



**GREAT PLAINS
FOOD BANK**

Partner Handbook: Food Assistance

Mission: End hunger through community partnerships.

Vision: A hunger free North Dakota and western Minnesota.

Values: We do all things in the spirit of passion, service and innovation.

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DEFINITIONS, AS RELATED TO GREAT PLAINS FOOD BANK

Great Plains Food Bank (GPFB) – North Dakota’s only food bank, which serves charitable feeding programs across North Dakota and Clay County, Minnesota.

170(e)(3) – U.S. Internal Revenue code section that explains the tax deduction available to corporations for donations out of inventory. Generally, the maximum tax deduction is equal to the cost of the goods plus one-half the mark up. Feeding America member food banks handle donated goods in accordance with the provisions of Section 170(e)(3).

501(c)(3) – U.S. Internal Revenue code section that defines a private not-for-profit corporation with charitable intent. Section 501(c) has several dozen subsections, but Section 170(e)(3) restricts the distribution of donated goods by members (Feeding America food banks) to only those described under subsection 501(c)(3).

Backpack Program (BPP) – GPFB program that provides kid-friendly, easy-to-prepare food for children to take home over the weekend.

Community Supplement Food Program/Senior Food Pack Program (CSFP) – federal nutrition program that works to improve the health of low income seniors (over the age of 60) by providing supplementary USDA commodity foods containing nutrients typically lacking in the diet of the target population every other month.

Farm to Food Shelf – program through the Minnesota Department of Agriculture (MDA) to increase fresh local produce at food assistance sites by offsetting the cost to harvest and package surplus produce that would have otherwise been discarded.

Feeding America (FA) – Feeding America is a nationwide network of more than 200 food banks serving the United States.

Food Assistance Partner (partner) – not-for-profit organization or its legal equivalent that receives food from GPFB. Food assistance partners are overseen by the Program and Agency Services Department, which includes a Program Director, Programs Manager, and two Regional Services Managers.

Food Pantry – charitable feeding program that distributes groceries and other basic supplies to needy clients, who then prepare and use these items where they live.

Food Bank – charitable not-for-profit organization that solicits, receives, inventories, stores and distributes donated food and grocery product to charitable agencies that directly serve clients in need, such as food pantries or meal programs.

Meal Program – charitable feeding program that distributes prepared meals to needy clients.

Midwest Regional Produce Cooperative (MRPC)/Mixing Center – member-driven organization facilitated and hosted by Second Harvest Heartland. This cooperative focuses on increasing the quality, quantity, and variety of produce, reducing the cost of bulk and cased produce, and improving efficiency and planning for members.

Minnesota Office of Economic Opportunity (OEO) – department that works with state and federal food programs across Minnesota to ease hunger and promote healthier living. Administers The Emergency Food Assistance Program, Minnesota Food Shelf Program, and Supplement Nutrition Assistance Program.

Mobile Food Pantry – GPFB program utilizing a semi to distribute groceries across the GPFB service area to those in need.

North Dakota Department of Public Instruction (NDDPI) – promotes relationships and enhances partnerships that provide quality nutrition education and nutrition services for the people of North Dakota. NDDPI, in accordance with the Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) of the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) administers The Emergency Food Assistance Program, Summer Food Service Program, and Commodity Supplemental Food Program.

Partner Agency Resource Center (PARC) – section of the GPFB website designed for partners that includes sample documents, recalls and other resources and information.

Primarius Web Window (PWW) – online system used by Great Plains Food Bank food assistance partners to order, report, and access billing information.

Retail Food Rescue – Feeding America program designed to procure unsellable product from donor grocery stores, foodservice distributors, big box retailers and foodservice establishments and get it quickly into the hands of those in need.

School Pantry – GPFB program designed to provide students in need and/or their families' access to food assistance in a safe location.

Summer Food Service Program/Youth Summer Meals (SFSP) – federally-funded, state-administered program. SFSP reimburses program operators who serve free healthy meals and snacks to children and teens in low-income areas.

Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) – federal program, formally known as food stamps, providing nutrition benefits to supplement the food budget of needy families so they can purchase healthy food and move towards self-sufficiency.

The Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP) – federal program that supplements the diets of low-income individuals, by providing them with emergency food and nutrition assistance at no cost. The USDA purchases commodity foods and allocates them to each state. The state then works with agencies, such as food banks, to distribute the product to food pantries, soup kitchens and shelters. TEFAP products are often highly desired items such as protein, peanut butter, shelf milk and other shelf stable items and are available at no cost to food assistance partners that are open to the public. The amount of food each State receives out of the total amount of food provided is based on the number of unemployed persons and the number of people with incomes below the state poverty level.

Local Agency – public or private non-profit agency which enters into an agreement with the state agency (NDDPI) to administer TEFAP at the sub-recipient level.

Eligible Recipient Agency (ERA) – not-for-profit food assistance program that enters into an agreement with Local Agency to provide TEFAP foods to low income households including food from other sources to relieve situations of emergency and distress.

Wellness Pantry – GPFB program and unique partnership with Healthcare Partners like clinics, hospitals, and public health units. Patients who are visiting their healthcare provider are screened for food insecurity and if eligible, provided an immediate referral to the onsite Wellness Pantry. These specialized pantries are stocked with specific food types and intended to address chronic health needs while improving long term outcomes and reducing food insecurity. They are only available to patients of that clinic during their clinic visit.

ABOUT GREAT PLAINS FOOD BANK

Great Plains Food Bank's (GPFB) mission is to end hunger in North Dakota and western Minnesota through community partnerships. It serves as the states only food bank and North Dakota's largest hunger-relief organization. As a private, non-profit organization, GPFB works together with food industry donors, food assistance partners, volunteers, and financial supporters to create hunger-free communities. Operations are based primarily out of a distribution facility in Fargo as well as a Regional Service Center in Bismarck that opened in November 2020 and are supported by a fleet of refrigerated trucks that travel the state picking up and delivering food to partners and those in need.

Great Plains Food Bank collects, secures, and distributes over 1 million pounds of food per month to nearly 200 food pantries and meal programs who serve the ill, needy or children across the state of North Dakota and Clay County, Minnesota. Food assistance partners are a vital part of the emergency food chain. GPFB provides food assistance partners access to low- and no-cost food to distribute to clients, while also providing technical assistance and training to ensure food assistance programs meet food safety standards and provides fair and equitable service to clients.



GPFB has five departments and two leadership bodies that are dedicated to ending hunger.

