

NOURISH — YOUR — NEIGHBOR

A toolkit to support healthy food drives



Illinois Extension
UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS URBANA-CHAMPAIGN



TABLE OF CONTENTS

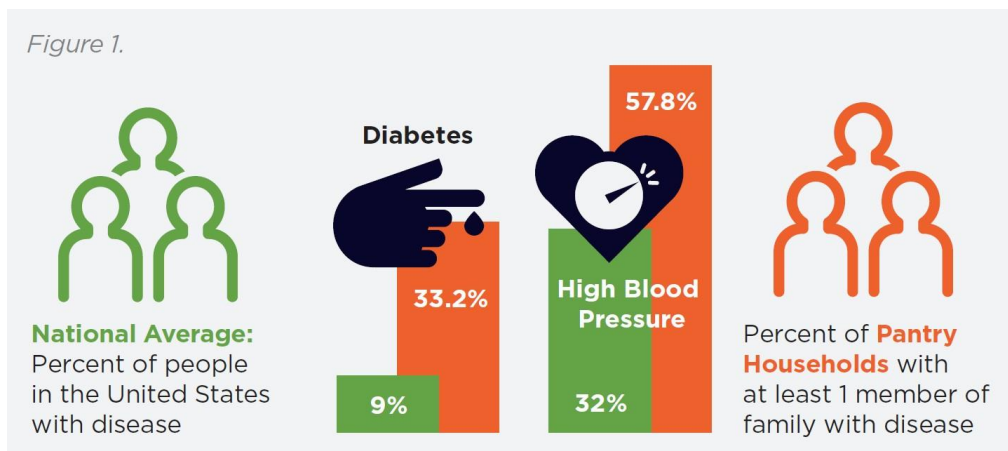
Introduction.....	2
Background.....	3
Implementation Checklist	4
Implementation Guide.....	5
Promotional Materials.....	8
Collection Sheet.....	13
Helpful Links.....	14
Appendices	15
Poster	15
Shopping List.....	16

INTRODUCTION

Thank you for your interest in organizing a food drive. Healthy food donations can play a significant role for individuals that rely on local food pantries. The Nourish Your Neighbor toolkit originated from The Southern Illinois Food Pantry Network to assist food pantries, individuals, businesses, agencies, churches, schools and other community organizations with planning, promoting, and conducting healthy food drives. The resources found within this toolkit center around nutritious foods that are always needed on food pantry shelves. These resources can be customized to meet the needs of your local pantry or organization.

BACKGROUND

Food insecurity is defined as a lack of consistent access to enough food for an active, healthy life and uncertain availability of nutritionally adequate foods.¹ Food insecurity is often faceless, silent, and diverse. A comprehensive study conducted by Feeding America in 2014 found that 47% of food pantry guests report being in fair to poor health and that client households have high rates of diabetes and high blood pressure.² (Figure 1). Further compelling data shows that 66% of client households must choose between buying food and paying for medicine or medical care.



Households with children are particularly vulnerable to hunger. In the state of Illinois, 1 in 9 people and 1 in 6 children struggles with hunger.³ This higher rate among children is partially due to larger household sizes and the fact that children usually depend on their caregivers. According to Hunger in America, food insecure children are at a greater risk compared to other low-income children, of not reaching their full potential as individuals. More specifically, children who are undernourished have difficulties concentrating and bonding with their peers as well as have a higher chance of suffering illnesses that have the potential to force them to miss school.⁴

More than half of those who visit food pantries are employed, yet one in three food insecure families in Illinois makes too much money to qualify for federal nutrition programs.³ This gap is filled by local food pantries while simultaneously transforming the lives of residents in their communities.

