



## Shape Up Your Workplace

A monthly series brought to you by Get Healthy CT

### Workplace Wellness Idea #24: Healthy Food Donations

Get Healthy CT aims to provide businesses with ideas that will facilitate healthy behaviors of their employees to improve employee satisfaction, productivity and showcase the employer as a role model for health. To support this, we will provide a “Workplace Wellness Idea” each month that employers can implement at low or no cost.

As an employer, you can help your employees support the health of their community by asking them to donate healthy foods to local food programs. Hunger is a real issue in our community. According to the Connecticut Food Bank and Feeding America, 13.1% or 472,540 Connecticut residents are food insecure, and one out of every 5 children is food insecure. An increasing number of residents in CT have been relying on the Connecticut Food Bank each year. In 2015, the CT Food Bank prepared more than 18.5 million meals to people in six counties, making food banks vitally important to our community.

#### **Why is it important to donate healthy food?**

Health and hunger are connected. According to Feeding America’s *Hunger in America 2014 Study*, one-third of the households using food banks reported having a family member with diabetes and two-thirds of households reported having to choose between paying for food and paying for medicine or medical care. People who face hunger are at a greater risk for diet-sensitive diseases including Type 2 Diabetes, high blood pressure and heart attacks, and have poorer health outcomes.

Local food drives often collect our unwanted pantry items, like boxed and canned foods, which are often high in salt, sugar and other additives that can lead to poor health. Next time you donate, think about some *healthier* items you can give that can help create an impact on the health of your community. Encouraging employees to donate healthy food can benefit the well-being of the community. Some healthy donation ideas are listed on the next page.



Source: <http://www.feedingamerica.org> | <http://www.ctfoodbank.org/>

## Get started with HEALTHY food donations

### Healthy Food Donation Options:

Shelf-stable milk and non-dairy alternatives - almond or soymilk

Whole grain low-sugar cold cereal and unsweetened oatmeal

Canned fruit in 100% juice or water

Canned low sodium, no salt vegetables

Whole grain pasta, whole wheat tortillas, taco shells

Low sugar, low sodium pasta sauce

Low sodium/water packed canned tuna / salmon / chicken

Brown rice & quinoa

Unsweetened dried fruit

Low sodium soups

Low sodium nuts & beans

Natural peanut butter or other nut butters

Non-creamy/lite salad dressings/vinegars

Unsweetened applesauce

Sugar free, low sodium & no salt items

100% fruit juice

→ **Fresh produce**

**\$5-\$10 grocery store gift card**

Check first. Some sites accept items from home and community gardens.



## Where to donate

- CT Food Bank- *accepts food and donations online* [www.ctfoodbank.org](http://www.ctfoodbank.org)
- Local churches
- Local food pantries & soup kitchens
- Local seasonal food drives:
  - Grocery stores
  - Schools
  - Other organizations
- You can also contact your local health department for more information.

### How to Host a Healthy Food Drive

- ✓ Assemble your team of family, co-workers or neighbors
- ✓ Identify a local food pantry to receive your donation
- ✓ Select a donation drop off date/time
- ✓ Distribute flyers and a healthy food donation list
- ✓ Collect the healthy donations
- ✓ Drop off donations to your selected feeding site

For more information, please visit [GetHealthyCT.org](http://GetHealthyCT.org)

**Let's work together to help make the healthy choice the easy choice in the workplace!**