- Accounting
- Development
- Ending Hunger 2.0
- Operations
- Program and Agency Services
- Leadership Team
- Board

FEEDING AMERICA

Great Plains Food Bank is a member of Feeding America, providing access to expertise in solving hunger, raising funds, sourcing food, advocacy, and understanding trends. GPFB follows the Feeding America contract and adheres to best practices, which are audited by an appointed compliance officer. GPFB partners are considered part of the Feeding America network of 60,000 food pantries and meal programs across the country. Feeding America ensures its network follows the highest standards of the industry and provides access to best practices and food streams.

Find more information about Feeding America at <https://www.feedingamerica.org/>.



PARTNERS

Great Plains Food Bank celebrates the uniqueness of each partner, but maintains high standards of food safety, client treatment, and barrier elimination to ensure clients are served in a safe and dignified manner.

Partners must, at minimum:

- Be recognized by the Internal Revenue Service as a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit, charitable organization, or be sponsored by a 501(c)(3) organization who serves the ill, needy and/or children.
- Cannot be a private foundation.
- Be located in North Dakota or Clay County, Minnesota.
- Have a mission to end hunger.
- Distribute food free of charge directly to the ill, needy, and/or children without requirement.
- Serve a minimum of 50% low income individuals.
- Have a facility able to safely handle and distribute food to participants in a dignified way.
- Distribute food at least once per month for a minimum of 90 minutes via appointments, walk-ins, and/or mass distribution. Cannot be an on-call pantry only. Current partners are grandfathered in but are encouraged to consider new guidelines.
- Have a thoughtful and organized plan for operation and distribution.
- Have responsible personnel who are accountable for record keeping, billing and inventory control as well as have individual(s) with the ability and willingness to access and submit information via the internet and receive communication via email.
- Have the ability to pay shared handling, delivery and annual partnership fees.
- Establish criteria for the individuals who are eligible for service. Criteria are not required; however, they must be consistent and posted onsite and in advertising.

The primary mission of GPFB is to help supply emergency feeding programs with food and grocery product. Therefore food assistance partners are categorized according to their primary function. Categories are as follows:

- Category 1: Emergency feeding programs open to the community.
- Category 2: Supplemental food programs which serve a targeted group.
- Category 3: On-site meal/snack programs which serve predominantly low-income individuals.

SPONSORSHIP

Food assistance partners must be recognized as or sponsored by an organization that is recognized by the Internal Revenue Service as a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit, charitable organization, or be affiliated with a 501(c)(3) umbrella organization which serves the ill, needy and/or children.

Needy is defined as a person who lacks the necessities of life, involving physical, mental, or emotional well-being, as a result of poverty or temporary distress. Examples include a person who is financially impoverished as a result of low income and lack of financial resources.

Ill is defined as a person suffering from physical injury, a person with an existing handicap, whether from birth or later injury, a person suffering from malnutrition, a person with a disease, sickness, or infection which significantly impairs physical health, and/or a person partially or totally incapable of self-care (including incapacity due to old age.)

Sponsors support the food program fiscally and legally and allow for a food program to serve without their own 501(c)(3) designation.

All sponsors must:

- Fiscally and legally support the partnering food program.
- Be willing to receive and acknowledge responsibility for invoices for product received from the GPFB for the food assistance program.
- Submit payment through a bank account belonging to their non-profit organization (can be a pass through of funds).
- Submit an affiliation letter to GPFB in January of every odd year.

Sponsors may serve as a liaison between GPFB and the food assistance program. The level of involvement with the sponsor varies greatly and may include operational, fundraising, and/or volunteer support.

GPFB THIRD PARTY GRIEVANCE & WHISTLEBLOWER POLICY

Great Plains Food Bank is committed to the highest possible standards of ethical, moral, and legal conduct. Great Plains Food Bank's Code of Ethics requires employees and Board members to observe high standards of business and personal ethics in the conduct of their duties and responsibilities and to comply with all applicable laws and regulatory requirements. The Third Party Grievance and Whistleblower Policy provides an avenue for individuals and organizations affected by the operations of Great Plains Food Bank and the actions of its staff and Board to raise concerns about inappropriate activity and to be reassured that they will be protected from retaliation for reporting wrong-doing. This policy is intended to encourage and enable persons to raise serious concerns about Great Plains Food Bank prior to seeking resolution outside of the food bank.

In the event of a third party grievance Great Plains Food Bank will:

- process grievances in an effective, appropriate, transparent, and fair manner, with due consideration for confidentiality and the rule of law;
- conduct an initial assessment and investigate further as needed;
- identify the root causes, remedy the impacts, and take disciplinary action where appropriate;
- advise complainants of the outcome of the investigation;
- develop remedial training and implement procedures to reduce the likelihood of future similar complaints;
- report complaints to the appropriate external authorities when the nature or severity of the complaint requires such action;
- publish the Third Party Grievance and Whistleblower Policy on its website.

DEFINITION

Third-parties within the context of this policy may include, but are not limited to, partner agencies, volunteers, donors, clients, and advocates. Separate policies and procedures are in place for employees and Board members.

Inappropriate activity may include, but is not limited to, actions that are discriminatory, unlawful, unethical, constitute harassment, or otherwise amount to serious improper conduct.

REGISTERING A GRIEVANCE

Those wishing to register a grievance should send an email to complianceofficer@greatplainsfoodbank.org giving as much information as possible of the circumstances surrounding the inappropriate activity. Grievances can also be mailed to: Compliance Officer Great Plains Food Bank 1720 3rd Ave N. Fargo, ND 58102.

If the grievance involves the Chief Executive Office it should be sent to boardchair@greatplainsfoodbank.org or mailed to Board Chair at the address above.

COMPLIANCE OFFICER

Great Plains Food Bank's Chief Executive Director will act as Great Plains Food Bank's Compliance Officer. The Compliance Officer, or a designated member of the Great Plains Food Bank senior management team, is responsible for investigating and resolving allegations concerning serious improper conduct. The Board Chair or his/her designee will take on the Compliance Officer role if the complaint involves the Chief Executive Officer.

HANDLING OF REPORTED VIOLATIONS

The Compliance Officer, or designee, will acknowledge receipt of the reported violation or suspected violation by writing a letter (or e-mail) to the complainant within five (5) business days. The point of contact will outline to the complainant the stages in the resolution process, liaise with all relevant parties, provide progress updates as appropriate, and report on the outcome. All grievances will be promptly investigated and appropriate corrective action will be taken if warranted by the investigation.

