



# PA Healthy Pantry Initiative

A project of Feeding PA in partnership  
with the PA Department of Health

## PARTNER TOOLKIT



[feedingpa.org/hpi](https://feedingpa.org/hpi)



Funding provided by the Preventive Health and  
Health Services Block Grant from the Centers for  
Disease Control and Prevention



# TABLE OF CONTENTS

PA Healthy Pantry Initiative Overview..... 3

Food and Health ..... 7

Timeline and Assessment..... 10

Implementation ..... 15

Nutrition Resources..... 27





Hello,

Thank you for all the work that you do every day to help individuals and families have access to nutritious food. We are excited to share details with you on a new partnership that seeks to support you in furthering your goals of providing healthy foods and beverages to pantry clients. The Pennsylvania Department of Health, Feeding Pennsylvania and Feeding Pennsylvania member food banks are collaborating on the Pennsylvania Healthy Pantry Initiative (PA HPI).

Food environments have a major role in influencing individuals' food choices, which can have a significant impact on their health. As you see every day, the need for food pantry services has increased among low income populations, who disproportionately face food insecurity and chronic disease. Your pantry can serve as a community hub for resources and information. Because individuals use food pantries more regularly, there is an opportunity to model healthy eating patterns and provide increased access to healthy food choices. PA HPI can support you in achieving the goal of improving the health of your clients.

The goal of PA HPI is to increase access to healthy foods and beverages and chronic disease information to food pantry clients. The initiative also aims to support pantry clients in increasing their consumption of healthy foods by highlighting the healthy choices within the food pantries.

Components of PA HPI include:

- a nutrition educator with **FOOD BANK NAME** working directly with pantries like yours;
- a pantry assessment and re-assessment every 6 months to determine progress, completed by the nutrition educator, with a staff member at the food pantry (e.g., current inventory, available nutrition information, other resources promoted);
- action plan development;
- materials for promoting healthy items (e.g., shelf signage, recipe cards, food display and storage materials);
- nutrition education classes (as interest permits); and
- on-going support and technical assistance.

With your support, PA HPI will collect information around the changes in client choices as well as changes in your inventory. We will contact you regarding the next steps for participation. If you are not interested in taking part in PA HPI, please let **Contact name** know by **Deadline for when to opt out and way to reach you-email/phone/etc..** Please reach out if you need any additional information or have any questions.

In order for PA HPI to be successful, we rely on the involvement of pantries like yours. We look forward to working with you and helping Pennsylvanians access healthy food to improve their health and the health of their families.

Thank you,

**Contact Name and Information Here**



**Megan Greevy MS, RD, LDN**

Healthy Pantry Initiative Project Coordinator  
mgreevy@feedingpa.org



# WHAT IS THE PENNSYLVANIA HEALTHY PANTRY INITIATIVE?

A project of **Feeding Pennsylvania** in partnership with the **Pennsylvania Department of Health**

Funding provided by the **Preventive Health and Health Services Block Grant** from the **Centers for Disease Control and Prevention**

**Feeding PA** is working with its member food banks to:

- ▶ Increase access to healthy food within the food pantries
- ▶ Increase consumption of healthy food by pantry clients through various promotion methods



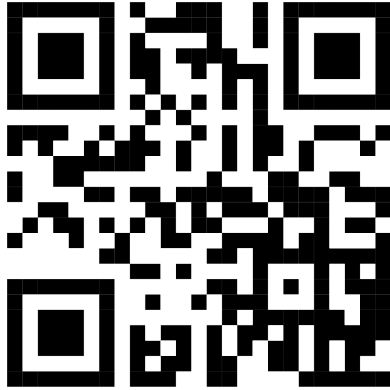
The long-term goal is to reduce the burden of disease and increase the quality of life for Pennsylvanians who use food support systems.



The Pennsylvania Healthy Pantry Initiative has a website. Check it out!

[feedingpa.org/hpi](http://feedingpa.org/hpi)

You can also use the following QR code to visit the website.



For iPhone:

1. Open your phone's camera app.
2. Select the rear facing camera. Hold your device so that the QR code appears in the viewfinder in the Camera app. Your device recognizes the QR code and shows a notification.
3. Tap the notification to open the link associated with the QR code.

For Android:

1. Open your phone's camera app.
2. Select the rear facing camera. Hold your device so that the QR code appears in the viewfinder in the Camera app. Your device recognizes the QR code and shows a notification.
3. Tap the notification to open the link associated with the QR code.

Note:

\* If nothing happens, you may have to go to your Settings app and enable QR code scanning.

\*\* For older Android models, download a third-party QR code reader app.







# Pennsylvania Healthy Pantry Initiative

The goal of the **Pennsylvania Healthy Pantry Initiative (PA HPI)** is to increase access to healthy foods and beverages and chronic disease information to food pantry clients. The initiative also aims to support pantry clients in increasing their consumption of healthy foods by highlighting the healthy choices within the food pantries.

**In order to accomplish the PA HPI goals, the nutrition educators will:**

- 1 Work with food pantries to increase availability of healthy food items  
.....
- 2 Train pantry staff on nutrition information and PA HPI  
.....
- 3 Provide display and storage equipment to nudge clients to healthier options  
.....
- 4 Provide shelf talkers, signage, produce information and/or recipe cards  
.....
- 5 Hold food demos/tastings and/or nutrition classes



[feedingpa.org/hpi](http://feedingpa.org/hpi)





# Food and Health



## WHY IT IS IMPORTANT: HEALTH AND HUNGER

- ▶ **Chronic diseases include:** Heart disease, cancer, chronic lung disease, stroke, Alzheimer's disease, diabetes, obesity and chronic kidney disease.
- ▶ **6 in 10 adults** in the United States have a chronic disease and **4 in 10** have two or more chronic diseases.
- ▶ Poor nutrition is one of the key lifestyle risks for chronic diseases.



---

## FOOD INSECURITY AND COMPETING NEEDS

According to a survey conducted by Feeding America, food pantry clients make compromises and use several coping strategies due to limited resources.

- ▶ **79%** purchase inexpensive unhealthy food
- ▶ **53%** receive help from family/friends
- ▶ **40%** water down food or drinks
- ▶ **35%** sell or pawn personal property
- ▶ **23%** grow food in a garden
- ▶ **69%** had to choose between food and utilities
- ▶ **67%** had to choose between food and transportation
- ▶ **66%** had to choose between food and medical care
- ▶ **57%** had to choose between food and housing
- ▶ **31%** had to choose between food and education



---

## WHY IT IS IMPORTANT: FOOD INTAKE AND HEALTH

- ▶ Adults who are living in food insecure households consume fewer servings of fruits, vegetables and dairy weekly.
- ▶ This pattern of food intake has been linked to the development of hypertension (high blood pressure), hyperlipidemia (high cholesterol) and diabetes.
- ▶ Food insecurity and obesity are also linked. Lower-income individuals often have access to inexpensive food options that are lower in nutritional value and are calorie-dense with limited access to affordable healthy options.
- ▶ Of all households surveyed: **57.8%** have at least one member living with high blood pressure and **33.2%** of all households report a member with diabetes.
- ▶ Of all households surveyed with a senior in the home: **77.3%** report a member with high blood pressure and **47.2%** report a member with diabetes.





## WHY IT IS IMPORTANT: CONSISTENT PANTRY USAGE

From a survey conducted in food pantries across the United States:

- ▶ **More than half** of pantry clients visited the pantry six times or more in the previous 12 months.
- ▶ **63.2%** of those surveyed budgeted to get food from the pantry monthly.
- ▶ Food pantries are a consistent source of food for those in need.

## CLIENT PREFERENCES

Pantry clients are requesting healthier options.

The most requested items by food pantry clients and pantry coordinators include:

- ▶ **Fresh fruits and veggies**
- ▶ **Dairy/eggs**
- ▶ **Poultry/meats**

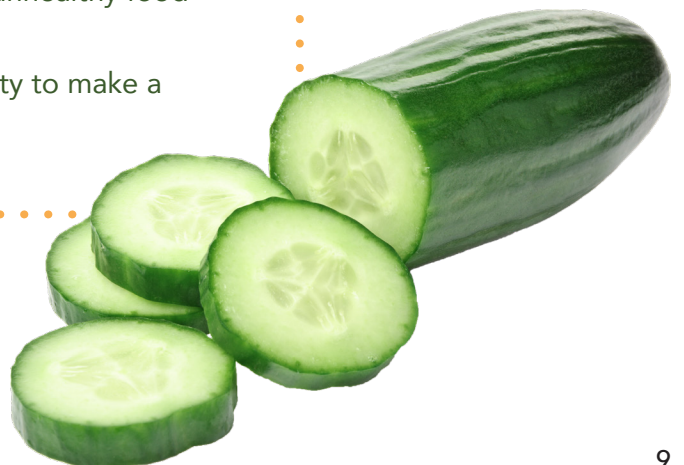
The least requested items by food pantry clients and pantry coordinators include:

- ▶ **Sweet snacks**
- ▶ **Salty snacks**
- ▶ **Sugar sweetened beverages**



## FOOD AND HEALTH: PUTTING IT ALL TOGETHER

- ▶ Food insecure individuals are at high risk for chronic disease.
- ▶ Nutrition plays a key role in preventing and treating chronic disease.
- ▶ Due to competing needs, pantry clients buy inexpensive, unhealthy food to stretch their money.
- ▶ Pantry clients use pantries regularly, creating an opportunity to make a difference in the food intake and health of our clients.





