# PARTNER AGENCY MANUAL

**FOOD BANK**
OF THE ROCKIES®

**FIGHTING HUNGER. FEEDING HOPE.**

**Published July 1, 2016**
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## SECTION I: INTRODUCTION

A. **Manual's Purpose -** The purpose of this manual is to provide hunger relief programs insight into processes and best practices that have been proven effective through years of partnerships. The content is derived from input and collaborations with, but not limited to, Feeding America & National Food Bank members, USDA, CDHS/FDNEP, outside non-profit organizations, food insecure individuals and Food Bank of the Rockies (FBR) Programs Advisory Council (PAC).

B. **Who We Are and What We Do -** Imagine not knowing where you'll find your next meal. Sadly, for 1 in 7 Coloradans, there is no need to imagine. Every day in our community, more than 400,000 people worry about where they will find their next meal. Hunger is very real and FBR is fighting to ensure no one goes without needed nutrition. Hunger is especially hard on children, who make up nearly half of our clients and require proper nutrition to grow and learn. Families need our help.
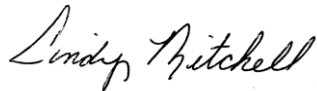
   FBR serves more than 800 hunger-relief programs in our service area which includes 30 counties in Colorado and the entire state of Wyoming. Programs like yours are the front line between health and happiness versus hunger and despair. Your organization can depend on us to help obtain food and provide the support needed to strengthen your mission.

   In addition to the shelf-stable food we procure from donations and our purchase program, we have partnered with retail donors for access to produce, bread, and dairy. These products are distributed to our partners in our Fresh Food Center by direct pickups and limited deliveries. Additionally, FBR purchases fresh produce which is made available to agencies at no fee.

C. **FBR's Hunger Relief Programs** - Food Bank of the Rockies supports many types of programs:

   1. **Agency Relations** – working with food pantries, soup kitchens and shelters. Our partners range in size from small independent churches to larger soup kitchens.
   2. **Nutrition Network** – provides nutrition programs like Totes for Hope, Kids Café, summer food service, and after-school programs to schools, rec centers and other various organizations caring for children
   3. **USDA** – we work with the State and Federal Government to distributed commodity foods to qualifying individuals, families and seniors through The Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP) and the Commodity Supplemental Food Program (CSFP).
   4. **Mobile Pantry** – FBR has over 40 distributions monthly in underserved areas with our mobile pantry. We bring food directly to the client at over 30 locations on a monthly basis.

D. **Why partner with FBR?**
   1. NO membership fee – there is no fee to become a partner agency.
   2. Food available at low to no Agency Support Fee (ASF) – average is $.02 per pound.
   3. Choose the items YOU WANT – choose from hundreds of items on our shopping list.
   4. Reliable quality & variety.
   5. Produce, bread & community food drive items at NO COST.
   6. Earn VIP Food Credit – volunteering in our warehouse benefits your program.
   7. Delivery to rural areas and limited metro area locations.
   8. Food safety standards and resources – decreasing liability and protecting clients.
   9. Network with hunger relief peers at FBR's Programs Conference.

*We are pleased to present this updated manual for all our partners. Within you will find a wealth of information and helpful tips compiled by each of our Programs Department's divisions; additionally, we are indebted to all our contributors. In addition to the manual, our staffs are simply a phone call or email away from you for unique questions or valued comments.*

*Although we are proud of our efforts, we fully realize and are most grateful for each of you who actually put the food into the hands of the clients. You are the very lifeblood of food distribution gains in Colorado and we sincerely thank you for all your endeavors.*

Cindy Mitchell
Chief Programs Officer
Food Bank of the Rockies

## SECTION II: FBR's MISSION STATEMENT & PHILOSOPHY

**A. Mission Statement**

> ## Fighting Hunger. Feeding Hope.
>
> **Our Mission: We will end hunger by efficiently procuring and distributing food and essentials to the hungry, through our programs and partner agencies.**

**B. Treating Clients with Respect -** FBR requires all partner agencies to not only follow Civil Rights regulations (Non-Discrimination Statement) but treat clients with respect, acceptance, courtesy and the personal acknowledgment they deserve.

To view the USDA's non-discrimination statement, http://www.usda.gov/NON_DISCRIMINATION

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### respect

*verb* | re·spect | \ri-ˈspekt\

#### Simple Definition of RESPECT

: to feel admiration for (someone or something) : to regard (someone or something) as being worthy of admiration because of good qualities

: to act in a way which shows that you are aware of (someone's rights, wishes, etc.)

: to treat or deal with (something that is good or valuable) in a proper way

Source: Merriam-Webster's Learner's Dictionary

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*"Respect is usually earned, but we try to treat folks with respect and hope that they have a feeling of dignity when they leave"*
—Johnny Davis, City Square-His Hands Ministry, PAC Member (2015 – current)

*"Most poor people I know are proud and really want not a hand out but a hand up. They do have an inherent pride and dignity, and we should treat them as those who have fallen on bad days."*
—Desmond Tutu

*"How would your life be different if…you stopped making negative judgmental assumptions about people you encounter? Let today be the day…You look for the good in everyone you meet and respect their journey."*
— *Steve Maraboli,* *Life, the Truth, and Being Free*

## SECTION III:    GLOSSARY OF TERMS

A.  **AIB:** AIB International was founded in 1919 as a technology and information transfer center for bakers and food processors. Their original mission was to "put science to work for the baker", a theme that has expanded yet remains central to our programs, products, and services.