NO RETALIATION

No third party who in good faith reports a violation of a law or regulation requirements or other inappropriate activity will suffer intimidation or retaliation of any kind. An employee who retaliates against someone who has reported a violation in good faith is subject to discipline up to and including termination of employment.

REQUIREMENT OF GOOD FAITH

Anyone filing a complaint concerning a violation or suspected violation of the law or regulation requirements or other inappropriate activity must be acting in good faith and have reasonable grounds for believing the information disclosed indicates a violation.

CONFIDENTIALITY

Violations or suspected violations may be submitted on a confidential basis by the complainant. Reports of violations or suspected violations will be kept confidential to the extent possible, consistent with the need to conduct an adequate investigation.

ANONYMOUS ALLEGATIONS

The policy encourages complainants to share their names and contact information because appropriate follow-up questions and investigation may not be possible unless the source of the information is identified. Concerns expressed anonymously will be investigated, but consideration will be given to the ability to confirm the allegation from attributable sources. Anonymous allegations may be sent to the appropriate person as outlined under the Registering a Grievance section above by mailing it to the organization's address or emailing it from a public computer.

EQUITY, DIVERSITY, & INCLUSION

Great Plains Food Bank embraces diversity as a guiding principle in our mission to end hunger. We champion understanding, acceptance and respect for individual differences including race, ethnicity, gender, socio-economic status, physical or mental ability, religious belief, national origin, citizenship, ancestry, age, marital status, familial or parental status, sexual orientation including gender identity or expression, political viewpoints and other ideologies, or discharge status from the military or status as a protected veteran. In doing so, we reflect the diversity of our clients and stakeholders, attract and retain talented staff and volunteers and nurture the creative partnerships, and innovation necessary to achieve our vision of hunger-free communities.

Partners are required to serve clients in an inclusive and non-discriminatory manner and cannot deny access to anyone based off of race, ethnicity, gender, socio-economic status, physical or mental ability, religious belief, national origin, citizenship, ancestry, age, marital status, familial or parental status, sexual orientation including gender identity or expression, political viewpoints and other ideologies, or discharge status from the military or status as a protected veteran. All partners are required to complete Civil Rights training biennially at the time of their site visit. Partners participating in The Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP) must complete Civil Rights training annually.

RELIGIOUS PROSELYTIZING

We recognize that many partners are located in and/or sponsored by a church or religious organization; however, partners cannot participate in religious proselytizing. This includes discriminating against clients based on faith or beliefs, requiring or requesting clients attend a service or other activity, or asking questions pertaining to religious affiliations verbally or on an intake form.

| ALLOWED | NOT ALLOWED |
|--|---|
| Religious artifacts and paintings on the walls. | Requiring clients to take religious artifacts or inserting them in the bags/boxes when distributing food. |
| Provide pamphlets for faith based activities as part of a larger display of resources. | Inserting faith based pamphlets into bags/boxes when distributing food. |
| Having a pastor or religious official help with the food distribution. | Require or encourage clients to have a religious conversation with a pastor or religious official. |
| Praying with volunteers or clients before or after food distribution and/or in a separate space. | Praying with volunteers or clients at the same time and in the same room as the food distribution. |

CLIENT ELIGIBILITY

Each partner determines what qualifies a client to use their program, but GPFB recommends removing as many barriers as possible to serve those in need. Eligibility guidelines and requirements should be included on all advertising and posted at the distribution site. GPFB encourages partners to accept client self-declaration of eligibility. A plan should be developed to serve those who arrive who do not meet the eligibility guidelines or have the required information. All staff and volunteers should adhere to and follow the same plan for client eligibility.

INTAKE

Partners are encouraged to develop an intake form and procedure that works best for the program. GPFB recommends partners only ask for information that will be used. All clients must be treated equitably and what is asked of one, must be asked of all. GPFB encourages partners that serve diverse populations to have forms available in multiple languages. Sample intake forms with the minimal requirements can be found on the PARC.

| North Dakota TEFAP ERAs | Minnesota TEFAP Food Programs |
|--|---|
| <p>Must include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Name• Address (if homeless, no address is needed)• Household size• Date of distribution• Signature• Non-discrimination statement as issued by USDA | <p>Must use the intake form provided by the program administrators, which can be found on the Hunger Solutions website. All other forms must be optional.</p> |

GEOGRAPHIC BOUNDARIES

Each partner has the ability to determine their geographic boundaries. Boundaries are not necessary, but can be put into place to align with the mission of the program. Boundaries should be publicized and transparent for both clients and community members. A contingency plan should exist to determine what will happen if a client comes from outside the boundaries and referral information should be kept on hand. A list of food assistance programs for surrounding areas can be found on the GPFB website.

INCOME/NEED

GPFB partners are intended to serve those who are ill, needy, and/or children. GPFB encourages partners to allow self-declaration of need and not require income verification.

The USDA provides income guidelines for partners who participate in TEFAP. These guidelines are updated every July and also include participation in other assistance programs as a qualifier. These income guidelines must be at minimum posted at the site where intake takes place and visible to clients.

USE OF RESOURCES

Food and funds are donated to GPFB & partners with the expectation that it will be utilized to assist those in need. Food received by partners from GPFB must be used to serve the ill, needy, and/or children with no charge or conditions.

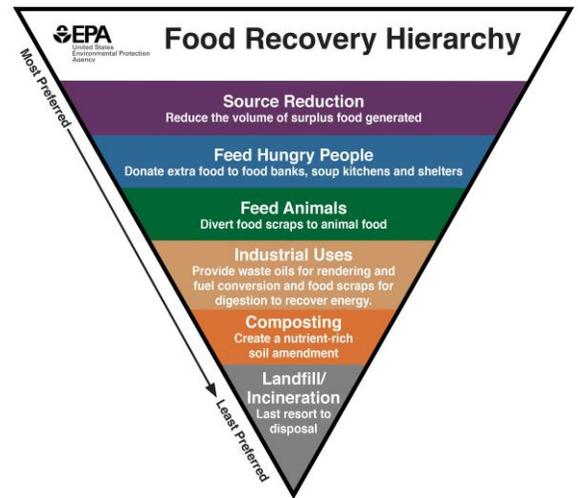
| Approved Use of Resources from GPFB | Prohibited Use of Resources from GPFB |
|---|---|
| Volunteers, who are in need of food assistance, receiving services from the program. Volunteers must follow the same procedure and guidelines as all other clients. | Product cannot be used as a volunteer “Thank You”, incentive for helping or refreshments for volunteers, meetings, trainings, etc. |
| Taste testing for clients, which can include staff and volunteers trying or recipe testing food so they can encourage clients to try it OR preparing the food and providing for clients to try. GPFB encourages programs to connect with local Extension Agents to assist with recipes and testing. Any preparation of foods being served to clients and volunteers should be done following the highest food safety standards. Taste testing should be done in small quantities and not in excess. | Product cannot be used for fundraising as either prepared food (bake sales, spaghetti dinners) or raffle/auction items or as prizes for clients (bingo, games, etc.). |
| Sharing excess product with other GPFB/FA partners who have been determined to meet GPFB/FA food safety standards and requirements. Partners that are open to the public can be found on the GPFB website. When sharing product, both programs must record: agency names, date shared, pounds shared, temperature at delivery/pick up and a brief description of the product shared. A sample secondary distribution log can be found on the PARC. | Sharing product with non-GPFB/FA partners. |
| Using non-food items within facility to support the food distribution program. For example, using paper towels to clean up after food pantry or meal program services. | Using non-food products to support the facility where the program is housed or other programming. For example, using paper towels to clean up after church meals. |