1. What is food insecurity? (n.d.). Hunger and health. Retrieved May 8, 2020, from <https://hungerandhealth.feedingamerica.org/understand-food-insecurity/>
2. Weinfeld, N.S., Mills, G., Borger, C., Gearing, M., Macaluso, T., Montaquila, J., & Zedlewski, S. (2014). Hunger in America 2014 national report. Retrieved from http://help.feedingamerica.org/HungerInAmerica/hunger-in-america-2014-full-report.pdf?s_src=W191ORGSC&s_referrer=google&s_subsrc=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.feedingamerica.org%2Fresearch%2Fhunger-in-america
3. Feeding America. (2017). Food insecurity in Illinois. <https://map.feedingamerica.org/county/2017/overall/illinois>
4. Feeding America. (2019). Child food insecurity. https://www.feedingamerica.org/sites/default/files/2019-05/2017-map-the-meal-gap-child-food-insecurity_0.pdf

IMPLEMENTATION CHECKLIST



△ Build a team

- Community organizations
 1. Midwest Youth Services – Youth Group Voice at the Market
 2. Jacksonville Farmers Market – donations and resources
 3. Jacksonville Memorial Hospital – Link program and funding.
 4. Pathway Services. – Weighing and transporting produce.
- Transportation of donations
 1. Pathway Services.

△ Outline details of the food drive

- Easy to access location for collection
- Time of year and duration of drive – May 7th through October 31st.
- Number of volunteers needed
 - Pathway Services
 - Midwest Youth Services.

△ Obtain food collection supplies

- Tote for carrying produce.
- Scale for weighing produce.
- Backyard gardener donations.
- Donations of Farmer's Market Produce.

△ Determine the donation process

- Tuesday and Thursday throughout the farmer's market.

△ Choose a theme

- Hunger Action Month

△ Set a goal

- 20-100 pounds of fresh produce in the month of October for Hunger Action Month.

△ Market the food drive

- Organize materials
- Decide when to start- Thursday
- Promote at local food retail stores
 - Social media posts
 - Press release
 - Shopping lists
 - Displays at stores

- △ Host healthy food drive
 - Start food drive
 - Track donations
 - Celebrate success

IMPLEMENTATION GUIDE

Build a team

- If you are a community organization, connect with a local food pantry to work together on the details before the drive (when, where, what, collection goal, etc.). They may be able to help promote the event and provide ideas to make it more successful.
- If you are a food pantry looking to host a food drive, connect with community organizations to assist with marketing, providing volunteers, providing a location to host the event and providing donations.

Outline details of the food drive

- **WHERE:** Choose a location that is well-known in the community and easy to access.
 - Will it occur at one location or at several places?
 - If holding the event at a public location or business, be sure to receive approval prior to setting up. Examples: sporting events, grocery stores, shopping centers, schools, and/or festivals.
- **WHEN:** Determine the time of year and duration of the drive.
 - One day events may work for a large event like a football game where volunteers assist with the drive onsite
 - Holding a drive for several weeks is great for standalone bins set out in multiple locations. This may tie in with a theme like Hunger Action Month in October.
- **WHO:** Decide the number of volunteers needed.
 - Consider volunteers for set-up/tear-down, loading, unloading, collecting items (door-to-door, bins at grocery store, classroom), sorting, checking for expiration dates or damaged items, someone to take pictures along the way, and marketing/promotion.
 - Identify a point-person who can assign volunteer roles.

Obtain food collection supplies

- Assess what's needed – bags, boxes, crates, etc.
- Providing bags work well for individual donations.
- Reach out to local food pantries, community organizations and/or businesses to obtain manageable, sturdy containers (milk crates, barrels, etc.) to collect food donations. If you cannot find an organization to donate these materials, you may have to purchase them.

Determine the donation process

- There may be one central location or several locations to accept food donations.
- Work with your local food pantry to determine delivery recommendations.
- Coordinate with your volunteers to pack food properly at the end of the healthy food drive before transporting to the food pantry.

Choose a theme

A theme is not required but can make it fun and meaningful for donors. Having a week-long food drive – target a specific food group or item each day. Be creative! Examples:

- “Fruit Frenzy” to focus on getting canned fruits.
- “Veggie Variety” to increase getting low-sodium canned vegetables.
- “Breakfast Bites” that features whole grain breakfast items.

Set a goal

Determine a realistic goal for your food drive by estimating how much food could potentially be donated. Working towards a goal can be motivating. However, it’s okay if you don’t reach your goal! Examples:

- Collect foods from the five food groups that represent a breakfast themed food drive.
- Collect 1,000 pounds of shelf-stable, low-sodium protein food items for a protein theme food drive.
- Collect 500 food items from each of the five food groups with a total 2,500 food items.

Market the food drive

Take the time to market your food drive and be intentional with efforts to increase success.

