

# Fresh Harvest Kit Program Manual



**HIGH DESERT  
FOOD  
& FARM  
ALLIANCE**

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

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



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## 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 inclusion.

### *Our Programs:*

Our Food Access programs and projects include Grow & Give (fresh food donations), Fresh Harvest Kit, VeggieRx (vegetable and fruit prescription program), food sovereignty work, and rural food security initiatives. Our Agricultural Support program improves the vitality of small to mid-sized family farms in Central Oregon to provide good food. Our Food & Farm Directory is available in print, online, and through a phone app, [Get a Taste](#).

## Fresh Harvest Kits (FHK)

### *Background:*

HDFFA believes that local food should be accessible to everyone. In Central Oregon, thousands of residents experiencing food insecurity desire fresh local food but have limited access. We at HDFFA are committed to improving equitable access to affordable, nutritious, and culturally appropriate food through our Food Access programs.

We created the Fresh Harvest Kit project to provide a meal kit that is accessible, easy to put together, and assists pantry clients in cooking meals with local produce. With the increasing trend of meal-kit options, such as Blue Apron or Hello Fresh, we decided that everyone should have the opportunity to have a ready to make meal-kit and the information needed to successfully cook a simple and nutritious meal. By providing all the produce, pantry staples, adaptable, accessible recipes, and specifically curated spice kits, Fresh Harvest Kits improve access to both local fruits and vegetables and nutritionally beneficial cooking techniques.

*Our Goal:*

The goal of our Fresh Harvest Kit project is to partner with community organizations to improve pantry client choice and offer nutrition education through locally-sourced meal kits for Central Oregonians experiencing food insecurity.

*A Fresh Harvest Kit:*

Each kit includes 3–8 pounds of fresh produce, staples from the pantry, a comprehensive recipe card, and a spice kit. HDEFFA provides all of the recipe cards (in English and Spanish) for a season and uses a seasonal growing guide to match produce with the recipes. Most recipes are flexible, allowing for produce, pantry staples, and spices to be substituted easily with what is available.



## Food Pantry Models

Hunger relief agencies typically have two types of models for clients, pre-packaged kits 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 capacity and demand.

**Shopping Style:** If your agency 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 or want.

*Frequency of providing FHK’:*

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 using the same recipe for no more than two weeks in a row.

**One recipe for a month:** 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 packing FHKs.

# Sample Recipe



## How to Build a Grain Bowl

Prep: 20 minutes

Cook: 30 minutes

Yield: 4 servings



### INSTRUCTIONS

See Grain Bowl Flow Chart for ingredients.

1. Cook grains according to directions found on packaging.
2. While grain are cooking, prep all vegetables and fruits by washing and then cutting, dicing, peeling etc. as desired. If using canned or frozen fruits or vegetables, thaw/drain all excess liquid. If cooking proteins, sautee/grill/thaw as desired and set aside.
3. Prepare sauce in a separate, small bowl.

**Simple Vinaigrette:** Combine 3 tbsp oil with 3 tbsp vinegar. Add salt, pepper to taste and mix. Additional items like citrus juice, mustard, herbs or yogurt can also be a tasty addition.

**Other Sauce Possibilities:** Hot sauce, soy sauce, salad dressing, oil and vinegar or salsa.

4. In a medium bowl, add grains, chopped choice vegetables, fruits, greens, and proteins. Drizzle sauce on top and enjoy!



### OPTIONAL

Add optional toppings such as cheese, nuts or seeds (peanuts, almonds, pine nuts, sunflower seeds), pickled peppers, root vegetables, onions, or chopped herbs.

### CHEFS NOTES - EXTRA INGREDIENTS?

*Make a grain bowl and then add broth to all ingredients and let simmer for 30 minutes to soften vegetables for a simple and easy soup.*

## Starting Your FHK Program

A good starting point is to offer 10–15 FHK per distribution date, for a duration of 8 weeks to pilot the program. After gauging interest, more of your agency’s resources may be reserved for FHKs; starting small reduces waste and ensures that most staples are still available for clients per usual.

### Sites in Central Oregon:

#### Things to consider before starting a program at your site:

- 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 of using donated fresh produce, you may consider purchasing fresh produce to include in FHKs. Each kit includes approximately 3–8 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 farmers markets (Wednesday or Saturday) or from a designated farm 1–2 days before FHK distribution. Additional coordination with produce pick up can be provided by HDFFA if a community organization is unable to pickup in Bend or from rural farms.

#### Responsibilities of the hunger relief agency:



- Supply all of the staple pantry items for the FHK
- Have a dedicated volunteer who can put the FHK together each week or month
- Collect produce either from HDFFA farmers market booth or local farm or farmstand

#### Responsibilities of HDFFA:



- Supply FHK recipe cards for use (digital or print PDF)
- Provide connections to fresh food through our Grow & Give program or directly with a farmer (when possible)
- Support you logistically in starting and running the FHK program
- Provide opportunities and client education around cooking and nutrition

## Starting outside of Central Oregon

Responsibilities of the hunger relief agency:



- Supply 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)
- Pick up produce from local farm, food bank, or market donation

Responsibilities of HDIFFA:



- Supply recipe cards (digital PDF) for use throughout the year
- Provide technical support for your organization in starting and running the FHK program, including site consulting, logistical support, and networking.

## Let's Get Started!

- Contact [foodaccess@hdiffa.org](mailto:foodaccess@hdiffa.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
- HDIFFA 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, HDIFFA 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 as a first option. If not, we can look at connecting you within our farm Partner network. Alternatively, you can purchase the produce needed or hold a fresh food drive.

### 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 the program?

- A. The best time to acquire fresh produce in the High Desert is June–October. If your community offers a farmers market, 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 the kits be first come, first served.

### Q. How many volunteers do we need?

- A. We recommend you have one to two volunteers who are dedicated to putting the FHK together for each distribution day. Volunteers are generally responsible for collecting spices (if applicable) and produce (if pick-up is required).

### Q. How long does assembly take?

- A. Total time varies with program size. It takes 10-15 minutes to collect the pantry staples and separate them into bags. FHK can 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 four to accommodate two adults and two children, or to have leftovers for smaller households.

