When donating to food pantries, there are actions you can take to ensure that your donations, whether during the holidays, a school food drive or an act of kindness have the biggest impact. Donate nourishing, healthy foods so recipients can get all the vitamins and nutrients they need. Also prioritizing foods that are allergen free and that are culturally appropriate better ensure your donation is equitable to all using the pantry.

Everyone has the right to food that they will enjoy and satisfies physical hunger. Taking time to be mindful and meaningful in your donation will benefit others in more ways than one.

Call or visit pantry websites to learn about what specific pantries are asking for, how/where to donate and information about making a monetary donation.

Below is general information from FoodWise and Wood County about widely accepted food donations at pantries and specific information for donating to Asian, Hmong and Hispanic individuals.

Also featured is guidance from the UWSP Cupboard, which provides food to current University of Wisconsin- Stevens Point students who need emergency or supplemental food.

**List by Extension and Wood County**

Fruits

* Canned- in 100% juice, not heavy syrup
* Dried fruits- no sugar added
  + Examples: applesauce, pears, peaches, apples

Vegetables:

* Canned- dark greens, starchy vegetables, beans
  + Examples: Collard greens, corn, beets, tomato juice, peas
* Dried beans

Whole Grains foods:\*

* Examples Bread, pasta, tortillas, crackers, cereals

\*first ingredient should read whole grain

* Perishable items (check if accepted by pantry)
  + Fresh or frozen fruits and vegetables
  + Skim milk
  + Low sugar yogurt

Meat/plant protein

* Canned meats
  + chicken, clams, sardines
* Nuts and Seeds
  + Almonds, peanut butter, pumpkin seeds, cashews

Extra items to donate include:

* Spaghetti sauce
* Bouillon cubes
* Ketchup
* Coffee and tea
* maple syrup without added sugar
* Pickles
* Salsa
* Salad dressing with little and no fat

Please avoid donating:

* Foods that are: dented, expired, opened, canned from home, or containing infant formula.

Monetary and holiday donations:

* Accepted in some cases to buy specific foods for pantry recipients
* Desired food may change around the holidays, so if you are donating at this time, please check their website to see what they are asking for.

**Specific to the Wood County Area, the top 10 foods to donate are:**

1. Canned tuna or chicken

2. Low sodium vegetables

3. Fruit in water or 100% juice

4. Whole grain cereal

5. Whole grain pasta

6. Dried or canned beans

7. Peanut butter

8. Spaghetti sauce

9. Low sodium creamed soup

10. Baking mixes and pancake mix

Top food allergens can be viewed [here](https://foodallergycanada.ca/food-allergy-basics/food-allergies-101/what-are-food-allergies/priority-food-allergens/). Donating products that are allergy friendly protects the health and satisfies the hunger of those with food allergies.

**UWSP Cupboard**

Desired Items

* Breakfast
  + Breakfast bars
  + Cereal
  + Fruit cups
  + Granola
  + Oatmeal,
  + Pancake mix
  + Waffles
  + Yogurt (refrigerator/freezer space is available)
* Cooking & Baking
  + Cheese
  + Flour
  + Mayo
  + Baking/ seasoning mixes
  + Oil
  + Sugar
* Fruit
  + Canned, fresh, frozen
* Peanut butter
* Rice
  + Plain or with sauce/seasoning

Regularly donated items

* Knorr products or similar items: <https://www.knorr.com/us/en/products.html>
* Macaroni & Cheese
* Pasta & Sauce
  + All shapes & sizes of noodles accepted
  + Sauce- packets preferred over jars for easy carry/transport
* Ramen
  + Noodle packets and soup bowls
* Soups
  + Bag, box, packet preferred
  + cans okay too
* Tuna & other canned meats

Donating to the Cupboard:

**Food donations** can be dropped off on the lower level of the Dreyfus University Center located at 1015 Reserve Street, Suite 050. **Office hours are Monday – Friday, 8 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.**

**Monetary donations** can be dropped off or mailed to UWSP Foundation located at 2100 Main Street, Suite 134.

**Online donations can be made here:** <https://give.uwsp.edu/give-now>

* Simply select the designation “Other Specific Fund” and list The Cupboard or student food pantry.