- Determine the timeline for marketing – depending on the type of food drive and organizations/businesses who are a part of the plan timelines will vary from 4-12 weeks.
- Determine what type of marketing materials will be used. Consider social media, flyers, newspaper, TV, radio, memos, phone messages, newsletters, e-mails and/or send reminders often.
- Use promotional materials on pages 8 – 12 for ideas.

Promote at local food retail stores

The following ideas can encourage shoppers to select specific items to donate. Work with your local store to see what is allowed and what equipment/resources are needed or can be borrowed.

- Place the Nourish your Neighbor poster in a prominent location at store entrances.
- Provide a collection bin by doors with a poster explaining the food drive.
- Display the Nourish Your Neighbor placement cards above healthy food items that are most in need by your pantry as a point of decision prompt.
- Set-up a large entrance or endcap (end of aisle) display that features most needed items on the food drive list.
- Record or send a script for the store to record a looped announcement about the food drive.
Example: “This week, we invite you to nourish our neighbors by donating healthy food items as part of the [name of food drive]. Find a shopping list and donation bin at entrance doors and thank you for shopping at [name of store].”

Host healthy food drive

Start

- Confirm food drive details with partners about one week prior to food drive start date.
- Train volunteers for their role.
- Implement your food drive based on outlined plan. Track
- Capture the process by taking pictures throughout the drive.
- Track the number of items/pounds of food collected during the food drive. To ease the tracking process, separate food items that meet Nourish Your Neighbor recommendations from the items that do not.
- Use the Food Drive Collection Sheet to determine the percentage of food collected that meets the Nourish Your Neighbor recommendations.

Celebrate

- Deliver food donations to food pantry based on the plan.
- Be proud that your food drive team helped increase healthy options for hungry neighbors.
- Thank volunteers and donors for helping make the food drive successful.
- Create a summary of results based on your goals.
- Share results of the food drive with the community through social media and local media.

PROMOTIONAL MATERIALS

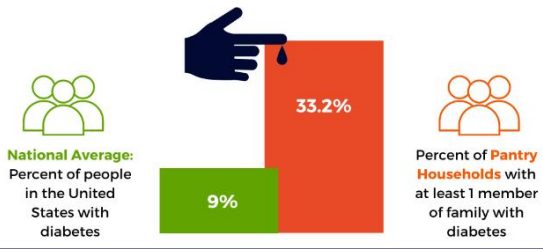


Social Media Posts

The following graphic images and sample captions may be used to promote your upcoming food drive on social media or give ideas to create your own! Be sure to attach a link or flyer/image providing additional information about the food drive.

To boost views around your posts consider tagging pages or accounts of the partner organizations. When you see this **@nameoforganization** within an example caption, type “@” directly followed by the page or account name of that organization. This will tag or notify them of the post.

Example Weekly Social Media Posts		
Wk	Caption Text	Graphic
1	<p>Support our Nourish Your Neighbor food drive on (dates). Check out the list for items in need. #nourishyourneighborIL #donatehealthyIL</p> <p>Optional text: “Shopping lists are available at @partnergrocerystore”</p>	
2	<p>Consider making a difference for those in need of food. Purchase foods from the Nourish Your Neighbor checklist and drop the items off at [insert @location and date]. Not only will your donation help fill the shelves at your local food pantry OR @foodpantry but will also be nutritious! #nourishyourneighborIL #donatehealthyIL</p>	

3	<p>Help fight food insecurity by supporting your local food pantries OR @foodpantry1, @foodpantry2, etc. through nutritious food donations. #nourishyourneighborIL #donatehealthyIL</p>	
4	<p>Make a difference by donating foods found on the Nourish Your Neighbor checklist at the upcoming [insert name of food drive and @location]. Your donation will help support healthy choices for people in our community. @localhospital #nourishyourneighborIL #donatehealthyIL</p>	
5	<p>Support food pantry guests by donating low-sodium, shelf-stable foods recommended for a heart healthy diet! Consider donating the food items found on the Nourish Your Neighbor checklist at the upcoming [insert name of food drive and @location]. #nourishyourneighborIL #donatehealthyIL</p>	
6	<p>You can help combat food insecurity by supporting your local food pantries OR @foodpantry1, @foodpantry2, etc. by donating nutritious foods during food drives! #nourishyourneighborIL #donatehealthyIL</p>	

