

**FEEDING
AMERICA**



**Regional
Food Bank**
OF NORTHEASTERN NEW YORK

**SOLVING HUNGER
TODAY
ENDING HUNGER
TOMORROW**

Client Choice Workshop
April 30th, 2024



Your facilitators today:

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Agenda

- **What:** Defining Client Choice
- **Why:** Benefits and Opportunities
- **How:** Maximizing Client Choice (incl. HPNAP compliance)
- **How:** Client Choice Champion: Brenda Blanks, Director of

Zion Community Food Pantry, Hudson NY

- **Wrap-up & Discussion**



Resource Packet:

1. Feeding America & Morgan Stanley Foundation Choice Study
2. HPNAP Choice Markers by Household Size
3. Study Quantifies the Benefits of Client Choice from foodbanknews.org

What: Defining Client Choice





What Is Client Choice?

- **Client choice = personal autonomy**
- **Not a binary: “yes, we offer choice” or “no, we don’t”**
- **Client choice is mindset for any type of pantry**
- **How can we maximize for choice?**



What Is Client Choice?

Choice models range from:

- No choice**
- Limited choice**
- Modified choice**
- Full choice**

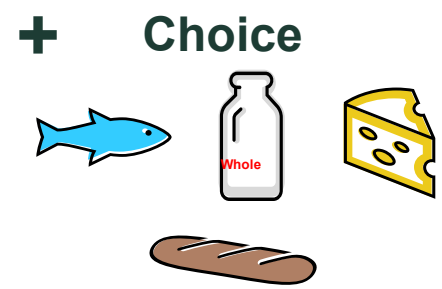
#1 No choice

- Pre-packed
- Everyone receives the same items
- Little to no exceptions
- Staff handles all food



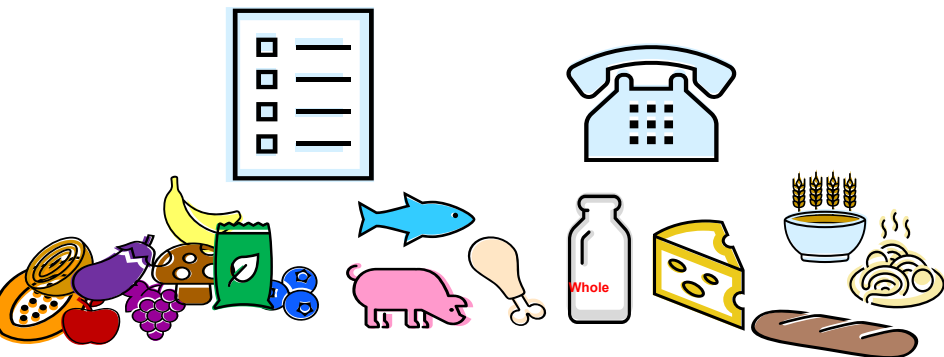
#2 Limited choice

- Combination pre-packed with limited choice of certain items
- Includes “freebie” table set-ups
- Staff handles most food



#3 Modified Choice

- Select from list, point & pick from shelf
- General choice between food items (ie pasta vs bread)
- Staff still handles most food



#4 Full Choice

- Reminiscent of grocery shopping or farmer's market
- Amount owed per household clearly communicated
- Neighbors can see all available food, can touch and select their own food





Why: Benefits and Opportunities



Why Is Client Choice Important?

Neighbor Experience

- Dignity & respect
- Reduces stigma
- Encourages use

“There is no substitute for [people choosing their food]. None. Because they’re not thinking of it as a hand-up, they’re thinking of it as shopping. – Site staff”

Pantry Operations

- Decreased food waste
- More stable inventory

were not a surprise to Reynolds. “By not wasting so much on food that nobody wants, we can double down and spend resources more efficiently,” he said.



Why Is Client Choice Important?

Volunteer/Staff Experience

- **Workload reduction**
- **Staff/volunteer resources**

Volunteers are happier and clients who come inside to shop appreciate the conversation. “We have found too that it reduces our workload,” Wisecarver added. “It doesn’t take as many volunteers to get it all set up.” Instead, those much-needed volunteers can shift to other roles, such as assisting clients as they shop.



How: Maximizing Client Choice






HPNAP Minimum Food Guide for a 3 Day Pantry Package

Rev 4/19

Using this food guide ensures that each HPNAP meal contains two servings from the Vegetable and Fruit Group and a serving from each of the other two food groups; and supports MyPlate by filling a plate with one-half vegetables and fruits.



