

River Bend Food Bank Nutrition Policy

Statement of Purpose¹

River Bend Food Bank strives to support the community in its desire for safe, high quality, culturally relevant, nutritious foods. We recognize the role that nutrition plays in achieving physical, mental, and social-emotional health for all ages and lifestyles, and in achieving health equity for its members. Food insecurity is linked to poor nutrition, poor health, an increased risk of developing chronic diseases, such as obesity, diabetes, cardiovascular disease, impaired psychological and cognitive functioning and substandard achievement, and other diet-related conditions. We will work to educate our agency and community partners, our staff, and our volunteers on the integration of healthy and nutrient-rich foods into our work and will use this policy to guide our decisions about foods to procure and distribute. Using the [Healthy Eating Research Nutrition Guidelines for the Charitable Food System](#), to acquire, purchase, and distribute nutritious foods, we commit to a long-term, evolving system that will eventually go beyond simply providing food and will seek to nourish those members of our community who utilize our services. This is subject to change based on River Bend Food Bank's ability to access proper resources and to adjust to unforeseen conditions; implementation will be gradual and ongoing.

Procedures

These procedures will guide the River Bend Food Bank's procurement, distribution, and partner and guest support practices to the best of our ability. Information on the development of these procedures is available in the appendix. Partners of River Bend Food Bank are encouraged to adapt this policy as a guideline for promoting healthful food choices for their pantries.

¹Badaracco, C. (n.d.). *Improving Health Equity through Nutrition*. ASA Generations. Retrieved July 22, 2022, from <https://generations.asaging.org/improving-health-equity-through-nutrition>
Food Insecurity - Healthy People 2030 | *health.gov*. (n.d.). Office of Disease Prevention and Health Promotion. Retrieved July 22, 2022, from <https://health.gov/healthypeople/priority-areas/social-determinants-health/literature-summaries/food-insecurity>
2015-2020 Dietary Guidelines | *health.gov*. (2021, August 24). Office of Disease Prevention and Health Promotion. Retrieved July 22, 2022, from <https://health.gov/our-work/nutrition-physical-activity/dietary-guidelines/previous-dietary-guidelines/2015>

This policy was developed in partnership with the Illinois Public Health Institute, made possible with funding from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and University of Illinois Extension Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Education program funded by the United States Department of Agriculture.

Procurement

- Our below commitments are intended to align our purchasing and donation requests with the needs and preferences of our partner agencies and guests. While we prioritize healthier options, this policy will not preclude the use of any foods donated to River Bend Food Bank and may be amended at any time due to budgetary constraints.
- The River Bend Food Bank emphasizes food procurement from the below categories. Specific foods purchased and requested within these categories will be guided by the input we have received and will continue to receive from guests who access our food pantries and feeding programs, and our agency partners. We encourage our agency partners to be in continual dialogue with their guests, so they have a strong understanding of the foods they need and prefer. As much as possible, we will strive to acquire and distribute foods that are sized to be manageable by families.
 - Variety of fresh fruits and vegetables.
 - Foods that are categorized as “green,” or the most nutritious, in the [Healthy Eating Research Nutrition Guidelines for the Charitable Food System](#) ranking system.
 - Low-sodium versions of typically high-sodium foods, including but not limited to canned and snack foods.
 - Snacks that appeal to children and align with “[Smart Snacks](#)” nutrition standards (the standards utilized by schools participating in the National School Lunch Program).
 - Certified gluten-free items.
 - Non-traditional milk products, including plant-based, shelf-stable, evaporated, and low-fat lactose-free milks.
 - Ready-to-eat and prepackaged meals. Other foods that arose through our 2021/22 data collection process. These foods will be updated as needed, as we continue to learn from our partners and guests.
- The River Bend Food Bank will strive to purchase foods that align with our guests’ cultural, religious needs and preferences.
- The River Bend Food Bank will seek to grow our partnerships with local farmers, especially those who produce foods requested by our guests and identify as a member of our priority populations.
- The River Bend Food Bank will explore opportunities to grow foods requested by our guests, especially those we experience challenges procuring.
- The River Bend Food Bank will explore opportunities to support partner agencies to fill the gaps they have in their food and/or equipment supply to meet their guests' unique needs.

Distribution

Our below commitments are intended to strengthen our distribution practices, so our partner agencies and their guests can better access the foods they need, when they need them.

- The River Bend Food Bank follows the [Healthy Eating Research Nutrition Guidelines for the Charitable Food System](#) ranking system to enable our partner agencies to see the nutritional value of the foods they order.
- The River Bend Food Bank will strive to share occasional updates and health benefits of new items that are available for order with our agency partners.
- The River Bend Food Bank will strive to survey, as needed, our partner agencies to inform improvements in our and our agencies' distribution practices for perishable items, especially fresh produce, meats, and ready-to-eat meals.
- The River Bend Food Bank will strive to explore ways to facilitate food sharing and redistribution among our partner agencies. This may take place via a forum that enables agencies across our network to share their food surpluses and deficits.
- The River Bend Food Bank will strive to encourage our partner agencies to deliver food to their guests who experience transportation barriers.
- The River Bend Food Bank will strive to offer bags to ease transportation of groceries.

Agency Partner and Guest Support

The commitments below are intended to support partner agencies and guests' needs and preferences by promoting nutritious foods and by leveraging local, regional, and statewide partnerships.

- The River Bend Food Bank works to support the health of our guests by leveraging partnerships to provide the below at our partner agencies:
 - Nutrition education classes
 - Cooking demonstrations
 - Breast/chestfeeding promotion and support
 - Training on nudges and other environmental strategies
 - Health screenings
 - SNAP resources
- The River Bend Food Bank will work towards being able to provide recorded and/or written nutrition education for partner agencies, especially related to the [Healthy Eating Research Nutrition Guidelines for the Charitable Food System](#) (food bank level) and [Supporting Wellness at Pantries \(SWAP\) Nutrition Guidelines](#) (food pantry level).
- The River Bend Food Bank will offer training to our staff and our partner agencies, when it is available, on a variety of topics including, but not limited to:
 - Cultural foods

- Gathering and incorporating guest feedback into policies and practices
- Food safety
- The River Bend Food Bank will, when available, provide nutritious, culturally responsive recipes based on items from food bank inventory. We will leverage our community partners to support this.
- The River Bend Food Bank will distribute resources available for low-income residents for partner agencies to share with their guests as they are made available to us by our community partners.
- The River Bend Food Bank will strive to partner with agencies that operate the client choice model. We will also promote and provide information on client choice, including by leveraging our community partners, to our existing partner agencies.
- The River Bend Food Bank will revise partner agency onboarding processes to encourage SWAP Guidelines.
- The River Bend Food Bank will seek to expand our understanding of emotional health, mental health, and trauma-informed best practices for potential education of agencies. We will leverage our community partners to support this.
- The River Bend Food Bank will explore the establishment of an Advisory Committee comprised of guests to inform the Nutrition Committee on desired ideas and outcomes. We will explore ways to compensate participants for their time.

Communications

In order to ensure the River Bend Food Bank community, including our staff, volunteers, agency partners, donors, guests, and more, have the information they need, we will utilize the below communications strategies.

- Share this policy publicly, including by posting it at the food bank, and making it available on our website.
- Provide this policy to our Board of Directors, volunteers, Nutrition Committee members, and partner agencies.
- Ensure all staff have the information they need to execute this policy. Methods to accomplish this may include but are not limited to:
 - Present on this policy for all relevant staff and volunteers. The presentation would be recorded, and shared with any staff and volunteers who were not able to attend and incorporated into onboarding practices for new staff and volunteers.
 - Provide an in-depth training for any staff directly involved in the implementation of one or more aspects of this policy, to ensure they have the information and support they need.
- Send a condensed version of this policy with relevant information to our partner agencies to distribute to their guests.

- Share a condensed version of this policy with relevant information to donation partners, including retail partners, food drive partners, etc., to increase their awareness of the foods our partner agencies and their guests are asking for.

Our policy will be initially shared with all key parties by December 30th, 2022. When updates to our policy or strategic plan are made, those updates will be shared with all impacted parties in a timely fashion.

The President and CEO of River Bend Food Bank is responsible for the oversight and execution of our communications strategies, with support from the Director of Programs, the Director of Agency Partnerships, and the Resource Manager.

Monitoring

The implementation of all aspects of this policy will be conducted annually, in alignment with our annual work plan development process, with any updates to this policy made at that time. The audit will include a review of the policy by key partners, potentially including but not limited to the Nutrition Committee, Advisory Committee, the River Bend Food Bank President and CEO, and the Board of Directors. Additional input will be sought from our partner agencies, who we encourage to be in continual dialogue with their guests. This process will be led by the River Bend Food Bank's Director of Agency Partnerships, Director of Programs, and Food Sourcing Manager.

Endorsements

This policy is approved for implementation by Janet Mathis, Chairman of the Board of Directors, and Nancy Renkes, President and CEO, at River Bend Food Bank, and is effective as of signature date.

