



## Manual for Implementing the Fresh Harvest Kit Program

A project of the High Desert Food & Farm Alliance (HDFFA)

# Fresh

## HARVEST KIT

*This one-of-a-kind ready to make meal kit pairs fresh produce, pantry staple ingredients, recipes, and spices, ready to take home and create - in one bag.*



# Table of Contents

HDFFA.....	2
Who We Are	
Our Mission	
Our Programs	
Background	
How it Works	
Fresh Harvest Kits (FHK).....	2
Background	
Our Goal	
What’s Included	
Food Pantry Models.....	3
Frequency of Providing FHKs	
Starting Your FHK Program.....	4
Things to Consider	
Responsibilities of the Hunger Relief Agency	
Responsibilities of HDFFA (or equivalent partner organization)	
Starting outside of Central Oregon.....	5
FAQs.....	6
Appendix.....	7
Sample Recipes	



## High Desert Food & Farm Alliance (HDFFA)

### *Who We Are:*

The High Desert Food & Farm Alliance (HDFFA) is a non-profit based in Bend, Oregon that serves all three counties in Central Oregon: Crook, Deschutes, Jefferson, and the Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs. HDFFA was founded on the belief that local food should be accessible to everyone, and that food connects us to each other.

### *Our Mission:*

Our mission is to support a healthy and thriving food and farm network in Central Oregon through education, collaboration and inclusivity.

### *Our Programs:*

Our main programs include Grow & Give (fresh food donations) and other food access work, VeggieRx (vegetable and fruit prescription program), and Agricultural Support (for farmers, ranchers, and value added producers).

## Fresh Harvest Kits (FHK)

### *Background:*

HDFFA believes that local food should be accessible to everyone. The reality is that there are thousands of food insecure residents that desire fresh local food but have limited access. In 2014, HDFFA initiated a fresh food donation program called Grow & Give, a fresh food drive in which we collect fresh produce from local farmers, gardeners and community members to improve accessibility to local food. On average, Grow & Give donates 15,000 pounds of produce annually to the regional food bank. This program has a significant impact on the availability of fresh produce for pantry clients.

Through the Grow & Give program and the partnerships we established with area hunger relief agencies, we identified the need to improve access to information about how to use fresh produce received by pantry clients. With the increasing trend of meal-kit options, such as Blue Apron or Sun Basket, we decided that everyone should have the opportunity to have a ready to make meal-kit, which is why we created *Fresh Harvest Kits: a ready to make meal kit that combines fresh, seasonal produce, with common food pantry staple ingredients, spices, and recipes to create a healthy, easy and delicious meal.*

*Our Goal:*

The goal of our Fresh Harvest Kit project is to partner with hunger relief agencies to improve pantry client choice with ready made fresh food bags for Central Oregonians experiencing food insecurity.

*A Fresh Harvest Kit:*

Each kit includes 3-5 pounds of fresh produce, staples from the pantry, a comprehensive recipe card, and spice kits. HDEFA provides all of the recipes cards for a season and uses a seasonal growing guide to match produce with the recipes.

## Food Panty Models

Hunger relief agencies typically have two types of models for clients, pre-packaged boxes or shopping style choices. Fresh Harvest Kits can be implemented using either of these models:



**Pre-Packing the Kits:** FHK are pre-packaged and either provided on a first come first serve basis or are available for everyone. We recommend starting with a few FHK and increasing the quantity over time depending on your organizational capacity and/or the demand from clients.

**Shopping Style:** If you have an agency that runs “shopping style” where clients pick out their own items, you can have a stack of the FHK bags as well as recipe cards ready to be picked up by participants. The client can then individually “shop” for all of the ingredients listed on the FHK recipe card that they need.

*Frequency of providing FHK's:*

This will depend on your agency, number of clients you serve, and the capacity for either purchasing fresh produce or finding channels to get donated produce for the program.

**A new recipe each week-** If your hunger relief agency sees repeat clients once a week, you can offer a limited supply of Fresh Harvest Kits each week (we recommend starting small and increasing over time) with a new recipe each week or running the same recipe for no more than two weeks in a row.

**One recipe for several weeks-** For agencies with clients who can only attend once a month we recommend picking a single recipe and offering it for one month at a time. This streamlines the process for packaging FHKs.