B.  **ASF:** Agency Support Fees are contributed to Food Bank of the Rockies by Partner Agencies in return for services provided to them by the Food Bank, covering the cost of distributing the food, such as transportation, refrigeration, warehousing, etc. ASF contribution helps with operational overhead and is currently 0 - 10¢ per pound. The IRS has ruled that an ASF is permitted if charges are not passed along to end users and the fee is not based on the value of the product. However, the persons receiving the food are never charged for the food.

C.  **CDHS/FDNEP:** Colorado Department of Human Services/Food Distribution and Nutrition Education Programs is a state-supervised and county-administered human services system. Under this system, county departments are the main provider of direct services to Colorado's families, children, and adults. The FNS Food Distribution Programs' mission is to strengthen the Nation's nutrition safety net by providing food and nutrition assistance to school children and families; and support American agriculture by distributing high quality, 100% American-grown USDA

Foods.    For more information: [CO Department of Human Services](#)

D.  **CSFP:** Commodity Supplemental Food Program works to improve the health of low-income elderly persons at least 60 years of age by supplementing their diets with nutritious USDA Foods. Through CSFP, USDA distributes both food and administrative funds to participating States and Indian Tribal Organizations.
For more information:  http://www.fns.usda.gov/csfp/commodity-supplemental-food-program-csfp

E.  **FBR:** Food Bank of the Rockies is the largest private hunger-relief organization in the state of Colorado. Founded in 1978, FBR was known as the Colorado Food Clearing House. FBR has a staff of 112 employees at warehouses in Denver, Wyoming and the Western Slope.

F.  **Feeding America**: With a mission is to feed America's hungry, Feeding America is a nationwide network of over 200 member food banks, engaged with our country in the fight to end hunger.

G.  **Food Bank:** A non-profit organization that procures and distributes food and grocery products to non-profit member organizations such as food pantries, shelters, meal sites (a.k.a. soup kitchens) who in turn serve clients seeking food assistance.

H.  **Food Insecurity**: The state of being without reliable access to a sufficient quantity of affordable, nutritious food.

I.  **Food Pantry:** A non-profit organization that distributes food for home use directly to individuals and families.

**J.  Meal/Onsite:** A non-profit organization that prepares food to be consumed onsite by clients. Onsite may also be an afternoon/school snack program.

**K.  PAC:** The Programs Advisory Council is a diverse council consisting of partner agency representatives reflective of all food programs, geographic areas, category (pantry, soup kitchen/shelter, etc.) and clients served. The council meets monthly with responsibilities including new application review, assist in supporting FBR's strategic outreach plans and advising on procedure changes.

**L.  TEFAP:** The Emergency Food Assistance Program is a federal program supplementing the diets of low-income Americans, including elderly people, by providing them with emergency food and nutrition assistance at no cost. It provides food and administrative funds to States to supplement the diets of these groups.  http://www.fns.usda.gov/tefap/emergency-food-assistance-program-tefap

*M.*  **USDA:** United States Department of Agriculture is the U.S. federal department responsible for developing and executing federal government policy on farming, agriculture, forestry, and food. Work to assure food safety, protect natural resources, foster rural communities and end hunger in the United States and internationally.  *www.usda.gov*



### SECTION IV: PROTECTING OUR FOOD PARTNERS – GOOD SAMARITAN ACT

To encourage companies and organizations to donate healthy food that would otherwise go to waste, they are protected from criminal and civil liability under the **Good Samaritan Food Donation Ac**t.

**A.  The Federal Bill Emerson Good Samaritan Food Donation Act**

On October 1, 1996, President Clinton signed this act to encourage donation of food and grocery products to non-profit organizations for distribution to individuals in need. This law:

- Protects you from liability when you donate to a non-profit organization;

- Protects you from civil and criminal liability should the product donated in good faith later cause harm to the recipient;

- Standardizes donor liability exposure. You or your legal counsel do not need to investigate liability laws in 50 states; and

- Sets a floor of "gross negligence" or intentional misconduct for persons who donate grocery products. According to the new law, gross negligence is defined as "voluntary and conscious conduct by a person with knowledge (at the time of conduct) that the conduct is likely to be harmful to the health or well-being of another person."

For more information, visit:
http://www.feedingamerica.org/ways-to-give
https://www.law.cornell.edu/uscode/text/42/1791

## SECTION V: FOOD INSECURITY NEEDS ASSESSMENT

Food insecurity exists in every county and congressional district in the country. Not everyone struggling with hunger qualifies for federal nutrition assistance.

**A. How We Got the Map Data**
1. Map the Meal Gap generates two types of community-level data:
   - County-level food insecurity and child food insecurity estimates by income categories and;
   - An estimate of the food budget shortfall that food insecure individuals report they experience.
2. The following provides additional information included in the methodology; a technical brief is also available for those interested in greater detail about the methods and data.
   - Food insecurity rate
   - Food-budget shortfall
   - Cost-of-food index
   - National average meal cost

Access Map the Meal Gap Interactive Map for a closer look at your county's food insecurity data.

