensure that staff and volunteers wash their hands.
- All equipment and material used for repackaging must be food-safe.

- Packaging material must be new, clean, and food-safe.
- Prior to use, any surfaces such as table-tops that will come into contact with food during repackaging **must be cleaned and sanitized**. Repeat cleaning and sanitation between all product changeovers and whenever the facility is cleaned and sanitized.
- At the end of repackaging, all cleaned and sanitized equipment must be stored, covered, and in a manner to prevent contamination.
- The facility and equipment must be sanitized with a quaternary ammonium compound at the end of the activity. Sanitation during the repack should be with a dilute chlorine solution (1 tablespoon of bleach per gallon of water).

Personnel

- All staff/volunteers involved in repackaging will comply with **food safety requirements**: hair restraints and gloves will be worn; clothing/aprons will be clean; hands will be clean prior to gloving; and no jewelry can be visible. Individuals will abstain from eating, drinking and smoking around food.
- Gloves will be worn. Gloves will be changed between tasks. Gloves will be removed when leaving the clean room and new gloves put on upon return.
- Anyone involved in repackaging must have a signed health policy document on file.

Food

- Food must be handled to **prevent contamination, and temperature must be maintained**.
- Repackaging material must be food-safe and acceptable for the food product.
- The label for the repacked product must include:
 - Common name of the product
 - Name and place of manufacturer, packer or distributor

- Net quantity of contents in the repackaged item
- Common or usual name of all ingredients.
The presence of allergens must be noted.

Keep a copy of the original product label (bulk package) with your records in the event of a recall.

- A **permanent record** must be kept of all food that is repacked. The record must include both a sample label from the original (bulk) food and the repacked food, number of units packed and date distributed. Time/temperature records must be kept for perishable foods that are repackaged.

Fresh produce

- Repackaging of bulk fresh produce is allowed (no license is required) and should take place in a clean facility and using new, clean and food-safe packaging material. Statements outlined in this policy covering facility/equipment/personnel should be followed.
- Fresh fruits and vegetables must be handled properly to prevent contamination.
- Many fresh fruits and vegetables can be safely stored at room temperature for 2 to 3 days; fresh-cut produce (pre-packaged) must be kept cold.
- Food pantries should not peel, cut, slice or otherwise prepare fresh produce—it should be distributed intact.

Tips for repackaging food

- Direct donations from local retailers or food processors can provide much-needed food items for your pantry. While these items may be repackaged, it is almost NEVER a good idea for a food pantry to do so. Here are some tips to help ensure that repackaging is done safely:
- Contact local grocery stores and food retailers that manufacture food. Ask them to partner with you and repackage food for you.
- Contact a local butcher shop or grocery store with a meat counter for help, especially when working with meat. These businesses will

have expertise in thawing large packages or subdividing meat into smaller lots.

- Work with your donor to see if they can provide the food item in more guest-appropriate packaging. Your donor may not be aware of the needs of those you are serving and may welcome the chance to better serve those in need.
- Contact your local food bank. Many larger food banks have everything in place to safely repackage bulk foods. Your local food bank may be able to work directly with the donor to repackage and distribute needed food items. This way, you will be extending the reach of your pantry by helping others outside your network.

Safe handling while thawing*

There are times when large packages of meat may be received that need to be partially thawed so that they can be distributed (intact) to households. There are two approved methods for thawing food such as this:

- Meat items may be partially thawed in the refrigerator so that packages can be separated for distribution. Refrigerator thawing will take several hours to several days, so plan ahead. Meat must be placed on a tray or other precautions taken so that meat juice does not contaminate other foods.
- Meat may be partially thawed at room temperature as long as the temperature of the room does not exceed 50°F.
- Meat may be partially thawed in cool water in a sink. The water must be changed every 30 minutes and thawing must be stopped **as soon as the packages can be separated.**

Signed: _____
Food Pantry representative

Date: _____

* Check your program rules. Neither TEFAP nor Feeding America Food Banks allow pantries to thaw the frozen foods they supply.



POLICY FOR ACCEPTING AND TRANSPORTING FOODS

It's important to keep food safe while transporting it to the pantry. When you are picking up food from a food bank, a retailer, a community garden or a farmers' market, several steps will help keep the food safe to consume.

Accept foods which meet nutrition and food safety standards

Individuals who are responsible for transporting food for the food pantry—either by picking up food at a food bank or through gleaning in the community—may need to communicate what foods the pantry is able to accept.

- Provide your driver(s) with the Food Pantry Nutrition and Food Safety Policies. Ask them to refer to these documents, if needed, when making decisions about food that is gleaned from the community.
- Regardless of whether the food pantry has a food safety policy in place, you **should not accept**:
 - Home canned foods
 - Foods prepared in a home kitchen
 - Food from an unlicensed food processor—the **exception** is fresh produce from a grower
 - Packaged foods that are not in their original labeled, sealed package.
 - Prepared foods are not packaged to prevent contamination. (Unpackaged food should not be transported in garbage bags, even for a short period of time, and even if the food is dry, e.g. bread. If necessary, arrange for delivery when the food can be properly packaged.)

