

Food Gatherers

2016 Healthy Pantry Conversion Project Toolkit



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Food Gatherers Healthy Pantry Conversion Project Toolkit

BACKGROUND

The Healthy Pantry Conversion Project provides technical assistance and resources to partner Food Pantries to improve the availability and promotion of healthy foods (including fresh produce, dairy, whole grains and low-sodium lean or vegetarian proteins) for pantry clients in Washtenaw County. Food Gatherers partnered with 9 food pantries to pilot this project, January – September 30, 2016, and will work with an additional 6 food pantries in 2017.

The Healthy Pantry Conversion Project emphasizes the implementation of sustainable, low and no-cost strategies that affect the food pantry environment – including the use of shelving, baskets, produce displays, signage, and the rearrangement of pantry space and layout - to support the promotion, selection and consumption of healthy foods.

Included in this toolkit are materials, recommendations and resources to support healthy food promotion strategies in your pantry. Contact Shaira Daya at (734) 761-2796 or shaira@foodgatherers.org with additional questions.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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Many resources in this toolkit have been adapted from and inspired by various food bank, health department and university-led healthy pantry projects. Thank you to: Feeding America, Gleaners Community Food Bank of Southeast Michigan, Groundwork Center for Healthy Communities, Northern Illinois Food Bank, New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene, Oregon Food Bank Healthy Pantry Initiative, University of Missouri Healthy Shelves Initiative, University of Wisconsin-Extension Safe and Healthy Food Pantries Project, and Vermont Food Bank Vermont Fresh Program.

Updated: 2/21/2017



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Recommended Strategies to Promote Healthy Choices in Your Food Pantry

1. Stock a Healthy Food Pantry

- **Adopt, post and communicate a Nutrition Policy to clients, volunteers and staff:** a nutrition policy can guide food procurement practices and serve as a mechanism for educating new staff, volunteers and outside donors on acceptable food donations. It can also be used to communicate pantry operations and priorities to pantry clients.
- **Provide Healthy Food Drive Donation Tips to outside food donors:** One way to increase your stock of healthy items is through food drives. Tell food donors what healthy items are most needed for your clients.
- **Distribute a wide variety of healthy foods,** such as fresh produce, dairy, whole grains and low-sodium lean or vegetarian proteins (e.g., eggs, beans, lentils, peas, nut and seed butters, chicken, turkey, and canned or frozen fish).
- **Distribute low-sodium canned beans and vegetables.**
- **Distribute canned or frozen fruit with no added sweeteners or syrups**

2. Encourage Healthy Food Selection

- **Host a client choice pantry**
- **Offer unlimited fresh produce per household**
- **Make healthy choices more visible and appealing** through the use of marketing and “nudge” strategies: subtle, low and no-cost changes to the food pantry environment can encourage people to make healthier food choices. Find a complete list of “nudge” strategies on the site-assessment tool.

3. Offer Indirect Nutrition Education

- **Prompt healthy choices with healthy pick cards:** visual cues that identify healthy foods. Use these cards to highlight foods that are fresh, in-season, and/or low in sodium. A list of healthy choices to identify with healthy pick cards can be found on page 14 of this toolkit.
- **Use cooking tips, hints and recipe cards:** Place cards near relevant food. Include cooking directions for preparing staple foods from scratch, like dried beans, brown rice or oatmeal
- **Have volunteers promote healthy food choices while shopping with clients**
- **Provide or partner with outside agencies hold on-site cooking demonstrations**
- **Provide food tastings or samples of prepared healthy recipes or fresh produce while maintaining food safety standards**
- **Display “Produce Identification Cards”** to advise on cooking and storage of fresh produce items
- **Display USDA MyPlate, Food Gatherers’ Superhero Nutrition, or other nutrition-ed posters**

4. Promote Additional Community Resources

- **Provide information on SNAP, WIC, Senior Farmers Market Coupons and other Food-Assistance Programs**
- **Distribute Affordable Healthcare Information**



Food Gatherers Healthy Pantry Conversion Project Self-Assessment Tool

Strategy	In Place		
	Yes	Somewhat	No
Stock a healthy food pantry			
Adopt, post and communicate a nutrition policy			
Provide Healthy Food Drive Donation handout to outside donors			
Distribute whole grains			
Distribute eggs and lean meats (such as chicken, turkey, canned or frozen fish)			
Distribute canned or dry beans, lentils, and nut and seed butters			
Distribute a variety of fresh fruits and vegetables			
Distribute low-sodium canned goods			
Encourage healthy food selection			
Host a client choice pantry			
Offer <u>unlimited</u> fresh produce per household			
Make healthy choices more visible and appealing (with “nudge” strategies)			
Place produce at front of distribution / choice line.			
Use baskets, bowls, or crates to display produce			
Arrange produce in a colorful way to increase visual appeal			
Angle shelves or display bins to help clients see available produce			
Arrange produce to suggest abundance and overflow			
Separate whole grain from refined grain products			
Separate low-sodium canned goods from regular canned goods			
Keep “Foods to Encourage” or “Go” foods at eye-level			
Place sugary cereals on top shelf so they are out of eye-level for children			
Place sweet baked goods and food/drinks with little nutritional value away from eye-level, on bottom shelves or back of pantry.			
Offer the same healthy produce items multiple times in the distribution line			
Post signs that encourage clients to take enough produce, such as “a family of 4 usually takes at least 8 tomatoes”			
Offer indirect nutrition education			
Prompt healthy choices with “healthy pick” cards or “shelf talkers”			
Offer hints, tips and instructions for healthy food preparation:			
Place recipe cards near “Foods to Encourage”			
Place cooking directions for preparing staple foods from scratch, such as dried beans, rice or oatmeal			
Use shelf-talkers or provide cooking hints, such as “cook me like a potato” or “add me to your smoothies” next to relevant produce items			
Have volunteers promote healthy foods while shopping with clients			
Provide or partner with outside agencies to provide cooking demonstrations			
Provide samples of prepared recipes or produce while maintaining food safety			
Display “Produce Identification Cards” to instruct on cooking and storage			
Display USDA MyPlate and other nutrition education posters			
Promote additional community resources			
Provide information on SNAP, WIC, Senior Farmers Market Coupons and other food-assistance resources			
Distribute affordable health care information			

Note: “Healthy Food” is defined according to Feeding America’s Detailed Foods to Encourage (F2E) framework, and includes: fresh produce, low-fat milk and yogurt, whole grains, and vegetarian and lean proteins (such as eggs, nuts and seeds, nut/ seed butters, beans, lentils, chicken, turkey, fish and other low-fat meats with low or no-added sodium).



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Sample Nutrition Policy for Food Pantries

Establishing a nutrition policy is one way for your food pantry to demonstrate your commitment to protecting the health of the clients you serve. A nutrition policy can guide food procurement practices and serve as a mechanism for educating new staff, volunteers and outside donors on acceptable food donations. It can also be a tool to communicate pantry operations and priorities to pantry clients. Share your nutrition policy widely so everyone knows about it.

