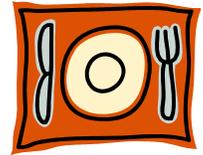
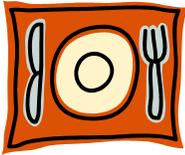


# Bringing More to the Table

## Greater Berks Food Bank

April 2017



### Our Staff:

Peg Bianca,  
Executive Director

Tim Becker,  
Operations Manager

Deb Gehris,  
Business Manager

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Development  
Manager

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Agency and Volunteer  
Services Coordinator

Deb Mest,  
Agency and Volunteer  
Services Manager

Brenda Miller,  
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Warehouse

Tom Marsh  
Warehouse/Driver

Ronny Perez  
Warehouse/Driver

Alex Putt  
Warehouse/Driver

Rob Wertman  
Warehouse Supervisor

### Help Us Move Out the Nutritious Produce and Meat

As we try to bring more nutritious, healthy foods to our hungry neighbors, we are looking to our agencies to order and distribute more of these products. According to the 2014 Feeding America Hunger in America study, 57% of our client households have high blood pressure, 31% of our client households have diabetes. These are facts we should not ignore. GBFB has a freezer full of nutrient dense meats, and a refrigerator overflowing with nutrient dense fresh fruits and vegetables. Remember you are ordering food for the clients, so even though it may be something you don't like, the clients may love it. Fresh fruits and vegetables will continue to come in to GBFB and increase as the warmer months approach. Please think about your clients and how you can help them better their nutrition by providing these great products.

### 3 REASONS TO AVOID CANNED VEGETABLES

[www.fitday.com](http://www.fitday.com)

For convenience, coming home after a tough day's work, throwing your briefcase on the chair and opening up canned vegetables to cook in the pan with some other quick-cooking ingredients seems just great. Canned vegetables may not be such a great idea, though. Consider the following three reasons to ditch the cans and opt for frozen or fresh vegetables instead.

#### 1. Bisphenol A (BPA)

Bisphenol A worries health practitioners because of its possible link to serious health problems. BPA is an industrial compound, but food manufacturers use BPA to protect food from metal corrosion and bacteria. BPA may affect neural development in fetuses. BPA is also linked to endocrine disorders, heart disease and cancer. Canned foods have high amounts of BPA that some study groups find unacceptable. One group of scientists discovered levels of BPAs in canned foods that were 200 times the level proclaimed by the U.S. government as safe. Research also shows that BPA leaches from the liner into the food of canned goods. In a study's random sampling of 50 cans from the U.S. and Canada, researchers found BPA in 46 of the 50 food products. The highest level was found in a can of green beans.

#### 2. Sodium

You need not worry about the sodium content of fresh vegetables, but canned vegetables pose a sodium risk if you are on a low-salt diet for health reasons. Check the ingredients of canned vegetables because they carry high levels of sodium. Fortunately, food manufacturers, in response to consumer awareness about sodium, have responded with reduced-sodium varieties. Unfortunately, not all canned vegetable products have low-sodium versions that you can find easily in stores. One state health agency concerned about the amount of sodium in commercial food took a look at canned tomatoes to illustrate the difference. The agency found that regular canned tomatoes had 15 times as much sodium as reduced-sodium canned tomatoes. Still, you can salvage your cans of vegetables by rinsing the food from the can first in water before putting the veggies in the pot, oven, pan or microwave. That will remove some of the salt content.

#### 3. Sulfites

Sulfites are sulfur-based compounds added to food as preservatives. They are found in canned vegetables. About one out of 100 people is sensitive to sulfites, and reactions can be deadly. Sensitivity varies from person to person, but the reaction manifests itself in respiratory problems. Signs of a bad reaction develop in just 15 minutes to a half-hour after eating foods with sulfites. They take the form of shortness of breath or wheezing. Food labels on canned vegetables may not say "sulfites" per se, but look for any of these ingredients which have sulfites in them: sulfur dioxide, potassium bisulfite, potassium metabisulfite or sodium sulfite.

Although these are three strong reasons to avoid canned vegetables, vegetables in general are the right choice for healthy eating. The perspective recommended by nutritionists is easy to live by: choose fresh or frozen vegetables first and canned vegetables second. A university study found that fiber and key vitamins in vegetables that underwent the canning process were not compromised as a result of canning. Just limit your use of canned vegetables if you are concerned about BPA, and look for reduced-sodium choices too.