**B. The Distressed Communities Index (DCI)**
The DCI calculates distress scores for every level of geography: zip codes, cities, counties, and congressional districts, and tabulates data by states as well. Scores are based on a geography's combined performance on the seven well-being metrics. The higher the score, the greater the distress. The scores range from 0 to 100, moving from dark green in the most prosperous zip codes to dark red in the most distressed ones.
The DCI combines seven complementary metrics to present a complete and multidimensional picture of economic distress–or prosperity–in U.S. communities:
- No High School Degree
- Housing vacancy
- Adults not working
- Poverty
- Median income relative to state
- Change in employment
- Change in business establishments

http://eig.org/dci/interactive-maps/state-zip-codes
http://factfinder.census.gov/faces/nav/jsf/pages/community_facts.xhtml

## SECTION VI: IDENTIFY UNMET COMMUNITY NEEDS

**A. Take a look at your community and answer these questions:**
1. Are there food pantries operating already?
2. What services are they providing?
3. What are their hours of operation?
4. Do they have specific geographic boundaries?
5. How much food do they give to a family requesting help?
6. How many times in a month, quarter, year will they serve the same family?
7. Have they ever had to close their doors because they ran out of food?
8. Does the pantry staff or volunteers know of unmet needs in your community?

**B. Know your clients: Who would you serve?**
1. Children
2. Families
3. Senior Adults on limited fixed incomes
4. Single Parents
5. Unemployed
6. Working poor
7. Homeless

**C. Things to consider:**
1. Survey clients seeking food assistance for their input, feedback from experiences with local food pantries and to assess their true needs.
2. Network with social service agencies. Social service employees have an awareness of the need in your service area.
3. Are food pantries in your community generally open at the same time? For instance, do all the pantries have hours Monday through Friday and close at or before 5:00? If that is the case, what happens to people who may need food but work the same hours the pantries are open? What about people who may need food on the weekends?
4. If the pantry restricts the number of times they will serve the same family, what happens when that family needs food but have exhausted the number of times they can get help from that pantry?
5. Are the pantries you visited unable to meet increasing requests for food?
6. You may be able to impact hunger in your community by joining forces with an existing pantry and helping them with volunteer workers, food drives and consistent financial support. Consider your options, what it is you really want to do and overall what is in the best interest for the community and clients.

FBR prefers to partner with strong organizations to serve a geographic area. Collaboration efforts will be encouraged for applications received in an area deemed covered by existing partners. If you have identified an unmet need, FBR encourages you to complete an application for partnership.

**SECTION VII: EMBEDDED STRATEGY ORGANIZATION**

A. ``Embedded Strategy Organizations" include the following elements:

1. **Intentional organizational Mission:** Our organizational mission represents the focus & intention of our work. It was recently confirmed/refined through engagement with key stakeholders.

2. **Well Established and supported Network:** Our organization has identified key stakeholders, partners and decision-makers. We maintain clearly defined goals, roles and responsibilities for all staff, board and volunteer roles at our organization and recruit great talent. We provide clear orientation, training and support to all internal stakeholders (staff, board members, volunteers). We actively cultivate this network.

3. **Defined strategic priorities:** Our board of directors has established a current strategic plan/priorities. They are well known by internal stakeholders.

4. **Strong Internal Systems, Structure & Policy:** Internal structures and systems are clearly defined and understood by all. Operational and governance policies are clearly documented, maintained and enforced by staff and board leadership. Decision making roles and process are well outlined and understood. The board approves an annual budget and regularly monitors financial activity. The organization properly invests in administrative supports (IT, professional development, outside expertise, etc.) as needed. The board regularly reviews bylaws and other governance policy to ensure it reflects best practice and supports intended operations.

5. **Well Designed programs:** Our programs and services are well designed to meet community need through a sustainable model to meet defined goals and achieve desired outcomes.

6. **Community Connection:** Our organization regularly partners with other organizations, makes referrals and maintains awareness of allied groups, others providing similar service and needs within our service area/community.

7. **Strategic Communications:** We regularly update our network through strategic communications. We communicate well internally and provide regular updates to internal groups.

8. **Engaging Events:** We provide opportunities to engage community through strategic events.

9. **Regular Evaluation & Feedback:** We regularly evaluate programs, staff, & events to assess outcomes with goals. We refine our operations/activities based on evaluation findings. We annually check-in and provide feedback to volunteers, board & staff.

10. **Productive Meetings:** We meet as needed (not too much/too little) and have productive meetings.

**B. Developing an "Embedded Strategy Organization"**

1. Know Your Network
   - Clarify organization Mission
   - Identify, connect, cultivate, mutual match (need/interest), and support your network
   - Board, Committee and Volunteer Programs
   - Goals and purpose for each group within network
   - Clear roles and responsibilities
   - Application process
   - Orientation and training
   - Succession plans

2. Strong Structure & Systems
   - Organizational chart
   - Handbook or Guide for board, staff and volunteers
   - History of organization
   - Overview of programs, events, calendar
   - Financial overview
   - Things to know (policy summary, guidelines)
   - Evaluation process

3. **Embedded Strategy -** Maintaining focus on strategic priorities aligned to the organizational mission within ongoing meetings and operations
   - Aligned calendar and resources
   - Meeting protocol (templates, dashboard, reports)
   - Program and event activities aligned to priorities
   - Monitoring key data and review of impact
   - Ongoing adjustment and refinement

