

How can I hold a successful food drive?

Nominate two food drive coordinators:

These individuals will be responsible for organizing the food drive within your organization and communicating with Food Bank staff.

Set your dates:

Average food drives run two weeks in length. When establishing the length of your drive, keep in mind the number of employees, students, members or customers you expect to participate. Whether you are holding a one-day-only event or a month-long drive, it is very important to establish a start date and an end date for your drive. Set your actual deadline a few days after your publicized deadline.

Establish a realistic goal:

Your food drive can be measured in terms of the organization's total donation or donation per person. For help in establishing a realistic goal for your organization, contact the Food Drive Coordinator.

Promote your food drive:

Begin promoting your food drive at least two weeks before your start date. Place posters and collection boxes, provided to you by the Food Bank, in highly visible locations throughout your event or organization. Other ideas to promote your drive include:

- **Profiling** the food drive in your newsletter.
- **Sending** everyone an email with a shopping list.
- **Broadcasting** your food drive on the P.A. system.
- **Creating** mailbox or paycheck stuffers highlighting your food drive.

Make your food drive rewarding:

The most successful food drives are those that offer a fun and rewarding experience for donors. Ideas include:

- **Hosting** a kick-off party for your food drive.
- **Giving** your food drive a theme.
- **Creating** competitions between floors, departments or classes.
- **Challenging** other organizations to a food drive.
- **Hosting** a wrap up party.
- **Hosting** a building competition using only nonperishable food.
- **Recognizing** participants with gift certificates or plaques.
- **Encouraging** employees to donate in memory of a loved one.

Make your food drive educational:

Hunger is a serious issue in our community. In fact, it likely has an impact on your organization. Just as important as holding a food and fund drive is understanding why your donations are so important. Here are ways your organization can learn more about hunger:

- **Schedule** a tour of St. Mary's Food Bank
- **Volunteer** to sort food or pack Emergency Food Boxes at the Food Bank.
- **Arrange** for a Food Bank speaker to visit your organization.
- **Upon your request**, St. Mary's Food Bank will provide literature on hunger in our community.

What should I collect during my food drive?

Food Donations:

Food drive participants should only collect nonperishable food items. These items are used to fill Emergency Food Boxes. The most needed items include:

- Tuna
- Canned fruits and vegetables
- Peanut Butter
- Rice
- Cereal
- Pasta
- Beans
- Juice (plastic bottles)

Baby Items:

St. Mary's Food Bank can only collect the following items* from food drive participants for its Emergency Baby Boxes:

- Diapers
- Powdered infant formula
- Baby wipes
- Baby cereal

*Due to safety guidelines, the Food Bank cannot accept jarred and canned baby food.

Monetary Donations:

St. Mary's Food Bank will accept cash or checks, made out to St. Mary's Food Bank, from food and fund drive participants.