Consider using the language below to help develop a nutrition policy for your food pantry.

[Food Pantry Name] will:

- Commit to supporting the health of our clients by prioritizing the distribution of healthy food, as defined by Feeding America's recommended Foods to Encourage (F2E) framework, such as:
 - Fresh fruits and vegetables
 - Whole grains
 - Low-fat or fat-free dairy and milk products
 - A variety of protein foods, including eggs, beans, peas, nuts and nut butters, meat, poultry, and fish
 - Foods low in sodium (5% Daily Value or less sodium per serving).
- Limit the distribution of foods with refined grains, trans fats, added sugars, and high sodium (20% Daily Value or more sodium per serving).
- Provide basic staples to support meal planning and preparation, such as cooking oils, flour, sugar, and spices
- Provide whole grains (such as brown rice, oats and quinoa), and whole-grain products (such as whole-grain cereals, whole-wheat breads, whole-grain crackers) that include "whole" listed as the first ingredient on the product package e.g., whole corn tortillas, whole grain cereal, whole rolled oats, whole wheat pasta, whole wheat couscous.
- Provide a variety of fresh, canned, and frozen fruits and vegetables
- Provide canned fruits packed in 100% fruit juice
- Provide a variety of protein foods, such as eggs, beans, peas, nuts and nut butters, meat, poultry, and fish
- Provide low-fat and non-fat milk, yogurt and other dairy products
- Provide 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)

[Food Pantry Name] will **not** distribute*:

- Sugar-sweetened beverages (soda, fruit drinks, energy or sports drinks)
- Candy
- Sweet bakery items (such as cakes, cupcakes and cookies)

* Please contact a Food Gatherers Community Food Programs Coordinator to eliminate specific food and beverage categories from your delivery profile.

Adapted from: Safe & Healthy Food Pantries Project, University of Wisconsin-Extension



Healthy Food Donation Tips

[Agency / Site Name] would like to provide healthier food options to our clients facing food insecurity. Please help us support health and wellness in our community by donating the following food and personal care items.



Fruits and Vegetables:

- Canned Vegetables – *low sodium or no salt added*
- Canned fruit – *no sugar added*
- Applesauce – *no sugar added*
- Dried fruit – *no sugar added*
- Canned or boxed fruit juice (*100% juice, no sugar added*)
- Canned tomatoes

Whole Grains

(First ingredient should say the word “whole,” such as whole wheat, whole corn)

- Whole grain cold cereal – *low sugar* (toasted oats, bran flakes, shredded wheat)
- Hot Cereal – *no sugar* (oatmeal, cream of wheat, grits)
- Brown or wild rice
- Pasta – *100% whole grain preferred*
- Quinoa
- Whole grain crackers and rice cakes
- Popcorn – *low or no fat or salt*
- Granola Bars

Protein

- Canned meat and fish – *low sodium* (chicken, salmon and tuna)
- Canned beans – *low sodium*
- Dried beans, lentils and peas
- Nuts and seeds (almonds, peanuts, pumpkin seeds, sunflower seeds)
- Nut and seed butters (peanut butter, almond butter, sunflower seed butter)
- Protein bars – *at least 6g protein per bar*

Milk and Milk Substitutes

- Shelf-stable low-fat powdered or evaporated milk
- Shelf-stable boxed soy or rice milk - *unflavored*

Pantry Staples

- Flour
- Spices
- Bottled vegetable or olive oil (plastic or metal containers only)
- Broth – *low sodium* (chicken, vegetable)

Other

- Boxed meals – *low or reduced sodium* (complete dinners, helper and pasta meals)
- Canned or boxed stews and soups – *low sodium*
- Canned tomato sauce – *low sodium*
- Baby Food and Formula (plastic containers only)

Personal Care Items

- Diapers
- Toothpaste & Toothbrushes
- Soap & Shampoo
- Disposable Razors

Please limit donations of:

- Sugary drinks (pop, fruit-flavored drinks, energy or sports drinks, sweetened teas)
- Candy
- Unhealthy snacks (chips, cookies, and other foods high in fat, sodium, sugar and calories)

Please do not donate rusty or unlabeled cans, opened containers and expired products, or items in glass containers. Thank you!

5 Tips for Managing Food Pantry Shelves

- Give each product a home. Designate a space for each regularly-stocked item in your food pantry (e.g., “black beans” or “brown rice”). Create labels to help maintain this order over time.
- Place each product ONLY in its labeled shelf space
- Do not overstock. Stock only what fits in each item’s designated shelf space.
- Turn product labels so that they face forward and are easy for shoppers to see
- Bring products to the front of the shelf when items run low. Products will be more visible and shelves will appear fully stocked.



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10 ways for VOLUNTEERS to Encourage Healthy Food Choices in the Pantry

Hello Pantry Volunteer!

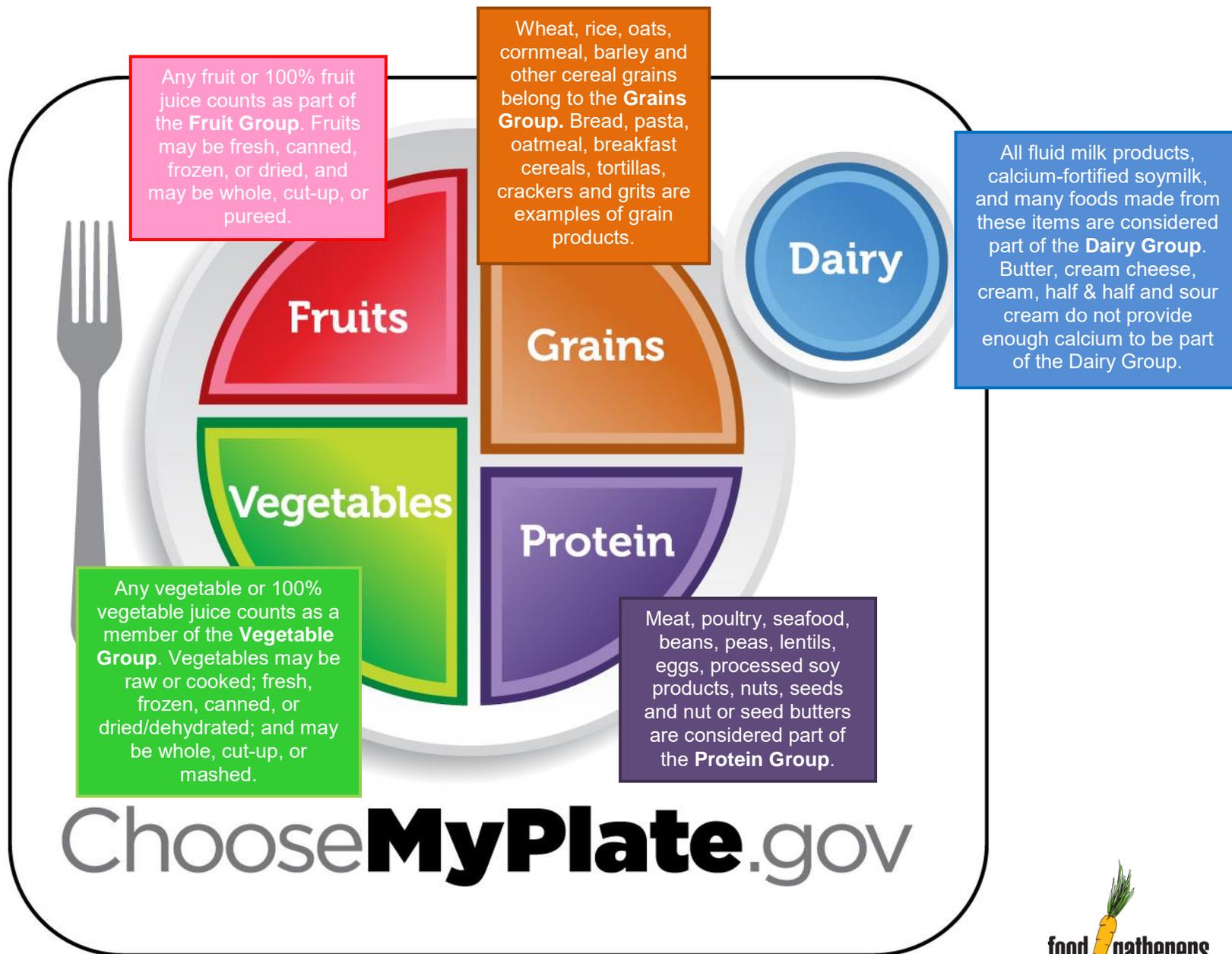
Thank you for working hard to alleviate hunger in our community. We believe there is a role for everyone to play in promoting healthy food and nutrition. As you help shoppers in the food pantry, here are 10 helpful hints on how to encourage healthy food choices:

1. Make sure the **pantry is clean and organized**.
2. Before clients arrive, **know what foods are in the pantry**. Be aware of healthier options such as foods with no-added sugar or low-sodium. Food Gatherers' "Healthy Shelves 101" guide can help you learn about healthy food choices, and how to talk about these foods with clients.
3. When restocking a shelf, **keep healthier items at eye level**. Turn labels forward and bring items to the front of the shelf so they are more visible.
4. **Display fruits and vegetables in nice baskets or crates** to catch the client's attention. Refill produce bins so they look full (we are all more likely to take a lot of an item when we know there is enough for everyone).
5. **Encourage fruits and veggies!** Remind clients that there is more than enough produce for everyone. Most vegetables can be cooked and then frozen for later use. Refer to CookSmarts Frozen Food Storage Guide (on page 30 of this toolkit) for more information.
6. Many breakfast cereals have a lot of added sugar. **Place sugary cereals on the top shelves**, out-of-reach and above eye-level of children.
7. **Display cooking tips, hints and recipe cards** near relevant foods.
8. **Share your own healthy recipes with the clients** if they are interested in trying a new type of food.
9. If clients want to explore more recipes, **recommend the Food Gatherers website** (www.foodgatherers.org). Recipes can be found under Nutrition and Recipe Resources.
10. Always **allow clients to make their own choice** about the foods they wish to take.

Thank you for your service to our community!



What Food Belongs in Each Group?



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Healthy Shelves 101

A Guide for Shopping, Stocking and Talking-Up Healthy Food for Pantry Clients

Fruits

- Fresh, frozen and canned fruits can all be healthy options. Fresh fruits are typically at their best (and least expensive) when they are in season. Canned and frozen can be affordable and convenient year-round options.
- Look for frozen fruits with no added sugar. Canned fruits should be packed in their own juice. If canned in light or heavy syrup, advise clients to rinse and drain fruit to reduce added sugar.
- 100% fruit juice with no added sugar or sweeteners can be a good product. Advise clients to limit portion size to no more than 6 ounces per day (and no more than 4 ounces for children).
- Dried fruit is healthy in small portions. Advise clients to mix dried fruit with yogurt, nuts, whole grain cereal, or to add to oatmeal for a balanced breakfast.

Vegetables

- Fresh, frozen and canned vegetables can all be healthy options. Fresh vegetables are typically at their best (and least expensive) when they are in season. Canned and frozen can be affordable and convenient year-round options.
- Look for frozen and canned vegetables with no salt, fat or sauces added. Canned vegetables should say “low sodium” or “no salt added.” Otherwise, advise clients to rinse and drain canned vegetables before using. This can greatly reduce the amount of sodium in your food.
- Vegetable juice can provide a lot of healthy vitamins, but may be very high in sodium. Look for 100% vegetable juice that has no more than 120 mg sodium (5% daily value) per serving.

Grains

- Stock a variety of whole grain options: for example, whole-wheat bread, whole-wheat pasta, whole-corn tortillas, whole-rolled oats and oatmeal, whole-grain cereal, brown rice, quinoa, teff and plain popcorn. Whole grains are heart healthy, contain more fiber, protein and vitamins than refined grains, and keep you feeling fuller for longer.

Protein

- Foods made from beans and peas, eggs, soy, nuts and seeds, meat, poultry, and seafood are all protein food. Try offering a variety of lean or vegetarian protein food for good health.
- Healthy shelf-stable protein options include: canned tuna and salmon, canned chicken, canned or dried beans, lentils or peas, nuts, nut butter and seeds.
- Chia, flax, hemp, pumpkin and sunflower seeds are becoming more common. Seeds are full of protein, healthy fats, vitamins and minerals. Sprinkle seeds on yogurt, salads, or add to smoothies.

Dairy

- Adults and children older than 2 should consume dairy products, such as milk, yogurt, and cheese, that are fat-free or low-fat (1%).
- Shelf-stable options include dried milk, canned milk, and shelf-stable non-dairy milk substitutes (such as soy, rice, almond or other nut or seed milk).
- Offer non-dairy milk substitutes, lactose-free milk and calcium-fortified orange juice for clients that are allergic or intolerant to dairy products.



Adapted from: Cooking Matters in Your Food Pantry



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Eating a Balanced Diet – Key Messages

#1 Eat from every food group, every day.

The 5 food groups are: Grains, Fruit, Vegetables, Protein and Dairy. All food groups provide important nutrients to help you live active, healthy lives. No single food or food group can provide everything you need to be healthy so eat a variety of foods from all 5 food groups each day.

#2 Eat the rainbow of colorful fruits and vegetables

The colors of fruits and vegetables contain vitamins and nutrients that help our body in different ways. For example, yellow and orange fruits and vegetables (such as carrots, cantaloupe, peaches, and pumpkin) contain nutrients for a healthy heart, good vision, and healthy skin. No single color of fruit or vegetable provides us with everything we need to be healthy. Try to eat a rainbow of colorful fruits and vegetables every day, or over 2-3 days. Fill at least half your plate with colorful fruits and vegetables.