DISPOSAL

Due to the nature of the donations received, sometimes food received is no longer usable. When choosing a disposal method, use the Environmental Protection Agency Food Recovery Hierarchy to select the best method of disposal.

CHARGING

GPFB partners cannot charge or be perceived as charging for any of the product they distribute. This includes asking for free will donations or having a donation jar prominently placed during distribution. Charging clients for bags, boxes, intake cards, or other items is also prohibited.



FOOD SAFETY

Great Plains Food Bank and partners comply with The Bill Emerson Good Samaritan Food Donation Act. The Act is a federal law made to encourage donation of food to non-profits for distribution to those in need. It provides protection for donors and the non-profits receiving the donations. To ensure compliance with The Act, do not accept donations of or distribute any of the following:

- Food that does not appear wholesome or fit for consumption because of age, freshness, grade, contamination, or insect infestation.
- Containers that have been opened or appear to have been tampered with.
- Canned goods that are leaking, swollen, no longer airtight, or badly dented.
- Foods that have not been kept in the appropriate temperature range.

GPFB conducts thorough checks upon receiving, repacking and shipment of food, but due to the nature and quantity of the product we receive, some unfit food is dispersed. We encourage partners to thoroughly inspect items during receiving and notify GPFB staff within two days of receiving any damaged, contaminated, or missing items. Email is the preferred method of notification and photos are encouraged.

CERTIFICATION

GPFB partners must have at least one representative with a food safety certification on file. The type of certification depends on the services provided by the partner. Partners are encouraged to have all staff and volunteers complete food safety training annually and create a log of participants.

Food Pantry or Equivalent: ServSafe Food Handler for Food Banking certification, an equivalent, or higher certification is required. GPFB provides each program a green ServSafe Food Handler for Food Banking booklet that is the property of the program and has a \$10 replacement fee. The content from this booklet should be used to complete a food safety quiz at the time of onboarding and/or the biennial site visit.

Meal Program or Equivalent: ServSafe Food Manager's certification or equivalent is required. Partners must access the training and test on their own; however, GPFB staff are able to proctor the test upon request. Upon completion of the course and test, partners will send their certificate to GPFB staff. GPFB will provide a \$150 credit on partner's GPFB accounts once the certification is received. Credit will only be provided every 3 years. GPFB will not credit food pantry accounts for receiving the food manager certification as it is not required.

FOOD STORAGE

GPFB requires all partners to maintain safe food storage practices outlined by Feeding America and local regulatory agencies.

At minimum, partners are required to:

- Store food in a clean, temperature controlled environment, free from pests and other contamination risks.
- Store food at least 6 inches off of the ground and 4 inches away from ceilings and walls.
- Implement a regular cleaning schedule to ensure the facility and all storage units are clean.
- Store refrigerated food at 32-41°F.

- Store frozen food at or below 0°F.
- Store shelf stable food in a cool, dry place at temperatures between 35-75°F.
- Store toxic items separately from food.
- Inspect product received to ensure it is fit for distribution.

GPFB recommends for partners to:

- Log temperatures of freezers and refrigerators (requirement of TEFAP).
- Log pest findings and control practices (requirement of TEFAP).
- Have handwashing facilities nearby or another method of sanitization.
- Follow the first in, first out flow of inventory.

RECALLED FOOD

GPFB tracks recall information pertaining to the region and makes it available to partners on the PARC. Partners are encouraged to check the recall list weekly. Item(s) on the list may not have been distributed through the GPFB, but a partner may have received it through other food streams. In the event a recalled item was disbursed through the GPFB the following actions will take place:

- GPFB staff will call each partner who has received or may have received the recalled items within 24 hours of notice.
- GPFB will verify that the product was received and will advise on disposal methods.
- GPFB may also advertise the recall through other means, such as mail, email, newspapers or radio if necessary.

Partners should establish a recall procedure, including plans for notifying clients and disposal of product. It is the responsibility of the partner to notify clients who may have received a recalled item. This can be done via social media, calls, emails, flyers at the program site, etc.

REPACKING

Partners are prohibited from repacking food in an unlicensed facility as it jeopardizes protection under the Good Samaritan Act. Any refrigerated, frozen or shelf stable product that typically comes in a sealed package cannot be repacked for distribution. If the product is loose and would be in an open market within a grocery store, partners may repackage or leave it for clients to package themselves, this includes some produce and non-food items.

LABELING

Food distributed should always contain a label, with the exception of fresh fruits and vegetables. According to the Fair Packaging and Labeling Act a label must include:

- The common/usual name of the item.
- Name and place of the manufacturer, packer or distributor.
- The net quantity (weight) of the contents.
- The common/usual name of each ingredient, listed in descending order of prominence.

If prepared food is donated from Feeding America (FA) or GPFB approved foodservice facilities, bakeries, or other locations, the Fair Packaging and Labeling Act does not apply, but product must still contain a label that meets the FA food safety standards. The necessary components include:

- The name and location of the food bank.
- The name and location of donor.
- The food description.
- The date of donation.
- Allergen disclaimer statement.

If a label is not on the packaging, one can be made and posted at the distribution point.

FOOD SOURCES

Partners are encouraged to procure food from a variety of sources. Use the guidelines below when accepting donations or making purchases.

