



1 Food Collection Activities:

1.1 Solicit Donations through Food Drive

Advantages



- For new emergency food programs, this may be your primary source of food until you are open long enough to qualify for food from traditional sources, like food banks
- Builds community awareness about your program

Challenges



- Requires staff/volunteers to help organize the drive, advertise it, and collect donations
- If relying on farmers' markets or local farms, supply is only available during the local growing season

1.2 Obtain Donated Fresh Produce for Your Food Program

Advantages



- You can provide more fresh, locally grown produce to your community
- New emergency food programs may not be able to obtain foods from the food bank yet, so working with local farms and markets will provide a consistent food source and engage new people in your work
- It engages farmers in support of your work while reducing waste

Challenges



- You will only receive produce during the growing season, which varies by location, type of crop, and elevation (from 4-7 months)
- Your customers may not be familiar with preparation of the produce you receive, so consider offering budget conscious recipes and/or doing cooking demos
- Fresh produce spoils more quickly so you'll need to make sure you are able to distribute them quickly and have adequate refrigerated storage

2 Fundraising Activities:

2.1 Recruit Volunteers to Assist Planning a Fundraiser

Advantages



- Raises funds to support your organization's work
- Builds your individual and corporate donor lists
- Raises your organization's visibility in the community
- Fun group activity

Challenges



- Requires significant advance planning
- Requires significant staff time to organize
- Must keep volunteers engaged and motivated
- Event must be profitable

2.2 Recruit Volunteers to Conduct Funder Prospect Research

Advantages



- Helps identify potential funders to support your work
- Deepens the volunteer's understanding of funding challenges and the nature of non-profit work
- Can be accomplished remotely, from any location with internet access

Challenges



- You must be able to share program information with your volunteer
- Volunteers need both a clear understanding of your work and how to search for relevant funders
- Identifying potential funders is no guarantee of actual funding, you will still need to follow-up and apply

3 Meal Service Activities:

3.1 Recruit Volunteers for Meal Service Activities

Advantages



- Having regular volunteers helps to offset the costs of staff to run your meal service program, enabling you to focus more resources on providing food and other services to your community

Challenges



- Relying solely on volunteers to run your program requires you to recruit and manage volunteers on an ongoing basis
- Volunteers' schedules and levels of commitment vary
- Often times volunteers want to provide the types of basic services for which you already have sufficient volunteers

4 Capacity Building Activities:

4.1 Recruit Skills-Based Volunteers to Provide Free Professional Services

Advantages



- Professional services are extremely expensive. Obtaining skilled volunteers on a pro bono basis can provide otherwise unaffordable services to your organization
- Volunteers with professional skills can help build your organization's longterm capacity
- Engaging local businesses in your work can help expand your base of support and connect new audiences to your mission

Challenges



- Relying solely on volunteers to run your program requires you to recruit and manage volunteers on an ongoing basis
- Volunteers' schedules and levels of commitment vary
- Volunteers usually want to provide the types of basic services for which you already have sufficient volunteers

5 Serving on a Board Activities:

5.1 Recruit Board Members for your Nonprofit Organization

Advantages



- Most nonprofits are in constant need of more active and effective Board members. Effective Board members provide monetary and/or in-kind support, leadership, program guidance, and fiscal oversight
- Benefit from the professional knowledge of your Board members
- Expand your base of support through Board network connections and leadership

Challenges



- Finding effective Board members is one of the most important tasks of any nonprofit organization, and also one of the most difficult. You may consider available trainings for your existing Board members

6 Benefits Access Activities:

6.1 Recruit Volunteers to Conduct SNAP (Food Stamps) & Summer Meals Outreach

Advantages



- Connects eligible households to federal nutrition benefits, which reduces the demand for food from your program and improves food security for your clients
- This is an ideal activity for groups, limited only by the number of flyers you print
- Helps introduce volunteers to deeper community hunger issues while still offering a group activity

Challenges



- Distributing outreach materials in low-income neighborhoods may be out of some volunteers' comfort zone, so providing instruction and support is necessary
- Children under 18 should always be supervised by an adult
- Volunteers need to be trained and supervised by someone from your program staff

6.2 Apply to Sponsor a Summer Meals Site

Advantages



- Sponsoring Summer Meals sites in your community can help reduce demand at your existing food program
- Increasing the number of Summer Meals sites in your community/region improves food security for children
- Sponsoring Summer Meals programs enables you to strengthen your relationship with community-based host sites

Challenges



- Sponsoring Summer Meals sites means that you will be responsible for managing a number of host sites in your community
- You must be able to demonstrate your ability to handle and prepare food, and also have the staff and funding capacity to supervise host sites
- Applications are time-intensive and require significant advanced planning (up to one year in advance for the next summer season)

6.3 Recruit Volunteers to Publicize Summer Meals through Social Media

Advantages

- Increase the number of local kids who participate in Summer Meals
- Reduce the demand for your food program
- Increase your program's visibility in local media and community
- Fun way to engage volunteers in work to reduce child hunger in your community

Challenges

- You must be able to provide content as well as monitor your volunteers' work on a regular basis, consider providing volunteers with a clear schedule of when updates should take place and be sure to review them before they are posted online
- Social media and hyper-local media outlets require you to update content regularly

7 Community Programs Activities:

7.1 Host Nutrition Education Programs

Advantages

- You will help low-income people meet dietary needs and change eating habits
- Can be a one-time project or a recurring activity
- Reduce food waste by educating about storage and preparation best practices, as well as how to use unfamiliar produce and other food products

Challenges

- Requires someone with professional skills in nutrition, healthy eating and/or cooking
- Requires staff members to coordinate and plan events and recruit participants
- Proper cooking and/or food prep facilities may be required

8 Raising Public Awareness Activities:

8.1 Raise Awareness about Hunger in Your Community and Nationwide

Advantages

- Increasing awareness helps build support for your programs, which can help you in your efforts to recruit volunteers and raise money

Challenges

- To build awareness about hunger in your community, and how your program addresses it, you will need to both collect and present data to the public, whether through newsletters, your website, brochures, flyers, etc.

9 Public Policy and Advocacy Activities:

9.1 Start a Food Action Board

Advantages

- You can create a leadership development program with few resources, empowering clients to take action on shared priorities
- You will gain the opportunity to present real-life compelling testimony to elected officials and the media in your area
- Excellent service-learning tool for students

Challenges

- Encouraging regular attendance is difficult, you may consider tangible incentives such as a completion certificate, attendance requirements to meet officials, and/or job recommendations
- You may need help developing a curriculum. Please contact Hunger Free America for more information, templates, or to inquire about starting a Food Action Board at your site