- Foods where the packaging is heavily soiled or damaged so as to put the contents at-risk.
- Obviously spoiled food.
- Hot/cold foods that are not temperature controlled.

Keep your transport vehicle and transport containers clean

A clean vehicle will help prevent the food that you transport from becoming contaminated.

- Keep your **vehicle(s) clean** of dirt, insects and animals.
- If you are using a car to transport food, consider using a clean tarp or plastic sheet to cover the area where food will be placed. This will protect both the food and your vehicle.
- If you are using a dedicated truck or van to transport food, set up a schedule to routinely clean the vehicle to prevent cross-contamination.
- **Containers** such as totes or bins that are used to transport bulk items such as produce or bread should be dedicated for food transport and should be **cleaned after each use** to prevent cross-contamination.
- **Separate** items such as raw meats from ready-to-eat foods like bread and fresh produce.
- **Do not reuse disposable containers** to transport food. Do not pick up food that is packaged inappropriately, i.e. fruit juice in a used milk container.



continued... POLICY FOR ACCEPTING AND TRANSPORTING FOODS

Maintain temperature control

Perhaps the most important thing to remember when transporting food is the importance of temperature control: **keep hot foods hot and keep cold foods cold.**

Check the temperature of foods that are being donated to the pantry.

- Frozen or refrigerated food should be cold (**40°F or below**) and labeled (sample on right)
- If your pantry can handle **hot foods**, these must be **kept hot at 140°F or higher** and **reheated to 165°F** prior to serving. **Hot foods** must be in a food-safe container and labeled with the date of preparation and retailer/donor.
- Use **insulated containers** to transport hot or cold food. The temperature of food should be checked upon receipt. Do not accept cold food that is above 40°F or hot food that is below 140°F.
- Be sure to **keep records** of perishable foods that you receive and their origin.

Personnel

- Individuals transporting or handling food should take care to **prevent contamination.**
- Practice proper hand washing and help out only when you well (not sick).

Fresh produce

- Fresh fruits and vegetables must be handled to **prevent contamination.**
- Use dedicated boxes or bins/totes for transporting fresh fruits and vegetables.
- Do not accept obviously spoiled or rotten produce.
- Fresh fruits and vegetables that are cut, peeled or sliced **are highly perishable and must be kept cold (below 40°F).**

Signed: _____
Food Pantry representative

Date: _____

NAME OF FOOD
DATE OF PREPARATION (or contain 'use by' date on package)
RETAILER/DONOR
"KEEP FROZEN" or "KEEP REFRIGERATED"



FOR FOOD SAFETY SAKE: KEEP OR TOSS?

Distributing & Using Donated Products

These are recommendations only. Always inspect products and discard if signs of spoilage appear.

category	product(s)	storage and usage guidelines
Baby Food	Moist food	Do not use after date on container. Refrigerate after opening. Use within 3 days once opened.
	Dry infant cereal	Do not distribute or use after date on container. Store in a cool, dry location.
	Infant formula—wet or dry	Do not distribute or use after date on container. Store in a sealed container. Keep liquid formula refrigerated after opening.
Bakery Items	Breads, rolls, cakes, pastries, cookies	Use for up to 1 week after date on package. Discard if mold appears.
Canned Foods (includes trays and pouches)	Canned fruits, tomato products, and pickled foods	Use for up to 2 years past the date marked on the product. Discard cans if deeply dented, or if any tears or rips in flexible packages or foil tops.*
	Canned meat, poultry, fish, soup, vegetables, and pasta	Use for up to 2 years past the date marked on the product. Refrigerate after opening. Discard cans if deeply dented, or if any tears or rips in flexible packaging or trays.*
Cereals, Chips and Crackers	All types	Use for up to 2 years past date marked on package. Product may stale before then.
Condiments	Ketchup, mustard, mayo	Distribute up to 2 years past date. Discard discolored or separation has occurred. Refrigerate after opening.
Cream-filled Pastries & Cream Pies	Pastries or pies with whipped cream topping or custard filling	Keep refrigerated. Safe to distribute up to 5 days past date on package if kept refrigerated.
Dry Mixes	Soup, meal-in-a-box (i.e. meal helper)	Distribute up to 2 years past date marked.
	Potato, pudding, flavored rice or pasta, seasonings	Distribute 6 months past date on package. Store in a cool, dry location.
Jars	Glass	Use for up to 2 years past date on container. Refrigerate after opening. EXCEPTION for juice (see below).
	Plastic	Use for up to 2 years past date on package. Refrigerate after opening. EXCEPTION for juice (see below).
Juice	Jars, cans or juice boxes	Distribute up to 6 months past date on package. Refrigerate after opening.
Mixes (bakery)	Cake, muffin, cookie, pancake	Distribute up to 6 months after date on package. Store in a cool, dry place.
Flour	Wheat, rice, soy	Distribute up to 1 year past date on package. Store in a cool, dry place. Discard if signs of insect infestation appear.
Rice & Pasta	Unflavored	Distribute up to 2 years past date on package.
Whole Grains	Whole wheat flour, corn meal, oatmeal	Distribute whole wheat products up to 6 months past date; other whole-grains up to 2 years. Store in a cool, dry place.
Salad Dressing	Packaged, in closed containers	Distribute up to 2 years past date on package. Refrigerate after opening. Once opened, use within 2 months.