Number of items per household size

| Food Group | What equals a choice(s)? | Family Size: | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
|---|---|--------------|---|---|--|---|---|---|
| Vegetables and Fruits  <i>1 choice=4 serving (svgs) 6 svgs/person/day</i> | Spaghetti Sauce, Canned Vegetables, 15 ounces = 1 choice Frozen Vegetables, 16 ounces = 1 choice Dried Fruit, 15 ounces = 1 choice Canned Fruit, 15 ounces = 1 choice Frozen Fruit, 12-16 ounces = 1 choice 4 Pieces, 1 Head, 1 Bunch, or 1 Pound Fresh Produce = 1 choice Instant Potatoes, 13.75 ounces = 1 choice Fruit or Vegetable Juice, 46-48 ounces = 1 choice <i>Limit Juice to one container per household</i> | | At least 3 choices, Aim for 5 choices | At least 5 choices, Aim for 9 choices | At least 7 choices, Aim for 14 choices | At least 10 choices, Aim for 18 choices | At least 12 choices, Aim for 23 choices | At least 15 choices, Aim for 27 choices |
| Proteins: Meat, Non-Meat and Dairy  <i>1 choice = approx. 4 ounces of protein 5 oz protein/person/day</i> | Dried Beans, 1 pound = 2 choices Canned Beans, 15 ounces = 1 choice Peanut Butter, 18 ounces = 3 choices Canned Stew or Chili, 15 ounces each = 1 choice 6 Eggs = 1 choice Frozen Meat, Fish, Poultry 8 ounces (¹ / ₂ pound) = 2 choices Canned Chicken, Salmon or Tuna, 5 ounces can, 2 cans = 1 choice Canned Chicken, Salmon, or Tuna, 15 ounces = 2 choices Fluid Milk, 32 ounces/1 quart = 1 choice 4 Fluid Milks, 8 ounces each = 1 choice Dry Milk 1 Envelope = 1 choice Cottage Cheese, 16 ounces = 2 choices 4 Yogurts, 6 ounces each = 1 choice 2 Greek Yogurt, 6 ounces each = 1 choice American Cheese (not Cheese Food), 8 ounces = 1 choice Mozzarella/Cheddar/Swiss Cheese, 8 ounces = 2 choices | | At least 3 choices | At least 5 choices, Aim for 6 choices | At least 7 choices, Aim for 9 choices | At least 10 choices, Aim for 12 choices | At least 12 choices, Aim for 15 choices | At least 14 choices, Aim for 18 choices |
| Grains  <i>1 choice =avg 12 svgs 6 svgs/person/day</i> | Bread, 1 Loaf = 1 choice 6 Rolls or Bagels = 1 choice Macaroni & Cheese and/or Rice-a-Roni, 3 Boxes = 1 choice Rice or Pasta, 16 ounces = 1 choice Oatmeal, 18 ounces = 1 choice Cold Cereal, 12-16 ounces = 1 choice Pancake Mix, 32 ounces = 1 choice | | At least 2 choices | At least 3 choices | At least 4 choices, Aim for 5 choices | At least 5 choices, Aim for 6 choices | At least 5 choices, Aim for 8 choices | At least 6 choices, Aim for 9 choices |

Client Choice: Making Meals Make Sense





Client Choice: Optimizing Inventory

The Regional Food Bank is supplemental

- Retail Store Donation Program
- Just in time delivery
- Local food drives, donation bins

Sampling

- For hard to move or unfamiliar foods

Signage



Client Choice: Obstacles



Feeding America Study Results

- Not having enough volunteers and staff (**32%**)
- A belief that it was more efficient to prepare bags in advance (**29%**)
- Not having enough space (**27%**)
- Not having enough time (**22%**)

Others reported

- Language barriers
- Guest issues
- Volunteer comfort
- Most reported barrier to FULL choice: desire for efficiency



Client Choice: Set-Up


- **Signage and layout**

- **Visibility and placement of food**
 - **Arrange according to food groups**
 - **Abundance encourages healthy choice**

- **Neighbors should know what/how much they are owed**

- **Staggered entry, appointments, or groupings to avoid crowding**

Client Choice: Operations



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ABOUT DONATE/VOLUNTEER FIND FOOD **AGENCIES** PROGRAMS NEWS & EVENTS

Member Agency Suggestions

The Regional Food Bank does not guarantee that all submitted requests will be fulfilled. Sourcing of items will be based on several factors, which may include demand, availability, and cost.

With your partnership, we can move the needle on food insecurity.

Agency Name *

Agency Reference Number *

Name of Agency Representative *

First Last

Products you would like in our inventory: *

- **Mixing styles and incremental change**
- **Set clear expectations**
- **Use staff/volunteer feedback**
- **Have a SNAP/WIC referral process**
- **@Regional Food Bank -- Inventory Suggestions**





NYS HPNAP Operations Support grant

- Folding tables
- Refrigeration/freezers including clear glass coolers
- Re-usable bags
- Insulated/thermal blankets
- Shopping carts or wagons
- Wire shelving including rolling shelving





Volunteer Recruitment

- **Be inclusive when seeking help**
 - students, people with disabilities
- **Recruit online**
 - Facebook, your program's website, VolunteerMatch.org - free
- **Tie the task to the mission**
- **Volunteer acknowledgement** (length of service, times of service, etc)
- **Promote from within**

How: Client Choice Champion





Client Choice Champion

Brenda Blanks



Director

Zion Community Food Pantry, Inc.



Zion Community Food Pantry



Wrap-up & Discussion

- **Client choice is mindset that can work at any size/style pantry**
- **Choice changes the pantry experience in multiple ways**
- **How can the Regional Food Bank help your pantry offer more choice?**



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Thank you for coming today!

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