

Sharing the Harvest



February Calendar

- 2/3 Waterbury Food Resource Committee at United Way of Greater Waterbury 100 North Elm Street-2nd Floor at 1 p.m.
- 2/9 East Haven Orientation at 9 a.m.
- 2/10 Bridgeport Council of Churches meeting at 877 Park Avenue at 1 p.m.
- 2/11 Fairfield Orientation at 12 p.m.
- 2/13 Waterbury Orientation at 12 p.m.
- 2/15 **Monthly statistics due**

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cfb@ctfoodbank.org



Join us to Walk Against Hunger and raise funds for your program



As a member agency in good standing, you are invited to assemble one walk team for one of the four upcoming Walk Against Hunger events this spring in Bridgeport, New Haven, Norwich or Waterbury.



Once signed up, your agency becomes a direct beneficiary and will receive 85 percent of all funds raised by your program's walk team to use for your food program! Through this process your participation is highlighting other partner programs in the community, eliminating lengthy eligibility requirements and encouraging community donors to continue their efforts in fighting hunger.



Remember, your team can be of any size – so the more walkers you recruit, the more funds for your agency!

By signing up your Walk team at www.ctfoodbank.org/walk, your agency agrees to the terms and conditions of the direct beneficiary program. Funds will be distributed 8-10 weeks after the last Walk Against Hunger event. Questions? Call Kerri at 203-469-5000, ext. 304.

Please note:

Changes to submitting statistics

To streamline the process of submitting statistics, the Connecticut Food Bank is collecting information via a simple web form. Programs will receive a link each month through email which will also include a link to the Sharing the Harvest newsletter.

Submit your statistics by clicking on the link and follow the instructions, working your way through all four pages of the web form. A message will appear confirming the form's completion. You will also receive a confirmation email to verify the information you've submitted so please keep a copy for your records.

Please provide the same program number in your statistics form that you use when signing into Agency Express when shopping online.

If you are ready to submit your statistics before you receive the Sharing the Harvest email, feel free to use the link provided [here](#). If you have any questions, please email Anna at apetsching@ctfoodbank.org or by calling 203-469-5000.

Out with the old, in with the new

Make your habits healthy this year; it's not too late



Cut back on caffeine

Too much caffeine can interfere with sleep, can make you jittery and can cause you to lose energy later in the day. Keep your caffeine intake in check by limiting regular coffee to three cups or less a day. And watch what you put into it. Skip unwanted calories and sugar by drinking it as plain as possible. Need to wean off? Try switching to half decaf or tea, drinking plenty of water and eating small, frequent meals to keep up energy.



Eat breakfast

There's no better way to start your morning than with a healthy breakfast. It provides your body with the fuel it needs to make energy to keep you focused and active throughout the day. If you are trying to lose weight, fueling your body regularly can help keep you from making unhealthy decisions later in the day based on hunger.

The key to a good breakfast is balance. Include lean protein, whole grains and fresh, frozen or canned fruits and vegetables. For example, oatmeal cooked with low-fat milk and sliced almonds and berries or crust-less quiche with mixed veggies, low-fat cheese and a slice of whole wheat toast.



Bring lunch to work

How do you make bringing lunch to work easy? Prepare the week's lunches over the weekend: bake chicken, chop veggies, steam rice. Be sure your options include a combination of protein and carbohydrates.

For example, whole grain bread with turkey, 1 cup of veggies and a piece of fruit. Or a salad with veggies and chicken, a piece of fruit and a 100-calorie cup of low-sodium soup.

Are you guilty of skipping breakfast, ordering takeout and getting jitters from coffee overload?

It's time to kick those habits to the curb and start eating right for the New Year. Here's a guide to get you back on track.

Eat more fruits and vegetables

Fruits and veggies add color, flavor and texture, plus vitamins, minerals and fiber to your diet. Try picking one new fruit or veggie you've never tried each time you go to the grocery store. Get your kids involved and let them choose what fruit or veggie to try. Don't let winter stop you from enjoying produce either. It might be harder to find fresh options, but frozen and canned are great alternatives.