***Deep dents** have sharp edges and are large enough to rest a finger in the dent. Discard cans with deep dents. Discard cans that are bulging or leaking. Discard cans with heavy rust (pitting).

A Guide to Refrigerated or Frozen Products

These are recommendations only. Always inspect products and discard if signs of spoilage appear.

category	product(s)	storage and usage guidelines
Cheese	Soft (cottage, string, feta, cheese spread)	Distribute up to 1 week past date; use within 3 days. Keep refrigerated.
	Cream cheese (spread)	Distribute up to 2 weeks past date; use within 7 days. Refrigerate. Discard if moldy.
	Hard (Cheddar, parmesan)	Good almost indefinitely. Keep refrigerated. Discard if moldy.
	Medium (muenster, brick, mozzarella)	If kept cold, can be distributed for many months past the date. Keep refrigerated. Discard if moldy.
Eggs	From a licensed processor, dated	Distribute up to 3-5 weeks past date on carton; use within 2 weeks. Keep refrigerated.
Juice	Fresh juice, stored refrigerated	Keep refrigerated. Consume within 5 days of product date.
Milk	Fluid milk	Keep refrigerated. Consume within 5 days of date.
	Canned or boxed milk	Store unopened up to 1 year past date on package. Refrigerate once opened. Use within 7 days.
Soft Desserts	Puddings, cheese cake	Distribute up to 1 week past date; use within 3 days. Keep refrigerated.
Yogurt & Sour Cream	Yogurt, smoothies, sour cream	Distribute up to 14 days past the date on the container; use within 7 days. Keep refrigerated.
Casseroles	Lasagna, mac & cheese, etc. stored refrigerated	Keep refrigerated. Use/distribute within 3 days, or freeze. Reheat thoroughly.
Fresh salsa, pickles	Fruit or vegetable salsa, fresh pickles, etc.	Keep refrigerated. Use/distribute within 5 days.
Fruits, vegetables	Fresh or fresh-cut, e.g. chopped peppers	Keep refrigerated. Use/distribute within 2-3 days.
Meat salads	Egg, tuna, chicken	Keep refrigerated. Use/distribute within 3-5 days.
Sandwiches	All meat or cheese types	Keep refrigerated. Use/distribute within 2 days.
Soups & Stews	All types	Keep refrigerated. Use/distribute within 3 days, or freeze. Reheat thoroughly.
Poultry (chicken, turkey)	Fresh (uncooked)	Cook or freeze within 2 days. Keep cold.
	Cooked	Use within 5 days. Keep cold.
Ground Meat	Beef, chicken, turkey, pork, lamb	Cook or freeze within 2 days. Once cooked, use within 5 days. Keep cold.
Meat (beef, pork, lamb)	Fresh (uncooked)	Cook or freeze within 3-5 days. Keep cold.
	Cooked	Use within 5 days. Keep cold.
Ham	Fresh or canned	Keep refrigerated. Cook or freeze by date marked. Once cooked, use within 2 weeks.
Lunch Meat	Deli sliced	Use within 2 days or freeze. Keep refrigerated.
	Packaged, e.g. bacon and hot dogs	Distribute up to 2 weeks past date. Once opened, use or freeze within 2 days. Cook bacon or hot dogs before eating.
Sausage	Fresh (uncooked)	Cook or freeze within 2 days. Keep cold.
	Cooked	Use or freeze within 2 days of opening.
	Hard/dry (summer sausage)	Shelf stable. Store for 3 months on pantry shelf.

“Sell by” Quality date found on eggs, milk and lunch meat. Distribute by this date, with time still left for storage and use at home.

“Use by or best by” Quality date found on canned food and cereal. Except for baby food, product may be safely used and distributed well past this date.

“Expiration date” Quality date on infant formula and vitamins. Do not distribute infant formula or vitamins past date.



SAFE AND HEALTHY: FOOD PRODUCT DATING

These are recommendations only. Always inspect products and discard if signs of spoilage appear. Dates on almost all food products are **quality dates**. The food can safely be consumed well past the “Best By” or “Use By” date on the package. Here are some tips to help you safely feed your family:

Foods stored in the cupboard

category	storage and usage guidelines
Food in cans or jars (metal cans, glass jars, trays, pouches or paperboard containers)	Use for up to 2 years past the date marked on the package. Refrigerate after opening.
Bakery mixes (cake, muffin, cookie and pancake)	Use for up to 6 months past the date marked on the package.
Dry mixes (Hamburger Helper™) or dry soup	Use for up to 2 years past the date marked on the package.
Dry potatoes, flavored rice or pasta	Use for up to 6 months past the date marked on the package.
Cereals, crackers, chips, rice and pasta	Use for up to 2 years past the date marked on the package.
Juice (cans, plastic containers and juice boxes)	Use for up to 6 months past the date marked on the package. Refrigerate after opening.
Ketchup, mustard, mayonnaise and salad dressing	Use for up to 2 years past the date marked on the package. Refrigerate after opening.