#3 Choose whole grains as often as you can

Whole grains are called “whole” because they contain the entire kernel of grain. Refined grains are called “refined” because during processing, parts of the grain kernel are removed, along with important vitamins and nutrients (including fiber, healthy fats and protein). “Enriched” grains add back only some of the vitamins and nutrients; they do not contain the entire grain kernel and are not whole grains. Multi grain just means “many” grains and does not mean the same as whole grain.

- Whole grains are like a broom that sweeps through the body and removes the “bad stuff,” just like a broom removes dirt from a house.
- Whole grains are full of fiber and help keep you feeling fuller, longer. They are very healthy for your digestion and keep your heart happy, too.
- Be sure to drink plenty of water when you start eating more whole grains! This will help prevent constipation.
- How do you find a whole grain? Look for the word “whole” on the ingredients list. Be sure to check that the first ingredient is a whole grain (such as, whole wheat flour, whole grain oats, whole corn, brown rice, bulgur, or quinoa).

#4 Compare food labels to make healthier choices

Look at the serving size. All the information on the label is for this amount. Think about how many servings are in the entire package, and how many servings you consume in one sitting. If you consume twice as much as a serving size, double everything you read on the nutrition facts panel. Compare labels of similar foods to find out which one has lower amounts of less desirable nutrients. For example, one whole grain cereal may contain more grams of sugar per $\frac{3}{4}$ cup compared to another brand of similar whole grain cereal.

Remember, many healthy foods like fruits and vegetables do not have labels. See page 13: How to Read a Nutrition Facts Panel, for more instruction.



Adapted from: **Cooking Matters in Your Food Pantry**



How to Read a Nutrition Facts Panel

1 Start Here →

2 Check Calories →

3 Limit these Nutrients →

4 Get enough of these Nutrients →

5 Quick Guide to % Daily Value

5% or less is LOW

20% or more is HIGH

Yikes! That is A LOT of added sugar!

Nutrition Facts	
8 servings per container	
Serving size	2/3 cup (55g)
Amount per serving	
Calories	230
% Daily Value*	
Total Fat 8g	10%
Saturated Fat 1g	5%
Trans Fat 0g	
Cholesterol 0mg	0%
Sodium 160mg	7%
Total Carbohydrate 37g	13%
Dietary Fiber 4g	14%
Total Sugars 12g	
Includes 10g Added Sugars	20%
Protein 3g	
Vitamin D 2mcg 10%	
Calcium 260mg 20%	
Iron 8mg 45%	
Potassium 235mg 6%	

* 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.

1. **Check the serving size.** All the information on the Nutrition Facts Panel is for this amount. Think about how many servings are in the entire package, and how many servings you consume in one sitting. If you consume twice as much as a serving size, double everything you read on the Nutrition Facts Panel.
2. **Check calories.** This number explains how much energy you are consuming in one sitting. Too many calories can lead to weight gain.
3. **Limit some nutrients.** Consuming too much saturated and trans fat, cholesterol, sodium and added sugars can increase risk of chronic disease, such as heart disease, high blood pressure, overweight and obesity.
4. **Get enough of other nutrients.** Eating enough dietary fiber (at least 2 g per serving) and a variety of vitamins and minerals can improve and maintain health.
5. **Keep the % daily value low** (5% or less) for nutrients you want to limit, such as sodium and added sugar.



Adapted from: US Department of Health and Human Services, Food and Drug Administration



Food Gatherers Healthy Pantry Conversion Project Toolkit

What is a Healthy Pick?

Food Gatherers has created Healthy Pick “Carrot Cards” to help shoppers identify healthy choices in the Food Pantry. Use these cards to highlight foods that are fresh, in-season, and low in sodium.



Instructions: Print and laminate Healthy Pick “Carrot Card” Printable Sheet*. Cut out carrots along dotted line. Fasten “Carrot Cards” on pantry shelves to highlight any of the healthy foods listed below. Healthy Pick “Carrot Cards” can also be used to highlight any “Go” foods, and foods that fall within Feeding America’s Foods to Encourage Framework.

Fruit

- Fresh with nothing added
- Canned in natural juices with no added sweeteners or syrups
- Frozen with no added sweeteners or syrups

Vegetables

- Fresh with nothing added
- Canned with no salt added
- Frozen with no added salt or sauces

Whole Grains

- 100% whole grains (plain) e.g., brown or wild rice, whole rolled oats, quinoa, teff
- Bread and pasta with “whole grain” or “whole wheat” listed as the first ingredient
- Plain popcorn with no added salt or flavors

Protein

- Eggs
- Dry beans, peas and lentils
- Canned beans, peas and lentils, low-sodium or no salt added
- Nuts and seeds, low-sodium or no salt added
- Canned Tuna, Salmon and Sardines
- Peanut Butter with no more than 230 mg sodium and 4 g sugar per 2 tablespoon serving
- Raw meat, poultry and seafood with no more than 480 mg sodium per serving

Dairy

- Milk and Yogurt, low fat or fat-free
- Non-dairy calcium-fortified milk substitutes (e.g., plain almond or soy milk) with no added sugars

* Contact the Food Gatherers Community Food Programs Team (cfp@foodgatherers.org) for an electronic file of the Healthy Pick “Carrot Card” Printable Sheet





Suggested Shelf Tag Lines

Food Gatherers has designed pear-shaped shelf tags or “shelf talkers” to make it easy for shoppers to identify and learn about healthy foods. Use these cards in your food pantry to highlight and offer hints and tips related to healthy items. Contact the Food Gatherers Community Food Programs Team (cfp@foodgatherers.org) for an electronic-file of the Pear Cards Printable Sheet.

Instructions: Print and laminate Pear “Shelf-Talker” Cards Printable Sheet. Cut out pears along dotted line. Use dry-erase markers to write quick nutrition or cooking tips on laminated cards. Fasten Pear Cards on pantry shelves next to healthy items. Use suggested tag-lines below, or create your own.

Fruits and Vegetables

- Applesauce (unsweetened)
 - “No added sugar”
 - “Healthy snack”
 - “Try adding cinnamon”
 - “Great for kids”
 - “Mix into Oatmeal”
- Canned Fruit (in 100% juice or syrup)
 - “Add to yogurt or cottage cheese”
 - “Makes a sweet healthy snack”
 - “Delicious kid-friendly snack”
 - “Stir canned pears or peaches into oatmeal”
- Dried Fruit (with no added sugar)
 - “Add me to Oatmeal”
 - “Mix with nuts for a healthy snack”
- Canned Vegetables (Low Sodium or No Salt Added)
 - “Low in Salt”
 - “High in vitamins and minerals”

Dairy

- Milk (low fat or skim)
 - “Good for bones, teeth and muscles”
 - “Got milk?”

