



A Successful Food Drive



A How-To Guide for Student Groups



What Can I do to Fight Hunger?

Examples of Successful Food Drives and Events

Getting Started With a Canned Food Drive

Table of Contents

Hunger is Real	3
Hunger Statistics and Who Needs Help	4
Food Bank Map	5
Food Drive Basics	6
Examples of Successful College Events	8
Food Wish List	10
Getting Started	11



A Food Drive is a way to fight Hunger

We know that about one in ten people in Michigan are living below the poverty level and are likely to have trouble making financial ends meet. Hunger is associated with poverty. In 2003, 9.2% of Michigan households were what the United States Department of Agriculture describes as “food insecure”, meaning they often have difficulty obtaining the food they need for an active and healthy life.



What are some of the human consequences of hunger?

- Poor overall health status and compromised ability to resist illness and elevated occurrence of health problems
- Higher levels of aggression, hyperactivity, and anxiety
- Children having difficulty getting along with other children
- Depressed mood and suicidal thoughts and intention and increased need for mental health services
- Children with impaired cognitive functioning and diminished capacity to learn, lower test scores and poorer overall school achievement and increased school absences, tardiness, and suspension

Many people are surprised to learn that there are children in our country going to bed hungry or that seniors are forced to decide whether to spend their limited incomes on medicine or food. But yes, hunger is real for working poor families and folks who may have lost a job or have a health crisis.

What Can You Do?

Holding a food drive is a simple way to make more food available for people who face emergencies or the lingering effects of poverty. People need to eat everyday and the need for donated food for the charities that provide help, never seems to end. Your canned food drive is an effective response to the problem of hunger. Please know every can and box collected will make a difference to a person in need.

Who Uses Food Banks?

From Hunger in America 2001, the Michigan Report:

How Many Need Help?

How many people use emergency food services in Michigan?

More than 744,000 different people use the Food Bank Council of Michigan member network in any given year.

The demographics of people served shows a broad cross section of folks in our state:

- Children under 18 43.6%
- Children under 5 10.5%
- Elderly 6.3%
- White 45.3%
- African American 47.4%
- Hispanic 5.1%
- US Citizens 97.9%
- Rural/Suburban 40%
- Urban 60.6%
- High School diploma 66.6%
- Homeless 5.7%
- At least one member employed 40% (in household)
- With single parent 65.4%
- Poor Health 30.8% (in household)
- At or below poverty level 70%

72% of people served say they have ongoing food shortages or don't know where their next meal is coming from.

Volunteers Are Essential

74.7% of pantries and 35.5% of the kitchens are operated totally by volunteer staff.

91.6% of pantries, 85.1% of kitchens and 76.4% of shelters use some volunteers as staff.

Food Banks are the single most important source of food for agencies

- Pantries obtain 63.1% of their food from food banks
- Kitchens obtain 40.9% of their food from food banks
- Shelters obtain 39.1% of their food from food banks

Other suppliers include local canned food drives, donations and purchasing

Michigan's Food Banks



Member Food Banks to Contact:

- Food Bank of Eastern Michigan
810-239-4441
- Food Bank of Oakland County
248-332-1473
- Gleaners Community Food Bank of Southeast Michigan
313-923-3535
- American Red Cross Regional Food Distribution Center
517-321-6807
- Food Bank of South Central Mich
269-964-3663
- Second Harvest Gleaners of West Michigan 616-784-3250

Food Drive Basics

What Food Banks Do

Each of Michigan's 83 counties is served by a Food Bank Council of Michigan (FBCM) member food bank. A food bank is a large warehouse stocked with food and grocery products. The products are handled and distributed by trained staff and volunteers. Local community agencies such as soup kitchens, pantries, and emergency shelters are the customers of food banks. After reviewing the list of available products, agencies will select and pick up what they need to prepare meals or pack grocery bags for those in need. Community donations and statewide activities like the Michigan Harvest Gathering cover costs for warehouse operations.