Foods stored in the refrigerator or freezer

category	storage and usage guidelines	
Eggs	As long as eggs are kept in the refrigerator, they can safely be cooked and eaten for up to 5 weeks after the date stamped on the carton. If you receive eggs that aren't in the original carton, plan to keep them refrigerated and use them within 2 weeks.	
Meat (hamburger, chicken)	Once you receive the meat, cook or freeze within 3 to 5 days. Meat can be frozen for up to 1 year without harming quality.	
Meat salads or sandwiches	If you receive refrigerated deli meat, meat salads like tuna salad, or pre-made sandwiches, eat these within 3 to 5 days. Keep refrigerated.	
Lunch Meat	Deli Sliced	Use within 2 days or freeze. Keep refrigerated.
	Packaged (bacon and hot dogs)	Eat up to 2 weeks past date. Once opened, use or freeze within 2 days. Cook bacon or hot dogs before eating.
Milk	Milk should be kept refrigerated. It may be good for up to 5 days past the date on the package. Throw away if the milk develops a sour or “fruity” taste. This may mean the milk has spoiled or “gone bad”.	
Yogurt, sour cream, buttermilk	Keep refrigerated and use within 3 weeks of the date stamped on the package.	
Cheese	Soft (cottage or cheese spread)	Use within 10 days after the date on the package. Keep refrigerated.
	Medium (Muenster, brick or mozzarella)	Use these within 2 months of the date on the package. Discard if mold develops. Keep refrigerated.
	Hard cheese (cheddar, Swiss or Parmesan)	Use within 4 months of the date on the package. Discard if mold develops. Keep refrigerated.



LOS PRODUCTOS ALIMENTICIOS Y SU SALUD: LAS FECHAS DE CALIDAD

Estas son solo recomendaciones. Siempre inspeccione los productos y deséchelos si aparecen signos de deterioro. **Fechas de calidad** aparecen en casi todos los productos alimenticios. Hay dos tipos de fechas que aparecen en los envases para denotar cuando los productos se encuentran en su mejor calidad. Las fechas de calidad aparecen en inglés como "Best by" o "Use by". Mientras se puede consumir los productos después de las fechas de calidad, se ofrecen los siguientes consejos para ayudarle a alimentar a su familia de manera segura:

Alimentos almacenados en la despensa

categoria	Las pautas para su consumo y almacenamiento
Alimentos enlatados o en frascos (latas de metal, frascos de vidrio, bandejas, bolsas o recipientes de cartón)	Se puede consumir hasta 2 años después de la fecha indicada en el envase. Refrigerar después de abrir.
Mezclas para cocer al horno (pasteles, <i>muffin</i> (panecillo), galletas y panqueques)	Se puede consumir hasta 6 meses después de la fecha indicada en el envase.
Mezclas secas (pastas envasadas con saborizante) o sopas secas	Se puede consumir hasta 2 años después de la fecha indicada en el envase.
Papas secas, arroz con saborizante o pasta	Se puede consumir hasta 6 meses después de la fecha indicada en el envase.
Cereales, galletas, papas fritas, arroz y pasta	Se puede consumir hasta 2 años después de la fecha indicada en el envase.
Jugos (latas, envases de plástico, cajas de jugo)	Se puede consumir hasta 6 meses después de la fecha indicada en el envase. Refrigerar después de abrir.
Kétchup, mostaza, mayonesa, aderezo de ensalada	Se puede consumir hasta 2 años después la fecha indicada en el envase. Refrigerar después de abrir.

Alimentos almacenados en el refrigerador o congelador

categoria	Las pautas para su consumo y almacenamiento	
Huevos	Siempre y cuando los huevos estén guardados en el refrigerador, se pueden cocinar y comer de forma segura hasta 5 semanas después de la fecha indicada en el envase. Si recibe huevos que no están en la caja original, manténgalos refrigerados y utilícelos dentro de las siguientes 2 semanas.	
Carne (hamburguesas, pollo)	Cuando reciba carne, cocínela o congélela dentro de 3 a 5 días. La carne se puede mantener congelada por hasta 1 año sin perjudicar su calidad.	
Ensaladas con carne o sándwiches (emparedados)	Cuando reciba embutidos de carnes frías, ensaladas con carne como la ensalada de atún o sándwiches prefabricados, cómalos dentro de 3 a 5 días. Manténgalos refrigerados.	
Carne procesada	Embutidos de carnes frías	Consumir dentro de 2 días o refrigerar. Manténgalo refrigerado.
	Envasada (tocino y salchichas)	Consumir hasta 2 semanas después de la fecha indicada. Una vez abierto el envase, consumir o congelar dentro de los siguientes 2 días. Cocine el tocino o las salchichas antes de comerlas.
Leche	La leche debe mantenerse refrigerada. Se mantiene en buen estado hasta 5 días pasada la fecha indicada en el envase. Si la leche desarrolla un sabor agrio o "afrutado," tírela a la basura. Esto puede significar que la leche se ha estropeado o "se ha echado a perder."	
Yogurt, crema agria, suero de mantequilla	Mantener refrigerados y consumir hasta 3 semanas después de la fecha indicada en el envase.	
Queso	Blando (queso tipo cottage o queso para untar)	Consumir hasta 10 días después de la fecha indicada en el envase. Mantener refrigerado.
	Semiduro (tipo Munster, queso en barra o mozzarella)	Consumir hasta 2 meses después de la fecha indicada en la envoltura. Desechar si desarrolla moho. Mantener refrigerado.
	Duro (Cheddar, Suizo o Parmesano)	Consumir hasta 4 meses después de la fecha indicada en la envoltura. Desechar si desarrolla moho. Mantener refrigerado.