4. **Engaging your Network & Stakeholders**
   - Identify ALL significant stakeholders and members of your network
   - Strategic communications
   - Strategic Events
   - Comprehensive Fundraising plan

**SECTION VIII: OPERATIONAL START UP**

**A. Draft a Budget & Raise 'Seed' Funds**
1. Operational & Staff
   - Rent
   - Utilities
   - Pest Control
   - Salaries
2. Computers, Internet, Office Supplies, etc.
3. Marketing; Public Announcements
4. Food Costs
   - FBR Agency Support and/or Admin Fees
   - Purchases from Big Box Retailers

**B. Locate & Retain A Facility**
1. Handicap Accessible
2. On a bus line; for clients without transportation
3. Adequate parking spaces
4. Storage space for food & distribution set up

**C. Hire Staff & Recruit Volunteers**
1. Pantry Coordinator: Responsible for day to day operations, scheduling, training, recruiting/training volunteers, bookkeeping, product ordering, inventory records
2. Assistant Coordinator: Back up to Pantry Coordinator; fills in during vacations, illness and/or whenever Coordinator leaves the position
3. Transportation Driver(s): Dependable team with reliable transportation to transport product from FBR and local donors to your facility
4. Registration/Reception Desk: Greets clients and certifies eligibility to participate in food assistance program(s)
5. Volunteers: Assist in receiving product into facility, stock shelves and act as client assistants

**D. Days & Hours of Operation:** If your community has existing food pantries, find out when they are open and consider opening your food pantry to compliment the other schedules and provide clients more options to access assistance. Example: Pantry A is open Monday through Friday from 9-11am; consider evening and weekend hours for your pantry. Once days and hours are established, post these hours via signs on doors & yard, announcements on your website and in local paper, flyers distributed in the community, (schools, rec centers, doctor's offices, churches, local businesses) or city/county offices.

**E. Frequency of Client Visits:** For a variety of reasons, not all people are receiving the government assistance to which they are entitled. USDA Programs (TEFAP & CSFP) provides monthly assistance to eligible clients. FBR prefers partners to serve clients at a minimum monthly but strongly encourages twice a month or weekly as best practice. Note: Clients utilizing bus services may benefit from weekly visits in order to be able to carry food product home.

F.  **Client Outreach:** FBR partners should perform client outreach on a regular basis. While word of mouth is a great source of outreach, if relied upon solely, the pantry could potentially become known as serving an exclusive group of client, thus excluding clients in need simply because they feel they do not qualify. There are various ways in which to outreach to clients and bring awareness of your pantry:
1.  Signs on facility door & lawn (day of distribution)
2.  Flyers distributed to (schools, daycares, libraries, local churches, etc.)
3.  Networking with Department of Human Services (WIC, SNAP, Leap, etc.)
4.  Attending local community events
5.  Social media (Organization's website, Facebook, etc.)

G.  **Client Intake Process:** Pantries are required to obtain basic client information. USDA Programs (TEFAP & CSFP) have eligibility income guidelines. The income eligibility is self-declared by the client, in which physical documents of income are not required. FBR further recommends serving ineligible individuals (outside your service area) one time and provide them with resources in their area instead of turning them away.

1.  Basic Client Information for Collection:
    - Name, address, phone number
        o  ID & Proof of Address is collected for partners with established service area boundaries.  A driver's license or ID card is an easy way to verify name and address. If they do not have either, a utility bill will work.
    - Number and ages of people in household.
    - Additional Information (optional):
        o  Source of household income.
        o  Public assistance programs from which they receive help.
        o  If special dietary needs are required by any family member.

Capturing client information may be as simple as a sign in sheet, entered onto excel spreadsheet or utilizing a food pantry software system. The use of Link2Feed through FBR may be an option for your program once approved for partnership.

Your Agency may also consider offering clients other services on site or a resource center to access brochures and flyers. Some of these wrap around services include SNAP, WIC, LEAP, TANF, and more.

Find more information including documents by visiting:
Federal Programs:  http://www.fns.usda.gov/programs-and-services
Browse Programs by State: http://www.benefits.gov/benefits/browse-by-state
Low-Income Energy Assistance Program: https://sites.google.com/a/state.co.us/cdhs-leap/

**H. Food Distribution Method** - There are two methods of distributing food:

1. **Client Choice** - Client Choice pantries help reduce the waste of emergency food and empowers your clients to make choices for themselves. All pantries utilizing this model establish a system unique to the program's size, square footage, number of staff or volunteer support and the amount of food and storage in the facility.

    - Shopping Method*:* The client goes into the pantry; picks out what s/he needs, and fills his/her own bag/box.

        o Advantages: The client receives only items he/she wants and allows them respect and dignity as a shopper. It does not require as many staff/volunteers as other methods. Ability to meet special dietary and allergy needs. Space needed is flexible. Example: Clients may shop in a full room set up grocery store style or along a set of tables with displayed food product. Partner agency/volunteers have the opportunity to talk with and get to know clients while walking them through the shopping experience.

        o Disadvantages:  The shopping method may be slower with new clients not familiar with the system, slow in making their product selection and/or overly talkative with the volunteers. Well trained volunteers will be able to put clients at ease and assist them efficiently. Most agencies will tell you there is no disadvantage to this method!

