



# Food Driver's Manual

Tips, Tools and Resources for  
Organizing Your Food Drive



## Overview

*Life's most persistent and urgent question is, 'What are you doing for others?' – Martin Luther King, Jr.*

What better way to do for others than to give them food when they're hungry? By organizing a food drive in your workplace, school, club, place of worship or even your entire community, you'll fill the empty shelves at the Arkansas Foodbank, the empty pantries of your neighbors' homes and the empty stomachs of one out of four Arkansas schoolchildren.

### THE NEED

Arkansas ranks fourth in the nation in overall food insecurity, and the number of these neighbors who struggle with hunger has increased more than 17% in the last year alone. Although the Arkansas Foodbank supplies food to 300 agencies in 33 statewide counties, we also face empty shelves in our warehouse, particularly at certain times of the year.

### THE ANSWER

Your food drive will keep our shelves stocked, and **every 1.5 pounds you collect enables us to provide one nutritious meal for a hungry Arkansan**. And if you hold a fund (or virtual food) drive we'll take every dollar your group donates and feed that same person for an entire day!

*Peace begins when the hungry are fed and the future begins when the hungry are educated.* - Gene White

## Follow These 10 Easy Steps

### **STEP 1: ENROLL YOUR DRIVE WITH THE ARKANSAS FOODBANK**

The Arkansas Foodbank is the state's largest foodbank warehouse, with 300 member agencies who serve more than 23,000 people each week. In 2010 alone, we distributed 13.3 million pounds of food. With the 2011 opening of our new Donald W. Reynolds facility, located at 4301 West 65<sup>th</sup> Street in Little Rock, we now have the capacity to triple that number! But we can't do it without you! By enrolling your drive, you can take advantage of our supplies, schedule your delivery to our warehouse and help us track and report your donation for our records.

**To Enroll:** Contact Jill Bayles, Food Drive Coordinator, [jbayles@arkansasfoodbank.org](mailto:jbayles@arkansasfoodbank.org) or 501-569-4321

## **STEP 2: DECIDE HOW, WHERE AND HOW LONG TO COLLECT FOOD**

Food drives can last from one or two days to one or two months. There are three main types of food drive formats you can follow:

**Single-Site Drop-Off:** You ask participants to bring food donations to one location during set hours on a specific day. Volunteers stay at the collection site and transport the food and funds donations to the Foodbank when the drive is over. *This is a great format for a neighborhood gathering place, like a senior center, grocery store or shopping mall.*

**Extended Food Drive:** You set up numerous collection points with drop boxes, where participants can leave food over the course of a week or more. Volunteers collect donations at regular intervals and transport to the Foodbank as needed. *This type of drive is most successful in workplaces, schools and places of worship, where competitions can increase results. It's also a natural tie-in to an online funds drive.*

**Event Food Drive:** You partner with a local event – a sports game, art walk, festival or fair – and set up collection sites to accept food and funds for the event's duration. *For this format, adding an incentive to the donations can significantly increase your results.*

**Online Funds, or Virtual Food Drive:** For any of these drives, you can guide your donors to the Donations Form on the Arkansas Foodbank website:

<http://www.arkansasfoodbank.org/Donate.aspx>.

Under "Company," they can list your company or drive's name, making it easy for them to give a monetary donation that will count towards your drive's totals. *And remember, monetary donations go further. With \$1, we can provide three meals a day; while 1.5 lbs. of food provides one meal.*

## **STEP 3: ESTABLISH A GOAL**

Setting goals greatly increases your results. Start by deciding upon a reasonable amount of food or money for each person to contribute – ie: 5 food items or \$10. Multiply that by the number of employees, students, congregants or members you'll invite, aiming for 100% participation, and there's your goal!

## **STEP 4: CREATE A THEME, INCENTIVE AND/OR COMPETITION**

Nothing motivates people to donate more than an incentive or competition. For lots of ideas, see **Tip Sheet #1** in this manual – *How to Make Your Food Drive a Hit.*

### **STEP 5: RECRUIT VOLUNTEERS**

Ask your family, friends, colleagues, neighbors and faith group members to help make your food drive a success. Check with local organizations that may already have a pool of volunteers. The Arkansas Foodbank also has a roster of volunteers available (email our Community Outreach Coordinator, Kathy Kaigler, at [kkaigler@arkansasfoodbank.org](mailto:kkaigler@arkansasfoodbank.org) for assistance).

