[Pantry Name]

Nutrition Policy

Why a nutrition policy?

Food pantries can make an impact on their guests and community’s health by providing and promoting healthy options. In some cases, the food provided in the pantry plays a key role in helping guests manage chronic conditions like diabetes, obesity, and high blood pressure.

Purpose of this policy

Our goal is to educate and support our guests and community in making balanced, healthy choices by using the federal MyPlate guidelines, Healthy Eating Research (HER) Nutrition Guidelines for the Charitable Food System, and SWAP (Supporting Wellness at Pantries) to acquire, purchase, and distribute healthy food. Education is a key aspect of this goal, which encourages individuals to make choices appropriate for their specific circumstances. Our nutritional approach is a long-term commitment that we expect to evolve over time. Ultimately, we strive to go beyond filling bellies and instead nourish healthy, productive lives.

This guide is most effective when partnered with:

* University of Illinois Extension Office
  + <https://eat-move-save.extension.illinois.edu/about/contact-us>
* Feeding America’s Hunger and Health website
  + <https://hungerandhealth.feedingamerica.org/>

1. Food inventory sources covered by this guide
   1. U.S. commodities
   2. Donated foods
   3. Foods purchased
2. Priority foods to buy and distribute:
   1. Healthy foods, specifically *those ranked yellow or green by SWAP* (see Appendix).
   2. Low-fat (1% and 2%) or fat-free (skim) milk and other dairy products
   3. A variety of protein foods, including eggs, beans, peas, nuts and nut butters, meat, poultry, and fish
   4. Foods low in sodium (5% Daily Value or less sodium per serving).
   5. Whole grains and whole-grain products that include "whole" listed as the first ingredient on the product package

*Example Grains: brown rice, oats and quinoa*

*Items: whole-grain cereals, whole-wheat breads, whole-grain crackers, Whole corn tortillas, whole grain cereal, whole rolled oats, whole wheat pasta, whole wheat couscous.*

* 1. Fruits and vegetables, including fresh, canned, frozen, and dried
  2. A variety of protein foods, such as eggs, beans, peas, nuts and nut butters, meat, poultry, and fish
  3. Low-sodium or no-salt added canned and other products (such as no-salt added beans, low-sodium soup, low-sodium tomato sauce, and unsalted popcorn)
  4. Basic staples to support meal planning and preparation will be regularly available. This includes cooking oils, flour, sugar, and spices.

1. *Example Sweetened Beverages: Soda, Fruit drinks, particularly not 100%, Sports drinks, Sweetened coffees, Sweetened teas, Sweetened dairy drinks, shakes, and smoothies, Sweetened vitamin-enhanced waters, Energy drinks*
2. Foods that will be limited in distribution:
   1. Foods made with refined grains.
   2. Foods made with trans fats.
   3. Foods with a high amount of added sugars.
   4. Foods with a high amount of high sodium (20% Daily Value or more sodium per serving)
3. Foods with limited distribution/that will not be distributed:

*d. Example desserts: Bars (granola, cereal, energy, snack bars), Candy, Cakes or cupcakes, Chocolate, Cookies, Donuts, Frozen desserts, Fruit snacks, Ice cream, Muffins, Pastries, Pies, Popsicles, and Puddings*

* 1. Sugar-sweetened beverages
  2. Candy
  3. Savory snack foods
  4. Sweet snack foods and desserts

*c & d. Example snack foods: Chips (corn, potato, puffed cheese, tortilla; not including lower/reduced fat or baked varieties), Crackers (not including lower/reduced fat or baked varieties), French fries, Onion rings, Pork rinds*

1. Foods not covered by this guide
   1. Canned soups, shelf-stable packaged meals, snack packs of flavored nuts, condiments, and frozen meals
2. Encouraging nutritious donated items
3. Create and distribute to donors a healthy donation list that makes donors aware of priority foods, limited foods, and those that will not be distributed (Appendix)
4. Regularly communicate with donors about nutrition guidelines.
5. Seek fresh produce donations from community partners
6. Product placement and selection
   1. ‘Nudge’ healthy choices by making these products one of the earliest options, at eye-level with clients, displayed in ways to appear abundant, appearing more than once, etc.
   2. Communicate client choice/selection practices to all new clients
   3. Healthy/priority healthy items will be placed prominently, more easily accessible than limited foods
   4. Provide flexibility with choice selections to accommodate special dietary needs and cultural food practices
   5. Highlight USDA’s MyPlate recommended foods

e. Example: shelf talkers, posters, color-coding system to highlight health/nutrition

* 1. Distribute fresh fruits and vegetables as unlimited choice to clients

1. Oversight of guide
   1. [Pantry staff member’s name] will oversee the implementation
   2. [Extension Office] can be contacted for more information
   3. How will guide training take place? Is it necessary for everyone (food purchasers and those placing food for distribution)?
   4. At least once a year, the nutrition guide will be reviewed. Necessary revisions will be made, and the update date will be noted.

This institution is an equal opportunity provider.

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College of Agricultural, Consumer and Environmental Sciences.

University of Illinois | United States Department of Agriculture | Local Extension Councils Cooperating.

Illinois Extension: https://go.Illinois.edu/EatMoveSave. Illinois at Chicago: http://cphp.uic.edu