



Regional Food Bank

OF NORTHEASTERN NEW YORK

Feeding with Thought
Partner Agency Newsletter
Fall 2022

In This Edition:

- [Ascension Holy Trinity Food Pantry Agency Spotlight](#)
- [Let's Keep the Records Straight](#)
- [Hunger Solutions - SNAP Updates](#)
- [Workshops](#)
- [Labelling for Specific Products](#)
- [New USDA TEFAP Forms and Civil Rights Training](#)
- [USDA Extends Flexibility that's Helping Manufacturers, States get Formula to WIC Families](#)
- [New Volunteer Sorting Area at Our Latham Facility!](#)
- [Town Hall Albany County Meeting](#)
- [Emergency Feeding Programs - URL's](#)
- [New to Agency Services](#)
- [Recipe and Turkey Safety](#)
- [A Poem for Agencies](#)
- [Just Say Yes!](#)
- [Ordering Information](#)



Ascension Holy Trinity Food Pantry

Agency Spotlight

Greetings partner agencies! This newsletter's Agency Spotlight shines on Ascension Holy Trinity Food Pantry in Highland, a beautiful hamlet set on the Hudson river. Operating since 2012, the program became a partner agency of the Food Bank in 2015. Since that time, the food pantry has served their community every Saturday morning and on the 3rd Wednesday of each month without fail. Their volunteers work tirelessly to uphold the standard the pantry has set for themselves and they have committed themselves to maximizing the positive output of the pantry.

When guests come to receive nutritious food at the pantry they also get a connection with the community and the highest level of service a food pantry can offer. The pantry offers extensive food choices with guests being able to choose whatever items they need at their own discretion. Volunteers are there to assist in any way possible, some of whom have faithfully served the guests since the pantry's opening. Many volunteers have served for at least 5 years, all indicating a deep commitment to the community and a sincere desire to sustain the program. They represent a diverse population of people who just want to feed their neighbors in a setting that respects the dignity of everyone who visits the pantry. Due to this commitment, the volunteers are given the opportunity to join Ascension Holy Trinity's Mission

Center Advisory Board. One of the guiding principles of Ascension is that leaders should possess firsthand experience and working knowledge of the program for which they are making decisions.

Ascension Holy Trinity is a vital link in the chain that keeps the Highland community together. Without their reliable support, the community would experience challenges that Ascension singlehandedly circumvents for their guests. Mary, the pantry coordinator, states that the enduring mission of Ascension Holy Trinity is "feeding and caring for our neighbors in order to grow a healthy, cherished, community where all are included and respected, where everyone has access to sufficient food, compassion, hospitality and dignity, and where this access is considered a basic human right." With all that said, we sincerely want to thank Ascension Holy Trinity for their commitment to their community and their wonderful partnership with the Food Bank. Our gratitude extends to all of our partner agencies who provide so much for their communities, even in the face of countless challenges.

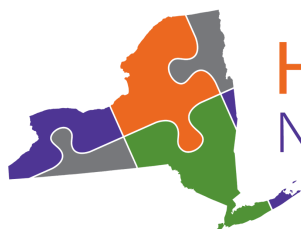




Let's Keep the Records Straight!

Are your agency's **days and times of service, contacts, including Executive Director, and address** up-to-date?

Please check this information on PWW under the 'My Agency' tab in the upper right corner. If any updates need to be made let us know by emailing ascontact@regionalfoodbank.net!



HUNGER SOLUTIONS
NEW YORK UNITING POLICIES AND
PROGRAMS TO END HUNGER

Hunger Solutions - SNAP Updates

SNAP October Eligibility and Budgeting Changes

With the start of each new federal fiscal year on October 1, the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) adjusts the standards and deductions that determine the monthly benefit amount an eligible household will receive. In fiscal

year 2023, SNAP maximum benefit amounts under USDA's Thrifty Food Plan — the formula that is used to set SNAP benefits — will increase to reflect the annual inflation rate of 12.4 percent. With this update, the maximum SNAP benefit, for example, will increase from \$250 to \$281 for a one-person household and from \$835 to \$939 for a four-person household.

