



**Wisconsin Food Pantry Conference Call**  
**Hosted by Feeding Wisconsin and TEFAP**  
**Thursday, September 8, 2022**

Notes can be found: [https://feedingwi.org/programs/pantry\\_network\\_engagement.php](https://feedingwi.org/programs/pantry_network_engagement.php)

- 1. Introductions: please type your name, food pantry/organization in the chat**
- 2. Nutrition Benefits and [FoodShare updates](#)**
  - a. Public Health Emergency Order
    - i. Because there was no notification made in mid-August that the PHE will end in October, there is an assumption that the PHE will be extended through January 11, 2022.
    - ii. That being the case, unless the PHE is extended beyond that 90 day cycle once again, any enhanced benefits, including SNAP/FoodShare emergency allotments may end in February, 2023.
  - b. FoodShare Benefit Updates
    - i. Those enrolled in FoodShare, are getting additional FoodShare benefits in September to help during the COVID-19 pandemic. All FoodShare members are getting at least \$95 in additional benefits each month. Some households will get more to bring their benefit amount to the maximum monthly benefit amount for their household size. These additional benefits will be deposited on Sept 18th.
    - ii. Summer P-EBT
      1. Final issuance will be 10/29. In order to receive benefits on this date, families needed to apply for free/reduced lunch by September 1, 2022
- 3. TEFAP**
  - a. **Food Flow Data**
    - i. Thrifty food plan adjustments will impact entitlement
  - b. **TEFAP COVID Recommendations**
    - i. Previous recommendations still in place - contact the local public health department; be safe and follow guidelines in your local community.
    - ii. Review [memo](#) if necessary
    - iii. State recommends that you follow safety protocol to keep participants, volunteers, and staff safe.

- iv. Regarding questions from previous calls about the ability of pantries to require vaccination to participate in in-person, indoor pantry distribution, DHS has shared that: **food pantries need to reach out to their local public health department for guidance on vaccination requirements.**

**c. TEFAP Income Eligibility**

- i. DHS has confirmed TEFAP income limits are changing from 300% FPL (increased during the height of Covid) to 200% FPL for food pantries.
- ii. Effective September 1, 2022, new income limit will be 200%, new reporting forms will be used, and requirement for matching pounds reinstated.
- iii. The September start date balanced the need to give customers advance notice of the change with the need to limit service to the most food insecure households in the face of concern over declining food volume and rising demand that could outstrip community resources.
- iv. TEFAP eligibility and income guidelines:  
<https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/nutrition/tefap/eligibility.htm>
- v. TEFAP Forms: <https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/nutrition/tefap/forms.htm>
- vi. New TEFAP Operators Manual will be released 9/8/2022
- vii. New forms and guidelines begin 9/1/2022
- viii. Annual recertification and match will begin 10/1

**d. TEFAP Reach and Resiliency**

- i. Began work on the assessment portion of the grant. Partners are gathering data in order to help produce a resource tool used to id areas that would be better served with the expansion of TEFAP into their area. Implementation of funds and infrastructure building will occur as the assessment process develops.
- ii. New staff
  - 1. Carol Johnson - carol.johnson@dhs.wisconsin.gov. New TEFAP Coordinator to start on 9/12/2022. Carol comes to her new role bringing with her years of experience in Environmental Health within the Department of Natural Resources as well as more recently working as a Food Scientist for the Department of Agriculture Trade & Consumer Protection (DATCP). Throughout her time with DATCP, Carol served as the state contact for licensing regulation programs including; retail food, food processing, warehousing and dairy operations. In addition, Carol has experience providing technical assistance related to policies and procedures at the state level.