SAFE HANDLING OF FRESH FRUITS & VEGETABLES

Fresh fruits and vegetables can be a real treat for your household, make excellent after-school snacks, and add color and variety to the diet. Follow these tips to keep fresh fruits and vegetables safe to eat.

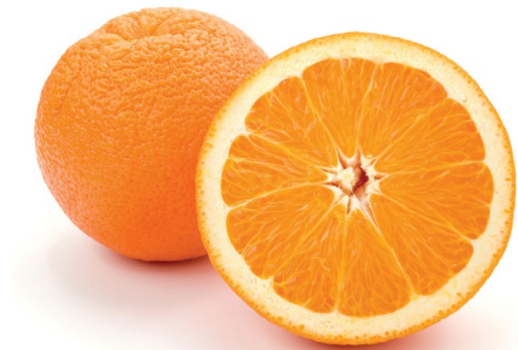
- **Grow fruits and vegetables using safe gardening practices.** If you have a garden, be sure to take care when growing fruits and vegetables, since they are often eaten raw. Keep dogs and cats away from growing produce, and use only composted manure for fertilizer.
- **Rinse all fresh fruits and vegetables** before eating, chopping, peeling or cooking with clean, running water. Harmful bacteria have been found on fruits and vegetables growing on farms. Don't use soap. Use a colander to rinse delicate berries. It's best not to rinse fresh produce until just before eating or preparing. Rinsed produce decays more quickly in the refrigerator.



- **Store fresh fruits and vegetables for maximum enjoyment.**
 - **Apples, peaches, pears, oranges, grapes.** Store in the refrigerator to help prevent spoilage.
 - **Bananas.** Store on the counter for best flavor and quality.
 - **Berries.** Keep refrigerated. Berries are very perishable.
 - **Green beans, green peas.** Store in the refrigerator to help prevent spoilage.
 - **Broccoli, cabbage, carrots, celery.** Store in the refrigerator to help prevent spoilage.
 - **Lettuce, spinach and other leafy greens.** These items are highly perishable and must be kept in the refrigerator to ensure a safe and healthy meal.
 - **Corn-on-the-cob.** Store in the refrigerator. It loses quality rapidly.

continued... SAFE HANDLING OF FRESH FRUITS & VEGETABLES

- **Tomatoes, onions, peppers, cucumbers, summer squash.** Store in a cool location on the counter (away from direct sunlight), moving them to the refrigerator if they begin to soften or if they are chopped or sliced.
- **Herbs.** Once cut, herbs such as parsley and cilantro are very perishable and should be kept refrigerated.
- **Sweet potatoes.** Store sweet potatoes in a cool, dry location. Refrigerate only after cooking.
- **White potatoes.** Store in a cool, dry location. White potatoes may be refrigerated to help prevent sprouting (spoilage).
- **Winter squash.** Store hard winter squash such as butternut or acorn squash in a cool, dry location. Winter squash may retain quality for 4 to 6 months after harvest.



-
- **Refrigerate all cut or prepared fruits and vegetables.** Whether you cut or peel fruits and vegetables at home, or you receive them ready-to-eat, be sure to refrigerate once they are cut or peeled. Use a reusable ice pack if you pack cut carrots or apple slices in school lunches. The cold temperature will keep cut produce safe and prevent spoilage.
- **Choose fruit or vegetable juices that are pasteurized.** Fruit or vegetable juices can be an easy way to add nutrients to your diet. Consume only pasteurized juices. The package will tell you if the juice is pasteurized. Pasteurization destroys harmful bacteria that might be present. Juice in the refrigerator at the grocery or food pantry should be kept refrigerated. Juice from the shelf should be refrigerated after opening.