## Did you know that April Is National Volunteer Month?

**Why Volunteer?** You have probably been asked this question at some point in your lifetime. The answers can vary. Many times people are looking to do something after retirement or they need hours for school or maybe they need to volunteer for their job. There are actually many benefits to volunteer. One benefit of volunteering is that you are taking a step toward creating a healthier community. For example, kids who agree to take part in tidying up their classrooms and surrounding areas, promote cleanliness. This in turn helps the community to find motivation to combat pollution and trash. It encourages more people to take an active part in cleaning up. In the end everyone benefits from it. Another benefit of volunteering is that it showcases someone's gratitude. Someone who becomes successful in selling books may take part in a reading for a children's program. An athlete can spend some time in teaching others, the basics of his / her sport. Someone who had struggled with food insecurity may volunteer to do a good turn for someone else who is currently in that situation. Others volunteer to help those in need. Many folks believe that the government agencies are able to assist folks struggling but that is not enough most times. People step up to volunteer to assist those folks dealing with that calamity in their lives, either directly or indirectly. Plus volunteering gives people hope and emboldens the human spirit. Volunteering can give you spiritual and emotional growth, something that cannot come from any amount of money. Since it is National Volunteer month, we wish to thank our agencies and their volunteers, along with our own volunteers to say we are truly grateful for the time and effort you give to our programs in order to make a difference in the lives of others. We appreciate all that you do and even though many of the folks you may help don't get to say it, they appreciate you too.

## SAVE THE DATE...

### AGENCY ORIENTATION

Monday April 10, 2017, 9:00-10:00am

Held at GBFB, RSVP is required...

Please contact either Deb Mest ext. 205, Lori Lowery ext. 206 OR  
Brenda Miller ext. 207.

### VOLUNTEER ORIENTATION

- April 7—11:30am-12:15pm webinar
- April 11- 1:00pm-2:00pm at GBFB
- April 20th- 3:00pm-4:00 pm at GBFB

## Reading Health System Pound Per Person Challenge 2017

WOW!!! In March in between some crazy rainstorms, GBFB picked up the collection from [Reading Health System's](#) 6th annual Pound Per Person Challenge - in which the RHS challenges its employees to collect at least one pound of food per employee (they have about 7,000 staff members).

11,460 pounds of non-perishable foods were collected to help the GBFB feed our hungry neighbors! This year's food drive beat the previous best collection total (9,681 pounds were collected in the first year of the Pound Per Person Challenge - 2012)!



## IMPORTANT CSFP Certifications Mailed

All CSFP (senior box) certification forms have been mailed, along with the new income guidelines. If your agency is part of this program, please be sure to have all of your clients on CSFP bring in current proof of income and sign the certification form. If any of your clients have a proxy, they must complete a new proxy form. All certification and proxy forms are due back to GBFB no later than May 31, 2017 or the client will have to be dropped from the list. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact Deb Mest at ext. 205.

**National Letter Carrier Food Drive  
Event—May 13th**

GBFB is once again looking for volunteers to pack donations from the annual National Association of Letter Carriers (NALC) Food Drive Saturday May 13th. The NALC food packing is held here at GBFB. Volunteers are needed in two shifts: 2pm to 4pm and 5pm to 7pm. Food is at hand (pizza, hot dogs, cold drinks) for all volunteers to enjoy. As it is the day before Mother's Day, a special letter is available to any volunteer to give to their mother to let her know they volunteered to help the less fortunate in her honor. Last year NALC collected almost 40,000 pounds of food. The NALC food drive is the largest food drive of the year and benefits all the agencies GBFB supplies.

If interested in helping please contact Lori Lowery via phone, 610.926.5802 x 206, or email her at [llovery@feedingamerica.org](mailto:llovery@feedingamerica.org). As of today, there are slots open for the 5 - 7pm timeframe.

**GBFB IS CLOSED ON FRIDAY, APRIL 14TH IN OBSERVANCE OF GOOD FRIDAY. IF YOU ARE PLANNING TO PICK UP AN ORDER ON MONDAY, APRIL 17TH, YOUR ORDER MUST BE IN NO LATER THAN WEDNESDAY, APRIL 12TH. IF YOU ARE PLANNING TO HAVE AN ORDER DELIVERED TO YOUR LOCATION ON MONDAY, APRIL 17TH, YOUR ORDER MUST BE RECEIVED NO LATER THAN TUESDAY, APRIL 11TH. THANK YOU FOR YOUR ATTENTION TO THIS MATTER.**



**APRIL 22 is EARTH DAY — Remember to reduce, reuse and recycle!**



**DUNKIN' DONUTS "ROASTS" HUNGER**

A morning pick-me-up has led to a big donation for the Greater Berks Food Bank. The Greater Berks Food Bank received a giant check from Dunkin' Donuts at the end of February. The money was raised through the chain's 'Roast Hunger' campaign. Dunkin' Donuts is donating a part of the proceeds of every large cup of coffee sold during the campaign. "It turned into \$13,000, which is fantastic and that will allow us to bring in more fresh fruits and vegetables that we distribute daily though here," said Peg Bianca, our executive director. This donation was raised by local Dunkin' Donuts. Overall, the chain said it raised more than \$257,000 during the campaign. The folks from Dunkin' Donuts local stores also came in to volunteer for a few hours in the warehouse packing local donations in March. We appreciate their support for the community that they service.