7	<p>Support food pantry guests by donating shelf-stable fruits with no added sugar or in 100% juice! Consider donating the food items found on the Nourish Your Neighbor checklist at the upcoming [insert name of food drive and @location]. #nourishyourneighborIL #donatehealthyIL</p>	<p>Did you know? 1 in 3 households relying on food pantries have a family member with diabetes?</p>  <p>National Average: Percent of people in the United States with diabetes: 9%</p> <p>Percent of Pantry Households: Percent of Pantry Households with at least 1 member of family with diabetes: 33.2%</p> <p>Logos: I, UIC, Illinois Extension, NOURISH YOUR NEIGHBOR</p>
8	<p>Graphic image: Assortment of canned/pouch proteins Graphic text: Power-packed proteins! Caption: Protein-rich foods are part of healthy meals and snacks. Consider donating the shelf-stable protein foods found on the Nourish Your Neighbor checklist at the upcoming [insert name of food drive and @location]. #nourishyourneighborIL #donatehealthyIL</p>	 <p>Logos: I, UIC, Illinois Extension, NOURISH YOUR NEIGHBOR</p>
9	<p>The [insert name of food drive] would like to thank everyone that donated to our healthy food drive! Because of your help, we were able to collect [insert number of cans or pounds collected] of healthy food items that will be used to fill the shelves at @foodpantry1, @foodpantry2, etc. and Nourish Your Neighbor. Thank you! #nourishyourneighborIL #donatehealthyIL</p>	 <p>Logos: I, UIC, Illinois Extension, NOURISH YOUR NEIGHBOR</p>

Press Release Example

NOURISH YOUR NEIGHBOR BY DONATING HEALTHY FOOD TO YOUR LOCAL FOOD PANTRY

MURPHYSBORO, Ill.— A sad reality is that many individuals throughout southern Illinois suffer from food insecurity and are without reliable access to affordable, nutritious food. Food insecurity exists in every county in America. The *Nourish Your Neighbor* initiative encourages donations of healthy food to food pantries to address local food insecurity.

According to Feeding America, 1 in 6 children in the United States may not know where they will get their next meal. Nearly 1 in 3 adults with a chronic disease struggle to pay for food, medicine, or both. The 2014 Feeding America Hunger Study revealed that 57% of their client households said they had to choose between food and housing, 66% had to choose between medical care and food, and 69% had to choose between utilities and food.

"Those who struggle with having enough food to eat are more likely to also struggle with health conditions such as diabetes, high blood pressure, heart disease, and obesity – all of which are affected by the foods that we eat. If we can provide more nutritious foods through our food pantries, we will be able to build a healthier community," says Toni Kay Wright, with University of Illinois Extension's SNAP-Education program.

In the state of Illinois, nearly 1.4 million people are struggling with hunger and of them 453,260 are children. Not only does food insecurity have a physical effect on people, but it can be especially harmful among children due to their increased vulnerability and risk for developing long-term consequences. According to Hunger in America, children who are denied an adequate diet are at a greater risk than other low-income children of not reaching their full potential. Children who are undernourished have difficulties concentrating, bonding with their peers and have a higher chance of suffering illnesses that force them to miss school.

Fortunately, there are approximately 95 food pantries located throughout the southernmost 16 counties of Illinois. These food pantries aim to serve the people of southern Illinois that need food assistance. To meet the high demands of food assistance in the area, the food pantries must rely on donations from community members and partners to keep their shelves stocked.

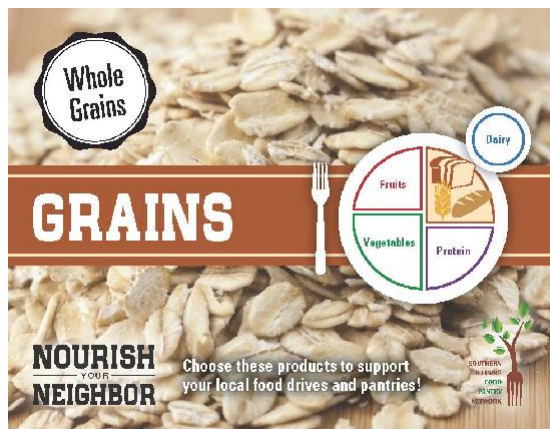
Much to our surprise, the Sack Hunger Food Donation Study revealed that not all foods being donated are meeting the nutritional quality recommended by Feeding America. The study found that sodium levels exceeded recommendations for vegetables, grains and miscellaneous food items (such as soups and meal kits). Through the *Nourish Your Neighbor* initiative, donors can identify nutritious foods that are always needed in food pantry and will improve the diet quality of food pantry clients.

