



Healthy Pantry Policy

Statement of Purpose:

The purpose of this policy is to create an official statement to guide pantry decisions about the foods to acquire and distribute that will contribute to more healthful diets of our clients, as well as alleviating hunger and food insecurity.

Our nutrition policy communicates to clients, affiliated local partners and other agencies, donors, government programs, and the community-at-large that we are committed to providing healthful foods to clients.

Policy Rationale and Benefits:

Our pantry has a history of service to the community, supplying foods to help families in hard times. In recent years, the food bank/pantry has become concerned about the increasing rates of diabetes, obesity, high blood pressure and other serious diet-related diseases and conditions in the community.

Our pantry has a strong commitment to providing healthful foods to clients. We are working with donors and our staff to make this happen.

We want our clients to know that their health and preferences for more healthful foods are among our highest considerations in acquiring food.

We recognize the increasing role that food banks and pantries play in providing healthful foods to community members in need. Our policy to procure and distribute foods of high nutritional quality demonstrates to the community that we take our role and responsibility seriously.

This policy ensures that our organizational commitment to offering healthful foods is a part of our institutional memory and provides staff with a basis for clear and consistent decision-making about the types of foods and beverages they should procure, encourage and prioritize in their work. The policy also serves as a tool for management and accountability on moving towards the provision of more healthful foods.

Nutrition Education

We believe that a key component of a healthy pantry is education. Education training shall be offered to all pantry staff, volunteers and clients about how foods can impact heart health and blood sugar.

Education will center on the USDA My Plate. Trainings may include teaching series offered by MSU Extension Program, cooking classes, taste tests using pantry food, and recipes.

Healthful Foods to Encourage

- A. Fruit and Vegetables
 - a. Fresh produce – including more colorful varieties, because they are rich in nutrients and low in calories. Examples include fresh carrots, cabbage, broccoli, spinach, bell peppers, apples, potatoes, cucumbers, and zucchini.
 - b. Frozen fruits and vegetables packed without syrup or sauces.
 - c. Fruits canned in water, 100% juice, or “lite” syrup.
 - d. Vegetables canned with no added salt or reduced sodium.
- B. Whole Grain and Whole Grain-Rich Foods
 - a. 100% whole grains such as rolled oats, barley, wild rice and brown rice.
 - b. Whole grain-rich cereals, bread, pasta and tortillas that contain whole grain as the first ingredient.
- C. Dairy Foods: Low Fat Dairy or Dairy Substitutes
 - a. Plain milk and yogurt
 - b. Milk substitutes – unsweetened milk substitutes
 - c. Flavored milk or milk substitutes
 - d. Flavored yogurt
 - e. Cheese
- D. Lean Protein Foods
 - a. Meat, poultry, seafood and beans – low fat, lower sodium
 - b. Eggs
 - c. Nuts and seeds (no added salt)
 - d. Beans and lentils (if canned, no salt added)
 - e. Peanut butter (natural, no hydrogenated fats)

Foods to Reduce

- A. Savory Snack Foods
 - a. Chips
 - b. Crackers
 - c. French fries
 - d. Onion rings
 - e. Pork rinds
- B. Sweet Snack Foods and Desserts
 - a. Bars (granola, cereal, energy, snack bars)
 - b. Cakes
 - c. Candy
 - d. Cookies
 - e. Chocolate
 - f. Donuts
 - g. Frozen desserts
 - h. Ice cream
 - i. Fruit snacks
 - j. Muffins
 - k. Pastries
 - l. Pies
 - m. Popsicles
 - n. Pudding

C. Sugar Sweetened Beverages

- a. Energy drinks
- b. Fruit drinks
- c. Sodas
- d. Sports drinks
- e. Sweetened coffees
- f. Sweetened teas
- g. Sweetened shakes and smoothies
- h. Vitamin enhanced waters

This policy has been approved by XXXXX, Board of Directors on XXXX. The policy will be effective on July 1, 2015. The policy will be communicated and disseminated to all stakeholders by August 1, 2015. Training of all staff and volunteers involved in the implementation of this policy will be completed by November 1, 2015.

The policy will be reviewed 6 months after initial implementation and annually thereafter by the Executive Director and the Board of Directors.

Board Chair

Executive Director



Sample Handout for donors

Fruit & Vegetables

Choose **canned or dry** fruits and vegetables in an array of colors to ensure consumption of a variety of vitamins and minerals.

Fresh fruit and vegetables are also appreciated! Please select shelf stable produce to ensure it is distributed while still fresh (items to consider – sweet corn, apples, carrots, green beans, cucumbers, zucchini)

- Canned vegetables (low-sodium or reduced sodium)
- Vegetable juice (100%)
- Diced tomatoes
- Tomato juice and tomato sauce
- Spaghetti sauce
- Canned fruit (in its own juice)
- Fruit juice (100%)
- Dried fruit
- Shelf-stable fruit cups

Grains

Choose non-perishable **100% whole grains** as often as you can for maximum nutritional value.

- Oatmeal
- Whole grain crackers
- Low sugar / high fiber cereal (Cheerios®, Raisin Bran®, etc.)
- Cream of Wheat®
- Whole grain rice
- Pasta (100% whole wheat)

Protein

Choose canned lean meats as a good source of low fat protein, and canned or dry beans as a good source of fiber.

- Canned tuna fish, salmon, chicken in water
- Canned bean soup
- Canned baked beans
- Dried and canned beans and peas
- Canned chili
- Canned beef stew
- Peanut butter
- Unsalted nuts

Milk

Choose shelf-stable low-fat dairy products fortified with vitamin D.

- Dry milk
- Evaporated milk
- Boxed shelf-stable milk