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# Gallatin Valley Food Bank Food Drive Manual

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### *A Community Snapshot:*

- The Food Bank responded to over **13,232 requests** for emergency food assistance in 2009, a **21.5% increase** over the previous year. That's approximately 53 households per day.
- On average **154 new families** were served every month in 2009.
- 1 in 5 elementary school-aged children qualify for free and reduced priced lunch in Gallatin County.

## Strengthening Your Community

Thank you for your interest in supporting the Food Bank's efforts to fight hunger in our community! The Gallatin Valley Food Bank is a vital link between food donations and the people who need it. We serve thousands of individuals throughout the Gallatin Valley through two primary channels: our Food Bank and by partnering with over 20 local social service agencies.

Without volunteers like you we would not be able to feed our community members in need!

This manual was prepared to guide you through the steps of planning and holding a community food drive. You, your community group, congregation, or employer can use this manual for tips and ideas

about how to create awareness and participation for your food drive.

No group or amount of food donated is too big or small. We appreciate your efforts.

The staff at the Gallatin Valley Food Bank is available to answer any further questions you may have. If you have a creative idea to share please feel free to contact us!

We appreciate your support, through your efforts you are strengthening your community.



*Volunteers help collect and sort donations during the Annual Postal Drive held in early May.*

## Getting Started

Plan to have the answers ready for these questions as you plan your event:

1. Will you partner with another group, business, or organization?
2. Who will lead the Food Drive; are the roles clearly defined?
3. Do you have a date and

duration decided? Drives can be either long or short depending on your interest.

4. Will the Food Drive be held at one location or several?
5. What "type" of drive are you having? By identifying a target population as your donors you can tailor your event and donations. Also decide if you will raise food

and money, or just one or the other. Both are appreciated.

6. Do you have collection materials? Bins, boxes, bags? You can contact the Food Bank to inquire about donation bins. Bins are typically unavailable for use during November and

## Getting Started Continued...



7. How will the collected food get to the Food Bank? You can have volunteers drop off at the Food Bank M-F from 8-5pm or call us to arrange a pick-up. We kindly request that if you request a pick-up the total weight of food is over 150 pounds. This saves us valuable time and resources!
8. Will you have a theme for your food drive? You can choose to collect a certain type of food, for example low-sodium or sugar-free foods, food for kids, or simply "most needed items." The choice is yours.
9. Do you have a goal for the amount of food or money to raise? When donations come to the Food Bank we can weigh your items for you!
10. Do you have a way to thank those who have donated? A simple note to your staff, parents, or neighbors goes a long way.
11. Lastly, complete the **Community Food Drive Registration** available on the Gallatin Valley Food Bank's website. We kindly ask that you do this **before** starting your Food Drive so we know the details and can be ready when you come!

***Have fun and celebrate your success!***

## Publicize your Food Drive

Now that the details have been ironed out, it's time to start talking about your Food Drive!

Announce your event to your potential participants. You can write a Public Service Announcement (PSA) for the radio, a press release for the local paper, send out emails, create flyers and payroll inserts, and display posters talking about

the event. The more people who know about the event and how they can contribute, the more donations you will collect.

Make sure that your collection locations are conveniently located and visible. Include signage that explains the event, hunger statistics, and the goal of the drive, and the progress made. Include a list of items



you are collecting near your collection containers to both remind and encourage participation.

*The more people who know about the event and how easily they can contribute, the more donations you will collect!*

## Keep Up the Drive: Get Creative!

Today's the day; your food drive has started! You have volunteers lined up to help with collection, the food drive has been publicized, and the collection bins are out.

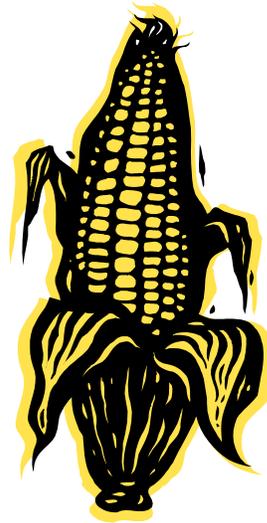
Make sure your participants are aware of the goal and the progress made. This will keep people motivated.

Here are some creative ideas:

- Kick off the event with an opening day festivity such as a presentation or a hunger awareness activity,
- Ask your business or organization to match donations.
- Hold a simultaneous event where the entry "fee" is canned food.
- Distribute empty grocery bags to drive participants with a "Wish List" and ask them to fill the bag with food.

## Keep up the Drive: continued

- Encourage a friendly competition among departments/ classes/groups.
- Offer rewards and prizes to top donors.
- Distribute hunger facts each day of the drive (available at [www.gallatinvalleyfoodbank.org/hungerfacts](http://www.gallatinvalleyfoodbank.org/hungerfacts))
- Hold a raffle, auction, book sale, bake sale or car wash to encourage donations.



## Most Needed Food Items

The following nutritious foods are always included in the Emergency Food Box Program and represent items we need on a continual basis:

- Canned meats (tuna, chicken, salmon)
- Canned fruits and vegetables
- Peanut butter
- Canned and boxed meals (Hamburger Helper, soup, chili, stew, Mac and Cheese)
- Canned or dried beans (lentils, black, kidney, pinto)
- Pasta and rice
- Cereals (oatmeal and other boxed cereals)
- Frozen chicken, beef, pork and game meat ( must be processed at a commercial processing facility)
- Fresh produce (from your garden or otherwise!)

## The Food Is Collected; What's Next?

- Take collected food to the Gallatin Valley Food Bank based on the method that was previously decided. The Food Bank will weigh the food for you when you bring it in.
- Recognize those that helped you plan and gather the food through thank you notes, give out awards if applicable, or
- Share the success of the food drive with the community through a press release or an email blast to participants.
- Review what worked well and what did not work well to prepare you for your next food drive.
- Consider scheduling a time for your group to tour the Food Bank or plan a volunteer opportunity to encour-
- Reserve a date with Food Bank staff for future food drives.
- Congratulate yourself on a job well done! It's through your gracious efforts that the Gallatin Valley Food Bank can feed thousands of individuals every month! Thank you!

### To ensure food safety we cannot use:

- Rusty or unlabeled cans
- Homemade items
- Noncommercial canned items
- Noncommercial packaged items
- Alcoholic beverages or mixes
- Open or used items

**SAMPLE FLYER**



**Your Group's  
Logo**

**<NAME OF YOUR FOOD DRIVE  
HERE>** *<Your business/group's tag line here.>*

*<Your group's name> is hosting a food  
drive to benefit the  
Gallatin Valley Food Bank.*

*Join in our efforts to collect <XXXX> pounds  
of food to be donated to those in need.*

**Dates:** The food drive will begin on <XXX> and conclude on <XXX>.

**Goal:** We are looking to collect <XXX> lbs of food. Please join in our efforts to meet our goal. We will also be accepting monetary donations that will go directly to the Gallatin Valley Food Bank.

**Collection Site(s):** <XXX, XXX and XXX>. Please drop off your food donations between the hours of <XXX and XXX>.

**Questions:** <XXX> name, Food Drive Coordinator, <phone number & email>

**Remember:** You have the ability to make a change and help fight hunger in our community. Bring your extra non-perishable food items to us today!

Consider donating the following items:

- |                |                        |
|----------------|------------------------|
| Canned Meats   | Canned Meals           |
| Canned Fruits  | Boxed Meals            |
| Canned Veggies | Canned and Dried Beans |
| Peanut Butter  | Pasta                  |
| Rice           | Cereal                 |