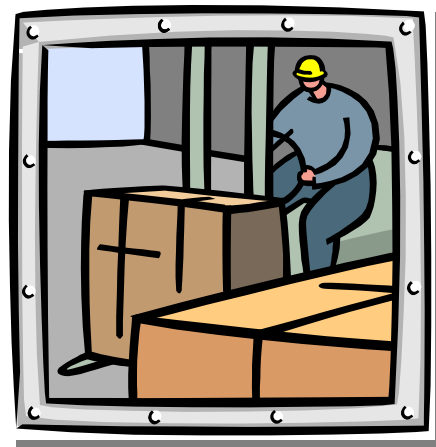
In 1983, Michigan's food banks formed the Food Bank Council of Michigan, which is dedicated to alleviating hunger through its statewide network of food banks. The FBCM acts as one voice for all of its members, working with federal and state governmental agencies on various programs and providing corporate and individual donors the opportunity to make a contribution that will help residents throughout all of Michigan.

Regional food banks work with more than 2,700 local food agencies to provide meals in Michigan. Call the regional food bank listed for your county on page 5.

Where Does the Food End Up?

Food Banks make their inventory of donated and purchased foods available to agencies that serve people that have emergency situations. Many agencies provide food to people as part of their programs. When a local agency like a soup kitchen, shelter or church food pantry uses a food bank, they have access to a wide variety of products and can save money.

There are over 2,700 local agencies that are members of the food bank network in Michigan, an extensive and cost-effective network that moves surplus food to the people who need it.



Food Drive Basics, Continued..

How Your Food Bank Can Assist You With Your Food Drive

Regional food banks are the experts on collecting and distributing donations of food and other grocery items to feed people in emergency situations. A representative of your regional food bank can answer nearly any question that comes up regarding your efforts for the Michigan Harvest Gathering. Check the list in the appendices to determine which food bank serves your organization.

....Nearly a million Michigan residents needed help with food in 2003



Collecting and Making Cash Donations



Some of the things your food bank representative can help you with include:

- Determining whether donations should be taken to the regional food bank or to a local agency
- Arranging an educational tour of the food bank for your project team
- Setting potential collection goals
- Recommending and/or obtaining appropriate food collection bins
- Suggesting food storage options
- Arranging for pickup of food donations
- Providing input on types of food and other items to collect
- Providing input on types of food and other items to collect

As a project leader, it is your decision whether to collect only grocery products or to also accept cash donations. Donated funds are used to pay for transporting the food collected at community sites to regional food banks and/or other community agencies. When planning your food drive, talk to your food bank representative about ways to collect cash.



Ideas for a Successful Student Food Drive

Competitions

Experience has shown that nothing motivates college students as much as a little healthy competition. When groups challenge each other to raise the most food, there's an additional motivation - to win. This might involve two opposing groups or an entire network of organizations. As a reward, offering an impressive looking trophy that could travel to the winner each year could be a motivator. This is a good way to instill pride and showcase a group's service to others.



Dormitories

Food drives work best when there are lots of donors (students) involved. Dormitories encompass lots of students with an affiliation to a specific dorm or floor of a dorm. Resident Assistants (R.A.s) can be instrumental in leading a dormitory food drive. Another opportunity in dorms is to hold a semester or year end food drive, which could be an opportunity for students to donate left over non-perishable food that they'd rather not have to take back home.

College Departments and Clubs:

Many students belong to clubs within their academic circle. Often these groups do community service projects, either as a requirement of their program or just for team building and because it feels good to help others! Schools that are related to a health field such as nursing or nutrition might be ripe for leading a food drive that can be a great learning experience as well.

Canned Food Sculpture

Some groups choose to hold a canned food sculpture competition instead of a food drive. Once enough cans are acquired via a food drive or by purchasing them at a grocery store you can enlist the expertise of volunteers who can create a sculpture out of non-perishable foods. Engineering or design students may be particularly interested to take a try at this. Other options are;



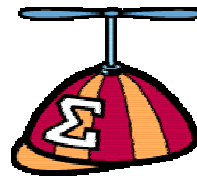
1) assigning a theme and having the sculpture relate to it, 2) see who can build the biggest sculpture or use the most food items or, 3) get groups to do a people's choice award for the best sculpture and charge a dollar to vote and donate all the proceeds and the food to a food bank. There are lots of possibilities and fun ways to do canned food sculpture events.