    - Ordering Method: The client receives a list of items available, or can view them from behind a table or counter; s/he will indicate which items s/he wants and how many. Staff/volunteers fill the boxes according to the order.

        o Advantages: The client receives only items he/she wants. Keeps pantry organized. Ability to meet special dietary and allergy needs. Items are not wasted. Space needed is flexible.

        o Disadvantages: Takes extra time to make up the order form for each distribution. You may run out of some items on the order form and it takes more staff/volunteers and time than the Shopping Method.

    For more information on Client Choice Pantries, watch the videos found on our website:
    Client Choice Video #1          Client Choice Video #2

2. **Pre-assembled box or bags** – involves developing a nutritional menu for your clients and then prepacking boxes with at least a 3-day supply of food for families of different sizes. Pre-packed food boxes or bags are typically packed in advanced and distributed to eligible clients on the day of distribution. Food box programs are very common for programs that lack large amounts of space or volunteer help.

- **Advantages:** Pre-assembled boxes or bags can be prepared in advance of a distribution and ready when clients arrive. Ability to distribute to a large number of clients in a shorter amount of time.

- **Disadvantage:** If a client receives something in their box or bag they do not want, will not eat, or are allergic to, the product will be wasted or given away leaving them with less food. The inability to connect with your clients.

Feeding America, FBR Staff & Board and PAC have determined the Client Choice as the best method of showing respect and restoring dignity to your clients during their visit at your food pantry. Some partners may express the clients will take advantage of the system but history reflects majority of clients only take what they truly need. However if you find that pre-assembly boxes and bags for your clients works best for your pantry, give them the option to exchange items they or their family will not eat for something else. In addition, give them the choice of produce, bakery items and other perishable items.

I. **Product Types and Categories –** FBR provides a wide range of food programs to our Partner Agencies to fit any type of program.

1. **Donated Product:** Includes wide variety of food and non-food items. We have hundreds of items on our shopping list each day like pet food, hygiene items, cleaning products, canned goods, snack items, breakfast foods, frozen meat, beverages, and more. Because these are donated items, the selection can vary from day to day. These items are available at a minimal Agency Support Fee which goes towards FBR costs of procuring and storing these items safely. The IRS permits this system if the fee is not based on the value of the product and food recipients are not charged. Fees cap at 10¢ per pound in Colorado.

2. **Purchase Program:** FBR's Purchased Program include staples like canned proteins, canned fruits and vegetables, grains and cereals. The fee to agencies for these items covers FBRs cost to purchase and ship.

3. **Commodities:** FBR works with the State of Colorado to administer two USDA programs providing food to qualified seniors, individuals and families.

4. **Grocery Rescue:** Retail donors across our service area donate produce, bread, meat, shelf-stable items and nonfood items. FBR sends regularly scheduled refrigerated trucks to pick up donations daily. Items returned to FBR's warehouse are available to order or pick up in our Fresh Food Center. As needed, a partner agency will be aligned with a donor directly to pick up donations and take back to their Agency.

5. **Kids Meals:** Kids Café is FBR's meal program designed specifically for children at risk of hunger. After-school and summer, free hot meals (prepared in our community kitchen) or shelf stable packaged meals distributed from our warehouse are provided. In order to meet the needs of more children, FBR also provides healthy, USDA approved snacks to children participating in afterschool programs to help them focus and grow. There is no fee assessed to the partner agency for participation in this program.

6. When selecting product to stock your pantry, take into consideration:
   - Combine items that go together to create a meal (spaghetti noodles & sauce).
   - SNAP benefits do not cover non-food items. Cleaning and personal hygiene items are costly for individuals. Purchasing these items utilizes personal funds that could be used to pay for medicine or utilities.
   - Pets are a form of companionship, especially for seniors. Clients will most often feed their pets before eating for themselves, therefore offer them pet food when available.
   - Snacks & Beverages: While not the most nutritious, consumed in moderation are fine to implement into one's diet.

     *"Well rounded and portioned snacks can play a vital role in a healthy diet for many people. It can help ensure that smaller portions are eaten throughout the day and at meal times as well as help to regulate blood sugar. The size and content of the snack should be considered. Aim for at least 2 food groups in a snack and keep in mind that snacks should be around 150-200 calories."*
     - Megan Bradley, RDN, Share Our Strength

   - Be familiar with "My Plate" and order product in quantities based on the serving suggestions. ***www.choosemyplate.gov***
   - Survey your clients to determine the items they would like to receive, which will include any dietary restrictions.
   - Communicate to FBR about any client product requests.

   FBR encourages partners to receive and offer a wide range of items to clients and not limit to their personal preferences and/or impose judgment on what a food insecure individual deserves.
   FBR regularly solicits feedback from partner agencies regarding client food product needs. FBR further encourages partners to survey clients for their needs.

## J. Quantity of Food Provided

1. **Stock a Client's Cupboard Not Your Food Pantry:** FBR firmly believes food product stored in our warehouse or partner agencies' facility is not in the best interest of the client nor meeting their needs or treating them with respect. Having the ease and ability to retrieve food from their own cupboard shows respect and restores dignity. When your pantry has food product but restricts the quantity clients may receive potentially sends the message they are not deserving of the same rights as others. FBR strongly encourages partner agencies to openly distribute and share food product with clients and not hold product back for next month or future distributions.