**4. WISCAP - Poverty Matters Conference**

- a. Will be Oct 18-19, 2022, at the Madison Marriott West

- b. Conference agenda is posted and registration is live
- c. More information at <https://www.wiscap.org/povertymatters>

#### 5. Future Call Topics - Based on Pantry Coordinator Survey

September 2022	Fresh produce availability/Food Sourcing
October 2022	Indoor shopping best practices/Order ahead online ordering pilots
November 2022	Winding down COVID resources
December 2022	Educational materials and recipes/Healthy & nutritious food options
January 2023	Fundraising
February 2023	Culturally appropriate food options
March 2023	Mobile and outdoor pantry best practices
April 2023	Food safety
May 2023	Creating a nutrition policy to guide donations and purchases

#### 6. Ongoing Monthly Calls in 2022

- a. Will occur the Second Thursday of the month at 11am
- b. You can find more information, including call recordings and meeting notes on the Feeding Wisconsin website:  
[https://feedingwi.org/programs/pantry\\_network\\_engagement.php](https://feedingwi.org/programs/pantry_network_engagement.php)
- c. You can register for the calls to get a calendar invite here:  
[https://secure.everyaction.com/gQfwP1eFGkO-Ri\\_RQ808lQ2](https://secure.everyaction.com/gQfwP1eFGkO-Ri_RQ808lQ2)
- d. NEXT CALL - October 13th at 11am

#### 7. Fresh produce availability/Food Sourcing

- a. Jeff Joslyn (jjoslyn@feedingamericawi.org), Chief Operating Officer and former/current Food Sourcing Guru to share update, insights, and tips on fresh produce and food sourcing
  - i. As you are approaching sourcing of produce and local products - start with a positive mindset. This can be challenging given the logistics – supply chain, short shelf life of produce, etc. How do we get to yes?
  - ii. Building relationships to allow for creative solutions - e.g. from a food bank perspective—shortening the line and having producers drop off at pantries
  - iii. Fundraising in partnership - best produce going to get comes from farmers that need payment for it, profit margins are not great. Fundraising in partnership with producers—asking them, what does it take for the to grow an acre of carrots for food distribution, how do we tell that story, and how can we make that happen

- iv. Sometimes accepting product, no matter what it is, is a good start to building a relationship - if we have to accept 10 pallets of eggplant but can only move two, have relationships with sister food banks to move the others so that we can keep positive relationships and use good food
- b. Erin Waldhart ([waferdirector@waferlacrosse.org](mailto:waferdirector@waferlacrosse.org)), Executive Director of WAFER Food Pantry in La Crosse to share update, insights, and tips on fresh produce and food sourcing
  - i. WAFER Food pantry in La Crosse. I have been with the org for 10 years, 16 in the food pantry industry
  - ii. Background on organization – currently providing 1600+ food packages per month, and we have continued increases of the number of food packages provided per month. Food sources are about 1/3 each of donated community product, government commodities, and purchased product. Last year we distributed more than 1.5 million pounds of food.
  - iii. Tip: Diversification of procurement sources. This is now more important than ever as we continue to deal with supply chain and access issue ripple effects from COVID.
  - iv. What does diversification look like? For us at WAFER, we have identified local and warehousing options for food purchases.
  - v. Locally we have a chain grocer (soon to be one more), Walmarts, Aldi, and Woodmans. We most often purchase from Woodmans when they are able to get the product we need, which has been more difficult the past 2 years. Second most utilized source locally is Aldi, although this source has been even less available in the past 2 years.
  - vi. Warehousing sources seem to be the easiest to find what I need, though may need to contact several. We currently have relationships with 4 warehousing companies, and 1 local that I would use in a pinch because our initial contact their prices were as good as the other warehousing companies. They send inventories every 2-3 weeks or specials as they come up. I am always watching for a good deal and will buy a larger quantity than needed because in the end there will be a cost savings. When I started at WAFER the food budget was twice what it is now because I changed ordering processes, buying ahead for good deals and shopping around.
  - vii. If a need comes up between emailed inventories I will contact each with my specific need and ask for options. I try to get multiple estimates if possible to get the most for the money. I took over food procurement with the changeover of the last operations manager, almost 5 years ago.

In that time I have come to understand what is a good price on certain items we purchase most. However, with inflation that base knowledge isn't much of a help as prices fluctuate which is why getting several estimates for a purchase is important.

