



Hunger Council of Windham Region

Guide to Healthy Food Donations

Why is this important? People struggling with low income suffer increased rates of obesity and chronic diseases. Studies show a key cause is limited access to healthy foods. You can help our food shelves and food pantries break this link by donating foods from this list:

Items	What to Look For
Dried Fruit with no added sugar	Examples: Dates, prunes, figs, apricot, peaches, apples and pears.
Canned Fruit in Juice, not Syrup	Look for "in juice" on the label. Syrup adds unnecessary calories and sugars.
Reduced-sodium canned Vegetables & Soups	Look for "reduced-sodium" or "low-sodium." High sodium intake can cause high blood pressure, heart disease and stroke.
Canned Fish & Chicken	Packed in water, not oil. Compare labels to find products low in sodium, saturated fats and cholesterol.
Whole Grain Pasta	A "whole grain" should be the first on the ingredients' list. There are several health benefits to whole and multigrain pasta over other forms of pasta.
Brown Rice	Several studies have found that brown rice reduced the risks for Type 2 diabetes and other chronic diseases compared with white rice.
Whole Grain Bread	A "whole grain" should be the first on the ingredients' list. There are several health benefits to whole and multigrain bread over those made of made from refined flour.
Whole Grain Cereal	A "whole grain" should be the first on the ingredients' list. There are several health benefits to whole and multigrain cereals.
Whole Grain Crackers	A "whole grain" should be the first on the ingredients' list. There are several health benefits to whole and multigrain crackers over others.
Low or No Salt Crackers	Whether Whole Grain or not, check the packaging for sodium content. "Low Sodium" is 140mg sodium or less per serving.
Gluten Free Products	More and more people are developing sensitivity to wheat gluten and need gluten free foods. Look for "gluten free" on the label.
Plain Bottled Water	Water is the recommended beverage because it contains no calories and offers many other health benefits. Make sure there are not added sugars or artificial sweeteners such as, saccharin or aspartame.
100% Juice	The label will usually state if the liquid has 100% juice. If not 100% fruit juice, the product has added sugars, salt and/or artificial ingredients that contribute to obesity and other chronic diseases.
Soy Milk	Soy milk has about the same amount of protein as regular milk with less saturated fats and no cholesterol. Get "calcium enriched." The brands available on the store shelf can be stored without refrigeration.
Granola Bars	Look for bars with less than 200 calories per serving, less than 35% of calories from fat and less than 17 grams of sugar.
Sugar Free Products	Many products, from soups to cereals to macaroni and cheese contain high levels of hidden sugar. People with diabetes need sugar-free foods, so check the nutritional label.

Our Vision: All people in Windham County have access to an adequate supply of nutritious food!

For copies of this Guide and a list of food shelves, food pantries, and community meal sites in Windham County, visit www.unitedwaywindham.org

For information about food resources, call toll free 2-1-1

Special thanks to Meeting Waters YMCA, the Vermont Department of Health, and Windham County food shelves and food pantries for the information provided in this guide.