   Recommendations:

   Feeding America: 6 meals per individual/monthly
   PAC: Survey reflects a range of 15 – 30 meals (equivalent of 5 – 10 day supply)

   According to the USDA one meal equals 1.2 lbs of food.

One method to determine how much to give is to multiply 3.6 pounds by the number of people in the client's household by the number of days' worth of food you want to provide.

Example:
3.6 lbs x 5 (people in household) x 7 (days) = 126 Pounds Provided

2. **Product Distribution Rates:** A distribution rate is factoring inventory on hand vs. average number of Households/Individuals accessing your food pantry monthly. FBR strongly recommends turning majority (if not all) of your monthly inventory. Note: USDA commodities must be completely distributed on a monthly basis and not stored for next month's distribution.

Example: 500 units of UHT milk on hand / 100 households served monthly = 5 units offered per household.

If some households do not accept the product as they will not use it, please consider offering additional units to households who are able to use it.

Food product stored within a client's kitchen cabinet is of more benefit to them then it being stored in your food pantry.

*"Colorado is blessed to have five strong food banks and the partnering agencies they serve. The Colorado Department of Human Services, Food Distribution Department, appreciates Food Bank of the Rockies commitment to food security; through their many partners, in Northern Colorado. We, as FBR, commend the actual distributors as you are the pipeline providing services to the clients. We strongly encourage the timely flow-through of food products to those in need without holding on to or unnecessarily storing products in order to support USDA's mission to strengthen the nutrition safety net through USDA Foods distribution and other nutrition assistance programs."*
- Nichelle Harris, M.S., Food Distribution Programs Manager, CDHS

## SECTION IX:    FOOD SAFETY STORAGE & TRACKING PROCEDURES

Maintaining food safety standards for storing and handling product is crucial for protecting our clients' health. The Food and Drug Administration estimates that 48 million illnesses, 128,000 hospitalizations, and 3,000 deaths occur from food borne illnesses in the U.S. each year.
The populations that are most susceptible to food borne illnesses are older adults, pregnant women, young children, and those with compromised immune systems. Many of the people we help fall under one of these categories.
Additionally, according to the Food, Drug, and Cosmetic act, food will be considered adulterated if "it has been prepared, packed, or held under insanitary conditions whereby it may have become contaminated…" Not only is maintaining food safety standards important to protect our clients, but it is the law.

A. **Safe Storage Practices:** What is the proper way to store food in my pantry?

1. Depending on the type of distribution you select for your food box program, you'll need different capacities for storage. For pre-boxed distribution, you'll need less storage space, but will need additional space to assemble the boxes/bags and to store them. For the client choice shopping method, you'll need space for shelves to display all the options as well as enough space for 2-3 people or more (clients or volunteers) to do their shopping at once. For the client choice ordering and hybrid methods, you'll need a similar storage space as needed for shopping, as well as a space to assemble the orders.

    These guidelines are important for safe food storage for all food box programs:

    - Choose a storage space with locking doors, preferably with no outside entrance.
    - There should be no cracks in the walls, ceilings, or floor and no broken windows where pests could enter.
    - Dry storage should be in a dry, clean, well-ventilated area and the temperature should be between 50 and 70 degrees as dry goods can become unsafe if they get too cold or too hot. This will also help prevent mold, and pest infestation and the air flow will help control temperatures.
    - Use free-standing shelves with the lowest shelf at least 6 inches off the floor. Food should also be kept at least 2 inches from the walls.
    - Whenever possible, remove individual items from the cardboard cases. This is a good opportunity to inspect the product as you store it to look for pests or bad items that have bulges or are leaking. Getting rid of the cardboard also eliminates hiding places and nesting material for pests.
    - Store all pet food, non-food items (including paper products, and cleaning supplies on separate shelving away from food storage.
    - Ensure that older items are rotated out first by labeling items with the date received, and always using the "First In, First Out" rule.
    - Use only non-toxic insect and rodent traps and inspect these traps regularly. Never spray chemicals or lay poison in a food storage area.
    - Refrigerators and Freezers: refrigerator temperatures should be between 32 and 40 degrees, and freezer should be between 0 and -20 degrees. Thermometers should be in all freezers and refrigerators on the front of shelves where they are easily visible when you look in. This helps staff/volunteers to spot problems easily and quickly.
    - When you bring food into the storage area, store it properly immediately. Never leave items on the floor, and place frozen and refrigerated items in coolers immediately.

B. **Safe Transport Practices –** What is the proper way to transport food for my pantry?

    - Always have adequate vehicle space – truck or trailer is best.
    - Transport that is enclosed so items do not fly out is ideal.
    - Load produce and product in a way that minimizes damage and allows proper air circulation.
    - Clean vehicles to reduce the trisk of contamination, particularly after transporting animal products.
    - Don't store raw food on top of ready-to-eat food.

- When transporting food from FBR, a donor, or be prepared with proper temperature controls like thermal blankets, coolers with ice packs or a refrigerated truck.
- Food should be at a safe temperature when picked up and also when delivered to the destination.
- Use a thermometer to check the temperature prior to putting items away to ensure a safe temperature has been maintained and the items are safe for consumption. Utilize the Transportation Temperature  Logs available on the Agency Portal.

