

Hello,

Thank you for all that you do to support food security in your community! As you may already know, Oregon Food Bank has launched some exciting strategic initiatives that focus the intersections of food and health, including our Healthy Pantry Initiative. **We'd like to invite your agency to join us in our Healthy Pantry Initiative, as a 2016 Model Healthy Pantry.** Please read carefully for more info...



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### **What is the Healthy Pantry Initiative?**

We know food pantries are vital resources to our neighbors in need. The food our network provides to families is a significant part of their diets, and the pantry itself is an important place where people spend their time. The Healthy Pantry Initiative is a statewide partnership with OSU Extension that seeks to re-imagine food pantries as community places that support nutrition and positive health outcomes. Our current list of criteria for 'healthy pantry' is:

- Client choice ("shopping style") pantry model
- Uses OFB's 2011 Food Box Guidelines
- Displays USDA MyPlate materials
- Provides information and referrals to SNAP, WIC, Farmers Market voucher programs, or other healthy food resources.
- Emphasizes access to a variety of fruits and vegetables **OR** provides some kind of education or skill-building activity at least once per year.

Oregon Food Bank hopes that between now and 2020, at least 80% of our partner agencies will meet these criteria. We're about halfway there!

### **What is a Model Healthy Pantry?**

Model Healthy Pantries are agencies that are deeply committed to the Healthy Pantry Initiative. They model the baseline criteria, test-drive different strategies, and provide valuable feedback about what works and doesn't. MHPs are critical to the success of the Healthy Pantry Initiative, as they provide leadership and guidance to the partner agency network as a whole – both in the Metro area, and across the state.

In 2014-15, a group of 8 pantries came together to deeply engage as Model Healthy Pantries (MHPs), employing different approaches to health through increased distribution of healthy foods, encouraging healthy decision-making, and building strong communities. This year, we are convening a 2<sup>nd</sup> group to refine our best practices and further measure and refine activities related to the HPI. We hope you'll join us.

### **What will participation in the 2016 MHP Group look like? What are the expectations?**

The 2016 MHP Group will test-drive and evaluate strategies that specifically relate to the Healthy Pantry Initiative's core objectives and baseline criteria. Engaging in this cohort will involve...

- Participating in quarterly meetings with the entire MHP Group.
  - Note: MHPs outside of Portland will be able to participate via conference call.
- Participating in pre- and post-assessments with OSU Extension staff.
- Working with OSU Extension and OFB staff to identify, execute, and evaluate baseline-meeting strategies.

Example strategies might include:

- Modifying pantry layout to encourage healthy foods
- Using merchandising techniques that make healthy foods more appealing
- Using signage to effectively communicate USDA MyPlate messages
- Testing different approaches to incentivize fresh produce
- Hosting cooking demonstrations featuring fruits and vegetables during pantry hours
- Partnering with OFB and OSU Extension staff to gather client perspectives on Healthy Pantry topics.

### **What are the benefits to participating?**

- Improve your pantry to better support the health and nutrition of those you serve.

- Access to dedicated time and resources from OSU Extension and OFB staff.
- \$1,000 grant for successful implementation and evaluation of Healthy Pantry baseline strategies.
- Model Healthy Pantry branding - great for grant proposals, outreach, and fundraising!
- Direct networking with a small group of peers with a wealth of expertise.

**How long will I participate?**

While we hope that your leadership as a Model Healthy Pantry will continue well past your participation, the 2016 Model Healthy Pantry Group will run January-December, 2016

**What if I have more questions or want to talk about it before I decide?**

We know you may have a lot of questions after reading all this. Please contact Jen Turner at OFB to talk more! [jturner@oregonfoodbank.org](mailto:jturner@oregonfoodbank.org) or 503-419-4180.