

**Food Gatherers**

# ***Food & Fund Drive Planning Guide***

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## Thank you for fighting hunger!

Every year, hundreds of local organizations and individuals host food and fund drives that benefit Food Gatherers. We rely on these donations to fuel our mission to alleviate hunger and end its causes in our community. Anyone can start a food and/or fund drive and this guide will help you make it a success!

### About Hunger

In Washtenaw County, many of our neighbors struggle with food insecurity, which is the lack of access to enough affordable, nutritious food for an active, healthy lifestyle. Hunger exists in every city, township, and zip code in our community and affects children, families, individuals, seniors, and veterans.

Our neighbors often have to make difficult choices between paying bills and having enough to eat. Your drive will help provide a reliable source of healthy food.

### About Food Gatherers

Food Gatherers is the food bank and food rescue program – and the lead anti-hunger agency – serving Washtenaw County. Our mission is to alleviate hunger and eliminate its causes in our community. We do this by connecting valuable food resources to programs that serve those in need.

Each year, Food Gatherers distributes millions of meals through our network of 140 than partner agencies. This is only possible thanks to the support of many volunteers, community partners, and donors.

# Getting Started

## Choosing a Food or Fund Drive

Before you organize a donation drive, decide whether you will be collecting food, funds, or both! With 95% of every donation directly supporting our hunger relief efforts in Washtenaw County, gifts of food and/or funds provide direct relief to children, families, individuals, and seniors.

### *Food Drive*

Food drives are essential to supporting Food Gatherers' mission. Donated food makes up about half of all the food we distribute. Food drives raise awareness of food insecurity and encourage community members to get involved in fighting hunger where we live. This a great option for individuals, as well as schools, businesses, clubs, faith groups, and more.

### *Fund Drive*

A fund drive is the most effective way to alleviate hunger in our community. Food Gatherers can make donated dollars go further by purchasing food in bulk to help fill the gaps in high-demand items that are not easily donated, like dairy and meat. Monetary donations also allow us to support our direct service programs and keep our warehouse running.

### *Both!*

This is our recommendation for engaging the greatest number of community members in the fight against hunger. Donated food keeps our warehouse shelves stocked and donated funds allow us to purchase needed food and to run our programs and warehouse. There are many ways to combine food and fund drives so we encourage you to get creative!

## *Questions & Support*

[info@foodgatherers.org](mailto:info@foodgatherers.org)  
(734) 761-2796





# Food Drives

Food drives are a great group activity for students, clubs, businesses, neighbors, faith groups, and more! Anyone can host a food drive to benefit Food Gatherers. Here are some steps to help you organize your food drive.

## Pick your dates

Decide how long you want your food drive to be. We recommend at least 2-4 weeks so that people have enough time to bring in their donations but you can also do a “flash” food drive over a weekend or at an event.

## Set a goal

It helps to set a goal that participants can work towards, such as gathering 500 pounds of food or filling three food drive boxes. If you have a business, you can try to fill your lobby, or start a competition with another group or business to see who can collect more food before the deadline.

## Register Your Food Drive

No matter the size or scale of your food drive, please register your food drive online [here](#) or through our website’s Give Food page. Fill out the form with the details of your food drive and indicate whether you need containers (food drive boxes or barrels) and if you would like to schedule a pick-up for the food.

## Register Your Food Drive

See our printable list of Most Needed Food Items below. All donations should be nonperishable, unopened, and unexpired. You can drop off donations at our warehouse at 1 Carrot Way in Ann Arbor, M-F, 9:00 a.m.-4:45 p.m. If you have collected more than 100 pounds of food or have special circumstances, please contact us to arrange a pickup.

## Add a Fund Drive

Encourage people to donate funds! Donations can be made by cash or check (payable to Food Gatherers) and/or you can set up your own online fundraising page on our website to collect donations by credit card. See page 6 of this guide for more detailed instructions.



## Most Needed Food Items

Food Gatherers appreciates all types of non-perishable food donations, however, we have the most requests from our partner agencies for the following items. For donation hours and instructions, please visit our website: [www.foodgatherers.org](http://www.foodgatherers.org).

### Non-perishable food

- Hearty soups (beef stew, chili, etc.)
- Canned meats (tuna fish, chicken, etc.)
- Canned vegetables
- Packaged pasta & rice
- Whole grain cereal & oatmeal
- Baking & cooking supplies (flour, sugar, oil, etc.)
- Condiments
- Nut butters or jelly
- Kid-friendly snacks (granola bars, goldfish, etc.)
- Baby food & formula
- Ensure & other nutritional supplement drinks

### Personal care items

- Baby items (diapers, wipes, etc.)
- Soap & shampoo
- Toothpaste & toothbrushes
- Disposable razors

#### *Please note:*

*Food Gatherers prefers low/no sodium canned food and food made from whole grains.*

*We cannot accept opened containers and expired products. Please avoid items with glass packaging.*

# Fund Drives

Hosting a fundraiser for Food Gatherers keeps our warehouse shelves stocked and our trucks on the road six days a week distributing food to our community partners. Because of Food Gatherers' bulk purchasing power and food bank connections, every dollar donated goes further than it would at your grocery store.

There are lots of way you can raise funds to support our neighbors facing hunger.

## Online

Our online giving tool makes it easy to host a fundraiser at your place of business, school, congregation, or with another group. Start your own fundraiser at [foodgatherers.org/fundraise](https://foodgatherers.org/fundraise).

1. Click the "Start a Fundraiser" button
2. Follow the prompts to create an account. If you already have one, there is an option to reset a forgotten password.
3. Set up your campaign.
  - a. Choose the option for a "Basic" fundraiser. Enter the name of your fundraiser into the designated box (required) and add a description. If you have a goal, you can enter the amount (optional).
  - b. Upload a campaign photo and/or a background photo. If you do not upload anything, this field will default to a video about Food Gatherers and our generic background image.
  - c. If your fundraiser has a physical location and event time, add it here (optional).
  - d. You can choose to add an activation or expiration date and customize your progress bar.
  - e. Choose "none" under Rewards
4. Click "Submit".

A shareable link will be emailed to you, and a Food Gatherers staff member will review and approve your fundraiser, usually within 1 business day.

## In Person or Promotions

Collect cash or checks at your in-person event! Or run a promotion through your business by donating a percentage of sales to Food Gatherers or offering a discount when customers make a donation directly. Drop off funds to the Food Gatherers warehouse.

## Social Media

Create your own online fundraiser through Facebook at [facebook.com/fund/foodgatherers](https://facebook.com/fund/foodgatherers).

# Next Steps

## Promote your food/fund drive

Spread the word about your campaign and post updates on social media. Make sure to tag us @foodgatherers so we can support your work!

If you need logos or other information for promotional materials, call or email Food Gatherers at 734-761-2796 or info@foodgatherers.

## Stay involved with Food Gatherers

There are lots of ways to take action to fight hunger where we live.

- Sign up for email alerts from Food Gatherers
- Volunteer at our warehouse or Community Kitchen
- Advocate for policies that support or neighbors facing hunger

## Spread the word about hunger

Follow Food Gatherers on Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and LinkedIn and share our updates and resources. Let your community know that there are resources available for anyone in need.

