EVERY NEIGHBORHOOD
NEEDS HEALTHY FOOD
Think before you donate. Choose healthy!

FAQs

HEALTHY FOOD DRIVES & COLLECTIONS

Q. What is *Think Before You Donate?*
Our nation is in dire need, not just for food but for HEALTHY nonperishables that are hard to come by at overwhelmed food relief centers. 1 in 4 Americans is relying on food pantries and soup kitchens to survive. Our *Think Before You Donate* campaign is focused on combating hunger with healthy food. And we can show you how to collect and donate—and do so safely during the pandemic.

Q. What's wrong with traditional food drives and collections?
Too often, people dump garbage into food drives and collections at church, schools, soup kitchens, food banks, etc. Expired foods and nonperishables high in saturated fat, sugar, and sodium are the result. Our mission is to teach people to *think before they donate*, filling food drives and collection bins with desperately needed nutrition, not empty calories. Our materials make it simple for you to quickly educate others and solicit healthy food donations.

Q. Isn't something better than nothing?
Our mindset about donations needs to change, recognizing that 23.5 million Americans live in food deserts that don't have large supermarkets nor the transportation to one. Simply put, they lack access and affordability to healthy food so they often rely on convenience and fast foods. The result? Poor diets that lead to heart disease, obesity, Type 2 Diabetes, and hypertension—comorbidities that have made Black, Hispanic, and Native Americans 4x as likely to be hospitalized with COVID-19 as white Americans. Healthy food drives and collections are a tangible way we can help ease racial health disparities—combating hunger at the same time.

Q. Don't healthy nonperishables cost more?
No. You can make healthy swaps without spending more, particularly if you stick to generic brands. For example, a whole grain and high fiber, low-sugar cereal in a generic brand will be cheaper than a high sugar name brand. Choose a can of tuna in water instead of a can of tuna in oil; brown rice over white rice; no sodium canned vegetables over sodium-added varieties; unsweetened fruit cups over those with heavy syrups; and granola bars over cookies. *Think before you donate.*

Q. Are healthy food drives and collections as successful as traditional versions?
We have a long track record of success at helping individuals, churches, schools, and businesses transform their traditional food drives and collections into healthy ones. When we teach people to *think before they donate*, we've experienced as much as an 83% increase in contributions to food drives and collections. Focusing on the health needs of others seems to inspire both compassion and generosity.

Q. During the pandemic, how can I help combat hunger with healthy food?
Use our online materials to educate others about the importance of healthy food donations. You can . . .

1. **Transform an existing charitable food collection if you're a church, school, work, soup kitchen, or food bank.** Use our *Think Before You Donate* materials to educate parishioners or donors about **why** healthy food donations are lifesaving and **what** to give.
2. **Host a Healthy Food Drive yourself.** Pick a local food pantry, soup kitchen, or food relief center as your recipient and make a plan with them to receive donations, either in person or by mail. We can help you identify one if needed.
   - Invite friends, family, coworkers, etc., to participate by setting out bags of healthy nonperishables on their porches for you to pick up. Or establish a Drive & Drop Healthy Food Drive with a designated day, time, and location to accept donations, for which volunteers should wear masks and gloves. Be sure to pass along our Think Before You Donate educational material about *why* healthy food donations are lifesaving and *what* to give.
   - Create an Amazon wish list with our Best Foods to Donate . Invite friends and social media followers to participate. Have items mailed directly to recipient organizations.