



Photo credit: Open Arms MN

EVERYONE NEEDS HEALTHY FOOD

The Why and How of our new healthy food policy

What is a healthy food policy?

- A healthy food policy is a written document that describes an organization's commitment to providing healthy food. It recognizes that pounds of food and number of calories are not the only meaningful measures of the food we provide. **Nutrition matters too.**
- A healthy food policy can describe our **current** practices, **planned** changes, and/or the values and **aspirations** that will guide our decision-making in the future.

Why prioritize healthy food?

- To serve our community better
 - There are higher rates of diet-related conditions like diabetes and heart disease in the community we serve.
 - A more nutritious diet will allow people to live healthier, happier, more stable lives and will give children a stronger start.



Photo credit: <http://panoramaatthepeak.com>

Consequences of an Unhealthy Diet

- Low-income people with **diabetes** have more difficulty managing their condition and higher likelihood of **poor health outcomes**
 - ▣ The prevalence of **sugar and carbohydrates** in the food environment (including food shelves) and the scarcity of whole grains and fresh produce contributes to this problem

Source: <http://www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/diabeticdiet.html>



Photo credit: <http://motivational-speakers-review.com/wp-content/uploads/2013/10/bis-pile-of-pasta.jpg>



Photo credit: <http://www.builtlean.com/wp-content/uploads/2010/04/s-tarvationmode1.jpg>

Consequences of an Unhealthy Diet, cont'd

- The foods commonly stocked in food shelves are frequently high in **sugar and sodium**
- So are the convenience foods most likely to be available for sale in low-income neighborhoods
- The odds of dying of **heart disease** rise in tandem with the percentage of sugar and sodium in the diet

Source: "Public Health Takes Aim at Sugar and Salt" Harvard School of Public Health Magazine, Fall 2009, <http://www.hsph.harvard.edu/news/magazine/sugar-and-salt/>



Photo credit: http://tomschlueter.blogspot.com/2010_12_01_archive.html



Photo Credit: <http://www.g4tv.com/attackoftheshow/blog/post/728686/generic-soda-win/>

Consequences of an Unhealthy Diet, cont'd

- Poor nutrition is linked to lower energy levels, decreased ability to concentrate, and higher vulnerability to common illnesses in both children and adults

- The effects on **children** are the most profound and can include:
 - ▣ Delayed motor development
 - ▣ Greater degree of behavioral problems and poorer social skills
 - ▣ Decreased attention, deficient learning, and lower educational achievement

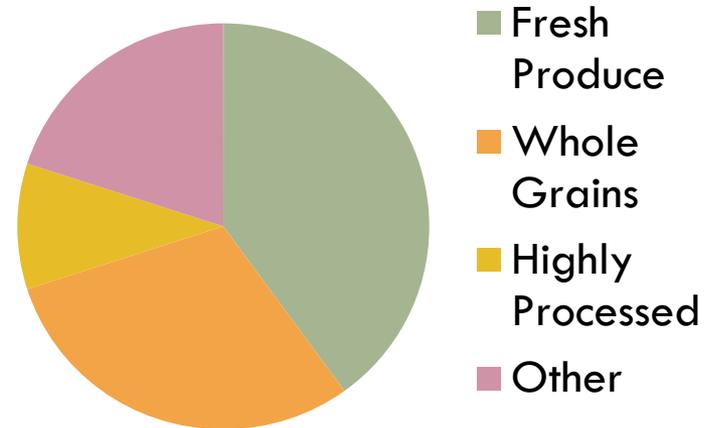
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Photo credit:
<http://panoramahttp://www.livewellnwfl.com/system/files/Kids%20Eating%20Healthy.jpg>thepeak.com

What strategies could be included in a healthy food policy?

- **Recording** the good work we're already doing
- **Promoting** healthier choices (excluding fresh produce from poundage limits)
- **Prioritizing** nutritious foods, (“Whenever feasible, we will stock the food shelf according to the following ratios...”)
- **Substituting** healthier alternatives (brown rice instead of white)
- **Limiting** junk food (reducing or eliminating things like pop and pastries)



Should we really be telling people what to eat?

- Healthy foods are more expensive, and often not available in low-income neighborhoods.
- By stocking more of these items, we are giving our clients **more choices**, not fewer.



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Photo credit: theblondevegan.com

Storage Concerns

- Fresh food needs to be distributed quickly or kept in cold storage
- Evaluate cold storage capacity, start small, and build capacity over time
- Nonperishable healthy options include: whole grain pasta, brown rice, low sodium canned vegetables, and fruit canned in water or light syrup



Photo credit: bushbeansfoodservice.com



Photo credit: <http://www.moneysavingmadness.com>

Sources of healthy food

- Strategic ordering from food banks
- Targeted food rescue from grocery stores



Photo credit: momsbistro.net



Photo credit: <https://foodlifeline.org/solving-hunger/innovative-programs/grocery-rescue>

More sources of healthy food

- Local gardeners
- Gleaning from farmers markets



Photo credit: <http://www.artfire.com/nosh/start-a-veggie-garden/>



Photo credit: <http://www.quodlibetica.com/eat-me-food-gets-fussy-in-the-cities/>

More sources of healthy food

- Our donor community
- New donors who are passionate about nutrition and food justice