- Yogurt
 - “Helps digestion”
 - “Add dried fruit and nuts”

Whole Grains

- Whole Grains (general)
 - “Whole grains are heart healthy”
 - “Make half your grains whole grains!”
 - “Whole grains are full of protein”
 - “Ask us about our whole grain bread choices”
- Oatmeal or whole rolled oats
 - “Makes a heart healthy breakfast”
 - “Try overnight oats (see recipe)”
- Quinoa
 - “High in fiber and protein”
 - “Cooks in 20 minutes”
 - “Eat quinoa like rice”
 - “Add quinoa to salads”
 - “Quinoa is gluten-free”
- Popcorn (plain, low-sodium or no salt added only)
 - “Popcorn: healthy snack”
 - “High in Fiber”
 - “Snack on Popcorn”



Food Gatherers Healthy Pantry Conversion Project



Suggested Shelf Tag Lines

Food Gatherers has designed pear-shaped shelf tags or “shelf talkers” to make it easy for shoppers to identify and learn about healthy foods. Use these cards in your food pantry to highlight and offer hints and tips related to healthy items. Contact the Food Gatherers Community Food Programs Team (cfp@foodgatherers.org) for an electronic-file of the Pear Cards Printable Sheet.

Protein

- Dried Beans and Lentils
 - “Heart Healthy”
 - “High in Protein and Fiber”
 - “Soak, boil and store in freezer”
- Canned Beans
 - “Drain and rinse canned beans before using”
 - “Add white beans to pastas or soup”
 - “Top black beans with cheese and salsa”
 - “Beans are Heart Healthy”
 - “High in Protein and Fiber”
 - “Try black beans and rice for dinner”
- Peanut or Almond Butter
 - “High in Protein and Healthy Fats”
 - “Spread on Apples or Bananas”
 - “Spread on Crackers”
 - “Delicious and Healthy”
- Nuts (unsalted or low-sodium)
 - “Snack on unsalted nuts”
 - “Mix nuts with dried fruit”
 - “Excellent protein source”
 - “Nuts are good for your brain”
- Seeds e.g., Pumpkin, Sunflower (unsalted or low-sodium)
 - “Snack on seeds”
 - “Mix seeds with nuts or dried fruit”
 - “Excellent protein source”
- Canned Tuna
 - “High in Omega-3”
 - “Good for your brain”
 - “Lean protein”
 - “Heart Healthy”
 - “Use in sandwiches, salads or pasta”
- Canned Salmon
 - “Use like canned tuna”
 - “Low in mercury”
 - “High in Omega-3”
 - “Good for your brain”
 - “Lean protein”
 - “Heart Healthy”
 - “Use in sandwiches, salads or pasta”
- Canned Sardines
 - “Low in mercury”
 - “High in Omega-3”
 - “Good for your brain”
 - “Lean protein”
 - “Heart Healthy”
 - “Use in sandwiches, salads or pasta”



How to Prepare Brown Rice

Serve with curries or stir-fries, or use in salads. Brown rice is a whole grain and is high in fiber, protein, vitamins and minerals.

- 1 cup brown rice
- 2 cups water
- Pinch of salt (optional)

Combine brown rice and liquid in a sturdy pot with a tight-fitting lid. Add salt, if using. Bring to a boil. Reduce heat to low; cover with lid. Simmer 45 minutes. Turn off heat. Let sit 5 minutes before serving. **Makes 2 cups.**

Recipe adapted from Whole Foods Market.



How to Prepare Brown Rice

Serve with curries or stir-fries, or use in salads. Brown rice is a whole grain and is high in fiber, protein, vitamins and minerals.

- 1 cup brown rice
- 2 cups water
- Pinch of salt (optional)

Combine brown rice and liquid in a sturdy pot with a tight-fitting lid. Add salt, if using. Bring to a boil. Reduce heat to low; cover with lid. Simmer 45 minutes. Turn off heat. Let sit 5 minutes before serving. **Makes 2 cups.**

Recipe adapted from Whole Foods Market.



How to Prepare Brown Rice

Serve with curries or stir-fries, or use in salads. Brown rice is a whole grain and is high in fiber, protein, vitamins and minerals.

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How to Prepare Dried Beans

- **Sort and Rinse.** Spread beans out on a clean kitchen towel or rimmed baking sheet, so you can see what's what. Remove any shriveled beans and pebbles. Rinse beans in a colander under cold running water.
- **Soak.** In a large bowl, cover beans with 2 inches of water and soak for 4-12 hours.
- **Cook.** Drain and rinse beans after soaking. In a large saucepan or pot, cover beans with fresh water by about 1 inch (about 3-4 cups of water for every 1 cup of beans). Partially cover pot, bring beans to gentle boil. Lower heat and simmer until beans are tender (about 1 ½ -2 hours, depending on the bean). Add more liquid to the pot, as needed.
- **Store.** Once beans are cooked, drained and cooled, portion into food storage bags or containers. Beans can be stored in the freezer for 9-12 months. Use as you would use cooked or canned beans.

Adapted from Whole Foods Market



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Adapted from Whole Foods Market



Black Bean Breakfast Burrito

Yield: 6 burritos

- 3 medium sweet potatoes
- 6 whole wheat tortillas
- 1-15oz can black beans, rinsed and drained
- ¼ teaspoon cumin
- ¼ teaspoon chili powder
- 8 eggs
- Toppings such as an avocado, shredded cheese, and salsa

Wash the potato. Carefully poke small holes in it using a fork. Wrap the potato with a damp paper towel, place on a plate, and microwave for 6 minutes, flipping the potato half way through cooking. Remove the potato skins and place in a bowl. Mash with a fork. In a separate bowl, add black beans and spices. In a separate bowl, beat eggs together. Scramble eggs in a nonstick skillet over medium-low heat. To assemble burritos, spread mashed sweet potato on each tortilla and evenly distribute beans, eggs, and toppings.

Adapted from allrecipes.com



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Black Bean Wraps

Yield: 4 servings

- 2 cups cooked black beans
- ½ cup low fat shredded cheese
- 1/3 cup salsa
- ½ cup cooked brown rice
- 1 ½ cup shredded lettuce
- 4 flour tortillas

In a medium bowl, combine black beans, cheese, salsa, and rice. Top each tortilla with ¾ cup of the black bean mixture and added some lettuce. Roll up tortillas and slice in half to serve.



Adapted from Just Say Yes to Fruits & Vegetables

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Chickpea Salad

Yields: 6 servings

- 1 ½ cups plain **low-fat yogurt**
- 1 minced garlic clove (or 1/8 teaspoon garlic powder)
- 1 teaspoon sugar
- 1 teaspoon cumin
- ½ teaspoon chili powder
- 1 ¾ cups cooked **chickpeas** (or one 16-oz can, drained and rinsed)
- 1 finely chopped **bell pepper**
- 1 cup of **peas**
- Salt and pepper to taste

In a medium bowl, mix yogurt, garlic, sugar, cumin, and chili powder. Add chickpeas, bell pepper, and peas. Stir. Add salt and pepper to taste. Cover and refrigerate for 1 hour. Serve and enjoy!

