

Stocking a Healthy Food Pantry Checklist

Fruits and vegetables

- Fresh or canned vegetables, low-sodium or no salt added (carrots, sweet potatoes, corn, green peas, lima beans, asparagus, beets, green beans, mushrooms, tomatoes, mixed vegetables, etc.)
- Fresh or canned fruit in 100% juice, or no sugar added
- Applesauce, no sugar added
- Dried fruit, no sugar added
- 100% fruit juice
- 100% vegetable juice

Whole grains

(First ingredient listed should say “whole” wheat, corn, or other grain.)

- Whole grain and enriched pasta
- Brown or wild rice
- Whole grain cold cereals with low sugar
- Whole grain hot cereals, oatmeal, Cream of Wheat, grits
- Whole grain crackers
- Corn or whole grain tortillas, non-refrigerated
- Quinoa
- Barley
- Popcorn
- Whole grain granola bars

Dairy

- Low-fat or non-fat, shelf-stable milk — powdered or UHT
- Low-fat soy milk, unflavored
- Low-fat pressurized cheese made from milk, non-refrigerated

Protein food items

- Fresh or canned meats and fish packed in water (chicken, tuna, salmon, sardines, etc.)
- Canned beans, low-sodium or no salt added
- Dried beans/peas (black beans, black-eye peas, chickpeas [“garbanzo beans”], kidney beans, navy beans, lentils, etc.)
- Nuts and seeds, low-sodium or no-salt added (almonds, peanuts, sunflower seeds, pumpkin seeds, pecans, etc.)
- Nut butter (peanut, almond, etc.)

Other items

- Spaghetti sauce, tomato sauce, low-sodium or no salt added
- Canned and shelf-stable soups and broths, low-sodium or no salt added
- Vegetable oil
- Flour
- Spices

Do not donate

Help pantry volunteers by avoiding these donations.

- Home-canned or home preserved foods
- Home-prepared meals or desserts
- Spoiled foods
- Rotten fruits and vegetables (or those close to spoiling)
- Opened packages of food
- Foods in glass, crushed, dented, or rusted containers
- Foods past their “best by” date
- Foods past their “use by” date
- Packages of food that are dirty or soiled
- Foods not from a retail business



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Adapted from: NYC Healthy Food Donation Initiative Food Donation Checklist accessed online at www1.nyc.gov/site/doh/health/health-topics/healthy-food-donation.page and FoodWise Safe and Healthy Food Pantries Toolkit (2018): <https://fyi.wisc.edu/safehealthypantries>