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About the Greater Cleveland Food Bank

OUR MISSION
The mission of the Greater Cleveland Food Bank is to work together to ensure that everyone in our communities has the nutritious food they need every day.

WHAT WE DO
The Greater Cleveland Food Bank (GCFB) supplies a majority of the food used in local hot meals, shelters, and food pantries. In addition, we provide food for child-care centers and after school programs, programs for the elderly, and other charitable non-profit organizations that serve food to low income individuals. The Food Bank works closely with other Northeast Ohio hunger relief organizations, providing food and non-food products to hunger centers administered by the Catholic Charities, Hunger Network of Greater Cleveland, and the Salvation Army, among others. In addition to distributing food and non-food items, the GCFB also provides critical support to its 800 plus Partner agencies by providing grants for food and offering educational classes on a variety of topics including nutrition, grant writing, advocacy, and capacity building.
School Market Program

The School Market program is designed to alleviate child hunger through the distribution of food to children, their families, and the immediate school community. School-based markets are located at, or adjacent to, school properties and are intended to provide a more readily accessible source of food assistance to low-income students and their families.

CORE COMPONENTS AND PARTNERSHIPS

- **Food Distribution** – The Greater Cleveland Food Bank delivers between 4,000 to 6,000 pounds of free, fresh produce for distribution by partner sites on a regular basis.

- **Nutrition Education** – The GCFB Nutrition Team may provide cooking demonstrations, nutrition education, recipes, and other activities upon request.

- **Physical Fitness** – Physical activities vary by location and might include: basketball, hula-hoop, and jump rope, as well as other types of interactive games and exercises.

- **SNAP Outreach** - GCFB Outreach staff can attend, upon request, School Market distributions to assist clients with applying/reapplying for SNAP benefits and may also provide additional information and resources.

- **Wraparound Services** - We encourage our School Market partners to incorporate community resources into their markets to provide other wraparound services. GCFB can assist in referring resources such as: health screenings, utility & rent assistance, cell phone services, insurance coverage, and financial assistance during their distribution.

PRODUCT TYPE

To alleviate barriers to access, School Markets are sustained via GCFB purchased and/or donated produce only. Government products may not be used as these require a self-declaration of income which children under age 18 are not permitted to complete. Though produce is the bulk of the food provided at School Markets, individuals may expect to receive additional perishable items such as bread, frozen, and dairy products, when available.

ELIGIBLE PARTICIPANTS

Eligibility of a site is determined using the MR81, a report published by the Ohio Department of Education that details the percentage of children enrolled in the free/reduced price lunch program at each school.
PHYSICAL REQUIREMENTS

- Paved parking lot or indoor space for distribution
- Space for up to a 32 foot box-truck to maneuver
- Flat space for 4 to 12 pallets
- Clear path to pallet area: no steps, curbs, steep inclines, grass, gravel, snow, ice, or soft surfaces
- Space to discard recyclables, trash, and unusable produce
- Space to store empty pallets until next distribution or a plan to discard pallets
- The organization must pass a site evaluation prior to programming and be subject to annual site visits during distributions
- Tables for distribution and bags to pack produce
- Storage area for required paperwork (invoices, training documents, stats receipts) for five years
School Market Distribution General Requirements

Organizational Requirements

- The organization must submit the appropriate distribution online application: https://portal.clevelandfoodbank.org/programs/mobilepantry/produce-distribution-app/
- The Market does not have to be held on school grounds, but must always have a school buy-in. If your Market will not be held on school grounds, you must submit the Use of Property Agreement.
- Eligibility is determined using the MR81, a report published by the Ohio Department of Education that details the percentage of children enrolled in the Free/Reduced Price Lunch Program at each school. At risk is defined as 50%, or higher participation. Geographic location is also considered to determine the level of need in the area for the program type.
- The organization must complete an online Food Safety Training Course.
- The organization cannot require, accept fees, or solicit donations for produce. All produce must be distributed at no charge.
- The organization cannot require or imply participation or attendance in religious service, ministry, or political event in order to receive produce.
- The organization must commit to at least three (3) months of monthly distributions scheduled and agreed upon by the Food Bank.
- Food Bank product must only be distributed/used for the approved program’s clients. It must not be distributed to another agency, group, or organization, or used for any other purpose (ex: fundraisers, block parties, funeral meals).
- The organization must publish, promote, and adhere to regular hours and dates of distributions to the public.
- The organization must recruit volunteers for the distribution (10-15 is recommended for most distributions).
School Market Distribution General Requirements