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Easy Black Beans and Rice



- 1 tablespoon vegetable oil
- 1 onion, chopped
- 1 bell pepper, chopped
- 5 cloves garlic, minced (or ½ teaspoon garlic powder)
- ½ teaspoon chili powder
- 1 (15-ounce) can diced tomatoes with their liquid
- 2 (15-ounce) cans black beans, drained
- Salt and pepper, to taste
- Brown rice, cooked

Heat oil in a large skillet over medium heat. Add onion; cook 5 minutes. Add bell pepper, garlic and chili powder and cook another 2 minutes. Reduce heat to low, add diced tomatoes in liquid. Simmer 15 minutes. Add beans; simmer 5 minutes to heat through. Add salt and pepper to taste. Serve over brown rice.

Makes 4 cups.

Recipe adapted from Whole Foods Market

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Makes 4 cups.

Recipe adapted from Whole Foods Market

Kidney Bean Chili

- 1 tablespoon vegetable oil
- 1 cup chopped onion (or 1 tablespoon onion powder)
- $\frac{3}{4}$ cup chopped **carrots**
- 3 cloves of garlic (or $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon garlic powder)
- 2 cups chopped **bell pepper**
- $\frac{3}{4}$ cup of chopped **celery**
- 1 tablespoon of chili powder
- 1 (28-ounce) can of **whole peeled tomatoes** with liquid
- 1 (19-ounce) can of **kidney beans** with liquid
- 1 (11-ounce) can of **whole kernel corn**, undrained
- 1 tablespoon ground cumin
- 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoons dried oregano
- 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoons dried basil

8. Heat oil in a large saucepan over medium heat.
9. Stir fry onions, carrots, and garlic until tender (if using spice powder, just stir-fry carrots).
10. Stir in green pepper, red pepper, celery, chili powder (and onion and/or garlic powder if using). Cook until vegetables are tender, about 6 minutes.
11. Stir in tomatoes, kidney beans, and corn; add dried cumin, oregano, and basil.
12. Bring to a boil, and reduce heat to medium.
13. Cover, and simmer for 20 minutes, stirring occasionally.
14. Taste, and adjust for seasonings. Enjoy!

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Overnight Oats

- ½ cup whole-rolled oats (NOT steel-cut)
- 1 cup milk
- ½ small banana, chopped or mashed
- 2 tablespoons raisins or chopped dried fruit
- 1 tablespoon walnuts or chopped nuts
- ½ teaspoon cinnamon
- ½ teaspoon vanilla extract (optional)
- 1 teaspoon honey (optional)

Combine all ingredients in jar and mix well. Refrigerate overnight. Enjoy for breakfast the next morning! **Makes 1 cup.**



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Pinto Bean Stew

Yields: 6 servings

- 1 ½ cups chopped onion
- 1 chopped bell pepper
- 2 chopped carrots
- 2 minced garlic cloves (or ¼ teaspoon garlic powder)
- 1 tablespoon chili powder
- 1 can (6 ounces) tomato paste
- 1 can (14.5 ounces) low sodium chicken broth
- 2 cups cooked pinto beans
- Salt and Pepper to taste

Add ½ cup water to a medium pot. Cook the onion, green pepper, carrots, and garlic in the water for 5 minutes over medium heat. Stir in chili powder, tomato paste, chicken broth, and pinto beans. Cook for 20 minutes. Add a little water if the beans start to stick to the bottom of the pot. Serve over hot cooked rice.

Adapted from Just Say Yes to Fruits & Vegetables



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Tuna and White Bean Salad

Yield: 4 servings

- 2 cups cooked **white beans** (cannellini, chickpea, great northern or navy beans)
- 1 chopped **onion**
- 2 chopped **tomatoes**
- 1 can (6.5 ounces) **tuna**, packed in water or oil, drained
- 2 tablespoons vegetable oil
- 1 tablespoon lemon juice (from ½ a **fresh lemon** if available)
- 1 minced garlic clove or pinch of garlic powder (optional)
- Salt and pepper to taste

Make the salad: In a large bowl mix drained beans, onion, tomato, and tuna.
Make the dressing: In a small bowl, mix oil, lemon juice, garlic, salt, and pepper.
Mix well. Pour the dressing over the salad and serve cold.

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Warm and Cozy Oatmeal

- 1 cup whole-rolled oats
- 2 cups milk
- 1 small banana, sliced or smashed
- ¼ cup raisins or dried fruit
- ¼ cup walnut pieces (optional)
- ½ teaspoon cinnamon

Combine all ingredients in a small pot over medium heat. Bring to a boil. Reduce heat and simmer for 5-10 minutes until oats are soft and tender. Drizzle with honey if desired. **Makes 2 Cups** (or 4 servings).



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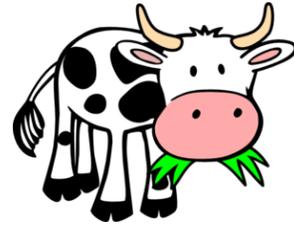
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Instructions: Food Gatherers has created labels for your fridge and meat bins to help sites organize and identify what is available for pantry clients. If needed, print and laminate labels. Cut along dotted line or to preferred size.

BEEF

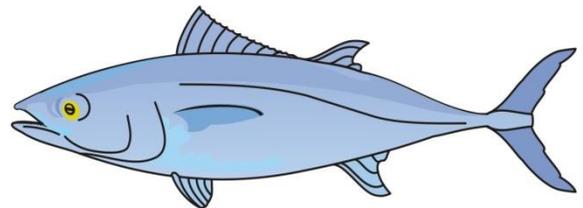


POULTRY

PORK



FISH



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WHOLE GRAINS



Ask us for
WHOLE GRAIN
Bread!



DAIRY



FROZEN FOOD STORAGE

This guide has everything you need to know about how to properly store food in your freezer, so that you can cook more and save more.