Janet Mathis Chairman of the Board of Directors River Bend Food Bank	Date
--	------

Nancy Renkes President and CEO River Bend Food Bank	Date
---	------

River Bend Food Bank Nutrition Policy Appendices

Appendix 1: Nutrition Committee Recommendations for the River Bend Food Bank Board of Directors (pages 7 - 8)

Appendix 2: Survey Findings from Food Pantry and Program Guests – English and Spanish surveys combined (pages 9 - 20)

Appendix 3: Focus Group Findings from Food Pantry and Program Guests (pages 21 - 26)

Appendix 4: Survey Findings from Food Pantry and Program Staff and Volunteers (pages 27 - 35)

Appendix 5: Key Informant Interview Findings from Food Pantry and Program Staff and Volunteers (pages 36 - 40)

River Bend Food Bank Nutrition Committee Recommendations

Background

The River Bend Nutrition Committee is comprised of a diverse set of professionals and community members working in and representing the River Bend Food Bank service area. To guide these recommendations, the Committee conducted 635 surveys with pantry guests, 121 surveys with pantry staff and volunteers, 15 key informant interviews with pantry staff, and four focus groups with pantry guests. The Committee used the data collected, member expertise, and established best practices to develop recommendations. Recommendations were ranked by Committee members considering the potential impact to individual pantry guests, the potential impact to the River Bend service region, and the feasibility (potential cost, partners available, time required, etc.). Recommendations were weighted by the extent to which they were supported by the collected data.

Top 10 Recommendations

Key: Procurement ■ Distribution ■ Health Promotion ■

1	Procure a wider variety of fresh fruits and vegetables.	
2	Budget specific funding for culturally responsive foods.	
3	Purchase and request specific foods that came up in data collection to fill gaps.	
4	Provide recorded and/or written nutrition education for pantries, especially as it relates to Healthy Eating Research (HER) nutrition guidelines (food bank level) and Supporting Wellness at Pantries (SWAP) nutrition guidelines (food pantry level).	
5	Train pantries on client choice. Note: promotion of client choice is already underway.	
6	Procure more low sodium options.	
7	Provide nutritious, culturally responsive recipes based on one or more items from food bank inventory. Recipes should be pre-printed and/or accessible via a printed QR code document.	
8	Facilitate discussions between the River Bend Food Bank, food pantries, and recipients to improve distribution practices for perishable items, including fresh produce and meat.	
9	Provide training and follow-up support for pantries on implementing environmental health promotion strategies (e.g., nudges and places the most nutritious items at eye level).	
10	Support implementation of cooking demonstrations or “shows” during pantry hours by university and other partners.	

Additional Recommendations

Overall Ranking	Recommendation
<i>Procurement</i>	
12	Provide mini grants or stipends to pantries to fill their specific procurement gaps. Encourage or prioritize pantries that commit to partnering with a local food producer or business.
13	Procure more nutritious snacks that are appealing to children.
20	Pursue more ready-to-eat meal donations, such as from convenience stores.
21	Procure more gluten-free options.
22	Procurement more non-traditional milk options such as soy, almond, shelf stable, evaporated, and low-fat lactose free.
23	Share the River Bend Food Bank Nutrition Policy with retail donors to increase their awareness of the kinds of foods pantry guests are looking for.

24	Partner with local farmers, especially those who produce foods requested by pantry guests, and identify as a member of the River Bend Food Bank priority populations.
27	Offer products in smaller quantities, including milk, cheese, and meats.
28	Support pantries to provide retail gift cards to their guests when nutritious food options are scarce.
33	The River Bend Food Bank grows its own food.
34	Procure more diabetes-friendly options, such as low-carbohydrate versions of foods traditionally higher in carbohydrates.
<i>Distribution</i>	
14	Facilitate food sharing and redistribution among food pantries. For example, consider creating a forum for agencies to share their surpluses and deficits.
15	Support pantries to deliver to guests who have transportation barriers, and to be mindful in how that food is packaged.
17	Facilitate easier transportation of groceries by utilizing bags and ties.
<i>Health Promotion</i>	
19	Develop a system for pantry guests to share recipes with each other.
25	Apply an emotional health lens to nutrition support strategies, including recipes, environmental changes, and education.
26	Revise the pantry onboarding process to standardize the health promotion strategies pantries utilize.
29	Coordinate with local health care professionals to provide health screenings and pantries.
30	Provide a monthly list of resources available for low-income residents for pantries to share with their guests. Lists should be pre-printed and/or accessible via a printed QR code document.
31	Encourage pantries to promote and support of breastfeeding as the optimal first food.
<i>Other</i>	
11	Provide training for River Bend Food Bank and pantry staff and volunteers on cultural foods. Resources include Eat Well Exchange and the Hunger and Health Feeding America Nutrition in Food Banking Toolkit .
16	Provide training for pantry staff and volunteers on soliciting input from their guests.
18	Provide kitchen equipment to pantries to distribute to their guests. Needs that arose from data collection include blenders, strainers, pots/skillets, spoons, sponges, oven mitts, and baking sheets. Consider encouraging pantries to tie distribution of equipment to attending a pantry event, such as a cooking or nutrition education class.
32	Establish an Advisory Committee comprised of pantry guests. The Committee could inform and/or be incorporated into the broader Nutrition Committee.

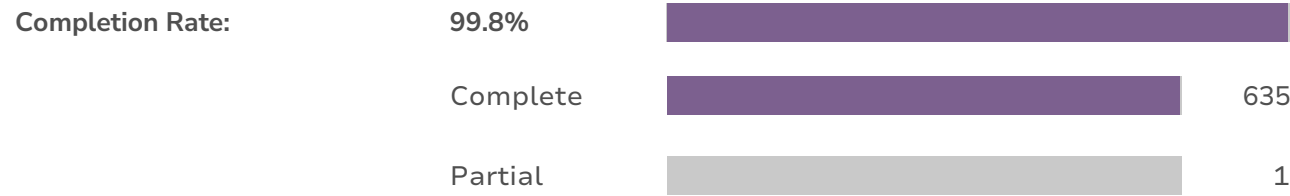
Committee Recommendations Underway

- Provide alerts, health benefits, and pictures of new items that become available for pantries to order from the River Bend Food Bank.
- Implement the Healthy Eating Research (HER) nutrition guidelines ranking system.

Detailed rankings by Committee member are available [here](#).

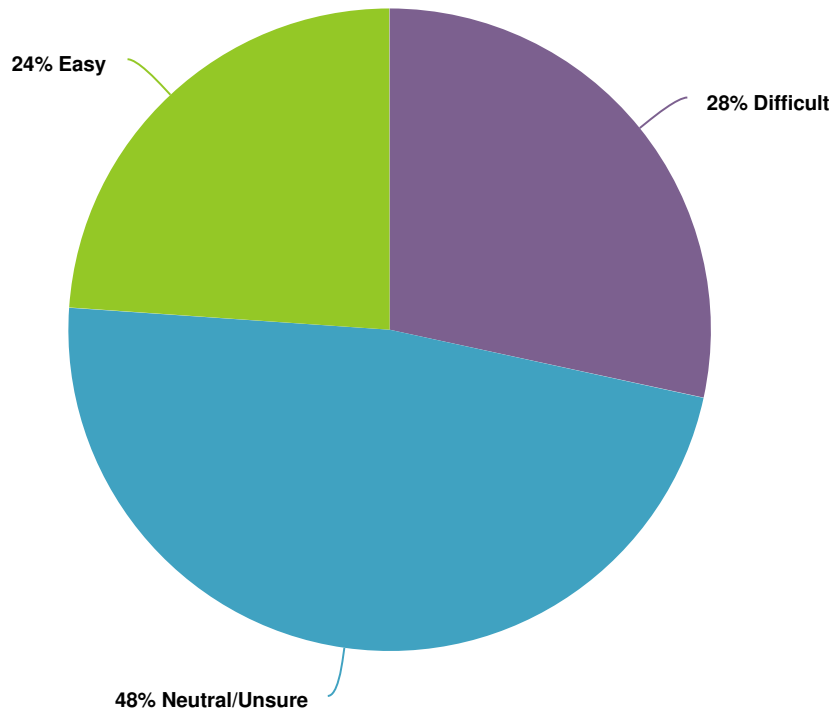
Report for Pantry Guest Survey- River Bend Food Bank