# Timeline and Assessment





# PANTRY VISIT GUIDE AND TIMELINE FOR PANTRY STAFF

1

## VISIT 1

Meet with nutrition educator for introductions and tour of the pantry.

2

## VISIT 2

Complete pantry assessment with nutrition educator.



## BETWEEN VISITS

Review assessment and assist with developing plan.

3

## VISIT 3

Complete PA HPI training with as many staff/volunteers as possible and discuss inventory opportunities.



## BETWEEN VISITS

Work with nutrition educator to order PA HPI equipment and materials.

4

## VISIT 4

Receive any conversion materials, like shelving, that was ordered and assist with changing pantry layout.

5

## VISIT 5

Accept PA HPI materials, like posters and recipe cards, and assist with placing them throughout the pantry.

6

## VISIT 6 AND ON

Work with nutrition educator on creating meal bundles or recipe card distributions, tastings, classes and so on.

Distribute nutrition and health education handouts as recommended by nutrition educator.

Re-assess pantry with nutrition educator six months after first strategies are implemented.



# PA HEALTHY PANTRY INITIATIVE STRATEGIES

**1 INCREASE HEALTHY INVENTORY**

.....

**2 IMPLEMENT NUDGE  
(ENVIRONMENTAL) STRATEGIES**

.....

**3 PROMOTE HEALTH AND NUTRITION**

.....

**4 IMPLEMENT NUTRITION POLICIES  
AND GUIDELINES**

.....

**5 PROMOTE ADDITIONAL RESOURCES AND  
SERVICES TO CLIENTS AND STAFF**





# PA HPI ASSESSMENT TOOL



## Inventory

- ☐ Healthy foods available\*
- ☐ Variety
- ☐ Quality

## Environment and Healthy Nudges

- ☐ Uses a shopping style/client choice model
- ☐ Uses stoplight, thumbs up signage, PA HPI symbol or other primers to highlight location of healthy items
- ☐ Signs highlighting nutritional benefits of fruits and vegetables displayed throughout the pantry
- ☐ Healthy items placed at eye or waist level
- ☐ Healthy items placed BEFORE other foods in pick-up line, highly visible location or near entrance
- ☐ Point-of-sale signage with nutrition information
- ☐ Appearance of abundance, or multiple exposures, to one of Feeding America's Foods to Encourage (F2E)
- ☐ Adequate shelving available
- ☐ Frozen storage available
- ☐ Refrigerated/chilled storage available

## Health Promotion and Marketing

- ☐ Healthy food samples, demonstrations and/or tastings offered onsite
- ☐ Nutrition education classes offered onsite
- ☐ Healthy, product-specific recipe cards distributed to clients
- ☐ Meal bundles/kits used to promote scratch cooking
- ☐ MyPlate materials visible
- ☐ Nutrition education materials/resources available for clients
- ☐ Education materials/resources available for clients with special dietary needs
- ☐ Chronic disease prevention education materials available for clients
- ☐ PA HPI media materials displayed
- ☐ Information on SNAP, WIC, TANF, farmer's market coupons and other local low-income food sources available

## Nutrition Policies and Guidelines

- ☐ Follows PA HPI/Feeding PA healthy food and beverage promotion policy (or similar, approved food bank policy)
- ☐ Offers accommodations to challenges with access (e.g., proxies, home delivery, special hours)
- ☐ Documented nutritional guidelines for procurement practices
- ☐ Documented nutritional guidelines for distribution practices
- ☐ Documented nutritional guidelines for healthy food drives

## Services, Resources and Training

- ☐ Visual or spoken referrals to Diabetes Prevention Program (DPP) or other chronic disease prevention programs
- ☐ Visual or spoken referrals to other social service programs/resources (e.g. job training)
- ☐ Formal partnership to offer SNAP outreach services
- ☐ Access to a garden, farm or farmer's market that provides fresh produce
- ☐ Pantry offers nutrition training to staff and/or volunteers
- ☐ Formal partnership with local health care system
- ☐ Pantry has staff and/or volunteers available to assist clients with questions regarding healthy food choices
- ☐ Provides basic cooking and/or gardening materials to clients
- ☐ Registered dietitian or nutritionist on staff or one that regularly volunteers
- ☐ Pantry has community and/or commercial partnerships to increase inventory of fresh produce

\*based off the Healthy Eating Research Nutrition Guidelines for Ranking Charitable Food and Feeding America's Foods to Encourage

## TIERING OF HEALTHY PANTRIES

The Healthy Pantry Assessment identifies many strategies intended to improve the health of pantry clients. Each pantry has different resources available to them and not all strategies can be implemented at every pantry. Because of this, there are no required strategies to participate. It is requested that pantries work with nutrition educators to implement and try new strategies as much as possible. Being involved in PA HPI demonstrates dedication and commitment to the health of pantry clients. Thank you for your commitment to serving your community day after day.

To recognize those pantries that are going above and beyond in their commitment to PA HPI through innovative and strategic partnerships, PA HPI has a tiering of healthy pantries based on improvement from baseline assessment scores\*.

### Improvement from baseline scores:

Bronze: 4-9 points

Silver: 10-15 points

Gold: 16-21 points

*\*In the first HPI cohort, the average improvement was 11 points from baseline and almost all pantries fell into at least the bronze category. Each new strategy that is implemented is equal to one point.*



The nutrition educator will discuss and provide you the resources that are included as part of participating in PA HPI. You can also view the resources for pantries available at [www.feedingpa.org/hpi](http://www.feedingpa.org/hpi).

### Most participating pantries can implement the following:

- ▶ Uses PA HPI healthy options shelf tags
- ▶ Signs highlighting nutritional benefits of fruits/vegetables displayed
- ▶ Point of sale signage with nutrition information
- ▶ Healthy recipe cards are distributed to clients and displayed in pantry
- ▶ PA HPI media materials displayed
- ▶ Pantry offers nutrition training to staff and/or volunteers

### Consider implementing some of the following strategies, which may require more of a time commitment from the pantry:

- ▶ Nutrition education materials/resources available for clients
- ▶ Education materials/resources available for clients with special dietary needs
- ▶ Chronic disease prevention education materials available for clients
- ▶ Registered dietitian or nutritionist on staff or one that regularly volunteers
- ▶ Nutritional guidelines for healthy food drives are followed
- ▶ Information on SNAP, WIC, TANF, farmer's market coupons and other local low-income food sources are available







# Implementation



Volunteers and staff at the food pantry have an opportunity to help clients make healthy food choices. Those that participate in PA HPI will have nutrition basics training with the nutrition educator. The information below includes some of the nutrition information that PA HPI nutrition educators provide.

## What is Included in a Healthy Eating Pattern?

- ▶ A variety of vegetables from all of the subgroups — dark green, red and orange, legumes (beans and peas), starches
- ▶ Fruits, especially whole fruits
- ▶ Grains, at least half of which are whole grains
- ▶ Fat-free or low-fat dairy, including milk, yogurt, cheese and fortified soy beverages
- ▶ A variety of protein foods, including seafood, lean meats and poultry, eggs, legumes (beans and peas) and nuts, seeds and soy products
- ▶ Oils such as canola, corn, olive, peanut, safflower, soybean and sunflower oils

## What to Limit in a Healthy Eating Pattern\*

### Saturated fats, trans fats and cholesterol

- ▶ Shift from solid fats to oils (unsaturated fats)
- ▶ Avoid processed foods with hydrogenated oils
- ▶ Recommendation: Consume less than 10% of calories per day from saturated fats

### Added sugars

- ▶ Recommendation: Consume less than 10% of calories per day from added sugars

### Sodium

- ▶ Recommendation: Consume less than 2,300 milligrams (mg) per day of sodium
- ▶ 1 tsp of salt = 2,300 mg of sodium

*\*Recommendations based on average for adults*





## Reading Food Labels

- ▶ Everything listed on the label is based on the serving size
- ▶ When looking at the information, ask yourself, "Is this my whole meal? What else am I having with this?"
- ▶ Consider the calories
  - ▶ Average calorie needs are 2,000 calories per day
- ▶ Use the % Daily Value to help you decide if something is low or high
  - ▶ % Daily Value is the percentage of the daily recommended amount for each nutrient in one serving of the food.