Our [SNAP October 1 Toolkit](#) reflects these changes and provides resources to help community organizations that work with SNAP applicants. Toolkit resources include:

- [Expanded Categorical Eligibility Desk Guide for 2022-2023](#)
- [SNAP Standards & Deductions plus Budget Worksheet for 2022-23](#)
- [NYSNIP Matrix October 2022](#)
- [Online SNAP Benefits Estimator Tool](#)

Although this increase will provide some relief from rising food prices, it is still \$75 below the level calibrated to the more realistic Low-Cost Food Plan. A growing number of stakeholders agree that the Low-Cost Food Plan is the more appropriate basis for determining SNAP benefits. For more information about this needed policy action, visit our [toolkit webpage](#) or see Food Research and Action Center's (FRAC) blog [Annual Inflation Adjustment Will Increase SNAP Allotments but Fundamental Change is Needed to Close Meal Affordability Gap](#).

SNAP Assistance to Ukrainians

Several provisions allow some Ukrainians in the United States to meet immigration-related eligibility requirements to enroll in federally funded benefits such as SNAP. [Visit our website](#) to learn more about immigration statuses being granted to Ukrainians and the SNAP eligibility rules for each status.

Updated Checklist for SNAP Student Eligibility

SNAP rules limit the eligibility of certain groups of people, including students. Under these rules, students who are 18 to 49 years old and enrolled at least half-time in an institution of higher learning cannot get SNAP unless they meet an exemption, such as working at least 20 hours per week, caring for a child, or being unable to work, among others. Our updated [student eligibility checklist](#) now includes information on acceptable documentation for each student exemption and can be used to determine if an applicant meets the criteria of an eligible student under SNAP rules. For more information and resources for working with students, visit our [SNAP and students webpage](#).

USDA Adds New Retailers to SNAP Online Shopping

The U.S. Department of Agriculture has approved online purchasing with SNAP benefits at additional retailers in New York State. Online purchasing can improve food access for many and is a vital tool to address food security. [Visit USDA's webpage](#) for more information and a list of approved retailers in New York State.



Workshops

Orientation

Join us virtually and learn how using the Food Bank can benefit your agency and clients. We'll cover policies and you'll leave with a clear understanding of the different parts of our inventory and how to put this knowledge to best use when placing orders. Orientation will include a training of our ONLINE ORDERING SYSTEM and ONLINE HPNAP REPORTING! This workshop will be held online on December 7th and January 23rd from 9:30am-12pm.

Food Safety

New programs are encouraged to attend & **FOOD SAFETY IS A REQUIREMENT FOR ALL HPNAP FUNDED AGENCIES**. You will learn more about code dates, food recalls and the safest way to provide food to your clients. Audio AND video is required, you must complete all attendance polls and remain engaged throughout the webinar to receive credit. No credit will be received if you do not have video. Only one person per email can receive credit for attendance. This training will be held online on December 7th and January 23rd from 12:30pm to 3pm.

Fresh Food Connect

How to collect food donations from local gardeners!

Fresh Food Connect works with hunger relief & food access organizations to close a critical gap in local food systems. As we know, more than 1 in 10 people in the US experience food insecurity every year. At the same time, 1 in 3 US households grows some amount of food at home. Fresh Food Connect links these two through a mobile app that streamlines communication between you and your local home and community gardeners.

The process is simple: gardeners download the free app and indicate when they have extra produce. From there, local nonprofit operators can choose to receive drop-offs or pick up the donations directly from gardeners' homes for redistribution to the communities they work with.

In 2021, Fresh Food Connect connected over 1,800 community gardeners to 65 hunger relief/food access organizations, engaging communities to share over 67,000 lbs of locally grown produce. They want you to share in the bounty by becoming an operator of the Fresh Food Connect App and joining their extensive network of organizations like yours across the country. Information session will be online on January 18th at 1pm!



To register for these events and to get the most up to date schedule on our workshops, please visit <https://regionalfoodbank.net/events/category/agency-education/>

If you have any suggestions for workshops you would like to see, please email ascontact@regionalfoodbank.net and let us know! We are always looking for ideas for new content that would benefit you!!

Coming Soon - Labelling for Specific Products!

We are currently working on having specific food labels added to our inventory to give you a better idea of what types of products we have in stock. The labels we are looking to add are as follows:

- Low Sodium
- Halal (meat only)
- Kosher
- Gluten Free
- Unsweetened

We hope that having these labels will help agency's needs in serving specific cultural and religious requirements that may be needed in your community! Keep an eye out for these labels to start showing in our inventory soon!

IMPORTANT! – NEW USDA TEFAP FORMS AND CIVIL RIGHTS TRAINING

This message is for all emergency feeding programs who receive USDA product.

