

**Hunger Ministries Program**  
Presbytery of Detroit

**Suggestions for Donating to Food Pantries**

When donating food to food pantries, please consider the quality and suitability of the items you choose. Families or individuals who must rely on the food provided by a food pantry need healthy choices because they have limited access to fresh produce, milk, or eggs. Items that are low in sodium and sugar or contain whole grains are good choices. Some clients have limited ability to cook or prepare food. Smaller cans work well for elderly clients as do items that can be heated in a microwave.

***Finally, if you don't want to eat it, they probably don't want to either!***

1. Canned meats: tuna, salmon and chicken are great choices, but so is canned stew or a chunky soup with meat. The low sodium options are preferable.
2. Canned vegetables: The low sodium options are preferable; smaller cans are great for the elderly.
3. Canned fruit: those packed in lite syrup are preferable. Smaller cups of fruit are great for kids. Dried fruit is also a healthy option.
4. Boxed meals THAT REQUIRE ONLY WATER. (Mac & Cheese that requires milk and butter is not as helpful because those items can be in short supply.)
5. Low-sugar cereal
6. Peanut butter or almond butter
7. Instant oatmeal, instant grits, or Cream of Wheat
8. Cans of beans or dried beans
9. Brown rice
10. Whole grain pasta and pasta sauce
11. Biscuit or baking mixes that only require water
12. Boxes of milk, powdered milk or evaporated milk
13. Tea bags and instant coffee, canned or bottled juices
14. Flour and sugar
15. Basic spices like cinnamon, oregano, basil, salt and pepper
16. Vegetable or olive oil, shortening
17. Mustard, ketchup, mayonnaise
18. Snack items for kids: low sugar juice boxes, applesauce containers, granola bars, unsalted nuts, popcorn

***Other items that are useful:***

1. Diapers in sizes above newborn, baby wipes, baby food
2. Toiletries: toothbrushes, soap, toothpaste, lotion, shampoo & conditioner, lip balm
3. Feminine hygiene products
4. Paper towels and toilet paper
5. Dish Soap
6. Foil, plastic wrap, sandwich bags

***Due to food safety concerns, the following items cannot be distributed:***

1. ***Dented or rusted cans***
2. ***Food that is well past the manufacturer's expiration date***
3. ***Open or torn boxes***
4. ***Items in glass containers***
5. ***Home-made goods***