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| Farm Fresh | Farm fresh produce and eggs are encouraged! |
| Homemade or Canned Goods | Partners cannot accept homemade or canned goods for distribution that are not prepared in a licensed facility. These items are very high risk for foodborne illnesses. |
| Prepared Food | <p>Partners can receive and distribute prepared food. Food should be prepared in a facility following the highest food safety standards. Food should not be received if it has been served buffet style, if it has not been held under proper time and temperature control, or if it has been reheated more than once. Partners must follow proper food safety guidelines when receiving and handling prepared food.</p> <p>Prepared food donated from an approved retailer must contain a label – see labeling information above.</p> <p>Partners classified as a food pantry can distribute prepared food that contains a label, meets the above requirements, and is prepared in a licensed facility.</p> |
| Supplements / Over the Counter Drugs | <p>Products must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be within code. • Have all label information intact and readable (product’s description, ingredients, net weight, distributor, data regarding dosage, antidotes, etc.) • Have tamper-resistant packaging intact. • Be segregated and stored securely prior to distribution. <p>Receive a final quality control check at the time of distribution to verify that it meets requirements.</p> |

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| <p>Wild Game</p> | <p>What type of meat and poultry products can be donated in the state of North Dakota? See full document on the PARC.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. State officially inspected product that bears ND “inspected and passed” inspection legend. 2. State officially inspected product produced under the Cooperative Interstate Shipment (CIS) Program that bears USDA “inspected and passed” SEND legend. 3. Federally inspected product that bears USDA “inspected and passed” (meat) or “inspected for wholesomeness” (poultry) inspection legend. 4. Retail exempt product—product produced by a retail exempt establishment that originated from state or federally inspected product. Product will not bear an inspection legend. 5. Legally harvested, pure wild game may be donated IF it is not mixed with any other species. Processed wild game will bear a statement “Not For Sale.” <p>What type of meat and poultry products cannot be donated in the state of North Dakota?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Custom exempt slaughtered or prepared "Animals" which includes cattle, swine, sheep, goats, farmed cervidae, llama, horses, equines, other large domesticated animals, and poultry as defined in North Dakota Century Code 4.1-31 (NDCC 4.1-31). Products will bear a statement “Not For Sale.” 2. Legally harvested wild game that is mixed with cattle, swine, sheep, goats, farmed cervidae, llama, horses, equines, other large domesticated animals, and poultry. 3. Home butchered animals. <p>The Minnesota Hunter Harvested Venison Donation Program allows Minnesota deer hunters to donate deer carcasses to food banks, food shelves and feeding programs. This program is a cooperative effort between the Minnesota Department of Agriculture (MDA) and the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR).</p> |
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AGREEMENTS & REPORTING

ANNUAL AGREEMENTS

Each year, annual partnership agreements must be completed by all partners. At this time, partners are encouraged to review the partner handbook. Agreements include a partnership agreement for all partners, retail food rescue agreement for retail food rescue enabled partners. Partners in Fargo, Moorhead, Dilworth, West Fargo, Bismarck, or Mandan who receive retail food rescue deliveries will need to additionally complete the addendum in the partnership agreement. Agreements are typically sent out in December or January.

Partners participating in TEFAP will complete a new agreement annually prior to October 1 unless otherwise stated by NDDPI or MN OEO.

AFFILIATION LETTERS

If a partner has a separate fiscal and legal sponsor, an affiliation letter will need to be provided in January 2021 and every other year after. This letter will meet the requirement for partners participating in TEFAP. A sample affiliation letter can be found on the PARC.

STATISTICS

Partners must submit statistics monthly via PWW. This information is used in the shared mission to end hunger to substantiate the need for food assistance to those who volunteer, donate, and advocate for hunger relief programs. These statistics are also used to allocate grant funding and TEFAP entitlements. Statistics should be entered by the 10th of the following month. If statistics are not entered within two months, PWW will automatically put a temporary order suspension in place.

Partners classified as a food pantry will report the number of adults, children, seniors, and households served as well as pounds distributed each month. The number of adults, children, seniors, and households should be reported as unduplicated statistics, meaning that each client will only be reflected once per month in reporting to GPFB.

Food pantry partners serving MN residents will report MN food pantry client statistics in the lines labeled "MN" in PWW.

Partners classified as a meal site will report the number of adults, children, and seniors served as well as the total number of meals and snacks provided. The number of adults, children, and seniors should be reported as unduplicated statistics, meaning that each client will only be reflected once per month in reporting to GPFB.

All partners will monthly report the dollars distributed in grocery store vouchers or gift cards to better capture the work partners are doing in the line labeled Voucher \$ in PWW. In many cases these innovative partnerships connect families with fresh and perishable foods that are not being distributed in a traditional pantry setting.

All North Dakota partners have the option to report Hunger Free ND Garden Project pounds to GPFB. These are the total pounds of produce received from local growers. Hunger Free ND Garden Project is a program through the ND Dept. of Ag to encourage donation of fresh, local produce to food pantries, soup kitchens, and other charitable community programs. Annually, GPFB totals the pounds reported by partners and sends a report to the ND Dept. of Ag.

RECORD KEEPING

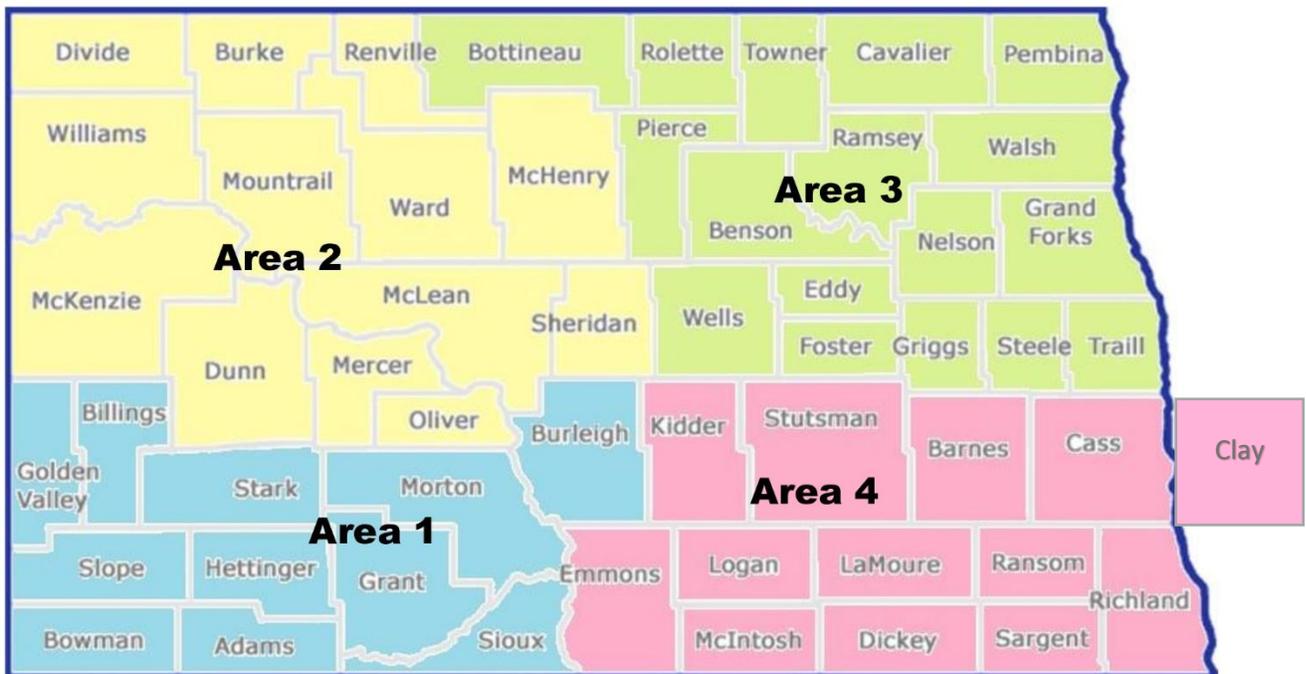
Partners are responsible for storing their own documents. Use the table below for document retention. Documents can be stored digitally.