1 Start Here ▶

2 Check Calories

3 Limit these Nutrients

4 Get Enough of these Nutrients

5 Footnote

Nutrition Facts	
8 servings per container	
<b>Serving size</b>	<b>2/3 cup (55g)</b>
<b>Amount per serving</b>	
<b>Calories</b>	<b>230</b>
	<b>% Daily Value*</b>
<b>Total Fat</b> 8g	<b>10%</b>
Saturated Fat 1g	<b>5%</b>
Trans Fat 0g	
<b>Cholesterol</b> 0mg	<b>0%</b>
<b>Sodium</b> 160mg	<b>7%</b>
<b>Total Carbohydrate</b> 37g	<b>13%</b>
Dietary Fiber 4g	<b>14%</b>
Total Sugars 12g	
Includes 10g Added Sugars	<b>20%</b>
<b>Protein</b> 3g	
Vitamin D 2mcg	10%
Calcium 260mg	20%
Iron 8mg	45%
Potassium 235mg	6%
<small>* The % Daily Value (DV) tells you how much a nutrient in a serving of food contributes to a daily diet. 2,000 calories a day is used for general nutrition advice.</small>	

6 Quick Guide to % DV

- ▶ 5% or less is Low
- ▶ 20% or more is High



# NUDGING STRATEGIES

## *What is a nudge?*

Feeding America defines a nudge as a “subtle environment changes in a food distribution setting, designed to make healthy choices, the easy choice” (Rivera et al., 2016, p. 4). In addition to this definition, in order to provide a deeper context, Thaler and Sunstein define a nudge as

any aspect of the choice architecture that alters people’s behavior in a predictable way without forbidding any options or significantly changing their economic incentives. To count as a mere nudge, the intervention must be easy and cheap. Nudges are NOT mandates. Putting the fruit at eye level counts as a nudge. Banning junk food does not (2008, p. 6).

These nudges are effective at influencing change on an individual-level basis without restricting freedom of choice while providing a low-cost, health-promoting option. Various nudging strategies are used across public health interventions. They also hold power in influencing policy change as a less invasive way to push long-term change. Within the setting of a food pantry, nudges can be utilized to inspire client choice of healthy options such as fruits, vegetables, whole grains, lean meat and low-fat dairy foods.

A study has shown that nudge interventions are extremely effective when used in food pantry settings. One study concluded that it increased the number of clients who took Feeding America’s Food 2 Encourage (F2E) by roughly 46%. Additionally, the intervention increased the number of F2E items the average client took by over 55%, which resulted in an increase in the number of F2E items selected per visit, up from about two F2E items. (Rivera, et al., 2016).

## *Nudging interventions*

Interventions include a wide variety of practices that are based on the goals, needs and capacity of each individual food pantry. By implementing one or multiple nudging strategies aimed at promoting healthy food options, pantries can improve the overall nutritional quality of the foods selected within the food pantry environment and begin to create lasting change.

Nudge interventions are grouped into four general categories. Examples of these are provided on the following pages.

## 1. CONVENIENCE

- ▶ Place produce at the beginning of the distribution
- ▶ Place healthy options at eye level
- ▶ Give healthy foods their own space



### *Works Cited*

Rivera, C., Alford, S., & Isham, M. (2016). The power of nudges: making the healthy choice the easy choice in food pantries. *Chicago, IL. Feeding America.*

Thaler, R. H., & Sunstein, C. R. (2008). Nudge: improving decisions about health. *Wealth, and Happiness*, 6.



## 2. DISPLAY CHANGE

- ▶ Create attractive displays
- ▶ Market-style produce distributions

### BEFORE



### AFTER





## BEFORE



## AFTER



Addition of bins, shelf tags and recipe cards



Addition of shelf tags and moved the healthier items to this first display



Addition of shelf tags and moved the healthy shelf to the beginning of the distribution



### 3. SIGNAGE NUTRITION/LABELING

- Identify healthy choices with shelf tags/talkers



See nutrition resources section for a guide to placing PA HPI shelf tags



### 3. SIGNAGE/NUTRITION LABELING

- ▶ Label fresh produce items
- ▶ Label unfamiliar and healthy food items

#### Examples of produce cards for display

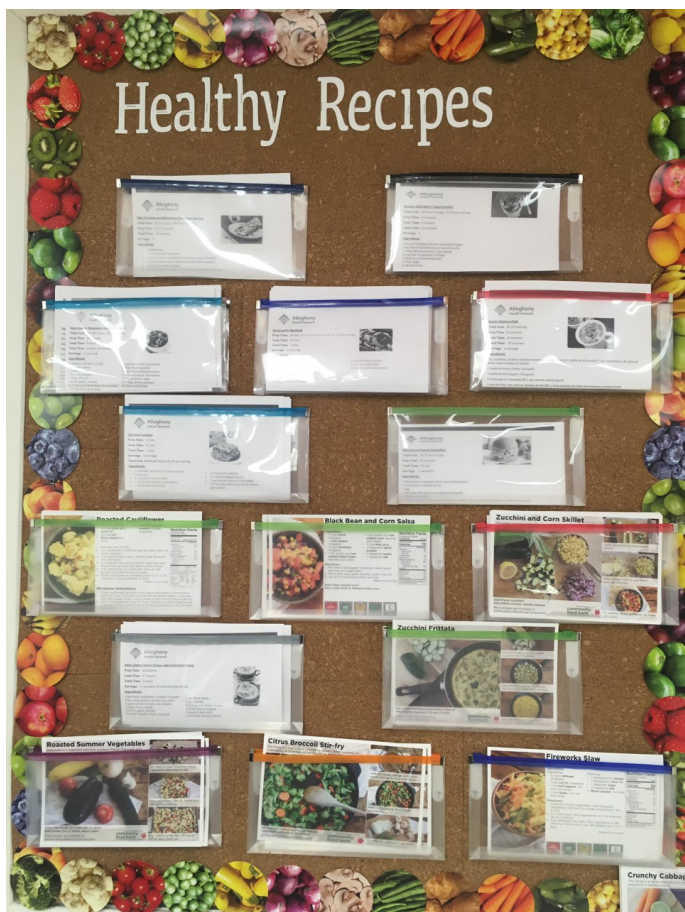




## 4. PACKAGING

- ▶ Bundle ingredients
- ▶ Suggest options for making a meal
- ▶ Provide recipe cards

### 1 Recipe card display



### 2 Recipe given out along with single item (if produce bags are packed ahead of time)



### 3 Recipe set alongside an item on the shelf





- 4 Recipe bundle set up as table display with ingredients (and client picks up the items in the shopping area)
- 5 Recipe bundle set up as a basket/rack display with ingredients (take ingredients from display)



- 6 Ingredients together as a physical bundle that is handed out with recipe



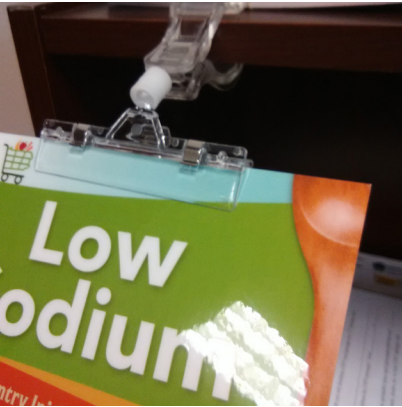
- 7 Any of the above along with a tasting/demo



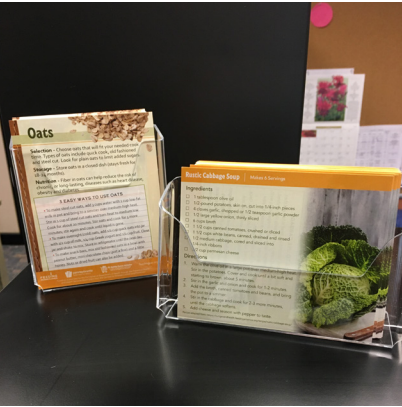
# HELPFUL MATERIALS

The following are a few examples of materials that are helpful for implementing PA HPI strategies. Every pantry is unique, so several ideas would work in some pantries but not others. This is not an all-inclusive list; other types of materials can work better in some pantries.

## Sign Holders



## Recipe Card Holders



## Recipe Organizers





## Bins, Baskets and Crates



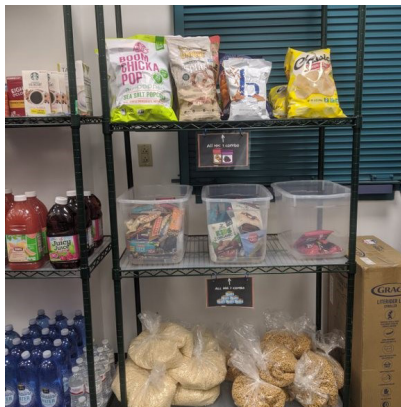
Clear plastic produce bins and collapsible produce crates are not pictured but also work well.

## Carts



There are also metal cart options that work great.