USDA has released new documents to be used going forward. On our website and on the following hyperlinks, you will find the **NEW Self Attestation form** and **NEW Civil Rights Training**. Please replace your old forms and trainings and use the new ones moving forward.

As a reminder:

- Self-Attestation (TEFAP) forms need to be completed once a year by the client. The new form has been simplified from the ones used in the past. Outlined changes are explained in the **Self Attestation Memo**.
- Civil Rights Training needs to be completed once a year by any staff/volunteers who work directly with clients. Training log can be found **HERE**. Please use the new training moving forward for any new staff or anyone who is due to retake the training.

We will be hosting a Self Attestation Virtual Office Hour on Wednesday, November 9th from 12:00pm to 1:00pm via GoToMeeting to answer any questions you may. You may access the office hour by clicking the following link: **<https://meet.goto.com/382523613>**.

You may also contact Colleen Bryar with any questions at **colleenb@regionalfoodbank.net** or 518-786-3691 x237.



USDA Extends Flexibility that's Helping Manufacturers, States get Formula to WIC Families

WASHINGTON, Oct. 13, 2022 – The U.S. Department of Agriculture is extending a key funding flexibility in the WIC program that has allowed state agencies and their infant formula manufacturers to work together to provide more options for WIC families in need of formula. Under this flexibility – which is now extended through the end of December – USDA is covering the added cost of non-contract formula to make it financially feasible for states to allow WIC participants to purchase alternate sizes, forms, or brands of infant formula.

“USDA, in partnership with the Biden–Harris Administration, remains committed to using every tool we have available to support WIC families as we improve the supply of infant formula,” said Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack. “By maximizing flexibilities and providing ongoing support, we can continue to ensure WIC families are able to access the formula they need for their infants.”

In general, WIC state agencies have contracts with one of three manufacturers to provide formula to WIC infants who are partially or fully formula fed. Using the new authority provided by the Access to Baby Formula Act, [USDA recommended in May](#) that state agencies that contract with Reckitt Mead Johnson (RMJ) or Gerber seek contract flexibility to allow alternate formulas if the contracted size, form, or brand of formula is unavailable. To help make this financially feasible, USDA is covering the additional costs of these alternate formulas while supplies remain impacted and will continue to do so through December 31, 2022.

USDA also previously provided flexibility to temporarily allow alternate formula in states that contract with Abbott, the third formula manufacturer and the subject of the [voluntary formula recall](#) in February. Abbott is currently covering that cost difference through December 31, 2022.

USDA’s Food and Nutrition Service continues to work tirelessly to ensure WIC participants and stakeholders have the information they need to keep infants fed and safe. Within hours of the recall, the agency provided guidance to WIC state agencies and offered flexibilities to help them respond. FNS continues to provide

ongoing assistance and support to states so they can adapt to the situation as it unfolds, approving nearly 500 waiver requests to date.

Working closely with the [Department of Health and Human Services](#), [FDA](#), and the [Biden-Harris Administration](#), recent USDA actions include:

- Coordinating cross-government to rapidly transport safe specialty and regular formula into the country through Operation Fly Formula.
- Providing a [toolkit](#) and [guidance](#) to WIC state agencies and stakeholders to assist with distributing imported formula.
- [Calling on states](#) to take advantage of all available WIC flexibilities and waivers that could help those they serve and providing extensive, tailored technical assistance to facilitate the process. Now, nearly all state agencies have applicable waivers in place.
- Extending [infant formula waivers](#) in WIC through December 31, 2022. These waivers work in concert with the funding flexibility extension announced today to provide flexibility for WIC state agencies to offer different formula products and waive certain medical documentation requirements.
- Providing [guidance](#) to Child and Adult Care Food Program operators that may provide formula to infants in their care to help them navigate the impacts of the shortage.

More information about USDA's response can be found on Food and Nutrition Service's [Infant Formula Shortage Response webpage](#).

Pulled from USDA website - <https://www.fns.usda.gov/news-item/usda-0219.22>

New Volunteer Sorting Area at Our Latham Facility!



We are excited to say that after a long year of renovations, we finally have a new volunteer sorting area in our Latham Facility! Previously, we relied on alternate locations or re-arranging our back dock in order to host volunteers and sort through all of the salvage donations. So what does this mean for our agencies? Ellie Zehnder, the Director of Volunteer Services, said "We are now able to host two separate volunteer events at the same time and are able to be more efficient in getting salvage product into inventory! We have a wonderful volunteer base and they absolutely deserve this long awaited space. We are grateful to have a space to call volunteer home!"