| Document | Document Retention Timeline |
|---|---|
| Pest Control and Temperature Logs | 1 year OR ND TEFAP: 4 years MN TEFAP: 7 years |
| Client Participation Records | 1 year OR ND TEFAP: 4 years MN TEFAP: 7 years |
| Retail Food Rescue Receipts (if applicable) | 1 year |
| Invoices | 1 year OR ND TEFAP: 4 years MN TEFAP: 7 years |
| Food Safety Training Documentation | Length of Certification |

ORDER & DELIVERY

Great Plains Food Bank provides low- and no-cost food to our network of feeding assistance partners. This product is procured in many ways to provide an adequate supply to our food assistance partner network and some methods result in a small fee that is passed on to partners. Traditionally, partnerships are set up to order and receive a monthly delivery. Non-traditional partnership ordering and deliveries will vary.

To be most efficient and maintain equity across the state, the GPFB service area is divided into four areas for ordering and delivering. Each partner will have the opportunity to order via PWW once each month based on the area the site is located in.



| Area 1 Counties | Area 2 Counties | Area 3 Counties | Area 4 Counties |
|---|---|--|---|
| Adams, Billings, Bowman, Burleigh, Golden Valley, Grant, Hettinger, Morton, Sioux, Slope, Stark | Burke, Divide, Dunn, McClean, McHenry*, McKenzie, Mercer, Mountrail, Oliver, Renville, Sheridan, Ward, Williams | Benson, Bottineau, Cavalier, Grand Forks, Griggs, Nelson, Pembina, Pierce, Ramsey, Rolette, Steele, Towner, Traill, Walsh, Eddy, Foster, Wells | Barnes, Cass, Clay, Dickey, Emmons, Kidder, LaMoure, Logan, McIntosh, Ransom, Richland, Sargent, Stutsman |

*Drake will order with Area 3

The order and delivery timeframes will follow the calendar month. All order timeframes will be Friday through Wednesday with delivery the week following the end of the order timeframe. Adjustments may be made for holidays, inventory, and staff schedules.

The 1st week of the month will be defined by the 1st falling on a Sunday through Wednesday.

The 5th week will be defined as the last day of the month falling no later than a Wednesday.

| | Ordering Timeframe | Delivery Calls | Delivery Timeframe |
|--------|---|--|---|
| Area 1 | Friday of the 3 rd full week of the month through Wednesday of the 4 th full week of the month | Friday of the 4 th full week of the month | 1 st full week of each month |
| Area 2 | Friday of the 4 th full week of the month through Wednesday of the 1 st full week of the month or the Wednesday of the 5 th full week of the month | Friday of the 1 st full week of the month | 2 nd full week of each month |
| Area 3 | Friday of the 1 st full week of the month through Wednesday of the 2 nd full week of the month | Friday of the 2 nd full week of the month | 3 rd full week of each month |
| Area 4 | Friday of the 2 nd full week of the month through Wednesday of the 3 rd full week of the month | Friday of the 3 rd full week of the month | 4 th full week of each month |

ORDERING

Orders can be placed via PWW during the order the appropriate timeframe. The order list in PWW is based on GPFB’s live inventory system (located at the Fargo warehouse), which is subject to change daily excluding weekends. Certain items have limits to maintain equity across our service area, which are reflected in the amount available in each partner’s list.

Second orders can be placed via PWW within the appropriate order timeframe. This is the only accepted method as of January 2021. Only one second order will be accepted and it may be adjusted based on product limits and shortages.

If an error is made while ordering, please email the Inventory Manager immediately to correct the order before it is processed by the warehouse staff.

Product Notes

Many items are received in smaller quantities and are categorized as “assorted product”. Assorted products are typically repacked into roughly 25 pound boxes and are available on the PWW order list by the pound.

There are popular food items that are often requested, but rarely donated. In an effort to provide a good variety, GPFB purchases popular items in large quantities through a co-op purchase program. Purchasing in

large quantities often results in cost savings. Purchased products are identified on the order list as “purchased” and include a case cost rather than a shared handling fee. Purchased products are typically shelf stable, but could also include perishable, frozen and/or fresh foods.

Kids in Distressed Situations (KIDS) recovers and distributes surplus children’s clothing and toys from manufacturers, distributors and retailers of children’s products. Products received are put on the PWW order list. Partners who serve children have access to these products and can distribute it to their clients.

DELIVERY

Partners located across the state will receive deliveries via a semi once per month following their order timeframe directly to their location, to a nearby partner or to a regional distribution site. Partners will be notified of their delivery location at the time of orientation and will be notified immediately of any changes. Partners in Cass and Clay Counties have the option for delivery (by a straight truck) or warehouse pick up in Fargo. Partners located outside of Cass or Clay Counties that are interested in picking up in Fargo can arrange to pick up by contacting the Distribution Center and Logistics Manager.

Statewide partners will be notified the Friday following the order timeframe about their delivery for the following week. These deliveries will have a \$.04 per pound delivery fee (excludes TEFAP product) up to a max of \$300. Delivery routes may change from month to month as not all agencies order every month and size of orders vary. If two full trucks are needed to deliver an entire order, an additional charge of \$300 will be added to the partner’s invoice. A full truck typically equates to 35,000 pounds or 22 pallets.