## Metal Shelving (with or without wheels)



## Wooden Shelving (with or without wheels)





## Nutrition Resources

This toolkit provides background information on PA HPI, the impact of the pantry on nutrition and health of its clients, the PA HPI pantry assessment and implementation of strategies.

One of the most important resources to pantry clients are the staff and volunteers who interact with them each month. Pantry staff and volunteers are crucial to the mission of PA HPI. The following resources are meant to support the pantry staff/volunteers in the work they are doing.





**Nutrition Guidelines for Ranking Charitable Food**  
(Published by Healthy Eating Research (HER), a national program of the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation)

Food Category*	Example Products	Choose Often			Choose Sometimes			Choose Rarely		
		Saturated Fat	Sodium	Added Sugar**	Saturated Fat	Sodium	Added Sugar**	Saturated Fat	Sodium	Added Sugar**
Fruits and Vegetables	Fresh, canned, frozen, and dried fruits and vegetables, frozen broccoli with cheese sauce, apple sauce, tomato sauce, 100% juice, 100% fruit popsicle	≤2 g	≤230 mg	0 g	All 100% juice and plain dried fruit			≥2.5 g***	≥480 mg	≥12 g
					≥2.5 g***	231-479 mg	1-11 g			
Grains	Bread, rice, pasta, grains with seasoning mixes	First ingredient must be whole grain AND meet following thresholds:			≥2.5 g***	231-479 mg	7-11 g	≥2.5 g***	≥480 mg	≥12 g
		≤2 g	≤230 mg	≤6 g						
Protein	Animal (beef, pork, poultry, sausage, deli meats, hot dogs, eggs) and plant proteins (nuts, seeds, veggie burgers, soy, beans, peanut butter)	≤2 g	≤230 mg	≤6 g	2.5-4.5 g	231-479 mg	7-11 g	≥5 g	≥480 mg	≥12 g
Dairy	Milk, cheese, yogurt	≤3 g	≤230 mg	0 g	3.5-6 g	231-479 mg	1-11 g	≥6.5 g	≥480 mg	≥12 g
Non-Dairy Alternatives	All plant-based milks, yogurts and cheeses	≤2 g	≤230 mg	≤6 g	≥2.5 g	231-479 mg	7-11 g	≥2.5 g	≥480 mg	≥12 g
Beverages	Water, soda, coffee,tea, sports drinks, non-100% juice products	0 g	0 mg	0 g	0 g	1-140 mg	1-11 g	≥1 g	≥141 mg	≥12 g
Mixed Dishes	Frozen meals, soups, stews, macaroni and cheese	≤3 g	≤480 mg	≤6 g	3.5-6 g	481-599 mg	7-11 g	≥6.5 g	≥600 mg	≥12 g
Processed and Packaged Snacks	Chips (including potato, corn, and other vegetable chips), crackers, granola and other bars, popcorn	None			If a grain is the first ingredient, it must be a whole grain AND meet following thresholds:			≥2.5 g	≥141mg	≥7 g
					0-2 g	0-140 mg	0-6 g			
Desserts	Ice cream, frozen yogurt, chocolate, cookies, cakes, pastries, snack cakes, baked goods, cake mixes	None			None			All desserts		
Condiments and Cooking Staples	Spices, oil, butter, plant-based spreads, flour, salad dressing, jarred sauces (except tomato sauce), seasoning, salt, sugar	Not ranked								
Miscellaneous Products	Nutritional supplements, baby food	Not ranked								

\* Definitions of food product categories are included in the text of the full report.

\*\*Use the added sugar value when available on the Nutrition Facts Label. If it is not available, use the total sugar value. The thresholds are the same for all categories except fruits and vegetables and dairy. For both fruits and vegetables and dairy, total sugar thresholds are ≤12 grams for the “choose often” tier, 13 to 23 grams for the “choose sometimes tier,” and ≥24 grams for the “choose rarely” tier.

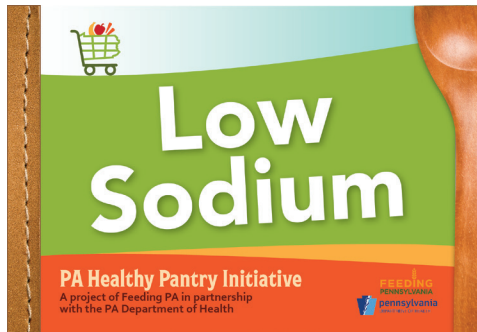
\*\*\* The threshold for saturated fat is the same for the “choose sometimes” and “choose rarely” categories. All saturated fat values ≥2.5 grams should be ranked as “choose sometimes.” The overall ranking is based on the lowest tier of any nutrient. Thus, a grain with 3 grams of saturated fat (“choose sometimes”), 300 milligrams of sodium (“choose sometimes”), and 13 grams of added sugar (“choose rarely”) would fall into the “choose rarely” tier, while a grain with 3 grams of saturated fat (“choose sometimes”), 300 milligrams of sodium (“choose sometimes”), and 10 grams of added sugar (“choose sometimes”) would fall into the “choose sometimes” tier.

Notes: Tiers can be communicated as “choose often,” “choose sometimes,” and “choose rarely,” or with green, yellow, and red visual cues, according to local preference. Overall food product rankings are determined by the lowest tier of any nutrient. For example, a product that is ranked green (“choose often”) for saturated fat, yellow (“choose sometimes”) for sodium, and red (“choose rarely”) for added sugar would receive a final ranking of red (“choose rarely”).

Use the guide below to help with placing  
PA Healthy Pantry Initiative Shelf Signage.



**Healthy Option:** this symbol can be placed next to any Foods to Encourage or "Choose Often" (see attached list).



**Low Sodium:** products have 5% or less % Daily Value (DV) of sodium per serving.



**This food contains important vitamins and minerals:** one or more of the vitamins and minerals listed on the food label contain 10% or more of the %DV.



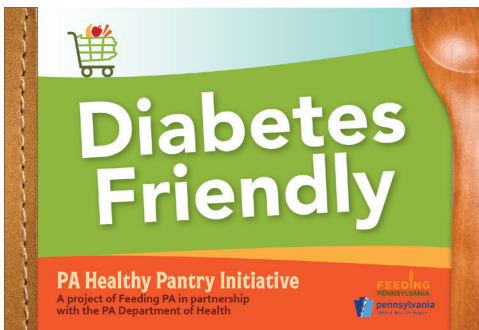
**Good Source of Protein:** product contains at least 10% of the DV of protein and is low in saturated fat (<10% DV saturated fat). If %DV is not listed, use 5g of protein per serving.



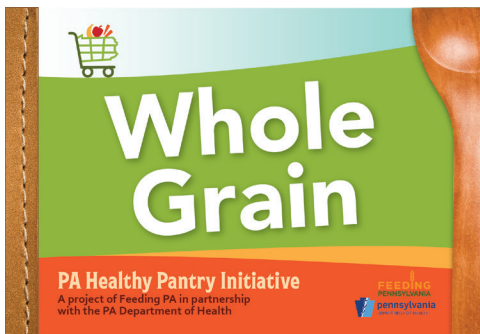
**This food is high in Fiber:** place next to items that have at least 3g fiber per serving.



**Heart healthy:** products are low in sodium, saturated fat and cholesterol. Products provide less than or equal to 5% DV per serving and provide 10% or more of potassium, Vitamin D, calcium, iron or dietary fiber per serving.



**Diabetes Friendly:** products have no added sugar and 10% DV or more for dietary fiber per serving.



**Whole Grain:** Food contains the 100% whole grain stamp and/or the first ingredient is one of the whole grains listed below:

- ▶ Amaranth
- ▶ Barley
- ▶ Buckwheat
- ▶ Bulgar wheat
- ▶ Corn
- ▶ Farro
- ▶ Freekeh
- ▶ Millet
- ▶ Oats
- ▶ Quinoa
- ▶ Rice (brown, black, red, wild)
- ▶ Rye
- ▶ Sorghum
- ▶ Teff
- ▶ Wheat berries
- ▶ Whole wheat flour (kamut, spelt, einkorn)



**No added sugar:** the label lists 0g of added sugar or when looking at the ingredient list, sugar (in any of its forms) is not listed.

### Names for added sugars\*

- ▶ anhydrous dextrose
- ▶ brown sugar
- ▶ confectioners' powdered sugar
- ▶ corn syrup
- ▶ corn syrup solids
- ▶ dextrose
- ▶ fructose
- ▶ high-fructose corn syrup (HFCS)
- ▶ honey
- ▶ invert sugar
- ▶ lactose
- ▶ malt syrup
- ▶ maltose
- ▶ maple syrup
- ▶ molasses
- ▶ nectars (e.g., peach or pear nectar)
- ▶ pancake syrup
- ▶ raw sugar
- ▶ sucrose
- ▶ sugar
- ▶ white granulated sugar

*\*You may also see other names such as cane juice, evaporated corn sweetener, crystal dextrose, glucose, liquid fructose, sugar cane juice and fruit nectar.*



## Food Label Shelf Talkers

The purpose of the food label shelf talker series is to provide information to the pantry clients that they may be able to apply outside of the pantry setting to help them make better food choices.



