4-Star Food Pantry Model: Creating Healthier Food Pantries Together in Northwest Ohio
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Introduction to the 4 Star Food Pantry Model

What is the 4 Star Food Pantry Model?

The 4 Star Food Pantry Model is a guide for food pantries to evaluate, discuss, and decide ways that would make sense for them to increase healthier offerings to their patrons. Because emergency food banks/pantries play such an important role in determining the health and wellness of the underserved community, a 4 Star Food Pantry model was developed as a guide to help improve the services that are offered to the community by food banks/pantries.

What does the 4 Star Food Pantry Model include?

The 4 Star Food Pantry Model includes the following:

- A checklist to be used as a self-assessment guide when determining what level of offerings a food pantry currently provides for its patrons and where changes could be made to help better serve the community.
- A glossary to help further explain each level listed in the checklist.
- A resource section to provide guidance when deliberately trying to reach certain levels listed in the checklist. All of these resources can be found on the Food Council website.

Why should an emergency food pantry be concerned with health and wellness of the community?

Lucas County has one of the highest rates of food insecurity statewide with nearly one in five Lucas County residents facing hunger. Research suggests that hunger can compound the prevalence of chronic disease. In addition, hunger can negatively affect the health of children 10 to 15 years later. By helping to reduce hunger, while at the same time helping to increase access to healthier options, we can help improve the health and wellness of the community to an even greater degree.

Who developed this guide?

This guide was developed by emergency food pantries, healthy community programs, community nutrition educational organizations, healthcare organizations, and others in the community who are trying to improve health outcomes in underserved areas of Northwest Ohio.

For more information on this model, contact

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### 4-Star Food Pantry Model:
**Creating Healthier Food Pantries Together in Northwest Ohio**

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<th>Star Level</th>
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<td>Physically accessible</td>
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<td>Variety of hours</td>
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<td>Physically accessible</td>
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<td>Ability to collaborate/share/refer resources</td>
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<td>Staff/volunteer education</td>
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<td>Offer at least 2 options in each of the five food groups: grain, fruit, vegetable, dairy, protein</td>
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<td>Offer some whole grains choices</td>
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<td>Educate about foods for chronic medical conditions</td>
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<td>Partner with medical services</td>
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<td>Healthy food demos</td>
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<td>Videos on nutrition</td>
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<td>Relationship with local farmers/growers</td>
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<td>Grow garden on site</td>
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<td>Cultural food options where applicable</td>
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**NOTE: Once your pantry has completed all categories in a star level your pantry is considered that level.**
4-Star Food Pantries: Creating Healthier Food Pantries Together in Northwest Ohio

GLOSSARY

*  
Consistent hours of operation
Set hours and days of operation that can be shared with clients and partners

Sustainable
Ability to pull from a variety of resources to provide food for those in need

Staffing
Job descriptions/expectations for paid staff and/or volunteers

Food safety / storage
Follow USDA guidelines for food storage and/or food preparation

Pest control
Having the ability to deal with rodents

Offer at least 1 option in each of the five food groups: grain, fruit, vegetable, dairy, protein
Use MyPlate for information regarding the five food groups

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Physically accessible
Able to make accommodations for persons with physical disabilities

Ability to collaborate/share/refer resources
Be prepared to share resources with clients to help with needs in addition to emergency food

Patron intake
Ability to track clients

Equipment for perishable storage
If supplying perishable food, have adequate food-safe storage

Staff/volunteer education
Staff/volunteer orientation and trainings to share a consistent message with the site’s mission of a healthier food pantry – may include but not limited to handouts or classes
**Food drive donor education**
Supplying organizations donating foods a list of healthy items you are in need of. -may include but not limited to handouts

**Offer a non-processed option for highly-processed food**
Some examples: for items like “meal helpers” also offer plain noodles, for items like high-sodium flavored rice or pasta also offer plain rice and pasta, for items like cereals high in sugar also offer options without sugar

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**Variety of hours**
Set hours and days of operation that can be shared with clients and partners, offer staggered days or hours to meet the needs of the community

**Access to fresh local foods, in season**
Utilize fresh produce that might be from community gardens, private gardens, gleaned from farms, donated by farmers or accessed through Food Banks.

**Client able to choose own foods**
Use MyPlate to design a client choice food pantry model

**Share healthier recipes**
Share healthier recipes based on pantry inventory. Healthier recipes should have simple, easy to follow steps with a limited list of ingredients

**Promote reading food labels**
May include but not limited to posters, handouts or classes to train staff/volunteers/clients about food labels

**Offer client education**
Offer education on a variety of food topics such as stretching the food dollar, healthy meals, and healthy snacks for kids. May include but not limited to posters, handouts or classes

**Offer at least 2 options in each of the five food groups: grain, fruit, vegetable, dairy, protein**
Use MyPlate for information regarding the five food groups.