### **STEP 6: GET THE WORD OUT!**

The key to a successful food drive is to get the word out about the event. Promote! Promote! Promote! See **Tip Sheet #2** in this manual – *Generating Publicity* – for suggestions, and download our posters and fliers from our website, [www.arkansasfoodbank.org](http://www.arkansasfoodbank.org)

### **STEP 7: PICK UP SUPPLIES FROM THE FOODBANK**

Schedule a time to visit the Foodbank, where you can pick up:

- Large (23x22x30) collection boxes for extended drives
- Small boxes for single-site and event drives
- Food Drive Sign (limit one per drive– to return with donation)
- Table tents with Foodbank information
- You can also download box signs from our website, [www.arkansasfoodbank.org](http://www.arkansasfoodbank.org)

### **STEP 8: PREP FOR YOUR DRIVE**

Make sure you have boxes, signs, tables, chairs, a volunteer staffing schedule with contact information, and information about hunger in Arkansas, the Foodbank's work, and the address of our nearest member pantry (for people who may come to the drive telling you they *need* food). Also, be sure you have a plan for delivering the food at the end of the drive.

Be prepared to accept our **Top Ten Needed Items**:

1. Canned meats, fish and poultry
2. Canned and packaged meals
3. Peanut butter
4. Cereal
5. Soup
6. Canned vegetables
7. Canned fruits
8. 100% juices
9. Pasta and pasta sauces
10. Diapers

And to sort out or politely refuse **Items We Can't Accept**:

1. Perishable food
2. Glass jars and bottles
3. Homemade items
4. Opened jars or containers

### **STEP 9: DELIVER YOUR CONTRIBUTIONS**

Because the primary purpose of the Foodbank's vehicles and transportation staff is for delivering food to our agencies, and because our gasoline budget is tight, we ask that you make every attempt possible to deliver your contributions to our warehouse, where we'll help you unload and weigh the food. And you can call our communications manager at 501-569-4318 in advance of your delivery if you'd like him to take photos of your team with your donation.

**Warehouse Hours: Monday – Friday, 8 am-12 pm and 1-4:30 pm**

**November-December Warehouse Hours – 8 am-4:30 pm**

**After Hours Delivery: Call 501-569-4339 to schedule with the warehouse manager**

### **STEP 10: FOLLOW-UP**

Reward participants for their good work (see possible methods in **Tip Sheet #1**). Send a thank-you email to all volunteers and include the final donation amount. You also may want to develop a list of lessons learned for future events. Email the Foodbank's food drive coordinator at [jbayles@arkansasfoodbank.org](mailto:jbayles@arkansasfoodbank.org) with your tallies, along with any suggestions for improving our procedures. And be sure to reward yourself – you've helped fill humanity's most basic need!

*There are people in the world so hungry that God cannot appear to them except in the form of bread. – Mahatma Gandhi*

## Tip Sheet: How to Make Your Food Drive a Hit

### FOR BUSINESSES, SCHOOLS, WORSHIP CENTERS AND COMMUNITY GROUPS

#### **Competition**

Create competitions between classrooms, departments, workgroups or floors to see who will collect the most donations. Make sure the winners get a special prize for their winning donation!

#### **Company Match**

Encourage your company to match your cash donation. Speak to your company management or Human Resource Department about a financial match program.

#### **The Big Dare!**

Who wouldn't want to see his boss or principal hit with a pie in the face? How about seeing your favorite coach or youth leader get his head shaved?

#### **Create an "Item of the Day" with our Most-Needed Foods List**

Utilize the list of preferred food items and designate "items of the day" for people to donate each day.

#### **Donation Bags**

Distribute grocery bags to participants and ask them to take home and return it full of food. Include a preferred food items list in the bags as a reminder of the items needed.