As you are planning your next food drive or donating to a local food drive, consider making a positive impact by donating foods highlighted on the *Nourish Your Neighbor* list and encouraging others to do so too! For more information about the *Nourish Your Neighbor* initiative, please contact NAME, ORGANIZATION at PHONE.

Shopping List

Work with local food retailers to host an informational table for your food drive during peak shopping hours. Consider creating a shortened list of the most needed healthy foods from your local food pantry and distribute to shoppers as they enter the store. Encourage them to pick up a few items while shopping and drop them off with you when finished. If possible, work ahead and create a list based on the store's sale items.

Placement Cards



Place these cards near items that are on the provided shopping list or from the foods to donate checklist.

Donation Display/Collection Bin

Work with the store to set up a display of suggested food items to be donated on a table or “end-cap shelving” to encourage and engage shoppers as they enter the store. Include a shopping list that can be taken to encourage items most needed for the local pantry. Add a collection bin so shoppers can drop their food without having to deliver it.



FOOD DRIVE COLLECTION SHEET



FRUITS	Tally Number of Items
Canned Fruit (No added sugar or packed in 100% juice)	
Fruit Cups (No added sugar or packed in 100% juice)	
Applesauce (No added sugar)	
Raisins/Dried Fruit	
100% Fruit Juice	
VEGETABLES	Tally Number of Items
Canned Vegetables (Low sodium or no added salt)	
100% Vegetable Juice	
DAIRY	Tally Number of Items
Shelf-Stable Lowfat Milk	
Evaporated Milk	
Powdered Milk	
WHOLE GRAINS	Tally Number of Items
Brown or Wild Rice	
Old-Fashioned Oatmeal	
High-Fiber/Low-Sugar Cereal	
Whole Grain Crackers	
Whole Grain Pasta	
Couscous	
Quinoa	
PROTEINS	Tally Number of Items
Canned Tuna (in water) (low sodium)	
Canned Salmon (in water) (low sodium)	
Canned Chicken (in water) (low sodium)	
Unsalted Nuts	
Peanut Butter (low sodium)	
Canned Beans (low sodium)	
TOTAL FROM ALL CATEGORIES LISTED ABOVE	
ALL OTHER FOOD ITEMS COLLECTED NOT LISTED ABOVE	+
TOTAL ITEMS COLLECTED	
TOTAL NUTRITIOUS FOODS / TOTAL ITEMS COLLECTED	% NUTRITIOUS FOODS

HELPFUL LINKS

University of Illinois Extension Eat.

Move. Save.

eat-move-save.extension.illinois.edu/

Find Food IL Community Food Map

eat-move-save.extension.illinois.edu/#find-food-il

NEFPAT Resource and Technical Assistance Guide snapedtoolkit.org/interventions/programs/nutrition-environment-food-pantry-assessment-tool/

Feeding America | Healthy Food Drive Donation List hungerandhealth.feedingamerica.org/resource/feeding-americas-healthy-food-donation-list/

Hunger Task Force | Hunger Task Force MyPlate

hungertaskforce.org/what-we-do/myplate/

APPENDICES

Infographic/poster (36" x 24")

NOURISH YOUR NEIGHBOR

SUPPORT YOUR LOCAL FOOD DRIVES AND FOOD PANTRIES BY DONATING NUTRITIOUS FOODS!