Response Counts



Totals: 636

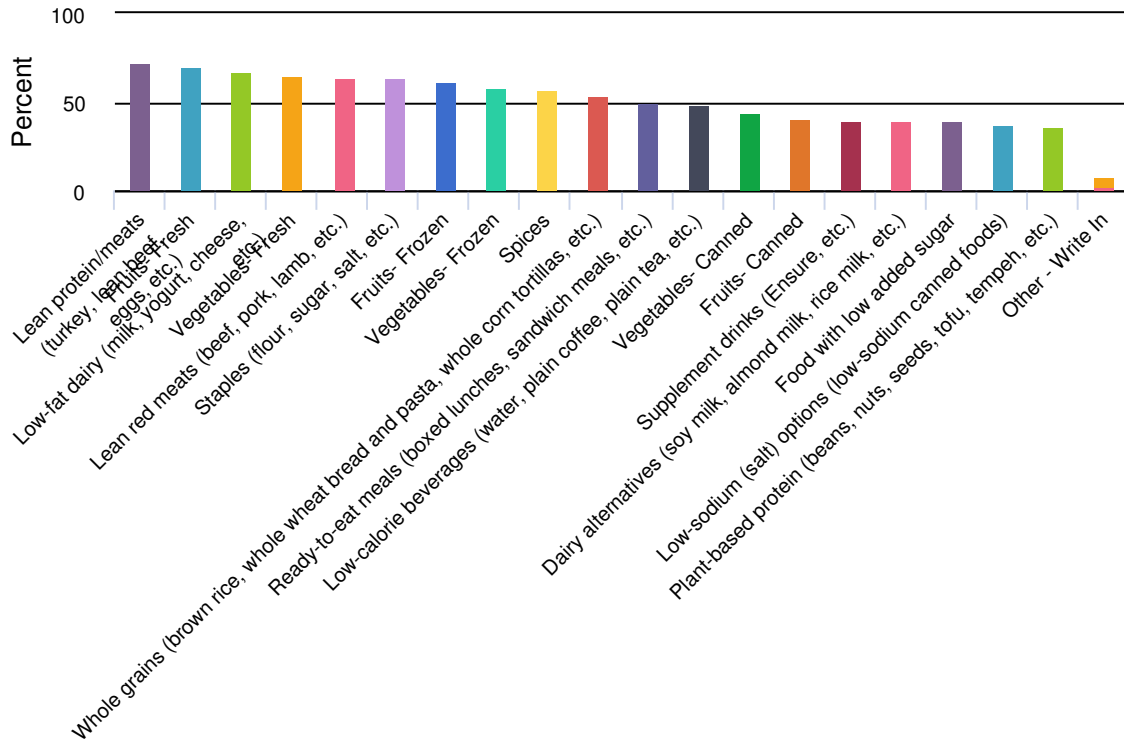
1. How difficult is it to get healthy foods for yourself and/or your family?
























Value		Percent	Responses
Difficult		28.4%	168
Neutral/Unsure		47.7%	282
Easy		23.9%	141

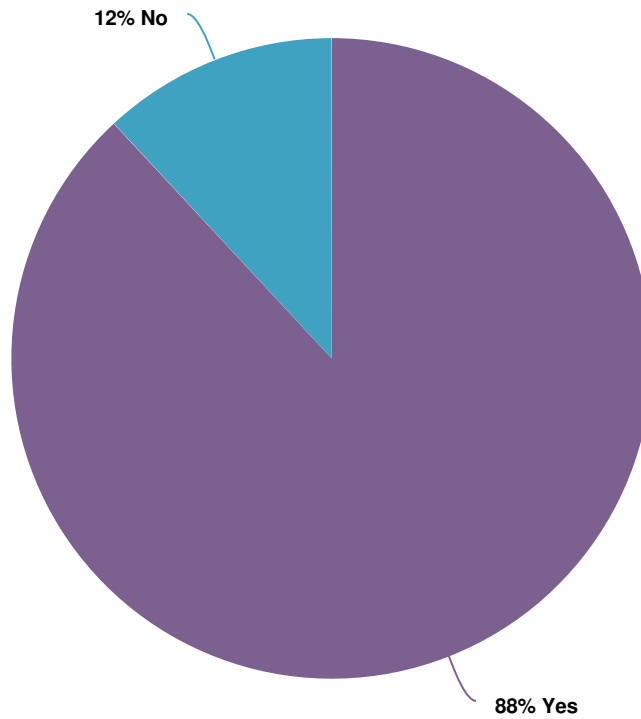
Totals: 591

2. To help you and/or your family have healthy foods available, What foods could this pantry provide more of? Please circle all that apply.



Value		Percent	Responses
Lean protein/meats (turkey, lean beef, eggs, etc.)		72.9%	455
Fruits- Fresh		70.7%	441
Low-fat dairy (milk, yogurt, cheese, etc.)		66.8%	417
Vegetables- Fresh		65.2%	407
Lean red meats (beef, pork, lamb, etc.)		63.8%	398
Staples (flour, sugar, salt, etc.)		63.8%	398
Fruits- Frozen		62.0%	387
Vegetables- Frozen		57.9%	361
Spices		57.1%	356
Whole grains (brown rice, whole wheat bread and pasta, whole corn tortillas, etc.)		54.2%	338
Ready-to-eat meals (boxed lunches, sandwich meals, etc.)		49.8%	311
Low-calorie beverages (water, plain coffee, plain tea, etc.)		48.2%	301
Vegetables- Canned		43.8%	273
Fruits- Canned		40.5%	253
Supplement drinks (Ensure, etc.)		39.6%	247
Dairy alternatives (soy milk, almond milk, rice milk, etc.)		39.4%	246
Food with low added sugar		39.3%	245
Low-sodium (salt) options (low-sodium canned foods)		37.8%	236
Plant-based protein (beans, nuts, seeds, tofu, tempeh, etc.)		36.4%	227
Other - Write In		7.9%	49
Other - Write In		2.7%	17

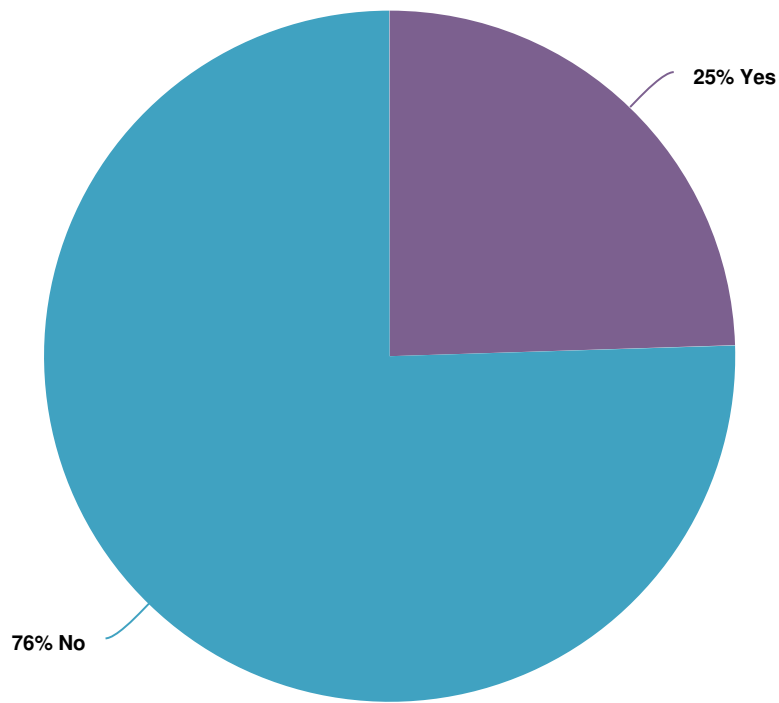
3. When visiting this pantry, are you comfortable talking with pantry workers about your family's cultural or religious food preferences and/or dietary restrictions?



Value	Percent	Responses
Yes	88.1%	546
No	11.9%	74

Totals: 620

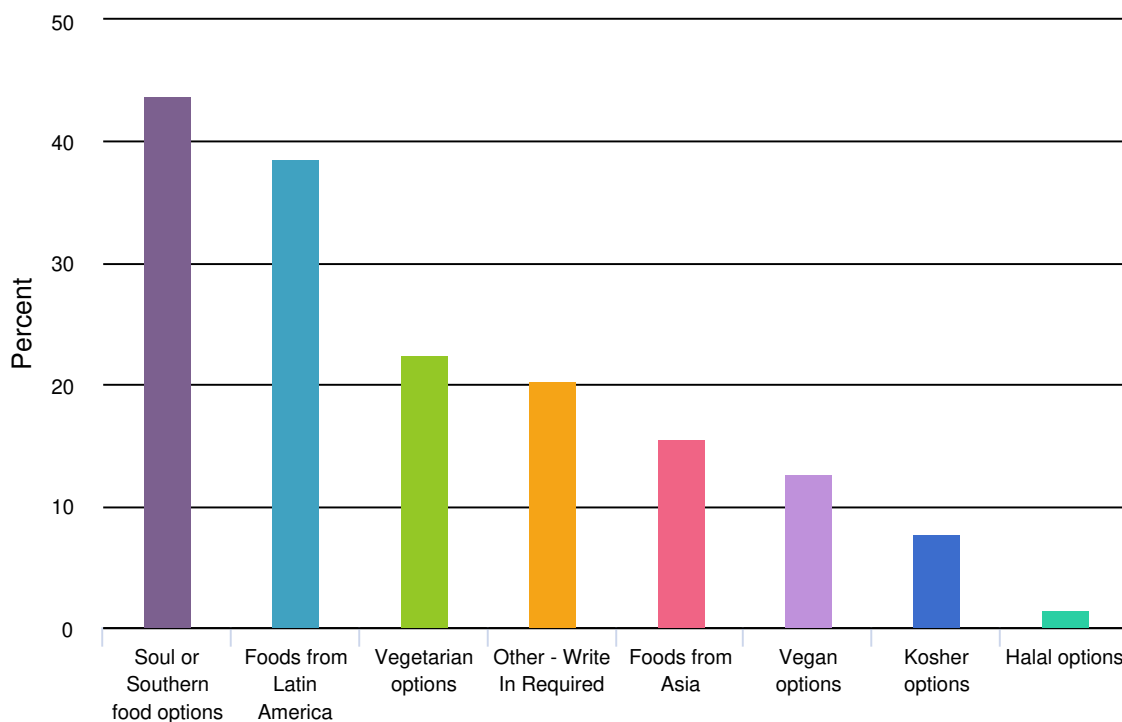
4. Is it hard to find foods at this pantry that meet your/or your family's cultural or religious preferences and/or dietary restrictions?



