

Running a Food Drive

Gemma E. Moran
United Way/Labor Food Center

AFL-CIO
COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS



An AFL-CIO Community Services and United Way Partnership

WHY HOLD A FOOD DRIVE? Increasingly, the face of hunger in Connecticut is someone we know. But you can help ease the pain of hunger by running a food drive in your company, organization or school. A food drive is an easy and rewarding project for any business or group to undertake and everyone can participate.

GETTING ORGANIZED Your first task at hand is to select the dates. It may occur over several days or weeks. Keep in mind that food is always needed by the programs served by the Gemma E. Moran United Way Labor Food Center, not only during the holiday season. Consider running a drive during the summer or late winter when food donations are typically slow but demand remains high.

Notify the Food Center about your drive. The staff will be able to assist you in your planning. They can provide an up-to-date listing of the most-needed food items. You should inform the Food Center of when your drive will be concluding so they know when to expect the food.

PUBLICITY Publicize your food drive at least two weeks in advance. Signs and flyers should list the dates of the drive, where the food will go, what types of food are needed, and where the collection boxes are located. United Way has some posters available. Post signs in well-traveled areas of your building(s). Lobbies, cafeterias, mailrooms and coffee areas make good locations. Notices can be placed in employee mailboxes and via email to all staff. If you receive public traffic from the community-at-large, invite them to participate in the drive, too. When the drive concludes, don't forget to thank people for donating.

TYPES OF FOOD TO COLLECT Ask people to donate canned and dry goods that are *not* in glass containers in the following categories: tuna, meats, stew, vegetables, fruits, pasta, rice, instant potatoes, dried beans and peanut butter. Baby food is also needed. Be sure to ask the Food Center staff if additional items are critically needed at that time because supplies may be lower in a certain category.

HOW TO COLLECT THE FOOD Whether your food drive is an in-house event or one in which the public will participate, collection sites should be convenient and highly visible. Lobbies, cafeterias, and other well-traveled locations are excellent spots to collect the food. Use boxes, not bags or barrels, to collect the food. Bags create too much breakage and barrels are too difficult to transport.

WHAT TO DO AFTER YOUR FOOD DRIVE Whether or not you can deliver the food yourself, call the Food Center. If you are able to deliver the collected food yourself, please bring it directly to the Food Center on 374 Broad Street in New London. Food Center hours are Monday–Friday, 7 a.m. to 2 p.m. If you need your collection picked up, the Food Center staff would be happy to make arrangements.

**Questions? Please contact the Food Center
at 860.444.8050 or www.uwsect.org/foodcenter.**