Cook dinner at home

Making meals at home doesn't have to zap the last bit of your time and energy. The trick is to plan ahead. Prepping on the weekend is a great time saver. Choose options you can make in advance. For example, cook a batch of soup you can portion out for lunches or dinner during the week, or bake a whole chicken to slice for sandwiches, wraps and casseroles. Use shortcuts such as pre-cut or frozen veggies and keep staples on hand such as low-sodium broth, herbs and lemons for flavoring. A quick and easy idea is to turn leftover beef into stew; with beans, no salt added diced tomatoes and pre-cut veggies.

Recipes of the Month

Nutrition Notes These recipes, loaded with fruits and vegetables, will help you keep your New Year's resolution to eat healthier. Fruits and vegetables provide vitamins, minerals, nutrients and fiber that we all need to stay healthy.

Apple Cinnamon Breakfast Quesadilla

Servings: 4



- Nonstick cooking spray
- 4 (10-inch) flour whole-grain tortillas
- 1 cup chunky applesauce
- 4 oz. reduced fat Cheddar cheese, grated
- 2 Tablespoons light brown sugar
- 1 teaspoon ground cinnamon
- 1 teaspoon light butter spread
- 1/2 cup non-fat Greek yogurt

Directions

Preheat oven to 400°F. Coat baking sheet with cooking spray. Spread applesauce over two tortillas. Top with cheese and remaining tortillas. In small bowl, mix brown sugar and cinnamon. Brush tops of tortillas with light spread and sprinkle with half of sugar-cinnamon mixture. Bake for 6 to 10 minutes or until golden brown. Set aside to cool. Meanwhile, stir yogurt into remaining sugar-cinnamon mixture. Cut each quesadilla into quarters. Serve topped with dollops of yogurt mixture.

Modified from ShopRite.com

Sweet Potato and Chickpea Cakes

Servings: 3



- 1 1/4 cup leftover mashed sweet potatoes
- 1 can, 15 oz., chickpeas, rinsed and drained
- 2 Tablespoons whole-wheat flour
- 1/3 cup bread crumbs
- 1/2 teaspoon smoked paprika
- 1 teaspoon cumin
- 1/4 cup green onions, chopped
- pepper to taste
- 1 Tablespoon canola oil

Directions

Add all ingredients except canola oil to a food processor and pulse until blended. To mix by hand, start by mashing the chickpeas with a fork in a medium bowl. Then add the other ingredients and continue mashing until well blended. If the mixture is too wet to shape into cakes, add more bread crumbs, one Tablespoon at a time. Shape mixture into 9 cakes. Heat the oil in a skillet. Place cakes into the hot skillet and cook for about 5 minutes per side, or until golden brown. Serve hot.

Modified from FOOD52.com

Butternut Stuffed Shells

Servings: 8



- 12 oz. pasta shells, uncooked
- 2 1/2 cups mashed butternut squash
- 1 1/2 cups reduced fat ricotta cheese
- 1 1/2 cups low fat cottage cheese
- 1 1/2 teaspoons cinnamon
- 10 oz. chopped spinach, drained well
- 1 1/2 cups marinara sauce

Directions

Cook pasta shells following directions on package. Drain, rinse with cold water then set aside. Cut squash in half lengthwise and remove the seeds. Place cut side down on a plate and microwave until soft enough to scoop out of the shell. Mix squash with ricotta and cottage cheese. Stir in cinnamon and spinach. Stuff each shell with cheese mixture. Place desired number of shells into a baking dish and drizzle with your favorite marinara sauce. Cover. Bake at 350°F for 30 to 40 minutes until heated through.

These shells have a delicate flavor and texture. If you have extra, you can freeze them! Place stuffed shells on a cookie sheet and freeze. Store frozen shells in a sealed freezer container.