## **FOOD DATING AND FOOD SAFETY—IMPORTANT REMINDERS**

Many of you receive food drive donation boxes from us which have a variety of non-perishable items inside. At times, the items in the boxes are past date and sites set up an area for people to choose “at their own risk”. We forget that sometimes a date is just a date and there is no reason to be concerned if it is past.

**When looking at food product dating you need to remember:**

- ◆ Dates are printed voluntarily on many food items, but they are not required by the Federal Government. Food product dating can appear as open dates that are readable to consumers or closed dates that appear as codes on shelf-stable products such as cans and boxes of food. Both dating systems enable manufacturers and retailers to rotate their stock and can help with product tracing.
- ◆ Calendar dates help grocery stores determine how long to display the product for sale and relate to the peak quality of food, not safety. Calendar dates are found primarily on perishable foods, such as dairy products, eggs, meat and poultry.

**Here are the three ways that products are dated:**

- ◆ “Sell-by” date tells the store how long to display the product for sale. You should buy the product before this date to ensure maximum quality, but the product is still safe to consume after the date on the box.
- ◆ “Use-by” date is the last date recommended for the use of the product while at peak quality. The date has been determined by the manufacturer of the product.
- ◆ “Best if used by (or before)” date is recommended for best flavor or quality. It is not a purchase or safety date.
- ◆ “Closed or coded dates” are packing numbers used by the manufacturer.

**\*\*It should be noted that the dates found on products are the food manufacturer’s recommendations regarding optimal quality of the product. The dates are not necessarily guides for food safety. For instance, a product may be safe to eat beyond the “best if used by” date, but may not be of highest quality. Also, in most cases, the product date is determined for a product remaining unopened and stored in a proper manner. Once opened, the quality limits of the product will vary from the date printed on the package.**

**Items like Fresh produce don’t have dates so when dealing with these remember:**

- ◆ Raw fruits and vegetables are safe to eat at room temperature, but, after ripening will mold and rot quickly. For best quality, store ripe fruits and vegetables in the refrigerator or prepare and freeze. But remember, there are some exceptions:

- \*Some hardy, dense vegetables like onions, garlic, potatoes and winter squash can be stored in cool, dark places outside of the refrigerator.

- \*Tomatoes taste best *not* refrigerated. They become mealy in cold storage.

- \*Bananas will not ripen while cold; refrigeration will cause the banana skin to blacken, but they are safe to eat.

- \*Very fresh apples, mangoes and stone fruits can be stored at room temperature, but

these items should be refrigerated as they ripen. When dealing with perishables always remember to refrigerate within two hours (one hour when the temperature is above 90°F). Use a refrigerator/freezer thermometer to ensure your refrigerator is at 40°F or below and the freezer is at 0°F or below. Place meat, poultry and seafood in the coldest part of the refrigerator. Store eggs in their original carton on a shelf, not in the door. To maintain quality when freezing meat and poultry in its original package, wrap the package again with foil or plastic wrap that is recommended for freezer storage. Encourage food safety at your site and encourage your recipients to continue to do the same.

Greater Berks Food Bank  
117 Morgan Drive, Reading, PA 19608  
610-926-5802

*Bringing More to the Table*  
Greater Berks Food Bank



*Bringing more to the table is brought to you by a joint effort of the Greater Berks Food Bank Staff*

We'd love your input

Editor: Lori Lowery  
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Reading, PA 19608

### MICHIGAN DRIED CHERRY OATMEAL COOKIES

- 1 1/4 c. butter, softened
- 1 1/4 c. packed brown sugar
- 1 egg
- 1 tsp. vanilla
- 1 1/2 c. all-purpose flour
- 1 tsp. baking soda
- 1 tsp. salt
- 3/4 tsp. cinnamon
- 1/4 tsp. nutmeg
- 3 c. quick or old fashioned uncooked oatmeal
- 1 c. dried cherries

Preheat oven to 375 degrees. Beat together butter and brown sugar until light and fluffy. Beat in the egg and vanilla. In a bowl combine flour, baking soda, salt, cinnamon and nutmeg; add to creamed butter mixture, mixing well. Stir in oatmeal and dried cherries.

Drop by a rounded tablespoon onto an ungreased cookie sheet. Bake 8-11 minutes or until lightly golden. Cool 1 minute on cookie sheet, then remove. Makes 5 1/2-6 dozen cookies. Dried cherries item # 708BA299T.