Place this shelf talker near the entrance to the shopping area or where they wait to shop.



Place this shelf talker near the entrance to the shopping area or where they wait to shop.



Place this shelf talker in the section of the pantry containing juice/beverages.



Place this shelf talker in the section of the pantry containing canned fruit.



Place this shelf talker in any of the following sections: canned vegetables, canned meats, canned/package meals or sides or frozen meats.



Place this shelf talker in any of the following sections: canned meats, canned/package meals or sides or frozen meats.



Place this shelf talker in any of the following sections: cereal (hot or cold), granola/snack bars, bread, pasta or rice, beans, canned/package meals or side dishes.

# Healthy Food Donation List

Feeding America's 2014 *Hunger in America* study found that while pantry clients want to have a healthy diet, they often must purchase inexpensive and less healthy foods to fit their budget. Less healthy foods (such as candy and soda) are often more accessible and affordable to pantry clients than the healthy foods that make up a balanced diet. Our goal is to provide access to these nutritious food options in order to promote greater wellness in our communities.

## FRUITS AND VEGETABLES:

- ▶ Low-sodium or water packed canned vegetables
- ▶ Canned fruits in 100% juice or lite syrup
- ▶ 100% fruit and vegetable juices
- ▶ Dried fruits and vegetables with no added sugar or fat



## 100% WHOLE GRAINS:

- ▶ Whole wheat pasta, barley, brown rice and wild rice
- ▶ Whole grain cereal and rolled oats with at least 3 g fiber



## PROTEINS:

- ▶ Low-sodium or water packed canned meats and seafood such as chicken, tuna, salmon and clams
- ▶ Dried beans, peas and lentils
- ▶ Low-sodium canned beans and peas such as kidney, black, cannellini, black eyed and chickpeas



## HEALTHY FATS:

- ▶ Low-sodium nuts and nut butters such as peanuts and peanut butter, almonds, walnuts and cashews



## DAIRY AND DAIRY SUBSTITUTES:

- ▶ Shelf stable unflavored milk (1% or 2%), powdered milk or evaporated milk
- ▶ Shelf stable non-dairy alternatives such as soy and almond milk (unsweetened)



**PA Healthy Pantry Initiative**

A project of Feeding PA in partnership  
with the PA Department of Health

[feedingpa.org/hpi](http://feedingpa.org/hpi)

**FEEDING  
PENNSYLVANIA**



**pennsylvania**  
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

Funding provided by the Preventive Health and  
Health Services Block Grant from the Centers for  
Disease Control and Prevention



# 12 Simple Ways to Increase Fruits, Vegetables and Beans/Legumes at Meals



1

Use canned vegetables including tomatoes, beans, mushrooms or beets and add into your favorite dishes.

2

Take convenience items (such as soups or frozen meals) and add in additional vegetables to boost the nutrition.

3

Replace half your meat with beans.

- ▶ Use black beans, kidney beans or lentils instead of beef or other ground meat.
- ▶ Use chickpeas or navy/white beans instead of chicken.

4

Add veggies to your eggs at breakfast.

5

Add fruit to your hot or cold cereal.



6

Create smoothies with fruits and veggies.

7

Use a dip (plain Greek yogurt can be savory or sweet!) to encourage fruits and veggies as snacks for young children.

8

Make pizzas using whole grain English muffins or pita bread.

- ▶ Add sauce, cheese and cut up veggies for toppings.

9

Sauté onions and peppers and add to almost any casserole dish.

10

Add veggies such as onions, carrots, tomatoes and spinach to your pasta sauce.

11

Make a stir fry with your vegetables.

12

Add veggies like tomatoes, lettuce, spinach and cucumbers to your sandwich and replace mayonnaise with hummus or avocado.



**PA Healthy Pantry Initiative**

A project of Feeding PA in partnership with the PA Department of Health

[feedingpa.org/hpi](http://feedingpa.org/hpi)

# Healthy Kitchen Basics

Making healthy meals at home is a little easier if you have some basics on hand. Here are some ideas to help you get started--keep in mind you do not need them all! You may be able to get some of the foods while shopping today; others you can look for at your local food store. Most of the items listed are shelf stable.

## PROTEIN

- ☐ Low sodium canned beans
- ☐ Dried beans and lentils
- ☐ Canned tuna/salmon
- ☐ Peanut butter
- ☐ Nuts/seeds
- ☐ Eggs



## GRAINS

- ☐ Oatmeal
- ☐ Flour
- ☐ Whole grain pasta, brown rice, quinoa
- ☐ Whole grain wraps/tortillas

## DAIRY

- ☐ Milk (low fat cow's milk, unsweetened soymilk)
- ☐ Low fat yogurt and/or cottage cheese

## FRUIT

- ☐ Raisins/dried cranberries
- ☐ No added sugar canned fruit
- ☐ Frozen fruit



## VEGETABLES

- ☐ Frozen greens
- ☐ Variety of frozen vegetables



## FOR EXTRA FLAVOR

- ☐ Balsamic vinegar, apple cider vinegar
- ☐ Low sodium broth—beef, chicken or vegetable
- ☐ Salsa or hot sauce
- ☐ Vanilla
- ☐ Lemon juice
- ☐ Olive or canola oil



## HERBS/ SPICES

- ☐ Italian seasoning
- ☐ Garlic powder
- ☐ Onion powder
- ☐ Oregano or thyme
- ☐ Chili powder/paprika
- ☐ Pepper
- ☐ Cinnamon



## PA Healthy Pantry Initiative

A project of Feeding PA in partnership with the PA Department of Health

[feedingpa.org/hpi](http://feedingpa.org/hpi)





**PA Healthy Pantry Initiative**  
A project of Feeding PA in partnership  
with the PA Department of Health

*Are you  
looking for...*



Healthy recipes?



Cooking and  
recipe videos?



Different ways to use  
fruits and vegetables?



Nutrition  
information?



Go to  
[feedingpa.org/hpi](https://feedingpa.org/hpi)  
for more resources!



**FEEDING  
PENNSYLVANIA**



**pennsylvania**  
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

Funding is provided by the Pennsylvania Department of Health through  
the Preventive Health and Health Services Block Grant from the Centers  
for Disease Control and Prevention.



**PA Healthy Pantry Initiative**  
A project of Feeding PA in partnership  
with the PA Department of Health

*Are you  
looking for...*



Healthy recipes?



Cooking and  
recipe videos?



Different ways to use  
fruits and vegetables?



Nutrition  
information?



Go to  
[feedingpa.org/hpi](https://feedingpa.org/hpi)  
for more resources!



**FEEDING  
PENNSYLVANIA**



**pennsylvania**  
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

Funding is provided by the Pennsylvania Department of Health through  
the Preventive Health and Health Services Block Grant from the Centers  
for Disease Control and Prevention.



**PA Healthy Pantry Initiative**  
A project of Feeding PA in partnership  
with the PA Department of Health

*Are you  
looking for...*



Healthy recipes?



Cooking and  
recipe videos?



Different ways to use  
fruits and vegetables?



Nutrition  
information?



Go to  
[feedingpa.org/hpi](https://feedingpa.org/hpi)  
for more resources!



**FEEDING  
PENNSYLVANIA**



**pennsylvania**  
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

Funding is provided by the Pennsylvania Department of Health through  
the Preventive Health and Health Services Block Grant from the Centers  
for Disease Control and Prevention.