KEY		DAIRY			PRODUCE		
 FREEZE		 BUTTER 6 TO 9 MONTHS	 CHEESE 6 MONTHS	 EGGS 12 MONTHS	 MILK 3 TO 6 MONTHS	 YOGURT 1 TO 2 MONTHS	 APPLES 12 MONTHS
 THAWED		Whole or portioned, wrapped tightly	Shredded, portioned into bags	Beat with a pinch of salt, and pour into ice cube tray	Portion into serving size containers with space for liquid to expand	Portion into serving size containers with space to expand	Make into applesauce by cooking and pureeing. Cool and portion into bags or containers
 USE IN		Taste and texture the same as before freezing, if used within 6 months of freezing	Hard cheeses will be crumbly, soft cheeses will be grainy	Yolks get thick like paste, which is why salt added before freezing slows down the thickening	Milk will have separated into chunks and water, so shake well before using	Thicker yogurt will separate into chunks and water, so whisk together	Taste and texture will be the same as before freezing
		Use as you would use fresh butter	Pastas, soups, bakes, frittatas	Frittatas, omelets, breading veggies or meats	Creamy soups, oatmeal	Baked goods, oatmeal, smoothies, dips, sauces	Baked goods, oatmeal
 ASPARAGUS 8 TO 10 MONTHS	 AVOCADOS 4 TO 5 MONTHS	 BANANAS 8 MONTHS	 BEETS 12 MONTHS	 BERRIES 6 TO 8 MONTHS	 BROCCOLI 6 TO 8 MONTHS	 CARROTS 6 TO 8 MONTHS	
Blanch 2-4 min, spread on a tray. When frozen, transfer to bags and refreeze	Peel and mash or puree with a bit of lemon juice	Chop or mash, and portion into bags	Cook and cool. Chop and portion into bags or containers	Spread on a tray. When frozen, transfer to bags and refreeze	Chop, blanch 3 min, portion into bags	Chop, blanch 2 min, portion into bags	
Taste and texture will be the same as when blanched	Surface will turn brown	Frozen bananas will turn brown	Taste and texture will be the same as when cooked	Berries will get mushy and release liquid	Taste and texture will be the same as when blanched	Taste and texture will be the same as when blanched	
Sautés, stir-fries, soups, bakes	Dips, spreads, baked goods	Baked goods, oatmeal, smoothies	Soups, sautés	Baked goods, smoothies, fruit soups	Sautés, stir-fries, soups, stews, bakes, frittatas, omelets	Sautés, stir-fries, soups, stews, bakes	
 CAULIFLOWER 6 TO 8 MONTHS	 CELERY 6 TO 8 MONTHS	 CORN 6 TO 8 MONTHS	 GARLIC 10 TO 12 MONTHS	 GRAPES 3 TO 5 MONTHS	 GREEN BEANS 6 TO 8 MONTHS	 HERBS 12 MONTHS	
Chop, blanch 3 min, portion into bags	Chop, blanch 3 min, portion into bags	Remove kernels and blanch 4 min. Spread on a tray. When frozen, transfer to bags and refreeze	Peeled or unpeeled individual cloves. Or peel, chop, and double bag to prevent odors from escaping	Spread on a tray. When frozen, transfer to bags and refreeze	Blanch 3 min, portion into bags	Remove stems, chop, pack tightly into ice cube tray, and fill with water, oil, or broth. Once frozen, pop out of trays and store in bags or containers	
Taste and texture will be the same as when blanched	Celery will lose its crispness and turn soft	Taste and texture will be the same as when blanched	Garlic will lose its crunchiness, but still have its strong flavor	Taste and texture will be the same as before freezing	Taste and texture will be the same as when blanched	Taste will be the same as before freezing	
Sautés, stir-fries, soups, stews, bakes, frittatas	Sautés, stir-fries, soups, stews, bakes	Sautés, stir-fries, soups, bakes, frittatas, omelets	Use as you would use fresh garlic	Eat frozen like a popsicle or use in smoothies	Sautés, stir-fries, soups, bakes, frittatas	Add to sautés, stir-fries, frittatas, omelets, bakes, soups, stews	

FROZEN FOOD STORAGE

This guide has everything you need to know about how to properly store food in your freezer, so that you can cook more and save more.

<p>KEY</p> <p> FREEZE</p> <p> THAWED</p> <p> USE IN</p>	<p>PRODUCE (CONTINUED)</p>	<p> LEAFY GREENS (SPINACH, KALE, CHARD) 8 MONTHS</p> <p>Remove stems, blanch 2-4 min, squeeze out all excess water, chop, portion into bags</p> <p>Taste and texture will be the same as when blanched</p> <p>Smoothies, soups, bakes, frittatas, omelets</p>	<p> MELONS 9 TO 12 MONTHS</p> <p>Chop and spread on a tray. When frozen, transfer to bags and refreeze</p> <p>Melon will become soft</p> <p>Smoothies, fruit soups</p>	<p> MUSHROOMS 9 TO 12 MONTHS</p> <p>Cook, cool, and portion into bags or containers</p> <p>Taste and texture will be the same as when cooked</p> <p>Sautés, stir-fries, frittatas, omelets, bakes, soups, stews</p>	<p> OKRA 8 MONTHS</p> <p>Blanch 3-4 min, portion into bags</p> <p>Taste and texture will be the same as when blanched</p> <p>Gumbo, stews, sautés, fried</p>	<p> ONIONS 3 TO 6 MONTHS</p> <p>Chop and double bag to prevent odors from escaping</p> <p>Onions will lose their crispness and release water</p> <p>Soups, stews, stock, sautés, stir-fries</p>	<p> PEAS 12 MONTHS</p> <p>Shell, blanch 1-2 min, portion into bags</p> <p>Taste and texture will be the same as when blanched</p> <p>Sautés, stir-fries, soups, frittatas, omelets, bakes</p>
<p> PEPPERS, SWEET BELL & HOT 3 TO 4 MONTHS</p> <p>Stem, remove membranes, chop, spread on a tray. When frozen, transfer to bags and refreeze</p> <p>Peppers will develop ice crystals, so for best quality, use as soon as possible. They will get soft the longer they freeze.</p> <p>Sautés, stir-fries, soups, bakes, frittatas, omelets</p>	<p> TOMATOES 3 TO 4 MONTHS</p> <p>Cut out the 'scar' where the stem was attached. Portion into bags or containers</p> <p>Tomatoes will become mushy</p> <p>Dice or puree for soups, stews, sauces</p>	<p> ZUCCHINI & SUMMER SQUASHES 8 MONTHS</p> <p>Chop, blanch 3 min, then portion into bags</p> <p>Summer squashes will become a little soft</p> <p>Soups, stews, bakes, sautés, frittatas, omelets</p>	<p> WINTER SQUASHES 9 TO 12 MONTHS</p> <p>Cube and cook by roasting, steaming, or boiling. (Optional: puree or mash)</p> <p>Taste and texture will be the same as when cooked</p> <p>Soups, stews, bakes, dips, baked goods (pumpkin)</p>	<p>PROTEINS</p> <p> BACON & PANCETTA 6 MONTHS</p> <p>In an air-tight bag or container</p> <p>Taste and texture will be the same as before freezing</p> <p>Use as you would use fresh bacon</p>	<p> BEEF COOKED 2 TO 3 MONTHS FRESH 6 TO 8 MONTHS</p> <p>In an air-tight bag or container</p> <p>Cooked - will lose some moisture; Fresh - same as before freezing</p> <p>Cooked - sautés, stir-fries, soups, stews, bakes; Fresh - use as you would unfrozen</p>	<p> DELI MEATS 2 TO 3 MONTHS</p> <p>In an air-tight bag or container</p> <p>Same as before freezing</p> <p>Grilled cheese sandwiches, melts, chopped for omelets, frittatas, bakes</p>	
<p> HAM 6 TO 8 MONTHS</p> <p>In an air-tight bag or container</p> <p>Same as before freezing</p> <p>Use as you would use fresh ham</p>	<p> GROUND MEAT COOKED 2 TO 3 MONTHS FRESH 6 TO 8 MONTHS</p> <p>In an air-tight bag or container</p> <p>Same as before freezing</p> <p>Burger patties, meatloaf, sautés, soups, stews, frittatas, omelets, bakes</p>	<p> FISH COOKED OR FRESH 6 TO 9 MONTHS</p> <p>In an air-tight bag or container</p> <p>Cooked - will lose some moisture; Fresh - same as before freezing</p> <p>Cooked - sautés, stir-fries, soups, bakes; Fresh - use as you would unfrozen</p>	<p> NUTS 1 TO 2 YEARS</p> <p>In an air-tight bag, so that odors will not get in</p> <p>Toast to add crispness, but taste and texture will be the same as before freezing</p> <p>Salads, baked goods, and garnish on sautés, stir-fries, frittatas</p>	<p> PORK COOKED 2 TO 3 MONTHS FRESH 6 TO 8 MONTHS</p> <p>In an air-tight bag or container</p> <p>Cooked - will lose some moisture; Fresh - same as before freezing</p> <p>Cooked - sautés, stir-fries, soups, stews, bakes ; Fresh - use as you would unfrozen</p>	<p> POULTRY COOKED 4 MONTHS FRESH 9 TO 12 MONTHS</p> <p>In an air-tight bag or container</p> <p>Cooked - will lose some moisture; Fresh - same as before freezing</p> <p>Cooked - sautés, stir-fries, soups, stews, bakes ; Fresh - use as you would unfrozen</p>	<p> SAUSAGES, COOKED 6 TO 8 MONTHS</p> <p>In an air-tight bag or container</p> <p>Taste and texture will be the same as before freezing</p> <p>Use as you would use unfrozen cooked sausages</p>	