SAFE FOOD FOR THOSE YOU SERVE

Healthy policy

You are an important part of providing food pantry guests with the food that they need for themselves and their household. You can do your best to help those in need when you follow a few food safety guidelines:

Handwashing

Good hand hygiene is key to food safety! Wash your hands regularly and thoroughly with soap and warm water after:

- Using the restroom and before handling food
- Touching animals
- Sneezing, blowing your nose and coughing
- Touching a cut or open sore
- Being outside and before starting to work with food
- Handling ready-to-eat foods like fresh fruits and vegetables
- Handling trash
- Sorting food, especially packaged items, and before handling fresh food
- Carrying boxes to and from storage or vehicles
- Handling non-food items and before handling food (even if that food is packaged)

Illness

You help protect those you serve when you take care of yourself! Do not come to the pantry, even to volunteer, if you are experiencing any of the following symptoms:

- Abdominal cramps, diarrhea, fever, vomiting
- Open, oozing sores on your hands, lower arms or any exposed body parts
- Sore throat with fever

If you have had, or are experiencing, vomiting, diarrhea or jaundice, you may not come in to work until you have been symptom-free for 24 hours or you have a written release from a medical practitioner.

You may not work with food if you have been diagnosed with Hepatitis A, *Salmonella* Typhi, *E. coli*, Norovirus, or Shigella. You must have a note from a medical practitioner to return to work.

I agree to follow the Health Policy:

Signed: _____
Food Pantry representative

Date: _____



RESOURCES



General Safe Foods Strategy

Foodsafety.gov

www.foodsafety.gov

FDA Produce Safety Posters

www.fda.gov/Food/FoodbornellnessContaminants/BuyStoreServeSafeFood/ucm114299.htm

USDA Safe Food Handling Posters

www.fsis.usda.gov/wps/portal/fsis/topics/food-safety-education/get-answers/food-safety-fact-sheets/safe-food-handling

University of Nebraska Extension Hand Washing Posters

www.food.unl.edu/free-handwashing-posters-activity-sheets-other-materials

Be Food Safe '10 Tips' from ChooseMyPlate

<https://www.choosemyplate.gov/ten-tips-be-food-safe>

USDA Kitchen Thermometers & Food Safety

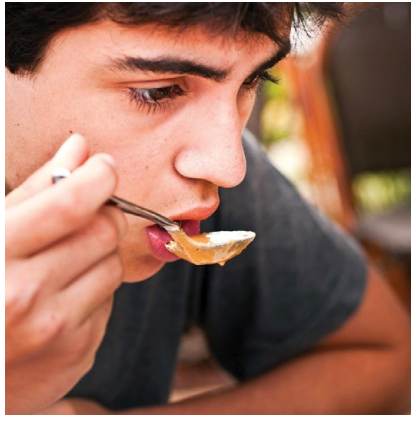
www.fsis.usda.gov/wps/portal/fsis/topics/food-safety-education/get-answers/food-safety-fact-sheets/appliances-and-thermometers

Hunger Task Force Standards of Excellence

<https://www.hungertaskforce.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/09/SOE-2018-Edited-Master-FINAL-email-version.pdf>

STEP 3

DEVELOP YOUR ACTION PLAN



“Developing an action plan was helpful. You don’t have to do it all at once. It’s okay to take baby steps.”

— Sue Steinmetz,
McFarland Food Pantry

Use the results of your self-assessment to set goals and prioritize strategies your pantry can take to improve the nutritional quality and safety of the foods. Not all action areas need to be addressed immediately. There may be actions your food pantry is already taking that can be expanded or improved. There may be other strategies that are entirely new for the food pantry. When building your action plan, consider which strategies are timely, realistic and achievable for your pantry. A sample action plan has been included for reference. A blank action plan template is available for you to create your own plan.



SAMPLE ACTION PLANS

OVERARCHING GOAL: PROVIDE HEALTHIER FOOD TO PANTRY GUESTS

Action area	Strategy to implement	Tasks	Person(s) responsible	Resources needed	Measurement	Timeline
Procure/purchase nutritious food	Adopt, post and communicate a nutrition policy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Draft nutrition policy language • Share nutrition policy with pantry decision makers and board of directors • Implement nutrition policy practices 	Food pantry coordinator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sample nutrition policy language • Decision maker buy-in 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nutrition policy is drafted, posted and communicated to key stakeholders • Procurement practices outlined in nutrition policy are followed one year after policy adoption 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy is drafted within three months • Policy is communicated to decision makers/board of directors within six months • Procurement practices are followed one year after policy adoption



OVERARCHING GOAL: PROVIDE SAFE FOOD TO PANTRY GUESTS

Action area	Strategy to implement	Tasks	Person(s) responsible	Resources needed	Measurement	Timeline
Transport, handle and store food to keep it safe to eat	Control temperature for hot/cold foods	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Purchase thermometer for coolers • Train volunteers on safe temperatures for cold food storage • Document temperatures in cooler at least once per day 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Food pantry coordinator • Pantry volunteer 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cooler thermometer • USDA kitchen thermometer document • Temperature checklist 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Volunteer completes cooler temperature log at least once per day 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Obtain cooler thermometer within two weeks • Train volunteers within one month • Begin to capture daily cooler temperatures within one month

IMPLEMENTATION TOOLS

ACTION PLAN TEMPLATES

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SAFE & HEALTHY FOOD PANTRIES ACTION PLAN

This template is designed to assist you in developing an action plan to implement food pantry strategies to support a safe and healthy food pantry. Use your self-assessment and other assessment results to guide your action plan, prioritizing areas that need improvement. Consider which strategies are timely, realistic and achievable for your pantry when developing your action plan.