Town Hall Albany County Meeting

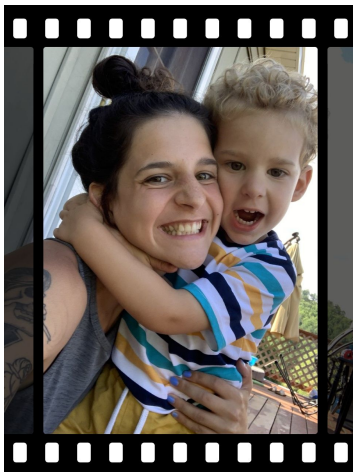
Did you miss our Town Hall Meeting in Albany at Capital Region Latinos? We have included the minutes from the event so you can stay involved in the conversations that the Regional Food Bank is having with agencies! We would like to give a huge thank you to Felix at Capital Region Latinos for hosting us and showing us your amazing pantry!

[Click here for the Minutes!](#)

Emergency Feeding Programs!

Do you have a website or facebook page for your program? Does it share useful information on how to access food, opening hours, etc? We would like to start adding URL's to our find food feature on our website! We feel this would help those in need get the information they need with ease! If you would like to share your website, please email Cathryn Doraby at cathrynd@regionalfoodbank.net and we will get it added to your site page!

New to Agency Services!



As some of you may know, Kelly is no longer with the Food Bank and we would like to wish her all the best in her future endeavors! We would like to introduce you to the newest addition to Agency Services, **Julianna Scavullo**! She has a background in social work and is the mother of a beautiful 3-year-old boy! They spend their free time hiking and enjoying the little piece of land they have in Cobleskill NY. One of her core values is community, so she looks forward to having the opportunity to build strong ties and learn how she can best support you all through partnership and collaboration! She can be reached at 518-786-3691 ext 236 or emailed at juliannas@regionalfoodbank.net.

Recipe and Turkey Safety!



Creamy Pumpkin Sage Soup

Ingredients

- 2 tablespoons vegetable oil
- 1 onion diced
- 1 tablespoon chopped fresh sage (or 1 teaspoon dried)
- $\frac{3}{4}$ teaspoon cinnamon
- $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon ground ginger (or nutmeg or ground cloves)
- 4 cups chicken or vegetable broth
- 30 oz. canned pumpkin puree (two small or one big can, NOT pumpkin pie filling)
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup half and half, or full-fat coconut milk
- salt and black pepper to taste

INSTRUCTIONS

In a large pot, heat oil over medium heat. Add the onion and sauté until softened and starting to brown. Add the sage, cinnamon, and ginger and stir until onions are coated and spices are fragrant.

Add the broth and the pumpkin puree. Bring to a gentle boil. Turn off the heat and puree the soup, using an immersion blender or standing blender. Stir in the half and half. Season to taste with salt and black pepper.

Adapted from bowlofdelicious.com

HOLIDAY TURKEY SAFETY TIPS:



FRESH TURKEYS

- Purchase your **fresh** turkey no earlier than 1 to 2 days prior to cooking.
- Once home, keep your fresh turkey stored on the bottom shelf of refrigerator until you're ready to cook. Keep it on a tray, or in a pan to prevent leakage.

FROZEN TURKEYS

- The refrigerator is the safest way to thaw your **frozen** bird. Leave it in the original packing and place in a shallow pan on the bottom shelf of the refrigerator. Allow 24 hours for every 4 to 5 pounds of bird. A 20 pound turkey will take 4 to 5 days to thaw.
- The other safe way to thaw the turkey is in cold water. Leave it in the original packing, place in a clean and sanitized sink or pan, and keep it covered in cold water. **Change the water every 30 minutes.** Allow 30 minutes per pound to thaw. A 20 pound turkey will thaw in cold water in 10 hours.

PREPARATION

- Don't forget to remove the giblet packages and cook them separately!
- For optimum safety, stuffing a turkey is not recommended. For more even cooking it is recommended that the stuffing be cooked separately. If you choose to stuff your turkey the following procedures are recommended:
 - * Fill the cavity loosely and don't overstuff it.
 - * The stuffing should be moist as heat destroys bacteria more effectively in moist environments.
 - * Cook the turkey immediately after stuffing.
 - * Use a food thermometer to make sure the center of the stuffing reaches an internal temperature of at least 165°F.
- Wash hands with soap and water, and wash then sanitize utensils, cutting boards, countertops, the sink, and anything else that came into contact with the raw turkey and its juices.