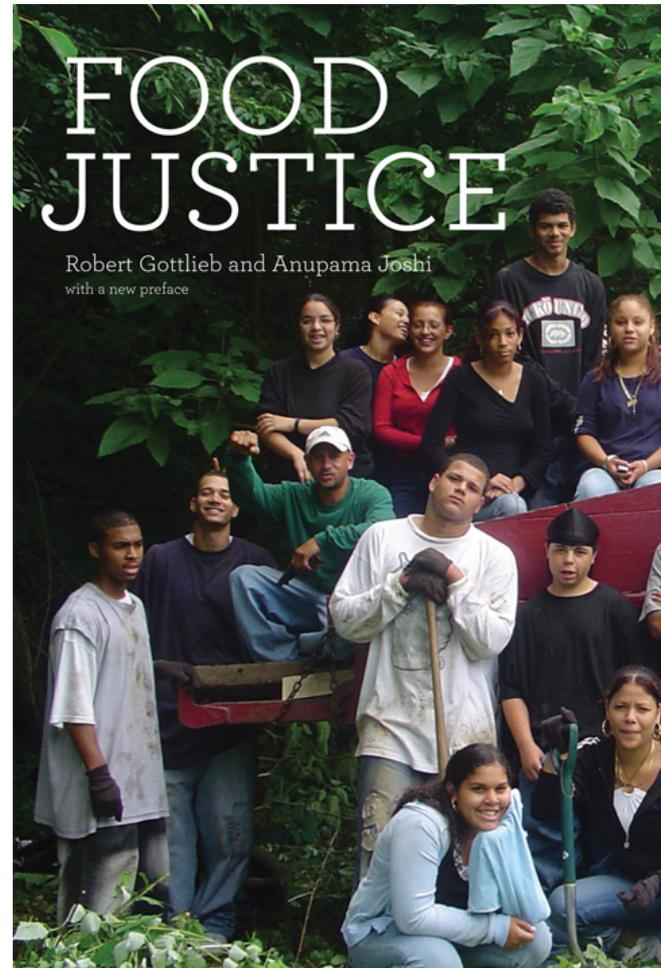


Photo credit: <http://mitpress.mit.edu/books/food-justice>

Encouraging healthy donations

- Single-item drives
- Hand-outs listing preferred items
- Requesting cash donations

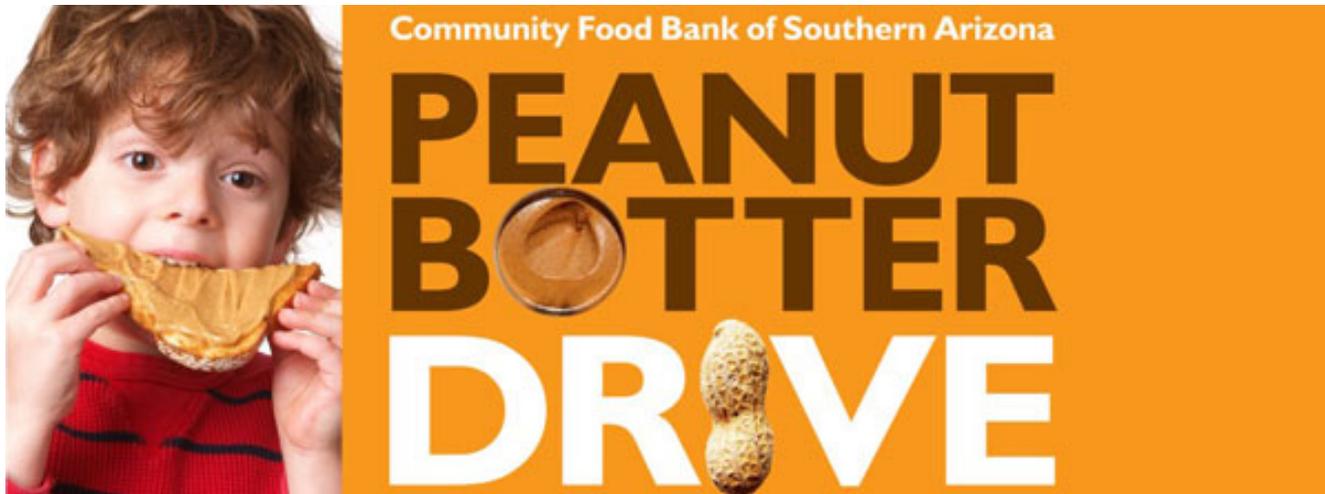


Photo credit: <http://tucsontopia.com>

Encouraging demand for healthy food

- Samples
- Recipe cards
- Volunteer personal shoppers
- Signage and marketing
- Cooking classes



Photo credit: <http://www.grubstreet.com/2013/04/erwinlingitz-cub-foods.html>



Photo credit: <http://www.mprnews.org/story/2013/04/29/health/food-shelf-options>

Who else is doing this?

- Many organizations are beginning this process, including:
 - ▣ Food shelves like VEAP and Open Door Pantry
 - ▣ Meal programs like Loaves & Fishes and the Waite House Community Café
 - ▣ Companies like Allina Health
 - ▣ Schools, hospitals, childcare and eldercare facilities
- **Any program that provides food can benefit from a healthy food policy.**

Case Study: Valley Outreach

- ❑ Prioritizing added cold storage
- ❑ Redesign to highlight healthy foods
- ❑ Nutrition-based point system
- ❑ Personal shoppers for each client
- ❑ Samples in waiting room