**Food Fun!**



**PA Healthy Pantry Initiative**  
A project of Feeding PA in partnership  
with the PA Department of Health

**Food Fun!**



**PA Healthy Pantry Initiative**  
A project of Feeding PA in partnership  
with the PA Department of Health

**Food Fun!**



**PA Healthy Pantry Initiative**  
A project of Feeding PA in partnership  
with the PA Department of Health

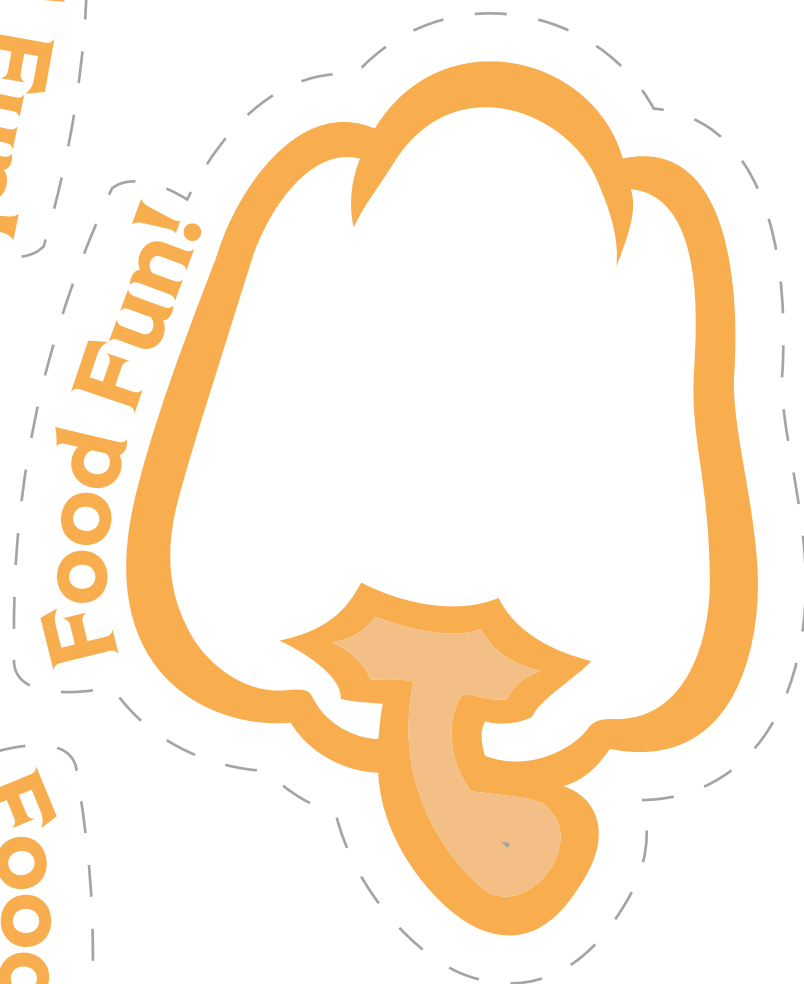
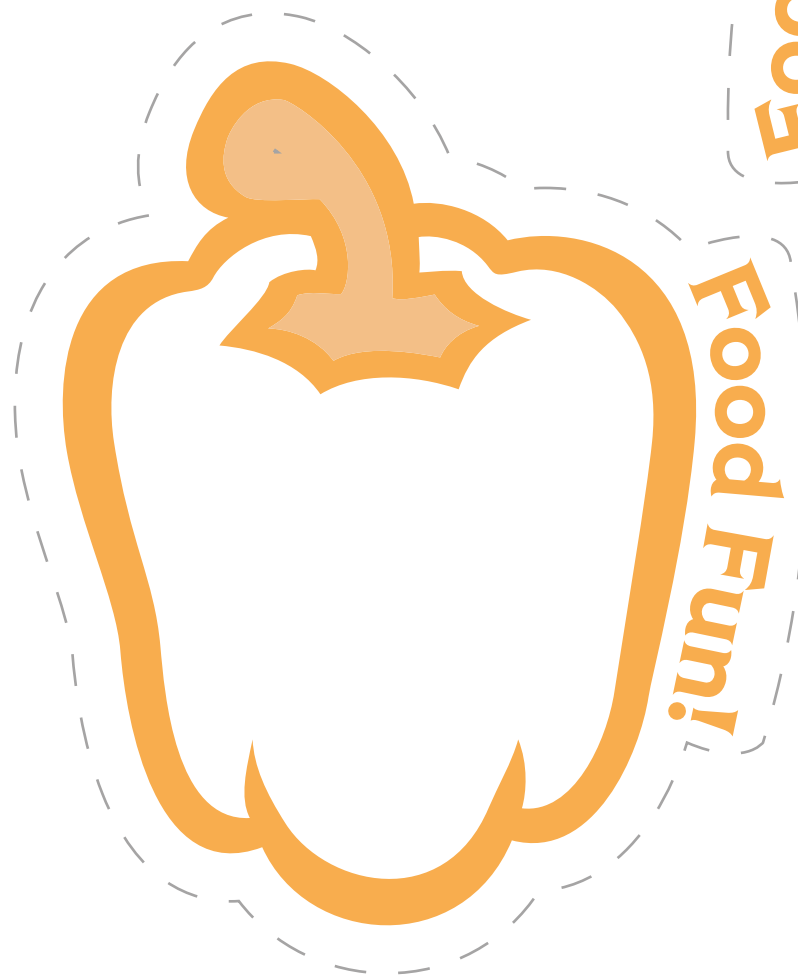
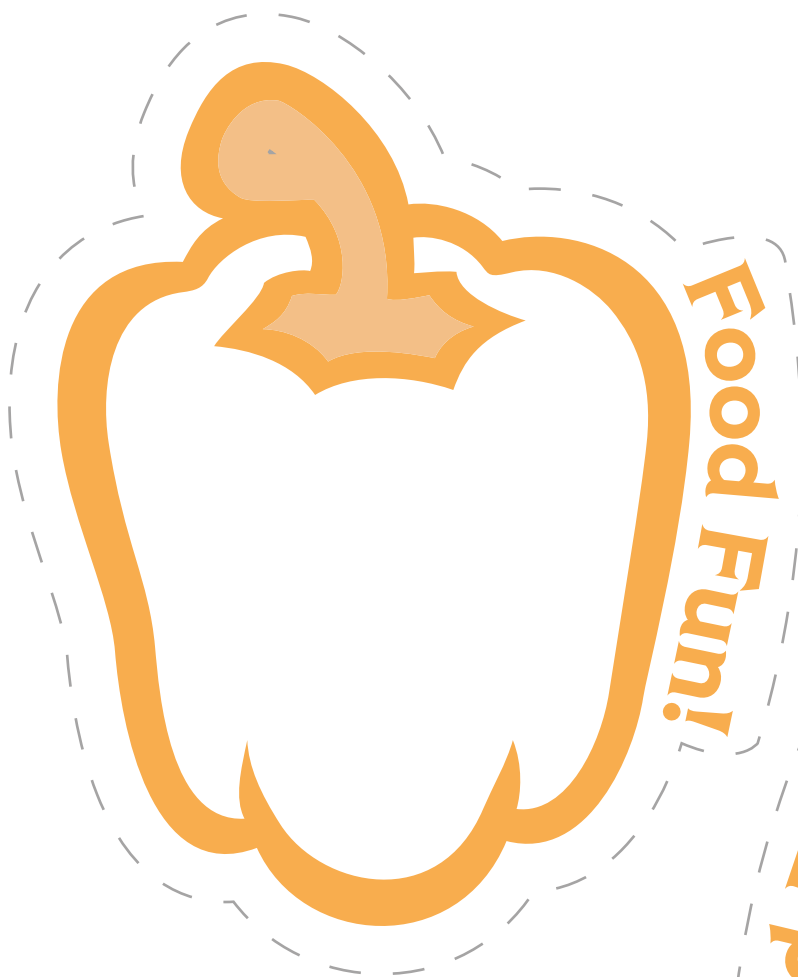
**Food Fun!**