Cass and Clay County partners who receive deliveries will be put on a set schedule that will be the same each month, unless adjusted for staff vacation, holidays, or weather related closures. Partners will be notified the Friday following the order timeframe about their delivery schedule for the following week. These deliveries will have a set \$50 delivery fee for each load. A full truck typically equates to 9000 pounds or 10 pallets.

Cass and Clay County Partners who pick up from the Fargo warehouse will schedule their pick up date and time in PWW when placing orders. The scheduled date and time must be during Area 4 delivery week. At the scheduled time, partners will arrive at the Fargo warehouse and ring the shipping and receiving doorbell by the volunteer entrance on the east side of the building. Staff will then give instructions to back up to the loading docks.

Partners picking up from a regional distribution site should arrive punctually and bring a vehicle(s) large enough to hold the entire order. It can be difficult to judge sizes of some items as they are large in size but light in weight (for example: 8 cases of veggie straws would fill an average car, but only weighs 56 pounds). To determine number of pallets and approximate size of the order contact GPFB. Below are the current 8 statewide regional distribution sites.

- **Bismarck:** MDU, 909 Airport Road
- **Devils Lake:** Lake Region Corporation, 224 3rd Street NW
- **Dickinson:** AMEN Food Pantry, 30 7th Street W (old St. Joe’s Hospital on the north side)
- **Grand Forks:** HC Community Care Center & Food Pantry, 1726 S Washington Street; Suite 11
- **Jamestown:** Progress Community Center, 429 2nd Street SW

- **Minot:** Our Lady of Grace Church, 707 16th Avenue SW
- **Valley City:** Epworth United Methodist Church, 680 8th Avenue SW
- **Williston:** Community Action, 120 Washington Avenue

GPFB delivery drivers typically take an order off of the truck on pallets. Partners are then responsible for moving the product into their facility. Delivery drivers are on a tight schedule and partners must be on time when receiving their orders. Drivers will wait for 15 minutes after the scheduled time. A no show will result in forfeiting all ordered product. Attempts will be made to contact a partner before a driver will leave. If GPFB delivery staff are out unexpectedly and/or experience delays on a scheduled delivery day, partners will be notified as soon as possible.

During winter months driveways and sidewalks must be cleared of snow for timely and safe delivery. If an alternate delivery location is needed in the winter months, notify Distribution Center and Logistics Manager. Some partners may opt to have a local forklift driver available to assist with unloading.

Upon receipt of order, product should be checked against the invoice and for damage. Any discrepancies need to be emailed to the Inventory Manager within two business days of receiving the order for credit. When reporting damaged or missing product, include product name, product number, and quantity. For damaged product, pictures are encouraged. While checking in orders, keep in mind that food banks often receive product that is unsellable, slightly damaged and/or close to its best by date. See PARC for shelf life guide.

RETAIL FOOD RESCUE & PARTNER SHOPPING

RETAIL FOOD RESCUE

Partners can also acquire product through retail food rescue. Retail food rescue is designed to procure unsellable product from donor grocery stores, foodservice distributors, big box retailers and foodservice establishments and get it quickly into the hands of those in need. Feeding America facilitates numerous national donor relationships, which benefit GPFB and in turn GPFB partners. GPFB must report weight and product received to the donors at a corporate level. Retail food rescue product can be received several ways.

Partners in Fargo, Moorhead, West Fargo, Dilworth, Bismarck, Mandan can receive deliveries of retail food rescue product from a GPFB truck. Items on these trucks must be received as offered. *Deliveries often vary in amount due to the size of donations that day and the time of delivery is subject to fluctuate. GPFB cannot guarantee the times of these deliveries and partners will be provided with a delivery timeframe.* Partners who receive retail food rescue deliveries must sign the addendum in the annual partnership agreement.

In areas where GPFB does not have staff available, partners may be asked to make pick ups on behalf of GPFB. Partners who agree to do pick ups will receive training from GPFB and must report donation weights and product received via PWW weekly. Partners who cannot make a scheduled pick up should reach out to another GPFB retail food rescue enabled partner if possible. If no partners are available, the donor(s) should be contacted and informed of the situation. Partners participating in retail food rescue pick ups must sign an annual agreement.

Some partners may participate in a combination of GPFB deliveries and their own retail food rescue pick ups.

PARTNER SHOPPING - *CLOSED UNTIL FURTHER NOTICE*

Partner shopping allowed partners the opportunity to come to the Fargo warehouse to select product from the partner shopping section. Product available through partner shopping was often received through retail food rescue and was close dated or not in large enough quantities to put on the order list.

FEES & BILLING

FEES

After the first of each year, partners are invoiced for a \$50 partnership fee for every site served by GPFB. This helps to cover the cost of PWW, staff support, and communications. GPFB does not charge partners for donated food, rather partners are requested to contribute to two types of fees.

Partners support transportation costs with a delivery fee. Partners located outside of Cass and Clay Counties, support with a delivery fee of \$.04/pound up to a max of \$300. If two full trucks are needed to deliver an entire order, an additional charge of \$300 will be added to the partner's invoice. Partners located in Cass and Clay Counties support with a set delivery fee of \$50/load. Delivery fees are added to invoices after orders are submitted in PWW. TEFAP products are not included in the \$.04/pound fee.

Partners share in the costs of handling and storage of product through a shared handling fee. This Feeding America guideline varies from \$.00 - \$.18 per pound and is noted on the PWW order list. By providing a few cents per pound, partners are literally sharing in the costs GPFB incurs by providing this service.

High demand product that is purchased through the GPFB co-op purchase program is made available at cost to partners on the order list. This product has NOT been donated rather sourced in to meet partner demand.

BILLING

Billing is conducted through PWW, where partners have access to statements, invoices, and balances. Statements are uploaded to PWW accounts on the first business day of the month. Invoices are available on PWW after deliveries are made. GPFB will provide a paper copy of the invoice upon delivery.

Partners should submit payments within 30 days from the posting of the statement. Checks must be written from the 501(c)(3) organization to the GPFB. Payments should be submitted with your agency name and agency reference number. Payments not submitted within 90 days will result in temporary suspension from GPFB partnership.

Occasionally, donations and/or grants are passed through GPFB to partners. Funding allocations are typically made based on service statistics or location of partner and those dollars can be used toward orders made through GPFB. Pass through funds are subject to have stipulations. Funds show up on statements as a credit until spent.