Action plan definitions

Action areas: What broad action areas does your food pantry want to address? Examples: procure/purchase safe and nutritious food, distribute safe/nutritious food and support guests in safe/nutritious food decisions. These broad action areas are outlined in the self-assessment and strategies section(s).

Strategy to implement: What strategies does your pantry want to implement to address the identified action areas? Examples: adopt, post and communicate a nutrition/food safety policy, educate your donors, secure fresh/safe produce, etc. These strategies are outlined in the self-assessment and strategies section(s).

Tasks: What steps will you take to implement your identified strategy?

Person(s) responsible: Which individual(s) will take responsibility for implementing tasks to complete your identified strategy?

Resources needed: What resources do you currently have or will need to help you complete your strategy?

Measurement: How will you know if you have been successful at making progress towards implementation of your strategy?

Timeline: When will the task(s) be completed?

OVERARCHING GOAL: PROVIDE HEALTHIER FOOD TO PANTRY GUESTS

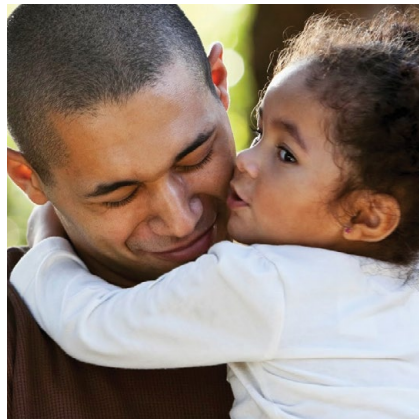
Action area	Strategy to implement	Tasks	Person(s) responsible	Resources needed	Measurement	Timeline

OVERARCHING GOAL: PROVIDE SAFE FOOD TO PANTRY GUESTS

Action area	Strategy to implement	Tasks	Person(s) responsible	Resources needed	Measurement	Timeline

STEP 4

PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION



The *Implementation Tools* listed to the right are a collection of tools created to support you in the implementation of the Safe & Healthy Food Pantries Project. Visit us online to access the most up-to-date resources and editable documents:
<https://fyi.extension.wisc.edu/safehealthypantries>



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DEVELOP YOUR ACTION PLAN

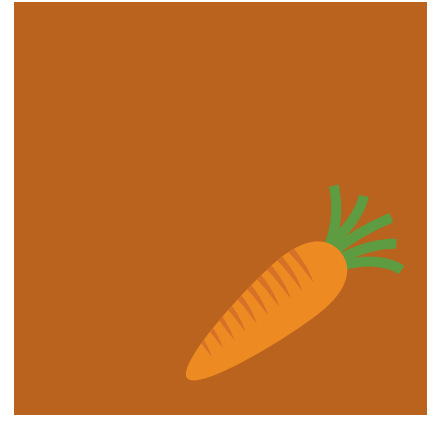
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EVALUATE YOUR EFFORTS

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STEP 5

EVALUATE DURING & AFTER YOUR CHANGES



Evaluation is the fifth step. But don't save it for last. Evaluating and monitoring your progress should occur throughout your process. Evaluation can answer such questions as, "How are we doing?" and, "Are we achieving our desired outcomes?"



Evaluation Tells the Story of What You Did and How You Did It

The Action Plan can illustrate how we can use the Safe and Healthy Pantries Project tools to evaluate your progress.

SAFE & HEALTHY FOOD PANTRIES ACTION PLAN

OVERARCHING GOAL: PROVIDE HEALTHIER FOOD TO PANTRY GUESTS

Action area	Strategy to implement	Tasks	Person(s) responsible	Resources needed	Measurement	Timeline

OVERARCHING GOAL: PROVIDE SAFE FOOD TO PANTRY GUESTS

Action area	Strategy to implement	Tasks	Person(s) responsible	Resources needed	Measurement	Timeline



Evaluation Begins With Project Planning

Ask yourself...

What change are you trying to achieve? In what action area?

In this example, procuring and purchasing nutritious food is the goal.

Action area	Strategy to implement	Tasks	Person(s) responsible	Resources needed	Measurement	Timeline
Procure/purchase nutritious food	Adopt, post and communicate a nutrition policy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Draft nutrition policy language Share nutrition policy with pantry decision makers and board of directors Implement nutrition policy practices 	Food pantry coordinator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sample nutrition policy language Decision maker buy-in 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Nutrition policy is drafted, posted and communicated to key stakeholders Procurement practices outlined in nutrition policy are followed one year after policy adoption 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Policy is drafted within three months Policy is communicated to decision makers/board of directors within six months Procurement practices are followed one year after policy adoption

What are your activities or tasks?