Value	Percent	Responses
Yes	24.5%	152
No	75.5%	468

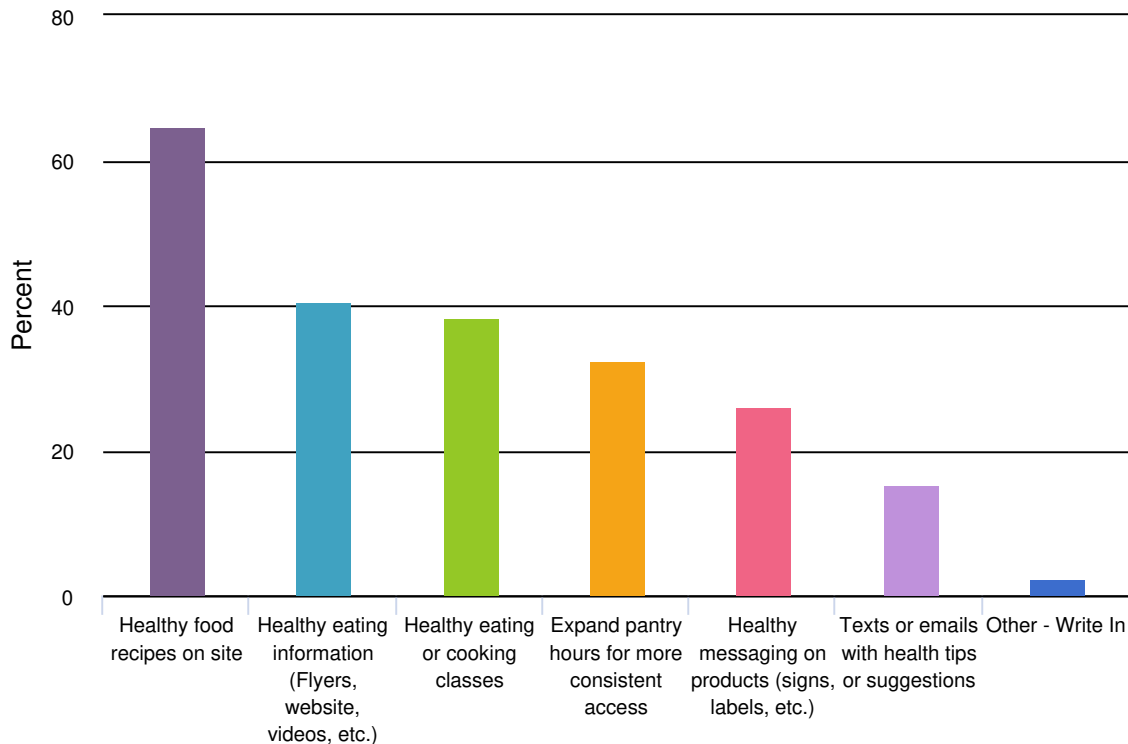
Totals: 620

5. To better support your/or your family's cultural or religious preferences and/or dietary restrictions, what foods would you like this pantry to provide? Please select all that apply. For any options selected, please use the textbox on the right to explain and/or provide examples of specific foods requests.



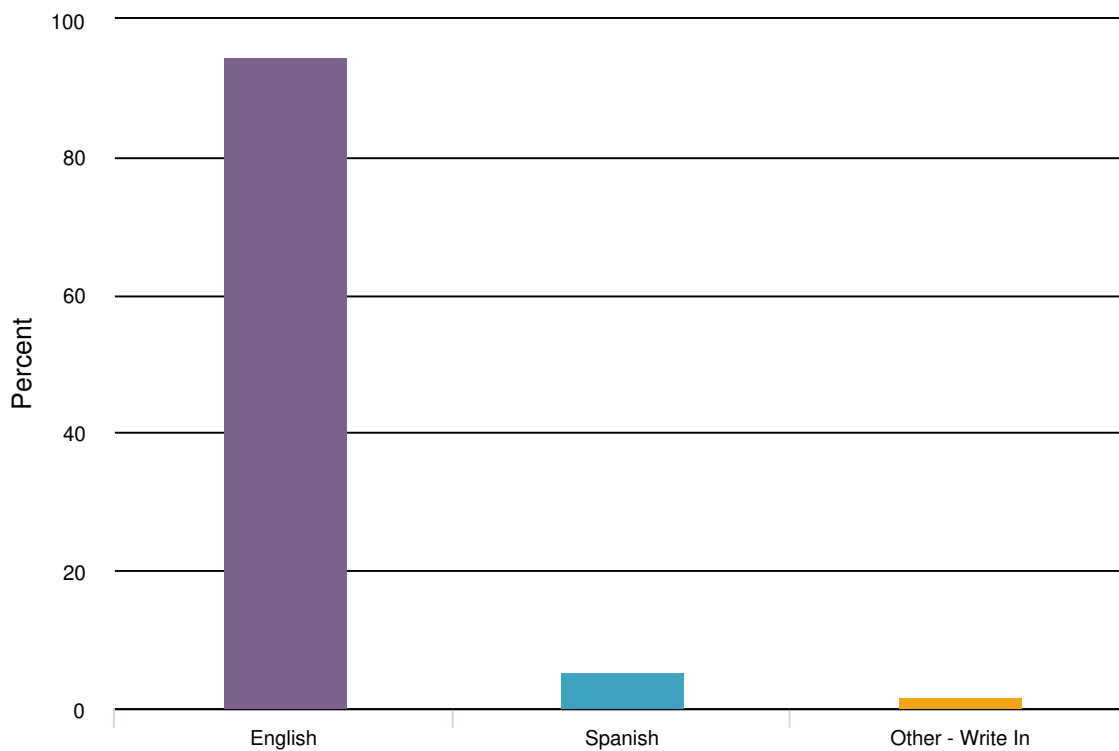
Value	Percent	Responses
Soul or Southern food options	43.7%	62
Foods from Latin America	38.7%	55
Vegetarian options	22.5%	32
Other - Write In Required	20.4%	29
Foods from Asia	15.5%	22
Vegan options	12.7%	18
Kosher options	7.7%	11
Halal options	1.4%	2

6. Would you be interested in any of the following to help you and/or your family make healthier food choices? Please select all that apply.



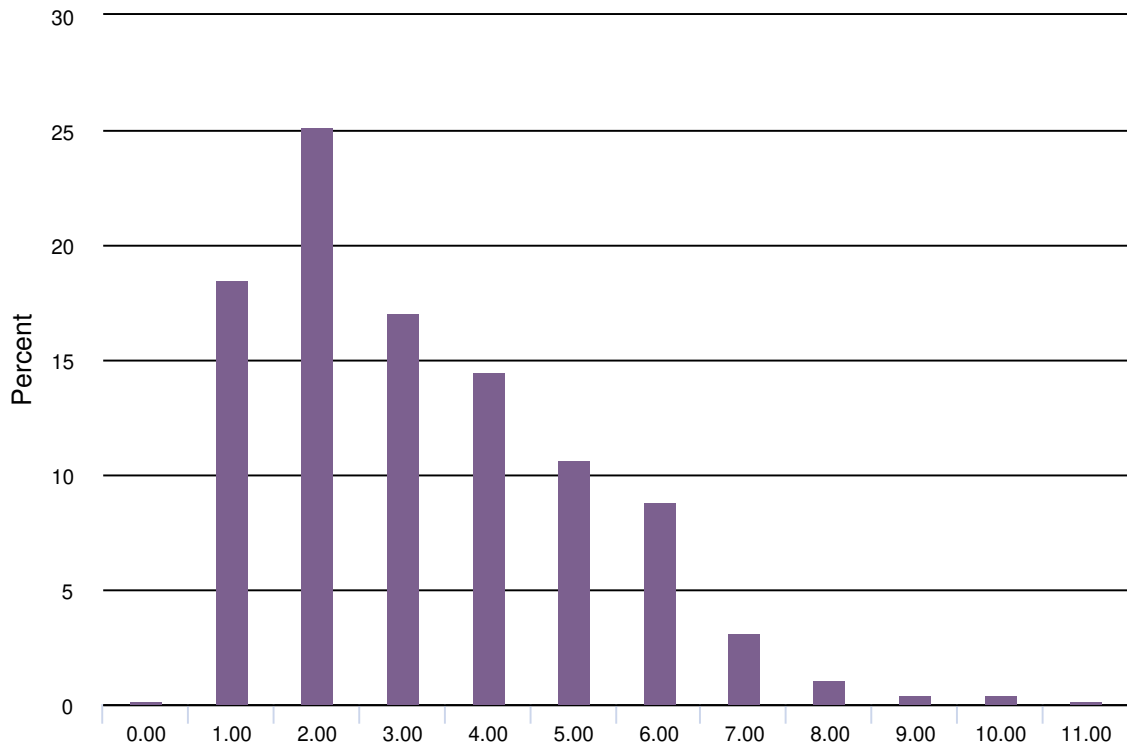
Value	Percent	Responses
Healthy food recipes on site	64.8%	249
Healthy eating information (Flyers, website, videos, etc.)	40.6%	156
Healthy eating or cooking classes	38.5%	148
Expand pantry hours for more consistent access	32.6%	125
Healthy messaging on products (signs, labels, etc.)	26.0%	100
Texts or emails with health tips or suggestions	15.4%	59
Other - Write In	2.3%	9