CLOSURES

WEATHER

It is a GPFB policy is to remain open during most periods of inclement weather. GPFB may close facilities or delay the opening of facilities when circumstances warrant to ensure the safety of employees and clients. Order deliveries are subject to be delayed or rescheduled due to inclement weather. Retail food rescue deliveries are subject to be delayed or cancelled. At times weather related decisions are not made until early mornings. GPFB staff will call and/or email partners to inform of rescheduled dates and times. Closure of either the Fargo or Bismarck facility will be sent out to all partners via email and will be posted on social media platforms. Partners closed due to inclement weather or who cannot receive a scheduled delivery need to notify GPFB immediately.

HOLIDAYS

The GPFB holiday schedule will be posted to the PARC each year. When closed GPFB warehouses and offices will be closed and all deliveries and retail food rescue will cease. Partners can still operate while GPFB is closed, including serving clients and conducting retail food rescue pick ups.

NON-COMPLIANCE & COMPLAINTS

Partners found to be in violation of any GPFB policies and procedures outlined in this handbook and/or partnership agreement will be subject to corrective action, suspension and/or termination.

CORRECTIVE ACTION

A plan created by a Regional Services Manager and the partner to return to compliance. During this time partners may still be eligible to order, receive retail food rescue deliveries, and/or conduct retail food rescue pick ups. A corrective action ends when the plan is complete, the partner is suspended, or terminated.

SUSPENSION

A period of time not exceeding six months when a partner is temporarily not eligible to receive GPFB product. During suspension partners cannot order, receive retail food rescue deliveries, or conduct retail food rescue pick ups. Partners will be notified of their suspension status via email, including the cause and next steps. Partners maintain an active status with GPFB while on suspension. Annual partner agreements will not be sent to partners who are currently suspended. Partners' suspension ends when one of the following occurs:

1. Partner works with Regional Services Manager to remedy the violation(s).
2. Partner voluntarily terminates their partnership with GPFB. No fees previously paid will be reimbursed.
3. Partner has been terminated by the Regional Services Manager if violation(s) is not remedied. Partner will be notified of their termination in writing. No fees previously paid will be reimbursed.

A suspension or corrective action extension may be authorized by a Regional Services Manager if the partner proves progress has been made and plans are in place to remedy the violation(s) in a timely manner.

TERMINATION

If non-compliance is not remedied or GPFB staff determines partner does not actively engage in the mission to end hunger, GPFB staff can terminate partnership. Partner will be notified of their termination in writing. No fees previously paid will be reimbursed.

APPEAL PROCEDURE

Partners may appeal disciplinary action. Partners must contact a Regional Services Manager to discuss the issue and find a resolution. Partners not satisfied by the resolution may appeal in writing to the Program Director. Program and Agency Services staff will meet within 10 business days to review appeal. Partners and/or sponsors may be invited to join the meeting. Decisions made at this meeting will be upheld as final.

COMPLAINTS

Complaints received by GPFB staff against a partner will result in GPFB involvement. Complaints received will be documented in writing and kept in the partner's file. All complainants will remain absolutely confidential. Program and Agency Services staff will immediately address the complaint with the partner and/or sponsoring organization. If the complaint shows a violation against the GPFB partnership agreement, the Program and Agency Services staff will create a corrective action plan for the partner to complete. Partners who fail to comply with the corrective action plan will be placed on suspension. If GPFB receives more than three complaints against a program in a 12 month period, partnership may subject to termination.

GREAT PLAINS FOOD BANK SUPPORT

Food assistance partnerships with GPFB are overseen by the Program and Agency Services Department, are monitored in many ways to ensure compliance with guidelines and increase partner capacity.

COMMUNICATION

GPFB highly values communication with partners and will utilize email, phone, in person visits and other online services to connect.

The Partner Agency Resource Center, PARC, is a section of the GPFB website designed for partners. Updates, reminders, recalls, holiday schedule, order and delivery schedule and other useful resources can be found on this page. Partners are encouraged to use this as a first resource.

Occasionally, surveys are sent out from the GPFB. These surveys help us collect information quickly and efficiently to help better serve our partners and clients.

Partners are required to inform GPFB staff of changes in contact information as soon as possible. New staff/volunteers are encouraged to review the partnership handbook and are required to complete food safety certification if another staff member has not already met this requirement. GPFB staff will provide orientation for new staff/volunteers as able.

SITE VISITS

Site visits take place biennially, every other year, with each food assistance partner to monitor guidelines set forth by FA and GPFB as outlined in this handbook and annual agreements. GPFB reserves the right to visit more frequently as able. This 1-2 hour site visit is intended to go over food safety, client information, and talk about capacity building opportunities. Site visits provide the opportunity to learn about partners' work and answer partner questions. GPFB encourages partners to invite anyone involved with programming to attend the visit, including volunteers, sponsor and/or board members. GPFB staff will send a follow up via email with required changes and best practice recommendations. Partners needing additional support or found to be in non-compliance will have follow up visits or check-ins within six months of initial visit.

CAPACITY BUILDING

GPFB encourages partners to increase their capacity to grow in the mission to end hunger. Capacity building is a key role of the GPFB with partners and occurs in multiple forms, including gatherings, toolkits, and programming. Building agency capacity helps increase partners effectiveness and therefore enables partners to optimize food distribution to people at risk of hunger.

Gatherings include quarterly all partner calls, regional meetings and food for thought sessions. Gatherings can take place both virtually and in person and all partners are invited to attend. At 'food for thought' sessions partners will be invited based on programming, geographic location, or similarities. These sessions are a time to connect, share information, and learn about best practices.

Toolkits created by the GPFB can be used by partners to assist in best practice and idea sharing. Toolkits will be made available on the PARC and have a wide range of topics.

- The Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP) – TEFAP is federal program that supplements the diets of low-income individuals, by providing them with emergency food and nutrition assistance at no cost. The USDA purchases commodity foods and allocates them to each state. The state then works with agencies, such as food banks, to distribute the product to food pantries, soup kitchens and shelters. TEFAP products are often highly desired items such as protein, peanut butter, shelf milk and other shelf stable items and are available at no cost to food assistance partners that are open to the public. The amount of food each State receives out of the total amount of food provided is based on the number of unemployed persons and the number of people with incomes below the state poverty level. Contact Regional Services Manager for additional information.

Partners are a vital part of the emergency food chain. GPFB staff provides technical assistance and training while ensuring partners meet food safety standards and provide fair and equitable service to clients.