ROASTING

The following two tables show approximate cooking times for unstuffed and stuffed turkeys. These tables are based on an oven temperature of 325°F. Your turkey is safe when cooked to a minimum internal temperature of 165°F as measured with a food thermometer in the innermost part of the thigh, and the thickest part of the breast.

Use the timetables below to determine how long to cook your turkey:

Unstuffed

| | |
|-----------------|------------------------|
| 8 to 12 pounds | 2 3/4 to 3 hours |
| 12 to 14 pounds | 3 to 3 3/4 hours |
| 14 to 18 pounds | 3 3/4 to 4 1/4 hours |
| 18 to 20 pounds | 4 1/4 to 4 1/2 hours |
| 20 to 24 pounds | 4 1/2 hours to 5 hours |

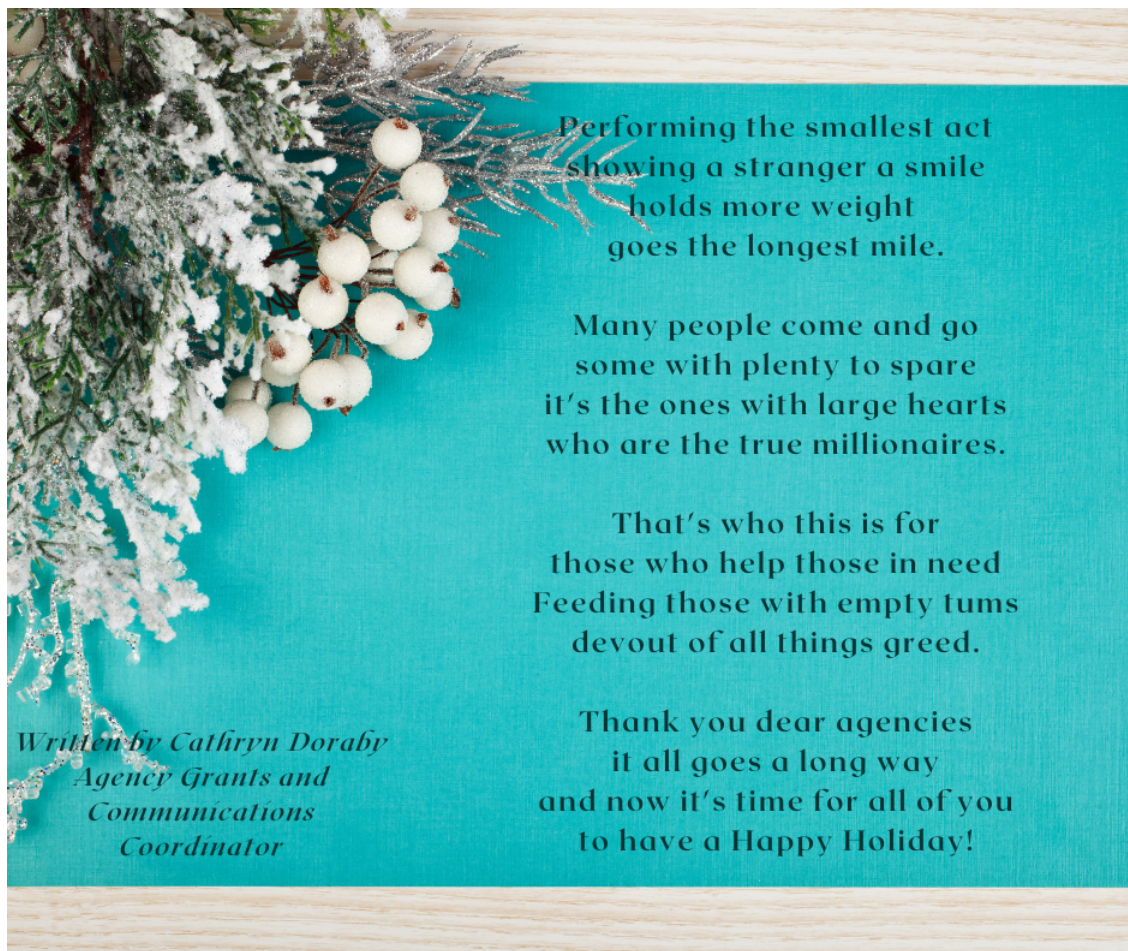
Stuffed

| | |
|-----------------|------------------------|
| 8 to 12 pounds | 3 to 3 1/2 hours |
| 12 to 14 pounds | 3 1/2 to 4 hours |
| 14 to 18 pounds | 4 to 4 1/2 hours |
| 18 to 20 pounds | 4 1/2 to 5 hours |
| 20 to 24 pounds | 5 hours to 5 1/2 hours |