Distribution Requirements

- The organization must attend an annual School Market training with at least one (1) representative
- The organization must administer USDA Civil Rights Training to all volunteers and volunteers must sign the training sheet on an annual basis
- “And Justice For All” and “Apply for SNAP” posters must all be displayed during all distributions
- The organization must comply with the client intake process of utilizing correct sign in sheets
- In case of cancellation, the organization must provide a 48 hour notice by phone or e-mail prior to scheduled distribution. If this notice is not given, the organization will incur a $75 fee (excluding weather related closing)
- In the case that the organization rejects any product which is deemed servable by the Food Bank, the organization will be charged a $25 restocking fee per item
- The organization is responsible for any excess product at the end of the distribution and required to follow the redistribution process
- The organization must report statistics from each month on The Portal within 48 hours of the distribution
- The Greater Cleveland Food Bank has the right to discontinue this program at its discretion due to funding, delinquent statistics, excessive account balances, or improper treatment of product or clients
- Food Discrimination guidelines must be adhered to at all times
Partner Distribution Guide

Once selected as a School Market Partner, certain steps should be taken in order to ensure a successful distribution. Below are some helpful tips to assist your organization.

Promote
Promotion of your distribution is extremely important, especially for your first few distributions. There are many ways to promote and advertise:

- Flyers, signage, social media, church bulletin, newsletters, organization website

Train Volunteers
Having well trained volunteers is essential to a successful distribution for your organization and your clients.

- 8-10 volunteers per distribution is recommended
- Civil Rights training required for all volunteers

Set-up
The GCFB truck will arrive in the scheduled one-hour delivery window agreed upon by the Food Bank. One volunteer is required to direct the driver when they arrive.

- A clear path to the distribution area is needed; no gravel, grass, or any soft surfaces
- In the winter months the driveway, parking lot, and path needs to be clear of snow and ice
- Check the produce for quality and notify driver if there are any concerns before they leave
- All product must be 6” off of the ground, usually on a pallet or table
- Check invoice to verify the product matches what is being delivered and please alert driver of any discrepancies

Distribute
Distributions must be held during the advertised times to adhere to Partnership Agreement guidelines.

- Communicate with your volunteers to ensure they are present on distribution day
- Start on time and stay open until your advertised end time
- Distribute on a first come, first served basis
- If you have excess produce at the end of your distribution, you may invite your clients to come back for additional produce
Clean-up and Tear-down

The distribution area should be cleared and pallets stacked at the end of the distribution.

- Pallets should be neatly stacked for pick up at the time of your next delivery
- Redistribution guidelines must be strictly adhered to if there is any product left at the end of the distribution
The Portal and Statistics

The Greater Cleveland Food Bank’s portal is the main website that all partners use to find useful program information, print outs, and submit stats. The portal can be found at this link: https://portal.clevelandfoodbank.org/

Once in the portal, you can find specific information regarding School Markets under the Programs Portal, and then in the School Market section.

All member agencies and programs are required to turn in their statistics online within 48 hours of their distribution through the Greater Cleveland Food Bank’s portal.

- GCFB requires that all Partner agencies maintain and submit monthly statistics. It is required by various state and federal agencies. Statistics are needed even if you did not distribute food for a month. Once you are logged into the Portal you will find the link to report statistics.

- Statistics must be submitted to GCFB, via the Agency Portal, no later than 48 hours after your distribution to which the report pertains. It can be found on the Agency Portal or at this link: https://portal.clevelandfoodbank.org/agency/statistics/
Food Safety training

School Market

Each School Market distribution can easily impact hundreds of households and upwards of a thousand people. To ensure that our neighbors are benefitted, and not harmed, by the far-reaching and high-impact nature of this program, we want to proactively train our partners on proper food safety procedure.

For the School Market program, there are three simple steps to hedging ourselves and our neighbors against food-borne illness.

1. **wash hands**
   - Volunteers should have clean and sanitary hands from the start of the distribution. Provide sanitizer, gloves or opportunity to

2. **Keep food up**
   - on tables or pallets / never on the ground or floor

3. **Never wash, cut, or process**
   - the food in any way
GCFB Contacts

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*Produce Distribution Coordinator*: Coordinates and schedules all Mobile Pantry and School Market distributions

**Cushman, Vince**: 216-738-2063; Cell: 216-644-2633; vcushman@clevelandfoodbank.org
*Produce Partnerships Manager*: Oversees, schedules and coordinates all Mobile Pantry distributions