

Sophia's Kitchen Food Pantry Policy

Good nutrition helps people to live long, healthy lives and reduces their chance of developing chronic diseases such as heart disease, type 2 diabetes, obesity, and certain cancers. Unfortunately, most Americans, especially those experiencing food-insecurity, do not have a healthy diet.

As such, Sophia's Kitchen is committed to providing nutritious foods and beverages that support dietary needs to our food pantry guests. This policy outlines the food donations we are thrilled to receive, those we accept, and those we discourage. We really appreciate your partnership, generosity, and support in getting healthy foods into the hands of the people who need them.

Category	Encourage	Accept	Discourage
Fruits and Vegetables	Fresh, frozen, canned or dried fruits and vegetables without added sugars or sodium (salt)	Canned vegetables (low sodium preferred), canned fruit in light syrup	Dried fruit with added sugars, canned fruit in heavy syrup
Grains	Plain whole grains, whole grain cereal with ≤6 grams sugar/serving	Plain refined grains, oatmeal with added sugar, cereal with 7 – 11 grams sugar/serving	Grains with seasoning mixes, cereal with >11 grams sugar/serving
Protein	Dried beans, low-sodium canned beans, plain nuts, nut butters and seeds, plain poultry and fish, eggs, tofu	Canned beans, nuts and nut butters with added sugars or sodium, plain red meat	Refried beans, processed meats (deli meat, bacon, sausage, breaded chicken, etc.)
Dairy and Alternatives	Unsweetened and fat-free or low-fat milk, yogurt and cheese, unsweetened non-dairy alternatives	Milk, yogurt and non-dairy alternatives with ≤11 grams added sugar/serving, regular cheese	Milk, yogurt and non-dairy alternatives with >11 grams added sugar/serving, cream cheese
Beverages	Unsweetened water (still or sparkling), coffee and tea	100% juice, diet and sugar-free beverages, sparkling water with added sugar, coconut water	Regular sodas, energy drinks, sports drinks, juice drinks with added sugars
Packaged Snacks	None	Plain popcorn, whole wheat crackers, vegetable crisps, rice cakes, unsalted whole grain pretzels, bars and granola with ≤6 grams added sugars/serving	Potato chips, pretzels, cheese crackers, flavored popcorn, bars and granola with >6 grams sugar/serving
Desserts	None	None	All desserts

Adapted from the Healthy Eating Research Nutrition Guidelines for the Charitable Food System, March 2020 and Kathryn Bernstein, a registered and licensed dietitian from the Illinois Public Health Institute, with funding from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

**Sophia's Kitchen Food Pantry
Nutrition Policy
Peoria, IL**

Purpose - The goal of this nutrition policy is to educate and support our guests and community in making balanced, healthy choices. Our nutritional approach is a long-term commitment as we strive to fulfill our mission commitment to provide nutrition for the day and support for their health needs.

Rationale –

Sophia's Kitchen Food Pantry is committed to supporting the health of our pantry guests.

- 1)** We are concerned with the increasing rate of diabetes, obesity, high blood pressure and serious diet related diseases and conditions in our community.
- 2)** We understand that food has an impact on preventing and managing diet-related diseases that our guests may have.
- 3)** We want our pantry guests to know that their health and preferences for more healthful foods are among our highest considerations in acquiring food.
- 4)** We recognize the increasing role that food pantries play in the providing healthful foods to community members in need.

Procedures

Purchased food - We will only purchase food and products that meet the Healthy Eating Research (HER)

Nutrition Guidelines including:

- 1) whole grain cereals, bread, rice, crackers, pasta, and other grains
- 2) canned fruits packed in 100% fruit juice only
- 3) low-sodium or no-salt added products
- 4) low-sugar or "no-added" sugar choices
- 5) fresh produce

Donated food and product - All food that is deemed safe will be distributed; not all food distributed will be healthy as our pantry reflects real life choices. We communicate regularly with donors to encourage donations in line with the HER Nutrition Guidelines through offering a shopping list aligned with 'green' food items. We actively seek fresh produce and products from community partners.

Implementation - The policy will be communicated and disseminated to all participants by July 2023. The Director of the food pantry is responsible for the oversight of communications and dissemination of the policy to staff, volunteers, donors, and community partners. Training of all staff and volunteers will be initiated and completed by September 2023.

Approval - This policy has been approved by Sophia's Kitchen Food Pantry Staff on May 19, 2023 for implementation. The policy will be effective as of September 2023. The policy will be reviewed 6 months after implementation in March 2023 and annually thereafter.