**One recipe a month-** If your agency is open once a month, we recommend having two FHK recipe options be available for clients to choose from per distribution date.

## Starting Your FHK Program

A good starting point is to offer 10-15 FHK per distribution date to pilot the program. After gauging interest more of your agency's resources may be reserved for FHK, but starting small reduces waste and ensures that most staples are still available for clients per usual.

### In Central Oregon

Things to consider before starting your program:

- Identify whether your clients would be interested in FHK before piloting the program (conduct a survey or ask a few clients).
- Each kit typically calls for 1-2 cans (bean, veggies, tuna, etc) and 1-2 cups of grains (rice, pasta, crackers, etc.) Identify whether your agency has enough pantry staples to dedicate to FHK.
- For each distribution, 1-2 volunteers will be needed to coordinate and package FHKs.
- If you don't have the option for using donated fresh produce, you may consider purchasing fresh produce to include in FHKs. Each kit includes approximately 3-5 lbs of produce.
- If working with HDFFA and our Grow & Give fresh food donation program, a volunteer or staff member from your agency will need to be able to pick up fresh produce at our HDFFA booth at the farmer's markets (Wednesday or Saturday) or from a designated farm 1-2 days before FHK's will be distributed.

Responsibilities of the hunger relief agency:



- Supply all of the staple ingredients for the FHK
- Have a dedicated volunteer that can put the 10-15 FHK together each week or month
- Have a dedicated volunteer prepare spice bags (optional)

Responsibilities of HDFFA:



- Supply FHK bags and recipe cards each week or month
- Provide spices from Savory Spice (a volunteer from your organization must go bag them)
- Provide connections to fresh food through our Grow & Give program or directly with a farmer (when possible)
- Support you in starting and running the FHK program
- Provide opportunities client education around cooking

## Starting outside of Central Oregon

### Responsibilities of the hunger relief agency:



- Supply all of the staple ingredients for the FHK
- Have a dedicated volunteer that can put the 10-15 FHK together each week or month
- Have a dedicated volunteer prepare spice bags (optional)

### Responsibilities of HDFFA:



- Supply FHK bags and recipe cards each week or month
- Provide spices from Savory Spice (a volunteer from your organization must go bag them)
- Provide technical support for your organization in starting and running the FHK program

## Let's Get Started!

- Contact [info@hdffa.org](mailto:info@hdffa.org) and please provide the following information:
  - Where your agency is located
  - When you operate (how often & date/time)
  - What kind of operation you have (food pantry, brown bag, etc)
  - Average number of clients you serve per distribution date
- HDFFA will connect with you to discuss options for implementing the program.
- Together, we'll determine the optimal start date, quantity, and frequency for FHKs.
- If applicable, HDFFA will do a site visit to go over putting kits together with your volunteer(s).

## Frequently Asked Questions:

- Q. How do we make a connection with a farm?
- A. If you currently have a relationship with a farm we would love to help you explore that. If not, we can look at connecting you. You can always purchase the produce needed for the bag, or hold a fresh food drive to get the produce.
- Q. Will all produce be donated?
- A. Ideally, produce will be donated to support your FHK program. If not, you may look at using produce you have or purchasing produce for the kits each week. HDFFA can help you navigate this.
- Q. When is the best time to run program?
- A. The best time for getting fresh produce in the High Desert is between June-October. If your community offers a farmers market, you might consider aligning with their season.
- Q. Are FHK pre-ordered by participants? Or are they first come first served?
- A. It's up to you on how you would like to have the program run. If you have the same clients each week you can offer a "sign-up sheet" or have them be 'first come first served'.
- Q. How many volunteers do we need?
- A. We recommend you have 1-2 volunteers who are dedicated to putting the FHK together for each distribution data, that way there is consistency and those volunteers know how to implement it each time. Volunteers will also be responsible for collecting spices (if applicable) and produce (if pick-up is required).
- Q. How long does assembly take?
- A. Total time will vary with program size. We found that it takes 10-15 minutes to collect all of the pantry staples and separate them into bags. The FHK can even be put together the day before with the fresh vegetables added the day of distribution. Volunteers can expect to spend one hour/week on average for this project.
- Q. Is there a standard serving size for each kit?
- A. Most of the recipes are written with a serving size of 4 to accommodate two adults and two children, or to have leftovers for smaller households.

