

# STRATEGIES FOR HEALTHIER AND CULTURALLY RELEVANT FOOD AT KING COUNTY FOOD BANKS

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*The food bank and emergency food system in the United States requires rethinking. Northwest Harvest, a food bank distributor and anti-hunger organization in King County is transforming emergency food by moving away from a charity model to a social justice model. One of the ways this organization is moving to a social justice model is by providing healthier, lower sodium and more culturally relevant food and support.*

## Objectives

- Create a buying guide to help make food bank leads and procurement directors more nutrition savvy shoppers
- Demonstrate an understanding of the importance of cultural humility and anti-racism at an anti-hunger organization
- Create picture-based recipes to be used by food bank clients of all language and literacy backgrounds
- Design donor material templates that highlight culturally relevant food

## Methods and Approach

### Healthy and Low Sodium Buying Guide

- Attended meetings with South King County Food Coalition and the Procurement Director at Northwest Harvest. Learned about the wholesale procurement buying process at and the Emergency Food Assistance Plan reimbursement process
- Reviewed, cleaned, and tagged data. 50 food items were identified, and each was entered into a spreadsheet and tagged based on program, food bank location, grocery store name (if applicable), category, product, packaging, brand, and online nutrition information (if available)

- Designed a nutrition buying strategy using nutrition knowledge, FDA rules on low sodium dietary guidelines, and needs of the populations accessing food banks

### Picture Based Recipes

- Conducted informational survey calls with food bank and food coalition managers to learn about recipe needs
- Designed three picture-based recipes using split peas: a basic split pea soup, a West African inspired version, and a Vietnamese inspired version
- Observed and surveyed clients at three food banks in King County

### Culturally Relevant Donor Material Templates

- Requested donor material samples from food bank partners and surveyed their needs



## Results

### Healthy and Low Sodium Buying Guide

- The final product is a six-page guide with shopping suggestions for 35 commonly purchased food bank items
- The buying guide was presented to Northwest Harvest and the CDC Low Sodium team. The buying guide will be used by food bank managers for smaller more regular purchases and by procurement leads for bulk and wholesale purchases

## Snapshot of Healthy and Low Sodium Buying Guide

Product	Shopping and Swap Suggestions	Additional Notes
Regular Applesauce)		sweetened varieties. If the only options available contain sugar opt for <10 grams of added sugar per serving.
<b>Vegetables and Processed Vegetable Products</b>		
Green Beans, canned	<b>Choose:</b> no salt added varieties. <b>Caution:</b> If salt is added choose <140 mg of sodium or less per serving.	Always compare nutrition labels when possible. Similarly named canned green beans can have vastly different sodium levels.
Corn, canned	<b>Choose:</b> no salt added varieties. <b>Caution:</b> If salt is added choose <140 mg of sodium or less per serving.	Always compare nutrition labels when possible. Similarly named canned corn can have vastly different sodium levels.
Vegetables, cut or whole, frozen	<b>Generally okay as is</b>	Frozen vegetables without any additives (such as seasonings and sauces) are an excellent choice and do not require a swap.
Tomato paste, canned	<b>Choose:</b> no salt added varieties. <b>Caution:</b> If salt is added choose <140 mg of sodium or less per serving.	
Crushed tomatoes, diced tomatoes, canned	<b>Choose:</b> no salt added varieties. <b>Caution:</b> If salt is added choose <140 mg of sodium or less per serving.	
Stewed tomatoes, canned	<b>Choose:</b> No sodium, "Low Sodium", "Low in Sodium", "Less in Sodium" OR 140 mg of sodium or less per serving. <b>Caution:</b> Stewed tomatoes with added sugar.	
Spaghetti Sauce	<b>Choose:</b> No sodium, "Low Sodium", "Low in Sodium", "Less in Sodium" OR 140 mg of sodium or less per serving. <b>Caution:</b> Sauces with added sugar.	
<b>Canned Soups and Ready to Eat Canned Meals</b>		
Product	Shopping and Swap Suggestions	Additional Notes

### Picture Based Recipes

- 65 recipes were sent with shoppers and clients with generally positive feedback
- These recipes will be used by several food bank partners and food bank cooking classes in some areas
- Going forward we need to continue to assess the demand and use of recipes along with testing these picture-based recipes with shoppers who speak limited to no English

### Donor Material Templates

- 20 culturally relevant donor material templates were created and are now available in a shared public drive

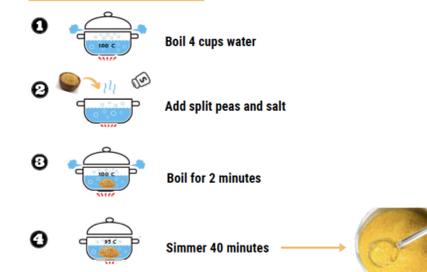
## Picture Based Recipes: Split Pea Soup



### ingredients



### directions



## Donor Material Template Example



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