7. What is your preferred language? Please check one.

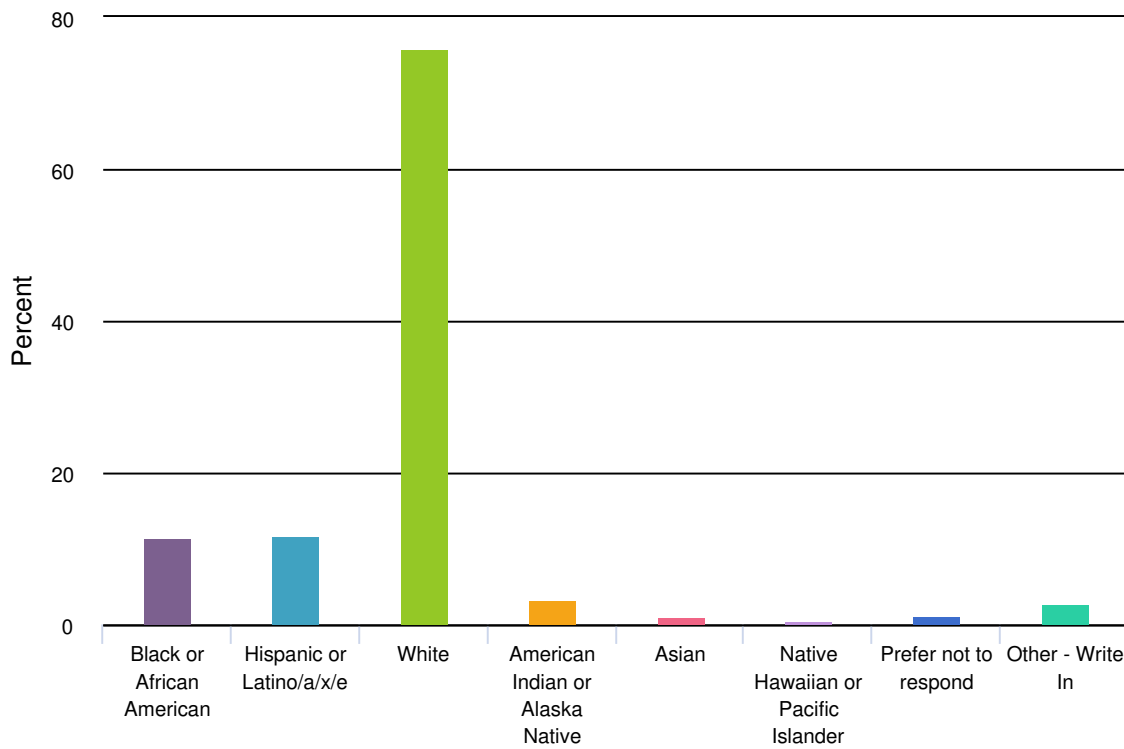


Value		Percent	Responses
English		94.5%	520
Spanish		5.3%	29
Other - Write In		1.6%	9

8. Including yourself, how many people currently live in your household?

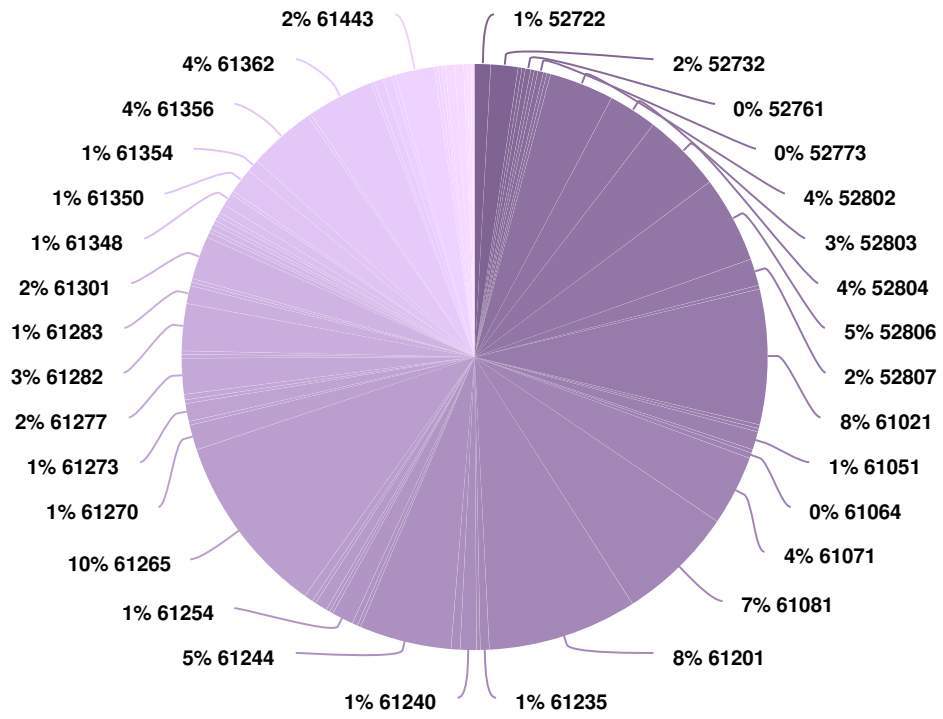


9. What race/ethnicity do you identify with? Please select all that apply.



Value	Percent	Responses
Black or African American	11.5%	66
Hispanic or Latino/a/x/e	11.7%	67
White	76.0%	437
American Indian or Alaska Native	3.3%	19
Asian	1.0%	6
Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	0.5%	3
Prefer not to respond	1.4%	8
Other - Write In	2.8%	16

10. What is your zip code?



Demographics

<p>Rural 6 participants (3 sets of 2)</p> <p>Salvation Army – Sterling (4)</p> <p>Prophetstown Food Pantry (2)</p>	<p>POC 12 participants</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • North park food pantry (Davenport) • South park food pantry (Moline) • Davenport food pantry 	<p>Refugee 12 participants</p> <p>World Relief (Moline)</p>	<p>Hispanic 6 participants</p> <p>Not tied to a pantry - Moline</p>
---	--	--	--

Healthy Food Preferences

<p>Fruits</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Fresh is best – all groups want more fresh</i> • <i>Rural groups mentioned frozen for their longer shelf life and some canned</i> • <i>Hispanic group mentioned they never use canned</i> • <i>Hispanic group has a specific need for Cactus and avocado</i> • <i>Many groups mentioned bananas, pomegranate, papaya</i>
<p>Vegetables</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Fresh is best – all groups want more fresh</i> • <i>Rural groups mentioned frozen for their longer shelf life</i> • <i>Rural groups mentioned canned corn and green beans specifically</i> • <i>Hispanic group mentioned they never use canned</i> • <i>Hispanic group mentioned fresh corn, tomatoes and tomatillos, chayote, lime/lemon, and dried chilis are important</i>
<p>Protein</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>All groups mentioned eggs are important</i>

- *All groups mentioned wanting more chicken*
- *Rural groups use peanut butter*
- *Rural and refugee group use and want pork*
- *POC group does not use pork*
- *Hispanic group needs less red meat*
- *Hispanic, refugee, and rural group use and want a variety of fish (tilapia, cod, salmon, Robollo etc.)*

Dairy

- *Rural, POC, and refugee groups all use regular milk, yogurt, cheese, and cottage cheese*
- *Rural group had the most interest in regular dairy and dairy alternatives*
- *Many Latinos are lactose intolerant, so soymilk and oat milk are important*
- *Latinos prefer queso fresco cheese*