C. **Product Code Dates –** Dates are printed on many food items, but product dating is not required by federal regulations except on infant formula and baby foods. Dating of some foods, usually dairy products, is required by more than 20 states. An expired date doesn't necessarily mean that the food needs to be discarded. Still it is helpful to understand the differences among package dates.

Coded dates (packing numbers) may appear on shelf-stable products such as cans and boxes of food. This enables manufacturers to rotate their stock, as well as locate their products in the event of a recall.

Calendar dates help stores determine how long to display the product for sale and relate to the peak quality of food, not safety. Calendar date are found primarily on perishable foods, such as dairy products, eggs, meat and poultry.

The only product that must be discarded if not used by its expiration date is baby food and infant formula. Otherwise, please use the below definitions to guide your decisions to keep or discard food.

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1. "Best if used by" – Manufacturers use this date to indicate the last date by which the highest quality of the particular product is guaranteed. After this date, the product is still safe to consume but may not be at its highest quality in terms of nutrition and taste. For example, a box of cold cereal with a "best if used by date 6/25/16" is still safe to eat for several months afterward. However, it may not taste as fresh and may be slightly stale.
2. "Sell By" – The date the manufacturer recommends the product to be sold with the assumption it will be stored in an individual's home for several days after purchase. A "sell by" date is most commonly found on dairy items and other refrigerated foods.
3. "Expiration date" – This phrase is used with baby food and infant formula. After this date the nutritional quality of the food cannot be ensured. Because baby food and infant formula are the primary source of nutrition for infants, a food of lower nutritional quality is harmful to their growth and development. *Therefore, all baby food and infant formula must be discarded on their expiration date*. According to the Health Department It is illegal to sell and distribute baby food items after the expiration date.
4. "Pack Date/Code Date" – Indicates the date the product was originally packaged but does not indicate the time by which the product should be consumed.

For further assistance in making product determination:   http://www.stilltasty.com/ The Food Keeper

**D. Temperature, Pest Control & Cleaning Logs**

1. **Monthly Cleaning Logs:** Daily logs should be kept to record cleaning of your food storage areas.

2. **Monthly Temperature Logs**: Place a copy of the log on each refrigerator and freezer unit and record the temperatures. Thermometers should be placed in each unit. Your refrigerator should be kept between 32 and 40 degrees and your freezer between 0 and -20 degrees.

3. **Pest Control Logs:** Weekly pest inspections should be performed and recorded in a log.

4. **Transport Temperature Log**: Check and record temperatures of perishable food product after transport to your food pantry to ensure items remained at a safe temperature during transport.

Each of these logs will be provided to FBR Partner Agencies and can be found on our website, Programs Resource Page FBR - Programs Resource Page

Safe food handling practices are crucial for ensuring that your organization is distributing wholesome product to your clients. These practices are also necessary to comply with federal law. According to the Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act, food will be considered adulterated if "*it has been prepared, packed, or held under insanitary conditions whereby it may have become contaminated…*" Additionally, Code of Federal Regulations Title 21, Section 110.93 states: "*Storage and transportation of finished food shall be under conditions that will protect food against physical, chemical, and microbial contamination as well as against deterioration of the food and the container*."

**E. AIB –** The FDA has established Good Manufacturing Practices (to include storage) that, when followed, should safeguard food from being contaminated. To verify compliance with the FDA's Good Manufacturing Practices (GMPs), FBR utilizes the services of AIB International; a company that provides food safety standards, training, and GMP audits.
FBR has undergone and passed GMP audits for all four of our facilities. AIB International's consolidated standards for food distribution centers can be found on their website at: http://www.aibonline.org/aibOnline/en/



## SECTION X:     RECORD KEEPING

A. Standard Policy – Keep on file for 3 years + current year
B. FBR Invoices – Invoices will provide record of product received for recall verification and audits. May also be utilized to total pounds received for Board and/or grant writing reports.
C. Client Records – Maintain a list of clients served. Client records may be a manual tracking such as signing in on a piece of paper, tracked in excel format or utilization of software. No personal information such as SSN, copies of ID should be kept on file due to the high risk of identity theft. Please keep all client information secured.
D. Temperature, Cleaning, Pest Control Logs
E. Food Safety & Civil Rights – Yearly certification documents.
F. USDA Programs – FBR partners will be required to maintain additional records per USDA & CDHS/FDNEP regulations.

## SECTION XI:    RESOURCES & SUPPORT

**A. FBR Staff Support**
1.  Each FBR Program Department Division (Agency Relations, Nutrition Network, and USDA Commodities) have full time staff available to support your Agency's operations.
2.  FBR Staff will provide onsite visitations and consultations, onsite training and web published training materials, send out monthly e-newsletters, and provide materials on our Resource Wall.

**B. Link2Feed:**
1.  FBR has rolled out Link2Feed, an efficient and streamlined client data base for intake and case management. Link2Feed will allow FBR and partner agencies to access client data at a moment's notice, ensuring that together we provide the best services possible to our communities. Reporting on your impact in the community has never been so easy.
2.  FBR anticipates this to be of no charge to our partners, however partner agencies will need to have a computer and internet service to participate.
3.  Link2Feed will be introduced to 30 agencies July 2016 with more joining in FY2017 and FY2018.