FROZEN FOOD STORAGE

This guide has everything you need to know about how to properly store food in your freezer, so that you can cook more and save more.

KEY



FREEZE



THAWED



USE IN

PROTEINS (CONTINUED)



SHRIMP
6 TO 8 MONTHS

In an air-tight bag or container

Same as before freezing

Use as you would use fresh shrimp



TEMPEH
12 MONTHS

In original packaging. If opened, wrap in plastic and put into a bag or container

Taste and texture will be the same as before freezing

Use as you would use unfrozen tempeh



TOFU
3 TO 5 MONTHS

Drain, wrap in plastic wrap, and put into container

Tofu will turn yellowish and have a spongy texture

Sautés, stir-fries, soups



BREAD & BAKED GOODS
3 TO 6 MONTHS

Wrap in a few layers of plastic wrap or foil, and place in an air-tight bag

Any ice crystals that form on bread or baked good will make them soggy

Enjoy as is; bread pudding, croutons (bread)



BEANS
9 TO 12 MONTHS

Cook, cool, and portion into bags or containers

Taste and texture will be the same as before freezing

Use as you would use cooked beans



BROTH / STOCK (MEAT, VEGGIE, FISH)
4 TO 6 MONTHS

Pour into ice cube trays or small bags or containers with space for liquid to expand

Taste and texture will be the same as before freezing

Use as you would use unfrozen stock

PREPARED FOODS



CANNED TOMATOES
2 TO 3 MONTHS

Portion into ice cube trays, bags, or containers

Taste and texture will be the same as before freezing

Use as you would use unfrozen canned tomatoes



CASSEROLES
3 TO 4 MONTHS

Freeze without toppings. If casserole is cooked, cool before freezing. Use a freezer-friendly container that is also oven-safe, and wrap tightly

For uncooked casseroles, baking time will need to be increased.

Enjoy as is



PASTA & NOODLES
6 TO 8 MONTHS

Cook, cool, and portion into bags or containers

Depending on how long it was in the freezer, it will have dried out some

Sautés, stir-fries, soups, bakes



PESTO
8 MONTHS | WITH CHEESE 4 MONTHS

Portion into ice cube trays. When frozen, transfer to bags and refreeze

Taste and texture will be the same as before freezing

Sautés, soups, stews, omelets, frittatas, bakes



PIZZA
4 TO 6 MONTHS

Wrap in a few layers of plastic wrap or foil, and place in an air-tight bag

Crust will be chewy and not as crisp

Enjoy as is



RICE & GRAINS
4 TO 6 MONTHS

Cook, cool, and portion into bags or containers

Taste and texture will be the same as before freezing, if used quickly

Fried rice, soups, stuffed veggies



SOUPS & STEWS
6 MONTHS

Portion into serving size containers with space for liquid to expand

Taste and texture will be the same as before freezing

Enjoy as is



TOMATO PASTE
2 TO 3 MONTHS

Spoon into ice cube trays. When frozen, transfer to bags and refreeze. Or put into bags and break off pieces as needed

Taste and texture will be the same as before freezing

Use as you would use unfrozen tomato paste

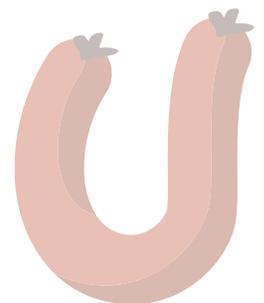
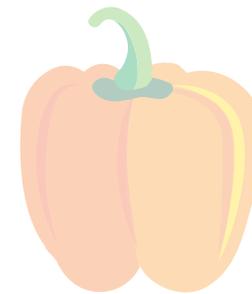
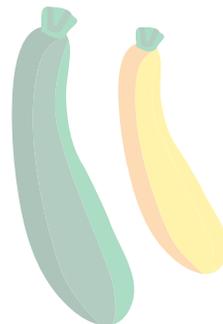


TORTILLAS
6 TO 8 MONTHS

Separate each tortilla with a piece of wax paper or parchment. Wrap in a few layers of plastic or in an air-tight bag

Tortillas will dry out a bit

Use as you would use unfrozen tortillas



Food Gatherers Healthy Pantry Conversion Project Toolkit

- For **Healthy Recipes**, visit:
 - www.foodgatherers.org (Recipes can be found under Nutrition and Recipe Resources)
 - www.jsyfruitsveggies.org
- For instructional videos on **How to Prepare Produce**, visit:
 - www.cooksmarts.com
- For information on Feeding America's **Produce Promotion and Nudge Strategies**, visit:
 - <http://hungerandhealth.feedingamerica.org/explore-our-work/nutrition-education-initiatives/strategies/nudges/>
 - Nutrition and Health Strategy “Nudges” | Feeding America: www.youtube.com
- MSU-extension provides **Recipe Demonstrations / Tastings for food pantry clients**. If you are interested in providing cooking and nutrition education programming to your pantry clients, please contact:
 - Lindsey Pung-Terry, Supervising Educator, MSU-Extension: pungli@anr.msu.edu
 - Office Line: 517-552-6912
 - Mention you are a food pantry serving Washtenaw County and a partner with Food Gatherers.
- If you need information and resources related to **Food Gatherers' Healthy Pantry Conversion Project**, please contact:
 - Shaira Daya, MPH, RD, Nutrition Projects Manager: shaira@foodgatherers.org
 - Food Gatherers Main Office: (734) 761-2796