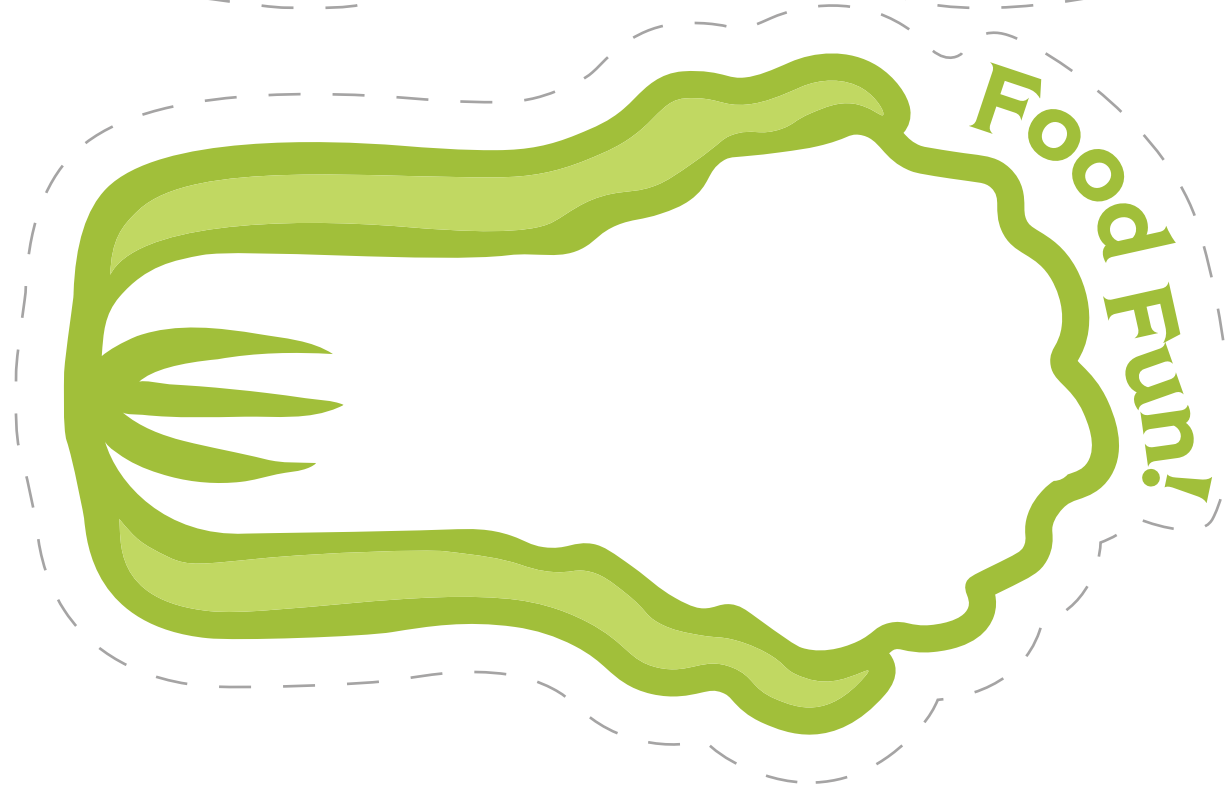
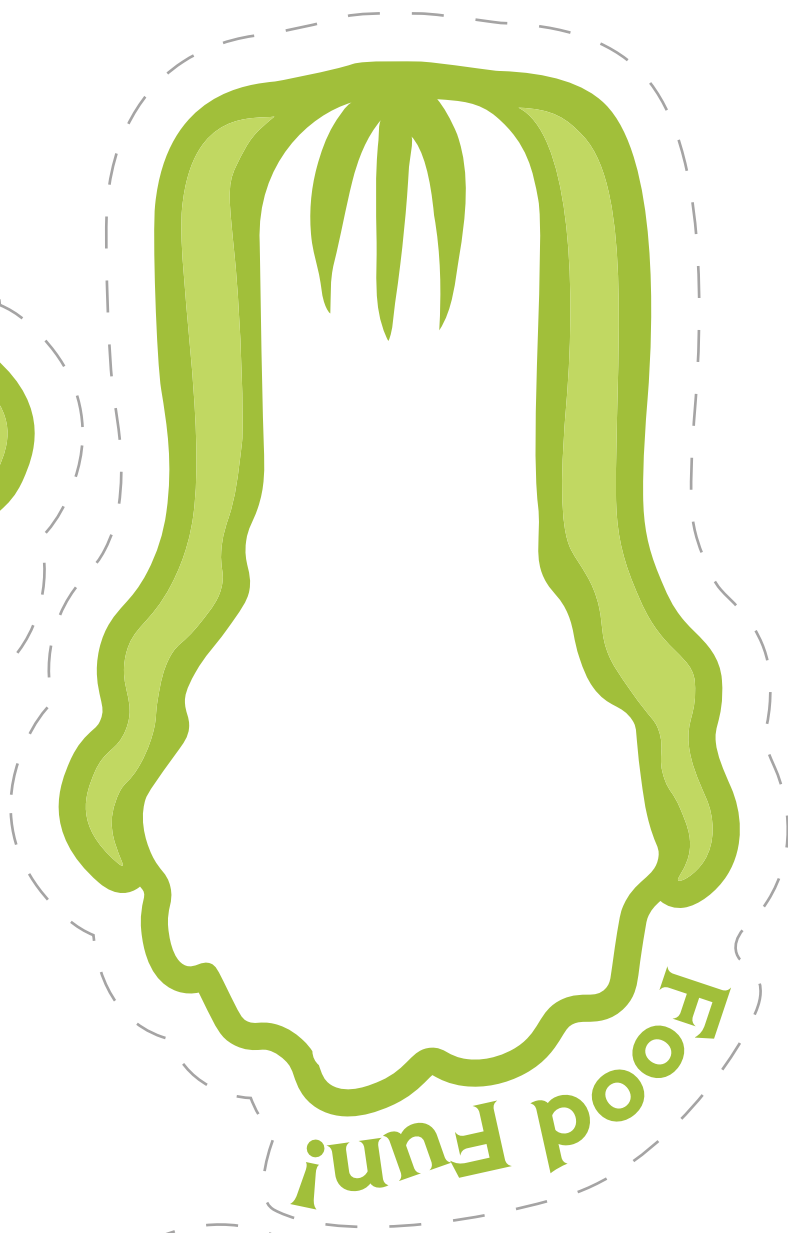
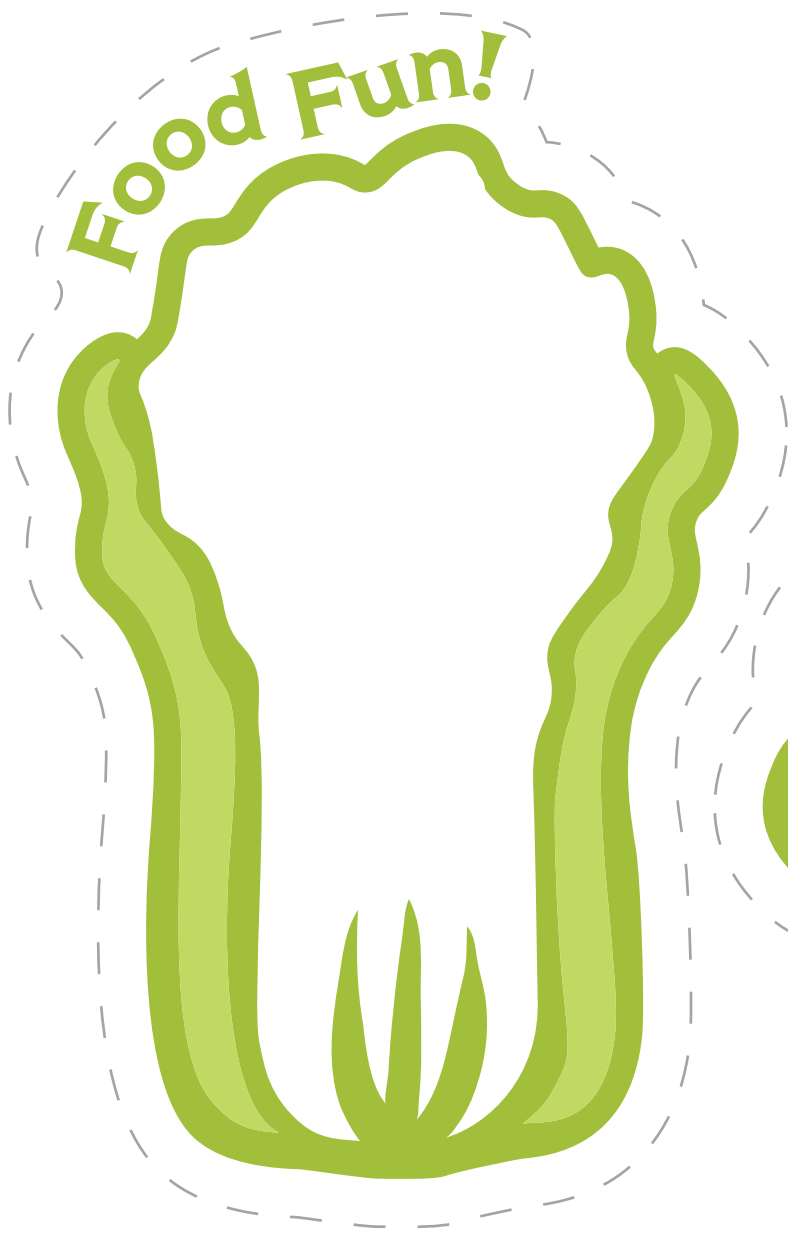
**PA Healthy Pantry Initiative**  
A project of Feeding PA in partnership  
with the PA Department of Health











# Food Fun List

Here are some ideas to get you started on what to write on your message boards. Feel free to write other cooking ideas and nutrition tips that you think would be helpful to your clients. We ask that you focus on promoting healthy and nutritious options.