Chicken and Zucchini Poppers

Servings: 5



- 1 lb. lean ground chicken
- 2 cups grated zucchini
- 3 green onions, sliced thin
- 3 Tablespoons fresh cilantro, minced
- 1 clove garlic, diced
- 1/2 teaspoon pepper
- 3/4 teaspoon cumin (optional)
- 1 Tablespoon canola oil

Directions

Mix chicken with zucchini, green onion, cilantro, garlic, pepper and cumin. Heat oil in a medium sized pan over medium heat. Use a heaped Tablespoon to scoop meatballs into the pan. Cook 8-10 at a time for about 5 minutes on each side, or until browned and the center are cooked through. Serve with salsa or your favorite dip. *Modified from onelovelylife.com*

New Haven's Loaves and Fishes building morale and support by walking the walk

Fresh off the heels of New Haven's Loaves & Fishes Food Pantry and Clothing Closet winning \$20,000 in Walmart's 'Holiday Makeover' online campaign, Executive Director Rev. Alex Dyer discusses his approach to rallying volunteers, funding and support.

How many years has Loaves and Fishes been in existence?

Loaves & Fishes has been going strong since 1982 and was one of the first food pantries to join Connecticut Food Bank. It started when a parishioner brought in a few canned food items to the parish office and grew from there - now we are one of the largest weekly food pantries in New Haven serving between 225-400 households.

Can you discuss your connection with the Walk Against Hunger?

Our participation each year is pretty good - dressing up in costumes really helps as it's another way for people to enjoy themselves. As many people know, it also takes persistence to make sure people fundraise well in advance of the Walk. However, the Walk itself is a really great way to get the message out about hunger in Connecticut.

How has the Walk Against Hunger benefited your program?

It is always nice to get the little bit of extra money, but the Walk also builds morale and lets people know that there are other pantries and soup kitchens out there doing the good work of feeding people. It is easy to forget that we are all part of a larger system!

What changes have you experienced in the last year?

We have introduced recyclable bags at our pantry so if a guest does not use our bags then he or she gets an extra item - this is



Rev. Alex Dyer at the 2014 Walk Against Hunger

how we use some of the items we get through individual donations. Another change we've seen this year is the ever increasing number of people coming back each week.

What are your greatest successes?

One of our most recent successes is securing a \$20,000 grant from Walmart. It was a lot of work to write the grant and then solicit as many votes as we could via Facebook. It was a challenge, but we did it, and now we get to update our kitchen with a walk-in refrigerator!

What are your greatest challenges?

We are not able to provide the consistent quality of food that we would like to give each week. With our increasing numbers, it is a challenge to keep up with the demand. We also want to provide as much fresh produce and meat as possible, and that is very expensive.

Are there any unique programs offered?

We have Yale medical students come most Saturdays to do some basic health screenings and also offer rapid HIV testing through Liberty Community Services. Additionally, we are one of the few places left in New Haven that still has a clothing closet!

It's time to update our annual TEFAP Civil Rights Training



All pantries, internal pantries, soup kitchens, and emergency shelters that receive The Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP) food must have all staff and volunteers review the TEFAP Civil Rights Training Manual. Once reviewed and signed, this form must be submitted to your Member Services Coordinator by June 1.

Please note that our contract with the State of Connecticut requires that this training is taken annually, and also requires that the "And Justice For All" poster is displayed on-site.

For more information or to view and download the TEFAP Civil Rights Training manual please click [here](#) or contact your Member Services Coordinator for assistance.

CTNAP ordering update

Connecticut Food Bank is in the process of finalizing an update to the CTNAP ordering process for the 2015 calendar year, and as a result, programs will no longer receive identical orders on various dates throughout the year. CTNAP products will now appear on Agency Express with online shoppers choosing the desired quantity, adding to their cart, and submitting with their online order.

Additionally, we hope to alleviate the space constraints many of our programs face by allowing you to order products in smaller quantities on a more regular basis.

Keep a lookout for an email when the process is complete and be ready to see CTNAP products on Agency Express soon!