Action area	Strategy to implement	Tasks	Person(s) responsible	Resources needed	Measurement	Timeline
Procure/purchase nutritious food	Adopt, post and communicate a nutrition policy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Draft nutrition policy language Share nutrition policy with pantry decision makers and board of directors Implement nutrition policy practices 	Food pantry coordinator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sample nutrition policy language Decision maker buy-in 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Nutrition policy is drafted, posted and communicated to key stakeholders Procurement practices outlined in nutrition policy are followed one year after policy adoption 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Policy is drafted within three months Policy is communicated to decision makers/board of directors within six months Procurement practices are followed one year after policy adoption

The activities that this pantry plans to monitor is adopt, post, and communicate a nutrition policy.



What information will you need to measure success?



Action area	Strategy to implement	Tasks	Person(s) responsible	Resources needed	Measurement	Timeline
Procure/purchase nutritious food	Adopt, post and communicate a nutrition policy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Draft nutrition policy language • Share nutrition policy with pantry decision makers and board of directors • Implement nutrition policy practices 	Food pantry coordinator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sample nutrition policy language • Decision maker buy-in 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nutrition policy is drafted, posted and communicated to key stakeholders • Procurement practices outlined in nutrition policy are followed one year after policy adoption 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy is drafted within three months • Policy is communicated to decision makers/board of directors within six months • Procurement practices are followed one year after policy adoption

This pantry can use a simple checkbox to see if they were successful in reaching their goals.

Was a nutrition policy drafted, posted and communicated to key stakeholders? Yes No

That was a simple example that can tell the story of the adoption of a nutrition policy.

If the pantry wants to tell a more complex story, they can also add further tasks such as sharing the nutrition policy.

- They can measure how the nutrition policy was communicated. They can do this by surveying the key stakeholders or interviewing key informants.
- Another way of measuring how the nutrition policy was communicated would be to look back at records and see how many methods were utilized to communicate the policy.



For example, the policy was communicated:

1. With pantry guests by posting a poster at the pantry,
2. With donors by distributing donor letters,
3. With volunteers by writing a paragraph in volunteer bulletins
4. With the board of directors by a presentation from the pantry director.



Data Collection Strategies & Measurement Tools

Many of you will have your measurement tools in your toolbox by completing self-assessments and the action plan and keeping good records.

Here are some of the measurement tools you can use:

- Food pantry guest interviews
- Interviewing key informants
- Record keeping
- Self-Assessments
- Post Training Evaluation
- Website Toolkit Evaluation
- More to come at: <https://fyi.extension.wisc.edu/safehealthypantries>





DATA COLLECTION TIPS

Data collecting does not have to be complicated or elaborate.
KEEP IT SIMPLE!

1. Use existing data:

- Data can come from record keeping

2. Make sure your measures match your desired outcomes.

- For example, if you aim to improve the food safety in food transportation, you would need to make sure you measure the cleanliness of the transportation vehicle or containers used.
- Another example, if you aim to increase the quantity of nutrition education at your pantry, you can measure the number of times nutrition education demonstrations or classes were held for a period of time.

3. Be prepared to learn what works AND what doesn't work.

- Not all pantries are the same. Not all pantry guests are the same. Many times what works in one situation may not work in another situation. Be prepared to accept that.

4. Use multiple methods of gathering data.

- Fill out the scored assessments before and after your changes (quantitative) and ask or interview some key informants such as volunteers and pantry guests (qualitative).

5. Share what works with others.

- Your experience is valuable. Please share what you have learned with others at meetings and through our submission tool at <https://fyi.extension.wisc.edu/safehealthypantries/more-resources/online-community>.



INTERVIEW QUESTION POSSIBILITIES FOR FOOD PANTRY GUESTS

Note: *Be sure to start with general open-ended questions.*

- How do you define healthy?
- What do you consider healthy food?
- What does a typical breakfast, lunch, dinner look like in your home?
- What is your favorite meal?
 - Go-to dish
 - If money was no object
 - What makes it difficult for you to prepare the food you would like to for your household?
- What type of food would you like more of?
- How do you like to cook at home?
- How does the food pantry help you?
 - Make healthy choices
 - Eat healthier?
- If you were in charge, what would the pantry look like?
- What do you take home that you like and use?
- What do you get from the pantry that you end up not using?
- Are there things that should be added at the pantry?
- How can the pantry better serve your needs?

Note: *Avoid the use of the word "ethnic".*

"Traditional" might serve as an alternative if need be.

**FOOD
WISE**

Healthy choices, healthy lives.



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Authors: Amber Canto, director, University of Wisconsin–Madison Division of Extension, Institute for Health & Well-Being; Barb Ingham, professor and food safety specialist, University of Wisconsin–Madison College of Agricultural & Life Sciences and Division of Extension; Jennifer K. Park-Mroch, state project coordinator and evaluation specialist, University of Wisconsin–Madison Division of Extension; Josset Gauley, program development and evaluation specialist, University of Wisconsin–Madison Division of Extension. Sarah Larson was graduate student at the University of Wisconsin–Madison.

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Persons with disabilities who require alternative means for communication of program information (braille, large print, audiotape, etc.) should contact Heather Lipinski Stelljes at heather.stelljes@wisc.edu.

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