Staples

Rural	POC	Refugee	Hispanic
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Garlic • Onion • Salt • Pepper • Italian blend • Cinnamon • Lemon pepper • Olive oil • Canola oil • Parsley • Mayonnaise • Ketchup • Mustard 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cinnamon • Onion powder • Garlic powder • Seasoning salt • Pepper • Celery flakes • Canola oil • Nutmeg • Sage (for dressing) • Flour (self-rising, almond, all purpose) • Corn meal (self-rising or yellow) • Salt substitute 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Black pepper • Salt • Oil • Flour • Chili • Chili oil • Rice is a staple !! 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Olive oil • Coconut oil • Canola oil • Vegetable oil • Cilantro • Salt course ground • Pepper • Oregano • Chamomile !! • Cornmeal • Cholula hot sauce • Bay leaves • Garlic • Cumin • Sugar • Brown sugar

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bouillon !! • Dried chilies
--	--	--	--

Holidays/Culture

<i>Rural</i>	<i>POC</i>	<i>Refugee</i>	<i>Hispanic</i>
<i>Christmas/Thanksgiving/Easter</i>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prime rib • Turkey !! • Stuffing • Green bean casserole • Sweet potatoes • Ham !!! • Egg bake with crab and shrimp 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Turkey • Ham • Duck • T-bone steak • Rump roast • Collard greens • Corn • Sweet potato • Candied yams 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ham 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Said this is a holiday they celebrate
<i>Fourth of July</i>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Burgers !! • Brats • Hot dogs • Potato salad • Ground beef or ground turkey for nachos or tacos • Fish 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ribs (beef, pork) • Brats • Hot dogs • Wings • Punch (Kool-aid packs, Cran-strawberry drink) • Water (sparkling water) • Ice • Iced tea (raspberry) • Lemonade • Milk • 100% fruit juice (apple) • Corn on the cob 	N/A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hot dogs • Burgers

GENERAL celebration foods			
<p>Celebrate Superbowl and Mother's day</p> <p>Celebrate St Patrick's day with corned beef and cabbage</p>	<p>Celebrate Cinco de mayo with Goya seasoning, cumin, and ground beef</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pork ribs • BBQ • Pig bone • Chicken • Apple juice • Pop/soda • Rice soup • Rice stew • Noodles • Rice !! • Chicken !! 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Noted they celebrate birthdays with food • Mole • Tamales !! (sweet tamales too with raisin, pineapple) • Sometimes ham, not always • Hominy • Chunk meat (pork) • Carnitas • Steak (carne asada) • Feet, head, all types of meat • Rice • Pazole (need ingredients to make this soup) • Gorditas • Enchiladas
Cultural Foods			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pot roast • Potatoes • Carrots • Spaghetti • Soups • Tamales • Italian • Mexican • Steaks • Soft taco shells 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yams • Collard greens • Sage • Self-rising cornmeal • Sweet potatoes • Goya seasoning • Ground beef • Cumin 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chicken !! • Rice !! • Spicy sauces • Tofu !! • Eggs !! • Beans • Nuts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rice • Beans • Vegetables • Tortillas (corn and flour) • Ingredients to make own tortillas • Cactus !!!!! • Corn – not corn on the cob, prefer fresh, but NOT ON the cob. • Cheese

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shrimp 			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low sugar cereals • Cornflakes !! • Limes • Guava • Papaya • Mango • Corn flour
--	--	--	---

Healthy Eating Supports

Recipe topics

- *Rural group could use budget friendly and diabetic recipes. They also like copycat recipes*
- *Hispanic group noted younger generations might need basic recipes, but older generations have recipes memorized*
- *Overall groups though recipes are helpful*

Healthy topics

- *Rural and POC want to know how to prepare unfamiliar foods*
- *Rural, POC, and refugee group are interested in food budgeting*
- *Hispanic and rural group had interest in gardening and farming chickens*
- *Rural wants to know more nutrition like how to save time, meal prep, food label reading, allergies*

Methods

- *Rural group split between using technology like apps and print copies*
- *Rural group emphasized needing an incentive for engagement virtual or in person*
- *Rural group thought a cooking show just on pantry foods would be fun/helpful*
- *POC group focused on education or recipes on the shelves or in food boxes*
- *POC group interested in how pantry volunteer training would help to share with guests*
- *Hispanic group likes in person but things live education should be recorded since everyone is busy*

Kitchen equipment

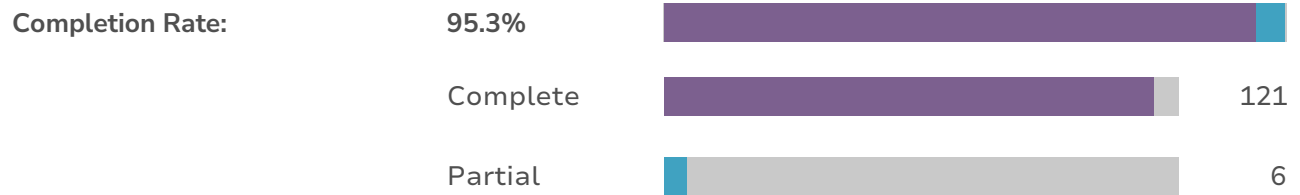
- ***Blenders are important for Hispanic and refugee groups. Also mentioned in POC group***
- ***Hispanic group has specific strainers and pots/skillets needed***
- ***Many need basic items like spoons, sponges, oven mitts, baking sheets, etc.***

Other

<i>Rural</i>	<i>POC</i>	<i>Refugee</i>	<i>Hispanic</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Pet food would also be helpful• Price is a big barrier to eating healthy (expensive to buy healthy foods)• Committing to eating healthy is a challenge• Thinks the Salvation Army provides a wide variety of fruits and vegetables	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Large quantities of foods are a struggle for the individual and the pantry• Visibility means a lot. Need to be able to easily locate where pantries are in town.• Concerns for close to expiration dates on items• Noted importance of client choice	N/A	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Need foods that are easy to prepare• Shortages of meats• Love fruits and vegetables• Milk for kids

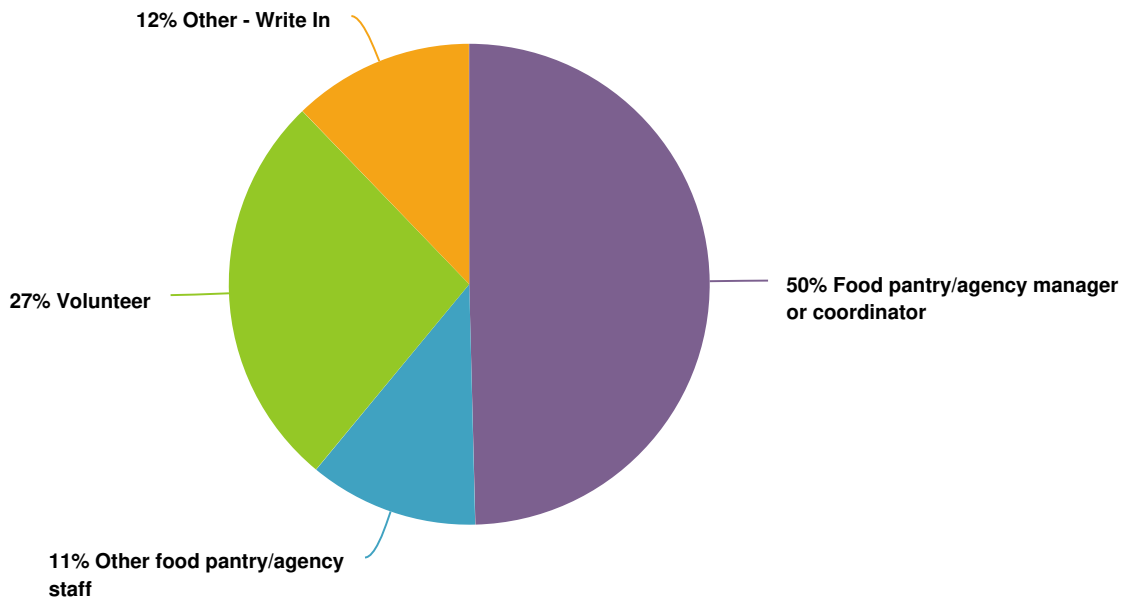
Report for Feeding Program Staff and Volunteer Survey - River Bend Food Bank