**C. Client Assistance – Referrals**
1.  FBR Find Help Link:  http://www.foodbankrockies.org/find-help-food-assistance/
2.  United Way 211:  http://www.unitedwaydenver.org/2-1-1

**D. Training Resources**
1.  Food Safety & Civil Right Courses: First Net Learning/FBR University: http://firstnetcampus.com/FoodBank
2.  Program Training: In house and/or posted training materials on FBR website for rural and/or staff needing a refresher course
3.  Programs Conference: Held every other year for active partner agencies
4.  Mentorship Program: For newly accepted partners or existing partners researching new innovative ideas on how to better serve their clients.

**E. Capacity Building**
1.  FBR budgets every fiscal year for capacity building funding. Currently this is not an open application process. Capacity building funds are utilized to strengthen our underserved counties by providing, but not limited to, equipment to increase food storage. Awarded partner agencies will have increased capacity to distribute more food to those in need.

**F. Funding**
1.  Pass-Through Funding: Funding is sometimes provided to FBR to be used as pass through grants to partner agencies. FBR will provide a food credit redeemable at our warehouse to partner agencies using this funding. We offer help through a food credit to allow partner agencies a way to maximize their purchase ability.
2.  Volunteers in Partnership (VIP) Credits: Like you, FBR depends greatly on our volunteers. If someone volunteers on your agency's behalf, they can earn a 20-lb food credit that will be applied to your FBR account and later applied to your agency's donated food order. Volunteer shifts are a minimum of 3- hours in one of our warehouses. Learn more or sign up today by visiting our website:  http://www.foodbankrockies.org/take-action/volunteer/

3. Depending on the type of organization you are – faith based or non-faith based – funding may come from different sources:
   - Donations – private or business
   - Private Funds – money from your own pocket or from that of your Board of Directors
   - Grants –staff or volunteer assisting with applying for grants; research local organizations for grant assistance or training classes
   - Budget – make funding for your food pantry a line item on your agency's budget
   - Church Congregation – your parishioners may be your biggest supporter as they give each week with some of their tithing to support the food pantry.
   - Fundraisers – host a car wash, bake sale, auction, or other event in your community to bring in donations

4. Fund Drive vs. Food Drive: A fund drive is another good way to secure money to acquire food from Food Bank of the Rockies. It is much more efficient to ask for donations of cash and use those funds at the food bank rather than having people purchase items at retail for your program. FBR requests a small agency support fee (ASF) to help with transportation and storage costs of the food in our warehouse. Asking supporters to contribute funds instead of food will stretch your donor's dollar and provide you with more resources to support your food program. Look what $10 buys at the store vs. spending $10 ASF at the FBR.



What your $10 gift buys at the store.    What your $10 gift buys at the food bank.

$1 = 4 meals at Food Bank of the Rockies.

5. Last year, partner agencies contributed an average ASF of 2¢ per pound; according to Feeding America, the average value of FBR's donated inventory is $1.72 per pound. Per IRS regulations, any product received from FBR (donated, purchased, USDA, etc.) cannot be sold.
6. Partner Agency, its employees, its volunteers, and its clients must not sell, transfer, trade or barter any items received from FBR in exchange for money, property, services or otherwise allow the items to enter commercial channels.
7. Partner Agency must not require mandatory donations or suggest the same in any manner whatsoever, require or request volunteer time or participation in any religious activity or service in order to receive food, nor show preferential treatment to clients who do participate, voluntarily donate or volunteer their services.

G. **Community Outreach:** You don't need to hire a public relations professional to get the word out about your organization. Keeping the community informed is important for financial, volunteer and

advocacy support. Before people will volunteer or give money to any program, they have to know about it. Here are a few tips:

1. Share client stories with their signed permission. Combined with statistics, stories bring the problem of hunger to life. Print brochures. Provide supporting churches and civic clubs with brief updates for their Sunday bulletins and/or newsletters.
2. Cultivate local and social media. In smaller communities, send announcements to your local radio and newspapers when a special activity is planned. If you live in a large urban area, reach out to FBR when you have a client story that might interest the media. We'd love to partner with you to help reach out for great stories.
3. Consider working with FBR on a shared video. FBR can do the interviews and create a co-branded video you can then share on your social media, website, and congregational meetings.
4. Start a mailing list and/or email list of the names of supporters, volunteers, donors and contacts. Send them regular emails or paper newsletters (monthly) about what's happening in your agency. Keep them short and interesting for best readership.
5. Unless they prefer anonymity, thank everyone publicly for anything they do. This can be done in the newsletter or in some special cases, through the local press. Take pictures and put a slide show together.

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**We hope you'll find this manual useful and welcome any feedback you wish to provide. Please feel free to share other useful information by contacting Food Bank of the Rockies at relations@foodbankrockies.org or 303-371-9250.**

**We greatly appreciate your interest in serving our neighbors in need.**
**With the effort and vision of our Partner Agencies, together, we can strive to fight hunger and feed hope.**

**Please visit us on the web**





**Denver:**      10700 E. 45th Avenue, Denver CO 80239
**Palisade:**    120 N. River Road, Palisade, CO 81526
**Casper:**      4976 Paige Street, Mills WY 82644