**Offer some whole grain choices**
For example, offer whole grain choices like 100% whole grain bread, brown rice, 100% whole grain cereal, 100% whole grain pasta

**Offer low-fat or 1% milk products**
Not limited to but including milk, yogurt, cheese or fortified soy beverages
Offer non-salt seasonings
Not limited to but include, onions, garlic, dried/fresh herbs and/or powders, not salts

Food inventory management
Organized system to track and manage inventory.

Educate about foods for chronic medical conditions
Offer education about food and chronic medical conditions such as low-sodium for hypertension, gluten-free for celiac disease and low-sugar foods for diabetes. May include but not limited to posters, handouts or classes

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Partner with medical services
Partner with a medical provider to provide medical screenings/services for chronic conditions that relate to diet such as high blood pressure, hypertension, and diabetes

Healthy food demos
Offer samples and food demonstrations of healthier recipes promoted at the pantry

Videos on nutrition
Use wait-time to view media on healthy eating

Relationship with local farmer/grower
Have a direct working relationship with a farmer/grower to plan and meet for your pantry

Donor education for companies donating to pantries
Work with donor to donate healthier foods to pantries. This includes having discussions with the people responsible for donating the food to the pantries

Gardening classes
Offer classes to clients to grow their own produce

Grow garden on site
Pantry has garden on-site to be used for demonstration purposes, place for clients to garden and a source of fresh produce

Cultural food options where applicable
If relevant, offer foods specific to clients that meet their cultural preferences
4-Star Food Pantries:
Creating Healthier Food Pantries Together in Northwest Ohio

RESOURCES

* 

**Consistent Hours of operation**

**Sustainable**

*How to run a food pantry*


**Staffing**

*Food Pantry job description*
http://www.docstoc.com/docs/43910342/Food-Pantry-job-descriptions-combined-1

Food Pantry Volunteer
http://www.denum.org/FoodandClothingBankJobDescription.php

http://aiccccares.org/involved/descriptions/food%20pantry%20volunteer.htm

Food Pantry Worker

**Food safety / storage**

*Perishable foods*
http://codes.ohio.gov/oac/901%3A3A3-57

http://lancaster.unl.edu/food/ftjan05.htm

**USDA Regulations for Food Pantries**
http://www.ehow.com/list_7328498_usdaregulations-food-pantries.html

Food safety for food pantry donations
http://extension.umaine.edu/publications/4302e/

**Pantry Food Storage**

Are you storing food safely?
http://www.fda.gov/ForConsumers/ConsumerUpdates/ucm093704.htm
Equipment/Tips for perishable storage:
http://tpu.bluemountains.net/unit-display.php?recordID=19672&s=TD702

Pest Control
http://www.anfponline.org/Members/Articles/2012_03_pestmanagement.pdf

Offer at least 1 option in each of the five food groups: grain, fruit, vegetable, dairy, protein

Fruit
http://www.choosemyplate.gov/food-groups/fruits.html
http://www.choosemyplate.gov/food-groups/fruits_amount_table.html

Vegetable
http://www.choosemyplate.gov/food-groups/vegetables.html
http://www.choosemyplate.gov/food-groups/vegetables-amount.html#

Grain
http://www.choosemyplate.gov/food-groups/grains.html
http://www.choosemyplate.gov/food-groups/grains-amount.html#

Protein
http://www.choosemyplate.gov/food-groups/protein-foods.html
http://www.choosemyplate.gov/food-groups/protein-foods-amount.html#

Dairy
http://www.choosemyplate.gov/food-groups/dairy.html
http://www.choosemyplate.gov/food-groups/dairy-amount.html
http://www.choosemyplate.gov/food-groups/dairy-counts.html

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Physically accessible
http://www.abilitycenter.org/
Ability to collaborate/sharing resources

http://www.unitedwaytoledo.org/211


Patron intake

http://www.smum.org/images/USDAForm_Sample.jpg


Equipment for perishable storage

Staff/volunteer education

http://lucas.osu.edu/

Local contact: Ohio State University Extension, Lucas County, 419-213-2022, powers-barker.1@osu.edu