LEFTOVERS

- Use refrigerated turkey and stuffing within 3 to 4 days, use gravy within 1 to 2 days.
 - If freezing leftovers, use within 2 to 6 months for best quality.
- Please visit <https://www.cdc.gov/foodsafety/communication/holiday-turkey.html> for additional information.

A Poem for Agencies



Just Say Yes!

Just Say Yes

To Fruits & Vegetables

Free JSY Classes Available: In Person, Online, and Indirect. The Just Say Yes to Fruits and Vegetables program is thrilled to be returning to in-person education. Our JSY program helps SNAP eligible clients make healthier choices by teaching them simple and affordable ways to increase their fruit and vegetable intake. Classes are free and can run between 30-60 minutes based on what works best for your participants. Each class has 2 different components to it. The first part of the class is an interactive discussion based around 14 different topics. They range from Food Safety, Easy Meal Planning, Portion Control, Reading Nutrition Labels, Stretching Your Food Dollar, Healthy Meals Out, Physical Activity etc. The second part of the class is a recipe demonstration. Participants can learn a wide range of cooking skills and tips and trick for preparing different types of produce. JSY will be

continuing to offer online trainings as well. Using platforms such as Zoom and Facebook Live, JSY nutritionists can partner with you to host an online nutrition education class! This is similar to the in-person classes and includes a conversation about one of several nutrition education topics along with a recipe demonstration or a pre-recorded recipe video. We are also excited to offer our agencies FREE indirect education. The JSY Nutritionists can provide you with handouts complete with relevant recipes that you can add to your pre-packed pantry bag. This is a great way to get nutrition information out to your clients without having people gather for an in-person class. Recipes can even be customized to include ingredients that you're giving away that week in your pantry bag.

For more information, contact:

Kristyn Bopp at 518-786-3691 x225, or KristynB@regionalfoodbank.net. Kristyn covers Albany, Clinton, Columbia, Delaware, Essex, Franklin, Greene, Fulton, Hamilton, Montgomery, Otsego, Rensselaer, Saratoga, Schenectady, Schoharie, Warren, and Washington Counties

Sarah Malone at 845-534-5344 x109 or SMalone@foodbankofhudsonvalley.org
Sarah covers Dutchess, Orange, Putnam, Rockland, Sullivan, and Ulster Counties

Ordering Information

Regional Food Bank Delivery Sites for 2022

Regional Food Bank Delivery Dates for 2022

Distribution and Delivery Calendar for 2022

NEW DATES FOR 2023 RELEASED! SEE BELOW

Regional Food Bank Delivery Dates for 2023

Distribution and Delivery Calendar for 2023

To Order from Our Latham Facility or a Delivery:

Appointments for Latham pick-ups are on Mondays, Tuesday Mornings, Thursdays, and Fridays.

Go to www.regionalfoodbank.net where our inventory is updated on Mondays, Tuesdays and Fridays.

Order weekdays from 9am-2pm, 2-5 business days before your pick-up date as follows:

· By phone at 518-786-3691

- By fax at 518-786-3004
- By e-mail at fborders@regionalfoodbank.net
- Using our Online Ordering system (you must receive training)

To Order from Our Cornwall-On-Hudson Facility:

Appointments for Cornwall-on-Hudson pick-ups are on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays.

Go to www.foodbankofhudsonvalley.org where our inventory is updated on Mondays, Tuesdays and Fridays.

Order weekdays from 9am-2pm, 2-5 business days before your pick-up date as follows:

- By phone at 845-534-5344
- By fax at 845-534-5256
- By e-mail at orders@foodbankofhudsonvalley.org
- Using our Online Ordering system (you must receive training)



Copyright © 2022 Regional Food Bank of Northeastern New York, All rights reserved.

Want to change how you receive these emails?
You can [update your preferences](#) or [unsubscribe from this list](#).