Canned:

- Mandarin Oranges
- Peaches
- Pineapple
- Pears
- Mixed Fruit

No Added Sugar OR Packed in 100% Juice

Shelf-Stable Lowfat Milk

- Evaporated Milk
- Powdered Milk

Lowfat

Whole Grains

- Brown or Wild Rice
- Old-Fashioned Oatmeal
- High-Fiber/Low-Sugar Cereal
- Whole Grain Crackers
- Whole Grain Pasta
- Couscous
- Quinoa

Low Sodium

Canned:

- Carrots
- Peas
- Corn
- Mixed Vegetables
- Tomatoes

Low Sodium OR No Added Salt

100% Vegetable Juice

Canned or Pouches:

- Tuna (in Water)
- Salmon (in Water)
- Chicken (in Water)

Unsalted Nuts
Peanut Butter
Canned Beans

In Illinois, 1,395,970 people are struggling with hunger, and of them 453,260 are children.

**1 IN 9 PEOPLE
STRUGGLE WITH HUNGER**

1 IN 6 CHILDREN
struggle with hunger



STARTLING FACTS ABOUT FOOD INSECURITY:

- Nearly 1 in 3 U.S. adults with a chronic disease has problems paying for food, medicine, or both.
- 63% of senior households (>50 years of age) served by Feeding America network are forced to choose between food and medical care.

Source: Feeding America
www.feedingamerica.org/hunger-in-america/illinois

Take a
tear-off
to help
you shop!

NOURISH YOUR NEIGHBOR

FRUITS
(No Added Sugar or Packed in 100% Juice)

DAIRY
(Lowfat)

GRAINS
(Whole Grain)

VEGETABLES
(Low Sodium or No Added Salt)

PROTEIN
(Low Sodium)



NOURISH — YOUR — NEIGHBOR

Support your local food pantries by donating the following nutritious foods!

Fruits

Canned:

- ✓ Mandarin Oranges
- ✓ Peaches
- ✓ Pineapple
- ✓ Pears
- ✓ Mixed Fruit

Fruit Cups

Applesauce

Raisins/Dried Fruit

100% Fruit Juice



Vegetables

Canned:

- ✓ Carrots
- ✓ Peas
- ✓ Corn
- ✓ Mixed Vegetables
- ✓ Tomatoes

100% Vegetable Juice



Dairy

Shelf-stable Lowfat Milk

Evaporated Milk

Powdered Milk



Whole Grains

Brown or Wild Rice

Old-Fashioned Oatmeal

High-Fiber/Low-Sugar Cereal

Whole Grain Crackers

Whole Grain Pasta

Couscous

Quinoa



Proteins

Canned Tuna (in water)

Canned Salmon (in water)

Canned Chicken (in water)

Unsalted Nuts

Peanut Butter

Canned Beans



Acknowledgments

Special thanks to the Southern Illinois Delta Network, Southern Illinois Food Pantry Network, and St. Louis Area Food Bank for initiating the efforts of putting together the original Nourish Your Neighbor Toolkit and to the review team that adapted the toolkit for statewide use: Toni Kay Wright, Veronica Skaradzinski, Staci Coussens, and Carol Erickson for their work in developing the local toolkit for statewide use in Illinois.

This is a publication of University of Illinois Extension's Illinois Nutrition Education Programs: Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Education (SNAP-Ed).

Please visit <https://go.illinois.edu/IllinoisNEP> to find out more about SNAP-Ed in Illinois and <https://extension.illinois.edu> to find out more about Extension programs in Illinois.

This institution is an equal opportunity provider.



In accordance with Federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, the USDA, its Agencies, offices, and employees, and institutions participating in or administering USDA programs are prohibited from discriminating based on race, color, national origin, sex, religious creed, disability, age, political beliefs, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity in any program or activity conducted or funded by USDA.

Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication for program information (e.g. Braille, large print, audiotope, American Sign Language, etc.), should contact the Agency (State or local) where they applied for benefits. Individuals who are deaf, hard of hearing or have speech disabilities may contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339. Additionally, program information may be made available in languages other than English.

To file a program complaint of discrimination, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form, (AD-3027) found online at: http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint_filing_cust.html, and at any USDA office, or write a letter addressed to USDA and provide in the letter all of the information requested in the form. To request a copy of the complaint form, call (866) 632-9992. Submit your completed form or letter to USDA by:

(1) mail:

U.S. Department of Agriculture
Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights
1400 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20250-9410;

(2) fax: (202) 690-7442; or

(3) email: program.intake@usda.gov.

This material funded by USDA's Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program – SNAP.

University of Illinois | United States Department of Agriculture | Local Extension Councils Cooperating.