Food drive donor Education


http://www.nesl.edu/llne/BestFoodsToDonateToYourFoodDrive.pdf

http://www.midohiofoodbank.org/pdfs/FoodDrive/MOF-Grocery-list-2013.pdf

http://www.threecranes.org/mofb-donation-list.pdf

Offer a non-processed option for highly-processed food

http://www.livestrong.com/article/26023-list-unprocessed-foods/

http://www.getting-started-with-healthy-eating.com/list-of-processed-foods.html

http://home.comcast.net/~twinbearer/eatinghealthier2002/processed.html

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Variety of hours

Access to fresh local foods, in season

http://www.justfood.org/fresh-food-all/resources/access-fresh-produce-efps

http://www.cfbnj.org/_assets/library/2013/01/Fresh- Produce-Guidelines-for-Pantries.pdf
Client able to choose own foods

Promote reading food labels

Offer client education
Healthy Eating on a Budget

Fruit

Vegetables
Grains
http://www.choosemyplate.gov/food-groups/grains-why.html
http://www.choosemyplate.gov/food-groups/grains-tips.html

Protein
http://www.choosemyplate.gov/food-groups/protein-foods-why.html
http://www.choosemyplate.gov/food-groups/protein-foods-tips.html

Vegetarian
http://www.choosemyplate.gov/food-groups/vegetarian.html
http://www.choosemyplate.gov/healthy-eating-tips/tips-for-vegetarian.html

Dairy
http://www.choosemyplate.gov/food-groups/dairy-why.html
http://www.choosemyplate.gov/food-groups/dairy-tips.html

Oils
http://www.choosemyplate.gov/food-groups/oils.html
http://www.choosemyplate.gov/food-groups/oils-how.html
http://www.choosemyplate.gov/food-groups/oils-why.html
MyPlate

Healthy Meals


Kids


Sodium

http://www.clemson.edu/extension/hgic/food/pdf/hgic4054.pdf

Seafood

Beverages

Celebrations

Food Safety

Parent tips
Active Lifestyle
http://www.choosemyplate.gov/food-groups/downloads/TenTips/DGTipsheet29BeAnActiveFamily.pdf
http://www.choosemyplate.gov/food-groups/downloads/TenTips/DGTipsheet30BeActiveAdults.pdf

Offer at least 2 options in each of the five food groups: grain, fruit, vegetable, dairy, protein

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http://www.choosemyplate.gov/food-groups/fruits.html
http://www.choosemyplate.gov/food-groups/fruits_amount_table.html

Vegetable
http://www.choosemyplate.gov/food-groups/vegetables.html
http://www.choosemyplate.gov/food-groups/vegetables-amount.html#

Grain
http://www.choosemyplate.gov/food-groups/grains.html
http://www.choosemyplate.gov/food-groups/grains-amount.html#

Protein
http://www.choosemyplate.gov/food-groups/protein-foods.html
http://www.choosemyplate.gov/food-groups/protein-foods-amount.html#

Dairy
http://www.choosemyplate.gov/food-groups/dairy.html
http://www.choosemyplate.gov/food-groups/dairy-amount.html
http://www.choosemyplate.gov/food-groups/dairy-counts.html

Offer some whole grain choices
http://www.choosemyplate.gov/food-groups/grains.html
http://www.choosemyplate.gov/food-groups/grains-amount.html#

Offer low-fat or 1% milk products
http://www.choosemyplate.gov/food-groups/dairy.html
Offer non-salt seasonings
http://lancaster.unl.edu/food/spiceherbshandout-color.pdf

Food inventory management
http://www.nfsmi.org/documentlibraryfiles/PDF/20121114100354.pdf


https://www.foodpantrymanager.org/

Educate about foods for chronic medical conditions

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Partner with Medical services
ProMedica Cancer Institute
877-291-1441
Facebook: ProMedica Cancer Institute
http://www.promedica.org/cancer

Healthy Food demos


Videos on nutrition

http://nutritionfacts.org/videos/


Relationship with local farmers/grower

http://toledofarmersmarket.com/

http://www.foodcouncil419.org/

http://www.toledogarden.org/?page_id=11

Donor education for companies donating to pantries
**Gardening classes**
Gardening information: Lucas County Horticulture Hotline, Ohio State University Extension, Monday, Wednesday and Friday, 10:00am – 1:00pm, 419-578-6783 or richter.71@osu.edu

**Grow garden on site**
http://ohioproud.org/docs/produceavailability.pdf

**Cultural food options**
*Hispanic*
http://www.diabetes.org/espanol/

http://www.hispanicfoodcommunications.com/hispanicnutrition.html

*Pacific Island Cultures*
http://www.ctahr.hawaii.edu/NEW/CulturalCuisine/CulturalCuisine.htm

*Religion*

*Hispanic recipes*
http://www.eatingwell.com/recipes_menus/collections/healthy_hispanic_recipes