Response Counts



Totals: 127

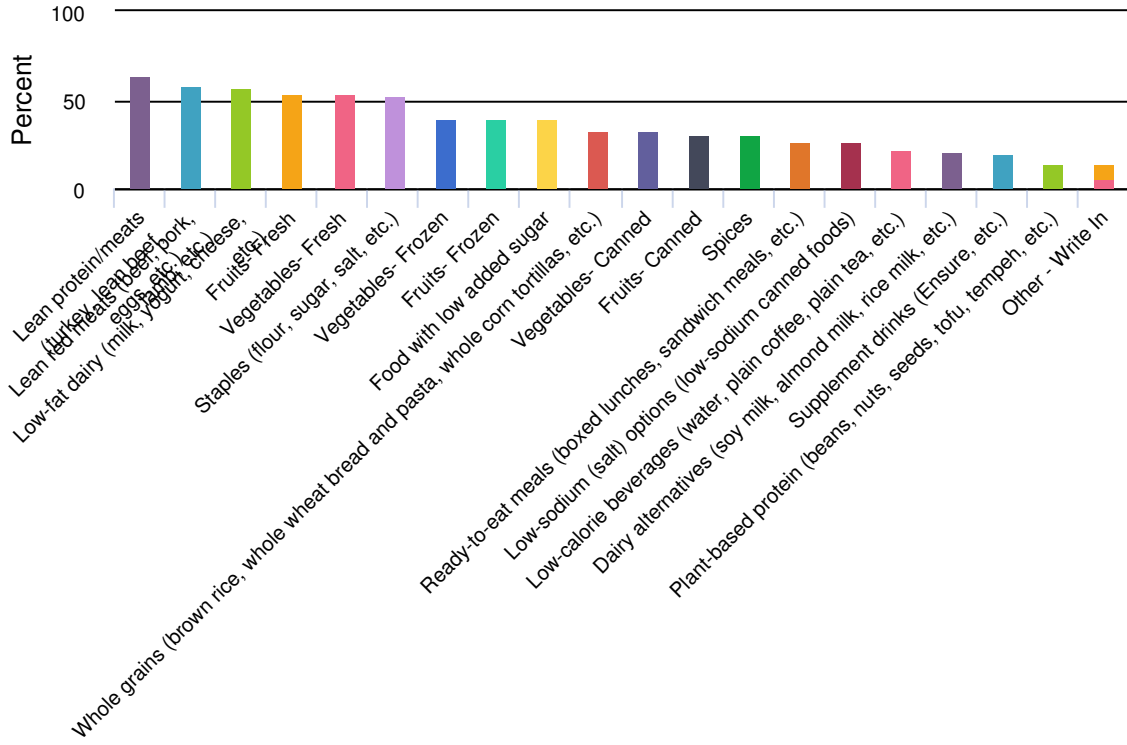
1. Role/Title:
























Value		Percent	Responses
Food pantry/agency manager or coordinator		49.6%	61
Other food pantry/agency staff		11.4%	14
Volunteer		26.8%	33
Other - Write In		12.2%	15

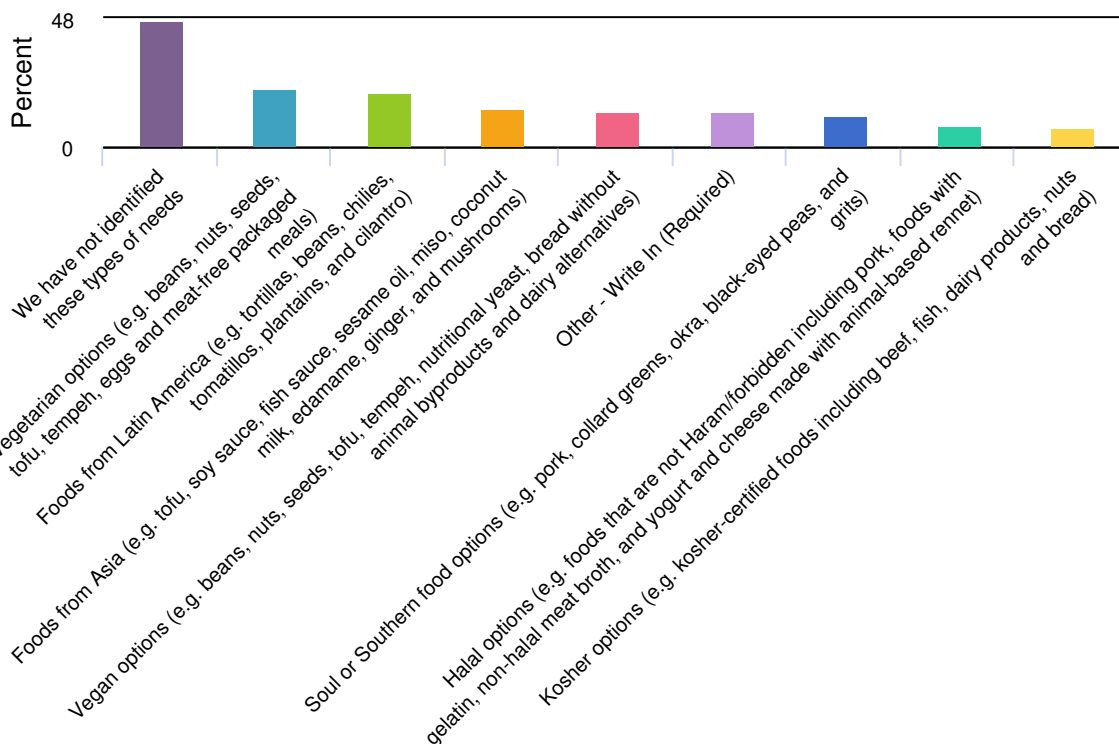
Totals: 123










3. To help your guests eat healthier, which of the following foods would you like to see more of at your Pantry?



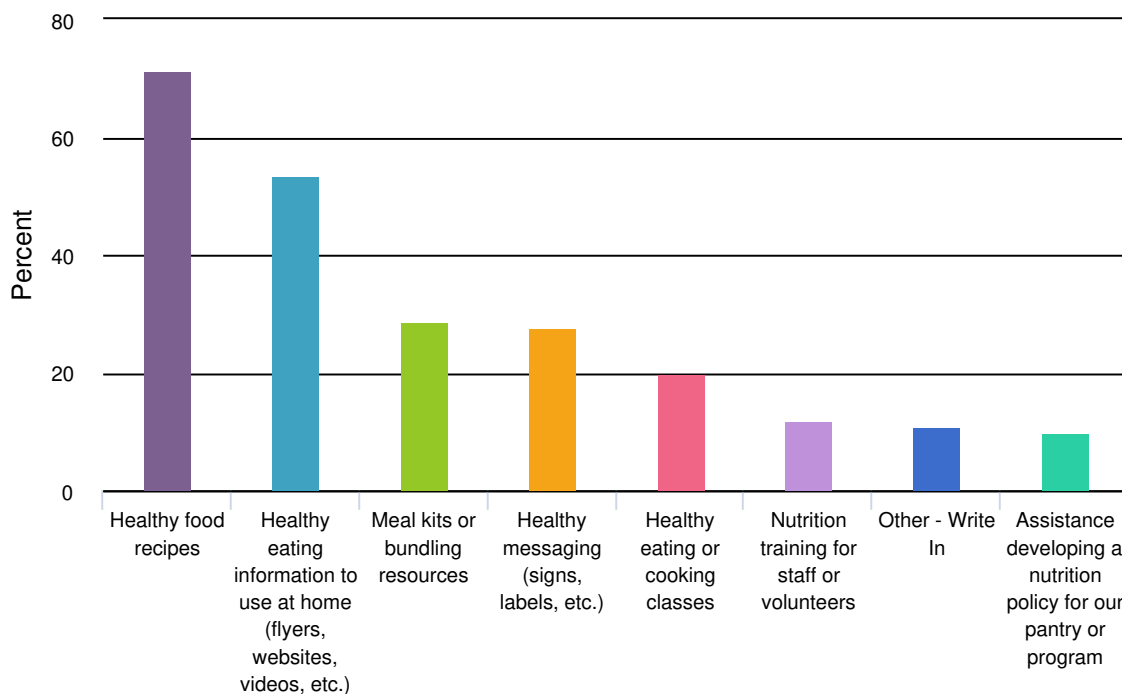
Value		Percent	Responses
Lean protein/meats (turkey, lean beef, eggs, etc.)		63.3%	76
Lean red meats (beef, pork, lamb, etc.)		58.3%	70
Low-fat dairy (milk, yogurt, cheese, etc.)		56.7%	68
Fruits- Fresh		53.3%	64
Vegetables- Fresh		53.3%	64
Staples (flour, sugar, salt, etc.)		52.5%	63
Vegetables- Frozen		40.0%	48
Fruits- Frozen		39.2%	47
Food with low added sugar		39.2%	47
Whole grains (brown rice, whole wheat bread and pasta, whole corn tortillas, etc.)		33.3%	40
Vegetables- Canned		32.5%	39
Fruits- Canned		30.8%	37
Spices		30.8%	37
Ready-to-eat meals (boxed lunches, sandwich meals, etc.)		26.7%	32
Low-sodium (salt) options (low-sodium canned foods)		26.7%	32
Low-calorie beverages (water, plain coffee, plain tea, etc.)		22.5%	27
Dairy alternatives (soy milk, almond milk, rice milk, etc.)		20.8%	25
Supplement drinks (Ensure, etc.)		20.0%	24
Plant-based protein (beans, nuts, seeds, tofu, tempeh, etc.)		14.2%	17
Other - Write In		14.2%	17
Other - Write In		5.0%	6

4. Food pantry guests may need certain foods to support their cultural or religious preferences and/or dietary restrictions. Which of these types of foods does your pantry have trouble supplying to meet the desires of your guests? Please check all that apply. For any options selected, please use the textbox on the right to explain and/or provide examples of specific foods guests request, but your pantry has trouble getting.