## Use with fresh fruits and vegetables:

### Apples

- ▶ Add to oatmeal
- ▶ Make your own applesauce

### Cabbage

- ▶ Eat cooked or raw
- ▶ Makes great stir fry

### Carrots

- ▶ Eat cooked or raw
- ▶ Goes well with cabbage

### Cauliflower

- ▶ Make into rice

### Citrus

- ▶ Add to water

### Corn

- ▶ Use to make salsa
- ▶ Freezes well

### Grapes

- ▶ Freeze for a snack
- ▶ Add to tuna or chicken salad

### Dark Leafy Greens

- ▶ Add to a smoothie
- ▶ Add to eggs

### Summer squash

- ▶ Tastes great roasted

### Sweet potatoes

- ▶ Mash like potatoes
- ▶ Cut into fries and bake

### Winter squash

- ▶ Stuff with favorite protein and bake
- ▶ Roast and blend into soup

## Use with grains:

### Grains

- ▶ Look for whole grain

### Oatmeal

- ▶ Add fruit, nuts and milk for complete meal
- ▶ Add to muffins or breakfast cookies

## Use with canned/ prepared foods:

### Canned applesauce

- ▶ Use in place of butter when baking
- ▶ Use as a snack

### Canned tuna

- ▶ Add to mac and cheese

### Canned salmon

- ▶ High in omega-3 fatty acids
- ▶ Aim to eat seafood at least once a week

### Canned black beans

- ▶ Add to tacos
- ▶ Goes well with eggs

### Canned beans

- ▶ Goes well in soups
- ▶ Plant based protein

### Canned peas

- ▶ Goes well with tuna and pasta

### Canned pumpkin

- ▶ Use for pancakes
- ▶ Packed with Vitamin A

### Canned veggies (general)

- ▶ Rinse to lower sodium
- ▶ Add to soup

### Canned tomatoes

- ▶ Add to pasta sauce
- ▶ Goes well with beans

### Canned soups

- ▶ Add more vegetables to boost nutrition

### Ramen

- ▶ Add greens
- ▶ Try using ½ the packet to lower sodium

**\*If you are unsure about the nutrition, remember, when looking at the label:**

- ▶ 5% or less of the %DV is low
- ▶ 20% or more of the %DV is high
- ▶ 10% of the DV is considered a "good" source for fiber, protein, vitamins and minerals.

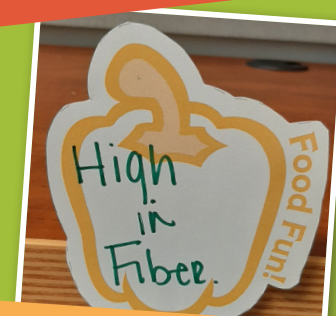
Use your Food Fun! Signs in a variety of ways to encourage clients to choose healthy foods.



Attract attention to an item



Suggest a way to use it



Nutrition Information



Suggest an amount



**PA Healthy Pantry Initiative**

A project of Feeding PA in partnership with the PA Department of Health

**FEEDING**  
**PENNSYLVANIA**



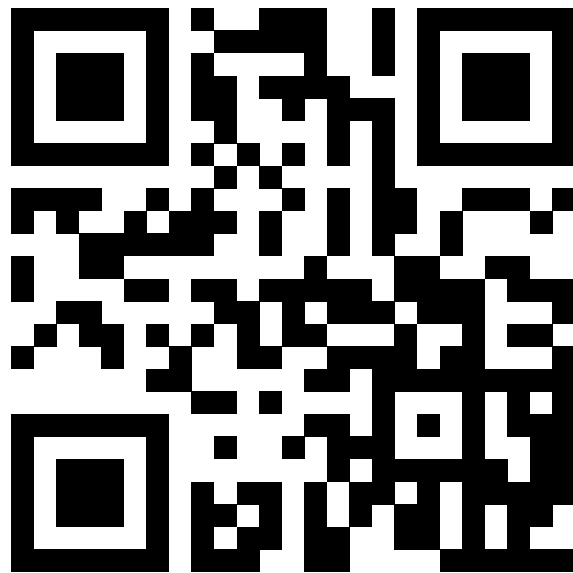
**pennsylvania**  
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

[feedingpa.org/hpi](http://feedingpa.org/hpi)

Funding provided by the Preventive Health and Health Services Block Grant from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention



For more nutrition  
resources, visit:  
[www.feedingpa.org/hpi](http://www.feedingpa.org/hpi)



**pennsylvania**  
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

  
**FEEDING**  
**PENNSYLVANIA**



**PA Healthy Pantry Initiative**  
A project of Feeding PA in partnership  
with the PA Department of Health

Funding is provided by the Pennsylvania Department of Health through the Preventive Health and Health Services Block Grant from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

[feedingpa.org/hpi](http://feedingpa.org/hpi)

The PA Healthy Pantry Initiative (HPI) recognizes that people in need of food may benefit from additional resources as well. Crucial to PA HPI is viewing pantry visitors as whole people and viewing the food pantry as uniquely capable of connecting people to other resources to meet their various needs. The resources listed below can be used to identify local resources available to clients to support their health and wellbeing.

## FIND OFFICES FOR BENEFITS PROGRAMS

**Women, Infants, and Children (WIC)** [www.pawic.com](http://www.pawic.com)

**County Assistance Offices** <https://www.dhs.pa.gov/Services/Assistance/Pages/CAO-Contact.aspx>, which offer assistance for:

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Child Care      | <input type="checkbox"/> Cash Assistance           |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Food Assistance | <input type="checkbox"/> Medical Assistance        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Housing         | <input type="checkbox"/> Utility                   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Job Finding     | <input type="checkbox"/> Long-term Living Services |



**Job Training/Career Readiness** [www.pacareerlink.pa.gov/jponline/](http://www.pacareerlink.pa.gov/jponline/)

## FIND FITNESS CENTERS AND ONLINE RESOURCES

**YMCA** [www.ymca.net/find-your-y/](http://www.ymca.net/find-your-y/)

- ▶ Ask for pamphlets on reduced-price memberships based on income
- ▶ Does your local Y offer Diabetes Prevention Program classes?  
[www.ymca.net/diabetes-prevention/locate-participating-y](http://www.ymca.net/diabetes-prevention/locate-participating-y)

### Free Online Fitness Websites:

- ▶ Yoga <https://www.doyogawithme.com/>
- ▶ Workout Videos and Routines <https://www.fitnessblender.com/>

## FIND HEALTHCARE PROVIDERS AND CLINICS

This includes:

- ▶ Federally Qualified Health Centers (FQHCs) - local, non-profit or city-run primary care providers serving low-income families <https://healthfederation.org/CommunityHealthCenters>
- ▶ County/municipal health departments - Department of Health website
- ▶ Hospital Systems (such as those through universities)
- ▶ Outpatient clinics
- ▶ Free clinics



## MAKING THE CONNECTION WITH HEALTHCARE ORGANIZATIONS

### 1 Introduction

- ▶ Research who their Social Worker, Community Liaison or Dietician is, or call the main line and ask for this person/department.
- ▶ Introduce yourself and tell them about your pantry. Inform them of your pantry location, food distribution hours, the types of clients you serve, any limitations on who can receive food and other services you offer.
- ▶ Ask them if they screen patients for food insecurity and if they would be interested in referring patients to your pantry.

### 2 Invitation

- ▶ Invite them to visit your food pantry.
- ▶ Offer to come to the hospital/clinic to present to staff on your pantry's programming and client health needs. For example, do many of your clients have diabetes or heart disease?
- ▶ Ask how you can help them, whether through making referrals to their programs, including their literature at your resource table, or promoting their community events.

## OTHER FOOD RESOURCES

Contact other food providers and growers to let them know you provide free food to people in the community. Offer to pick up excess food from them in order to get it to those who need it.

- ▶ Grocery stores
- ▶ Local restaurants and caterers
- ▶ Community gardens

**WHEN YOU HAVE GATHERED A LIST OF LOCAL RESOURCES, PUT THEM ALL IN ONE PLACE!**

## CREATE A RESOURCE GUIDE

Tip from Lifewerks/FC, located in Delaware County

Located near several universities and serving a wide range of clients, Lifewerks/FC seeks to meet people where they are and provide more than food. In 2020, they finalized their resource guide, a brochure that includes a list of food, mental health, clothing, entertainment and other local resources. When it comes to partnering with local businesses and organizations, founder Chuck Kieffer says it's as simple as making a phone call to introduce himself, the food pantry and ask how he can help. This has resulted in Lifewerks collaborating with neighboring school districts and other non-profits, as well as receiving food drive donations and other equipment from the local boy scout troop and various restaurants.





COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS AND HEALTHCARE PARTNERSHIPS

Agency:
Contact (Person):
Most recent update:

Contact Connection Profile
Phone:
Email:
Services Provided
Material Available for Clients
Yearly Updates that Affect the Program

## ADDITIONAL NUTRITION RESOURCES:

**American Heart Association** [www.heart.org](http://www.heart.org)

**Choose My Plate** [www.choosemyplate.gov](http://www.choosemyplate.gov)

**American Diabetes Association** [www.diabetes.org](http://www.diabetes.org)

**Cooking Matters** [www.cookingmatters.org](http://www.cookingmatters.org)

**Oldways PT** [www.oldwayspt.org](http://www.oldwayspt.org)

**ChopChop** [www.chopchopfamily.org](http://www.chopchopfamily.org)

**PA Eats** [www.paeats.com](http://www.paeats.com)

**PA Produce** [www.paveggies.org](http://www.paveggies.org)

**Fruits and Veggies for Better Health** [www.fruitsandveggies.org](http://www.fruitsandveggies.org)

**Pennsylvania Nutrition Education Network** [www.behealthypa.org](http://www.behealthypa.org)

