

Healthy Food Donation List

Feeding America's 2014 *Hunger in America* study found that 79% of clients purchase inexpensive and unhealthy foods just to make ends meet. However, clients reported that they want to have a healthier diet; 55 percent of client households reported fresh fruit and vegetables as one of their most desired items when visiting a food pantry, 47 percent cited protein food items (including meat), and 40 percent cited dairy products.

Listed below are Feeding America's suggestions for healthful food donations.

Fruits and Vegetables

- **Fresh produce;** check to see if the food drive has the capacity to accept this as a donation.
- **Low-sodium or water packed canned vegetables,** including tomatoes and tomato sauce can be easily obtained and are great alternatives to their fresh counterparts.
- **Canned fruits in 100% juice or lite syrup** are great sources of Vitamin C because only a small amount of it is lost in the canning process.
- **100% fruit and vegetable juices** in all container forms are welcome, including canned, plastic, and boxed.
- **Dried fruits and vegetables** with no added sugar or fat.

Proteins

- **Low-sodium or water packed canned meats and seafood** such as chicken, tuna, salmon, and clams are high in protein, low in saturated fat, and rich in a variety of vitamins and minerals.
- **Dried beans, peas and lentils** are high in fiber and low-fat sources of protein.
- **Low-sodium canned beans and peas** such as kidney, black, cannellini, black eyed, and chickpeas are high in fiber and low-fat sources of protein. Rinsing beans and removing the canning liquid can reduce their sodium content.
- **Fresh or frozen meat;** check to see if the food drive has the capacity to accept this as a donation.

Dairy and Dairy Substitutes

- **Milk** (unflavored nonfat, skim, and low-fat); check to see if the food drive has the capacity to accept this as a donation.
- **Shelf stable milk or non-dairy alternatives** such as soy and almond milk are great sources of Vitamin D and calcium. In addition, shelf-stable dehydrated milk and canned evaporated milk are also encouraged.

100% Whole Grains

- **Whole-wheat pasta, barley, brown rice, and wild rice** are complex carbohydrates. They contain good sources of fiber, which are more satiating and filling.
- **Whole-grain cereal and rolled oats with at least 3g of fiber** such as breakfast cereals can be additional sources of vitamins and minerals. Low-sugar or unsweetened cereals and oats are also highly encouraged.

Healthy Fats

- **Low-sodium nuts and nut butters** such as peanuts, almonds, and cashews are rich in protein and fiber. They also contain "good fat's" and vitamins that are known to positively support heart health, such as monounsaturated and polyunsaturated fats, omega-3 fatty acids, and Vitamin E.