More Food Drive Ideas

Charge a Can for Admission to a party or event:

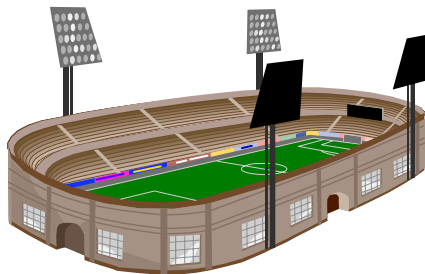


Get young people in the habit of giving by sponsoring canned food drives at social functions. Ask guests to “pay” a canned good or food item at the door. Even the smallest collection of food can make a difference to people in need.



Fraternities and Sororities

Members of college fraternities and sororities are required to do community service and are often looking for service projects. A food drive can be fun and the competition between the Greek community can be fierce. Why not incorporate the two and do something really helpful for the community? Try doing a food drive for specific food items like canned tuna or fruit. Offer a trophy for the most items collected. It could be a traveling trophy to the winner each year. Cans can be collected from people in neighborhoods near campus as well. This is a good way to share the positive spirit of service within the Greek community.



Sporting Events

Whenever large groups of people gather, give them a reason to bring non-perishable food items that will help local food banks. Basketball, football and many other sporting events attract hundreds and often thousands of people who can be encouraged to bring food and donate it on behalf of a team or school or person. Teams from the two opposing schools can compete to see who brings the most food, or who can fill a bus. Consider giving a reduced or free admission to folks who bring food, or have a celebrity promote the food drive and announce the winner at half time. Raising awareness and promoting the food drive will increase its success. Use the natural competition of sports to motivate the generosity of spectators.

Food Wish List -

Non-perishable food is best, packaged in paper, plastic or cardboard containers. No glass please! Some items are more popular than others, so when deciding what to collect and donate, think about what you'd like to eat if you had to receive emergency food.

- **Cereals**
- **Canned Meats**
- **Tuna**
- **Rice**
- **Peanut Butter**
- **Beans, dried or canned**
- **Canned vegetables**
- **Canned fruits and juices**
- **Corn meal**
- **Flour**
- **Sugar**
- **Macaroni and cheese**
- **Cooking oil**
- **Soups, dried and canned**
- **Jelly or jam**
- **Canned or dried pasta**
- **Detergents**
- **Toilet Paper**



Getting Started

Get Organized

A food drive is an easy and rewarding project for any size organization or group to undertake, that everyone can participate in. Your first task at hand is to select a date. It may be over several days or weeks. Keep in mind that food is always needed by the Food Bank, not simply during the holiday season. Consider running a food drive during the summer or late winter when food donations are typically slow but demand is still high.

Notify your local food bank to let them know about your drive. The staff will be able to assist you in your planning. They can also provide an up-to-date listing of the most-needed food items. You should also inform the food bank of when your drive will be concluding so they know when to expect the delivery or when picking up of the food.

Publicity

Publicize your food drive or event at least two weeks in advance. Signs and fliers should list the date/s of the drive, where the food will go, what types of food are needed, and where the collection boxes are located. Post signs in well-traveled areas of your buildings. Lobbies, cafeterias, kiosks and snack areas are good locations.

Sometimes friendly competition is a great motivator, by challenging one group to collect more than another. Donating food can also be rewarded with an incentive like wearing jeans to work or with a sticker or T-shirt for top contributors.

How to Collect the Food

Whether your food drive is an in-house event or one in which the public will participate, collection sites should be convenient and highly visible. Well-traveled locations are excellent spots to collect the food. Remember that food must be handled safely and that all the products you collect will need to be inspected for quality before they can be distributed to families. Food Safety starts with the collection, storage and transportation of these valuable resources. Use boxes, not bags or barrels, to collect the product.

Say Thank You

Be sure to announce your success to those who participated and also to the public. Thank your volunteer team and let them know just how much their efforts helped.

Food Bank Council of Michigan

501 N. Walnut Street
Lansing, Michigan 48933
Phone 800-552-4483
Email mhg@fbcmich.org
Website www.fbcmich.org

