

# GUIDE TO HOSTING A HARVEST FOOD COLLECTION

## WHY HOST A HARVEST FOOD COLLECTION

We cannot state strongly enough how important food donations are to food banks in our network. Without the boxes, packets and tins of items being regularly donated across the UK, food banks simply wouldn't be able to run. And as we face an ever-increasing demand for our services, particularly in light of the Covid-19 pandemic, we need your help! Your food donations will go directly to people in crisis in your local community, making a direct and real impact this Harvest.

## ABOUT FOOD COLLECTIONS

Hosting a food collection can be simple and fun to do - whether you're doing it by yourself or with a group of friends. By following this guide, you'll see how easy it can be to make a difference in your community.

## FIVE STEPS TO A SUCCESSFUL FOOD COLLECTION

### 1. Agree the location of your food collection

Make sure you have permission from your school and work out with them exactly where the collection will take place – ideally you're looking for somewhere central like the entrance hall so that it's as easy as possible for people to find and drop off their donations.

### 2. Select the dates of your food collection

We advise hosting the food collection for one or two weeks so people have a specific amount of time to donate items and it remains fresh in their minds.

### 3. Make sure you have something to gather donations in

Speak to your local supermarket and see if they would be able to donate a trolley or basket for the duration of your food collection. Seeing a trolley in the entrance hall can be a great reminder for people to bring in their donations.

If they aren't able to help with this, ask if they will donate boxes or bags for the food to be collected in. Or if that doesn't work, ask people to donate shopping bags with their items – bags being another much needed item at food banks! Decorate the area with [our food collection poster](#).



#### 4. Promote your Harvest food collection

Making sure people know about your Harvest food collection and what they need to do is absolutely crucial to its success. Don't be shy about reminding people of the dates, location and what they should donate. People like to be informed about how they can make a difference.

Make sure you circulate a food list to everyone so they know what to give.

*Go the extra mile: contact your local food bank to find out what's on their most wanted list as well as finding out if there are any items they have a surplus of. The donation is all the more valuable if you're giving items truly needed.*

#### 5. Collect items

Having set up your food collection and promoted to all, you can take a break while you watch the donations come in. Every few days send a message to all – thanking those who have donated and reminding those yet to do so that there's still time to give.

### AFTER THE EVENT

Once your Harvest food collection has finished box or bag up the food as best you can and contact your local food bank to agree the best day and time for you to drop off the food.

Finally, remember to get in touch with everyone who donated letting them know:

- How much was collected
- Where the food has gone
- How grateful you – and the food bank – are for their support.