- viii. (We use CIS [comprehensive inventory solutions] out of minnesota, SIMCO foods out of California, sharratt provisions out of California, Hidden Valley Industries out of Menomonie)
- ix. And of course, we rely heavily on our Food Bank for purchasing and they are a source for getting questions answered. The food bank inventory list is always my first stop.
- x. These procurement ideas can be applied to shelf-stable basic foods procurement and to fresh produce procurement. I do very little produce purchasing other than from the food bank. Thanks to the equipment and capacity, one area that can be tapped into are trucking companies for fresh produce. If they haul an overage or have some damaged product it is common for an entire load or sometimes just pallets to be declined by a retailer. Trucking companies usually don't want to return a load to their original source, and I have heard from the drivers that they are instructed to just dump it somewhere. Most do not do that and instead find a pantry or food bank to donate to. Make friends with the companies when they call you. Provide them your contact info, ask them to remember you in the future should that happen again. Oftentimes, once you are in their system they will call again. Product varies for nearly any type of food, but it is important to remember the questions to ask regarding food safety, storage, dates, and package sizes to ensure you can handle the donation. If you can't, who could you refer them too so the product doesn't go to waste? Or another idea, if you could handle a larger donation and share with the people who have a like mission to distribute widely to avoid spoiling.
- xi. \*Always keep looking for new partners! FFA, retail, community food drives, warehouses, farmers, farmers markets, orchards, etc

#### Tips

- xii. \*for inventory and ordering. Again, now more than ever, keep an eye on your inventory. Don't wait until you are down to 1 weeks worth of a particular item. It will take time to reach out and get information from your sources. Delivery may be delayed. One recent order took 3+ weeks to arrive. Arrival is dependent on where it is coming from and the warehouse's method for shipping. Remember, not every source is going

to have access to or be able to order what you need. Have a decent buffer. For us, that time frame is a one month supply. I would prefer we have a 3 month inventory buffer, but space constraints do not always allow for that.

- xiii. \*Also, be flexible. For instance, I was recently having a difficult time procuring cereal. My food bank had none, the warehouses had some coming in weeks, and my option was buying locally. My least expensive decent option was around \$2/unit. Instead of purchasing cereal, I was able to get pancake mix for less than half of what cereal would cost. We rarely have pancake mix so this was a cost effective option and a great treat for our patrons. Just be sure to communicate to volunteers who stock shelves that you truly do mean for some items to be in areas they typically aren't.
- xiv. \*Don't compromise food standard values. If possible, buy a more wholesome choice. Avoid the sugary cereals even if the healthier choice costs more. Food is expensive, and getting to be more every day, but it is important that we offer access to healthy foods or the ramifications of poor health will just hit further on down the road.
- xv. I don't spend money on items I feel have no nutritional value. For instance, juice. I do not purchase juice when we run out unless I find an amazing deal. Or crackers, the crackers we typically have aren't whole grain and serve as mostly a filler. On categories that aren't essential to a good diet once the product is gone, it's gone. I would rather spend the money in areas that provide for optimum nutrition.

c. Q&A for Jeff and Erin

- i. Any advice on sourcing non-Standard American Diet foods? We've seen a lot of growth in Hispanic-American and South East Asian-American families, and it's been difficult to get culturally relevant foods for these families sourced outside of purchasing from wholesalers
  1. Food bank solution recently was to support Hmong Elders to use grow machines for Elders to grow the greens that they and their communities wanted
  2. Are there other unique ways that working with local growers can support sourcing the culturally meaningful food that folks would like to eat?
  3. Grants for these specific food purchases – working with community partners i.e. Hmong Association to make decisions about the food that are more relevant

- ii. Generally, is it difficult for food banks to procure culturally-relevant foods?
  - 1. Generally speaking it is hard to get specific foods (dietary specific, culturally specific, etc) through donated sources
  - 2. developing relationships with manufacturers or other donors who might have the food that communities are looking for in the quantities and pricing structure that would work

Thank you all for joining the call and for all that you do to support ending hunger in your community.