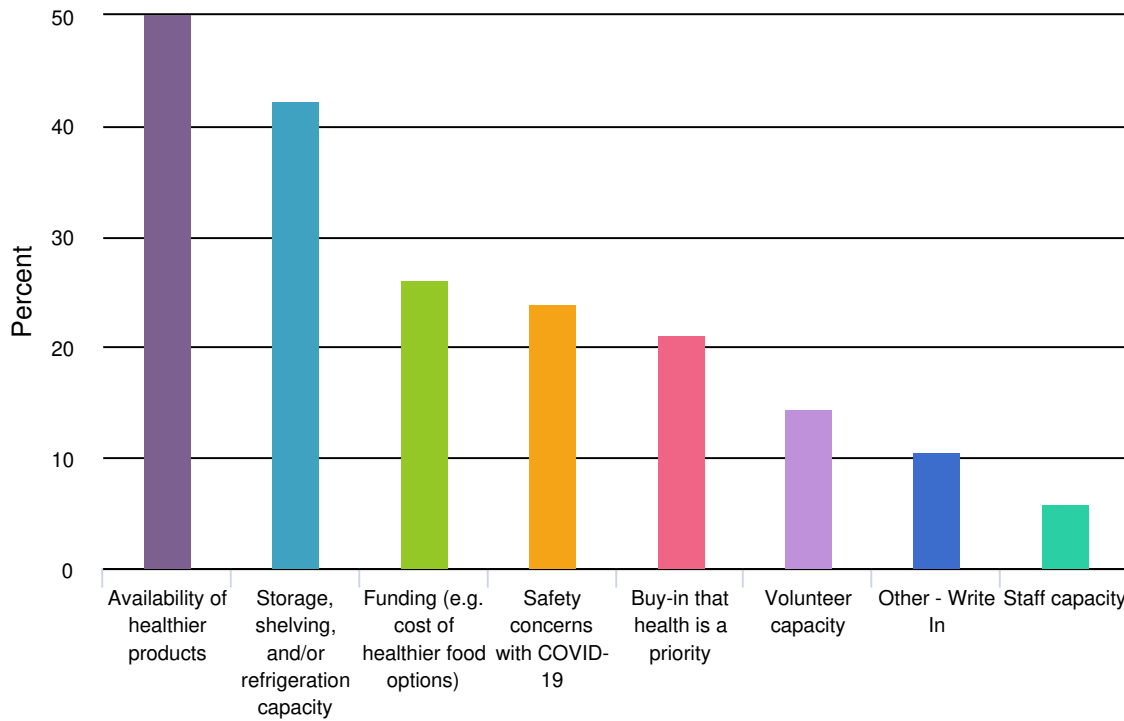
Value		Percent	Responses
We have not identified these types of needs		47.4%	46
Vegetarian options (e.g. beans, nuts, seeds, tofu, tempeh, eggs and meat-free packaged meals)		21.6%	21
Foods from Latin America (e.g. tortillas, beans, chilies, tomatillos, plantains, and cilantro)		20.6%	20
Foods from Asia (e.g. tofu, soy sauce, fish sauce, sesame oil, miso, coconut milk, edamame, ginger, and mushrooms)		14.4%	14
Vegan options (e.g. beans, nuts, seeds, tofu, tempeh, nutritional yeast, bread without animal byproducts and dairy alternatives)		13.4%	13
Other - Write In (Required)		13.4%	13
Soul or Southern food options (e.g. pork, collard greens, okra, black-eyed peas, and grits)		11.3%	11
Halal options (e.g. foods that are not Haram/forbidden including pork, foods with gelatin, non-halal meat broth, and yogurt and cheese made with animal-based rennet)		8.2%	8
Kosher options (e.g. kosher-certified foods including beef, fish, dairy products, nuts and bread)		7.2%	7

5. What would you like to see provided to help support your guests in making healthier food choices? Please check all that apply:



Value	Percent	Responses
Healthy food recipes	71.3%	72
Healthy eating information to use at home (flyers, websites, videos, etc.)	53.5%	54
Meal kits or bundling resources	28.7%	29
Healthy messaging (signs, labels, etc.)	27.7%	28
Healthy eating or cooking classes	19.8%	20
Nutrition training for staff or volunteers	11.9%	12
Other - Write In	10.9%	11
Assistance developing a nutrition policy for our pantry or program	9.9%	10

6. What barriers does your pantry face in your ability to provide healthier foods to your guests? Please check all that apply.



Value	Percent	Responses
Availability of healthier products	50.0%	52
Storage, shelving, and/or refrigeration capacity	42.3%	44
Funding (e.g. cost of healthier food options)	26.0%	27
Safety concerns with COVID-19	24.0%	25
Buy-in that health is a priority	21.2%	22
Volunteer capacity	14.4%	15
Other - Write In	10.6%	11
Staff capacity	5.8%	6

Key Informant Interviews: Key Takeaways

Illinois- 10 Completed

7 rural

3 people of color

5 immigrant/refugee

8 non-English

Iowa- 5 Completed

2 rural

2 people of color

1 immigrant/refugee and non-English

Challenges			
Name	Code	Number of times mentioned	Takeaways
Staples	!6	25	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Refrigeration and freezer space is a challenge • The larger quantities of produce are hard to distribute before they go bad • Would like more variety of fresh produce • Produce goes bad too quickly and they can't distribute • Pantries would like more milk • Pantry guests don't select foods based on expiration dates despite education • Pantries use their own funds to fill in gaps and funds are a concern • Better coordination in delivery dates and pantry hours • Smaller quantities of packaged foods would be helpful as they can't repackage items (meats, cheeses, and produce)
Challenges with Fresh Produce	!2	21	
Perishable Food	!3	19	
Money/ Cost	!4	18	
Distribution	!5	16	
Fridges/Freezer	!1	14	

Support Ideas			
Name	Code	Number of times mentioned	Takeaways
Other Support	@6	45	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Better coordination in delivery dates and pantry hours • Provide foods to better meet needs of their clients • Guests would like meat more regularly in addition to fresh produce and dairy products • Connecting with local grocery stores gardens to help fill in gaps • Different naming conventions in ordering system to better reflect items • Have access to order lists ahead of time so they can plan to supplement, if needed • Boxes would be helpful instead of bags • Recipes/nudges would be helpful • Connections to grants
Availability of More Food Options	@3	28	
Revised Distribution	@1	16	
Ordering	@5	14	
Obtaining more Fresh Produce	@2	10	
Vendor Relations	@4	9	

Guest Feedback Mechanisms			
Name	Code	Number of times mentioned	Takeaways
Informal Feedback	#1	21	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Informal feedback is collected regularly through conversations and relationship building • Some pantries have created surveys to gather feedback from guests
Formal Feedback	#2	9	
Other Feeding	#3	1	

Learning Opportunities			
Name	Code	Number of times mentioned	Takeaways
Foods Traditional to Cultures	\$1	29	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learning opportunities related to culture ranked highly (cultural sensitivity, traditional foods, cultural holidays) • Learning opportunities related to nutrition ranked highly • Indicated that resource guides or handouts would be a helpful way to receive trainings • Online learning opportunities would be helpful as well so folks can watch as their schedule allows
Other Learning	\$6	12	
Healthy Foods	\$2	11	
Resource Guide	\$4	11	
Virtual Learning	\$5	8	
Food Safety	\$3	5	

Recipe Mechanisms			
Name	Code	Number of times mentioned	Takeaways
Printed Handout	%1	16	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recipes would be helpful • Top two responses on recipe mechanisms are pre-printed and some pantries shared they have printing capability if they were emailed recipes
Media Source	%4	7	
App	%2	3	
Book	%3	3	

Suggestions to Peers

Name	Code	Number of times mentioned	Takeaways
Client Choice	^2	21	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Client choice ranked highly and many encouraged client choice to their peers • Interest was expressed about communication between pantries to network • Building relationships with guests is vital to serving them • Applying to grants is helpful
Client Relations	^5	15	
Establishing Relationships	^4	7	
Storing Foods	^3	4	
Volunteer Assistance	^6	3	
Technology	^1	1	

Other

Name	Code	Number of times mentioned	Takeaways
Other	&2	20	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Many expressed their gratitude to River Bend Food Bank and are thankful for their partnership • Location of pantry in relation to River Bend causes difficulty in ordering
Recognition	&1	10	

Foods referenced in key informant interviews by food group	
Fruits	More variety on fresh fruit
Vegetables	More variety on fresh vegetables, onions, potatoes, garlic, squash, zucchini, carrots, canned green beans and corn, turnips, collard greens, kale, cabbage, Brussels Sprouts
Grains	Rice* (basmati and jasmine), fufu, saltine crackers
Protein	Beans (dried)*, Nuts, lentils, chickpeas, legumes, sardines, canned tuna, whole fish, eggs*, meat*, ground beef,
Dairy	Almond milk, milk*, cheese,
Other	Palm products, flour*, rice flour, corn flour, bread flour, yeast, oil, garlic powder, cumin, paprika, turmeric, salt, pepper, sugar*, chili paste, curry powder, minced garlic, fish sauce, hot sauces, pastes, halal foods, salsa, lemon pepper, brown sugar*, cinnamon, masa, condiments (ketchup, mustard, salad dressing)