#### **Special Events**

You can partner your food drive with a special event, using four or more cans of food as a full or reduced admission.

#### **House Party**

Does someone at your business, school or church have a spectacular home or great view of the city? Consider hosting a party with admission donations benefiting the Arkansas Foodbank.

#### **Donation Envelopes**

Distribute envelopes to employees, students or congregation members with instructions on making a cash donation to benefit the Arkansas Foodbank.

#### **Fundraisers**

Ideas include bake sales, car washes, breakfasts, lunches or concerts.

### **Fill the Canoe**

Place an empty canoe (or other large, interesting container) in the entrance to the worship center and challenge members to fill it with donations by the end of the month.

### **Raffles or Auctions**

Solicit local businesses, your company or staff for prizes to raffle or auction. Examples of prizes might include movie tickets, hotel packages, plane tickets, or donated artwork.

### **Loose Change**

Have a “loose change” bin sitting at your company’s cafeteria or break room. As employees eat lunch they can put their loose change in the collection bin to be donate to the Community Food Bank.

### **Penny Wars**

Find large glass jars, place in rooms and have a race to see who can fill up their jars with pennies. Adding bills to an opposing team’s jar requires them to subtract money from their total amount (if you put in a \$5 bill, the other team takes \$5 off their total).

### **Jeans Day**

For the right price, allow employees to wear jeans to work one day.

### **Hunger Fast**

Encourage your group to skip one meal, giving what money they would have spent on the skipped meal to the Arkansas Foodbank.

### **Visible Goals**

Create a “Goals Thermometer” or chart to track the progress of your event’s fund raising and food donation

### **Meal in a Bag**

Provide grocery bags with instructions to fill them with ingredients for a meal for four, such as:

- Spaghetti sauce; pasta; Parmesan cheese; canned fruit; salad dressing
- Tuna Helper; canned tuna; canned fruit; muffin mix
- Canned beef stew; canned green beans or corn; muffin mix; fruit cocktail
- Canned chili; canned pears; box of saltines; jar of peanut butter
- Canned soup; box of saltines; canned fruit; jar of peanut butter

## Tip Sheet: How to Generate Publicity

CREATE THIS:	AND DISTRIBUTE IT THIS WAY:
Flyers	Post on break room bulletin boards
Emails	Send to your contact lists
Printed Announcements	Insert in payroll envelopes and newsletters
Media Alerts	Contact Arkansas Foodbank for a list of media
Grocery Bags with Needed Items List Inside	Pass out to congregants, students or staff the week before your drive begins

### Utilize Social Media

Contact the food drive coordinator about adding your drive to our website's Donation Drop-Down Menu. Then update your Facebook status, and send out on your Twitter account, a statement such as:

*Help me feed local families by visiting [www.arkansasfoodbank.org](http://www.arkansasfoodbank.org) and making an online donation! With more than 28% of Arkansas children uncertain where their next meal is coming from, your help is needed now more than ever.*

### Borrow an Arkansas Foodbank Sign

The Arkansas Foodbank has twelve 22x28" corrugated signs featuring the graphics on our generic poster. Contact the food drive coordinator to request one of the signs for the duration of your drive.

### Send Out Emails Like This One

Dear [Name],

[Organization Name] is partnering with the Arkansas Foodbank to bring hope, relief and security to our neighbors struggling with hunger. From [now/begin date] to [end date], our food drive will help the Foodbank meet more of the growing need in our community.

Your support allows the Arkansas Foodbank to continue providing more than 13 million pounds of food each year—that's more than 8.5 million meals!—to 33 central and south Arkansas counties. With **1 in 3 Arkansas children living in households where food isn't consistently available**, your participation couldn't come at a more crucial time.

Our campaign's drop-off locations are at [insert container locations]. Please consider the most needed foods:

Meals in a can (stew, chili, soup)	100% Fruit Juices	Tuna/Canned Meat
Peanut Butter	Low Sugar Cereals	Canned Fruits and Vegetables.

**Our goal is to raise [# of pounds] pounds and \$[dollars].** Thank you in advance for your participation!

Sincerely,  
[Name]