

HOW TO HOST A DRIVE FOR DMARC

PROVIDE HEALTHY FOOD FOR PEOPLE LIVING WITH FOOD INSECURITY

Inside this toolkit, you will find:

- creative ideas to make your drive a success
- facts about food insecurity in our community
- resources and tools for promoting your drive



Ready to get started? Contact us today!



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ABOUT OUR WORK

The Des Moines Area Religious Council (DMARC) is an interfaith organization with a mission of working together to meet basic human needs in Greater Des Moines.

The DMARC Food Pantry Network consists of 14 partner food pantries, multiple mobile food pantry sites, a home delivery program, and numerous community partners. The DMARC Food Pantry Network provides healthy food options and fresh produce to the people we assist.

The DMARC Food Pantry Network assisted over 65,000 people in 2023.



Once per calendar month, people can select a three-day supply of food from any one of our partner food pantries, and AnyTime Items are available whenever our partner pantries are open.

In 2007, Iowa State University Extension & Outreach conducted a research study at DMARC food pantries and found that the people we assisted were three times as likely to have diabetes than the general population of Polk County, and twice as likely to have heart disease. The research study led to us changing our food supply and how we talk about food insecurity and access to healthy food.

Since then, we have implemented healthy food guidelines and changed our food supply accordingly. We provide healthy food—fresh fruits and vegetables, and non-perishable items low in sugar, fat, and salt. It's not enough for us to just fill stomachs, we want to nourish the people we assist.

This past year, the DMARC Food Pantry Network assisted more people in more places than any other time in our 45 years of food work, and provided a record amount of fresh fruits and vegetables through our partner food pantries.

Unfortunately, the need still continues to rise in Greater Des Moines, but DMARC is here to ensure that no one in our community ever goes hungry.

FOOD PANTRY NETWORK LOCATIONS:



PURCHASING POWER

Because we purchase food wholesale and in bulk, DMARC is able to buy two to six times more food per dollar than a consumer can buy at a grocery store with the same amount of money.

On average, DMARC can provide a meal for 89¢.

Keep this fact in mind as you're deciding which type of drive will be the most impactful. Below are our top three food needs, along with some information on how much we can buy with your donation.



Fruit Canned in its Own Juice

Fruit that is canned in water or its own juice is a great healthy donation option!

\$1.02 = 1 can

\$50 = 49 cans

\$100 = 98 cans

Peanut Butter

Peanut butter is a quick and convenient source of protein for the people we serve.

\$1.43 = 1 jar

\$50 = 35 jars

\$100 = 70 jars



Healthy Cereal

Cereal is one of the staple breakfast items that we distribute through our Food Pantry Network.

\$1.52 = 1 box

\$50 = 33 boxes

\$100 = 66 boxes

WHAT TYPE OF DRIVE WILL YOU HOST?

One of the first parts of planning your drive is deciding what will be your focus. You don't have to limit yourself to one type of drive, either! You can ask for multiple types of items into one. For example, you could host a drive for both funds and food at your office, while also encouraging donations of personal care items, and have a virtual drive set up to take donations directly online! We're happy to help you along the way, however you decide to structure your drive.



Fund Drive

If you want to do more with your dollar, consider hosting a fund drive for our Food Pantry Network! Collect donations of cash, change, and checks to support our work.

Virtual Food Drive

Hosting a virtual food drive is a fun, easy, and effective way to support DMARC. Contact DMARC and we'll set up a custom page on our website for your group to select food items and make online donations to our Food Pantry Network!

Personal Care Items Drive

Personal care items such as shampoo, toothpaste, toilet paper, etc. are always greatly appreciated, as DMARC does not use donated funds to purchase these types of items and relies entirely on in-kind donations to keep these items on our shelves.

Period Supplies Drive

Period supplies such as tampons and pads can be costly for menstruating people who are living on a budget. Consider hosting a period supply drive so we can keep our pantry shelves stocked and in good supply.

Food Drive

Hosting a food drive is a traditional way to support the DMARC Food Pantry Network. Be sure to check our list of most needed items to make sure you're donating healthy foods we can put to good use!

Diaper/Baby Food Drive

Diapers, formula, baby food, and other supplies for infants and young children are always in high demand at our partner food pantries. Help us meet this need by hosting a drive for baby supplies!



Red Barrel Event

If your group is smaller in size, consider hosting a Red Barrel event at a grocery store. Collect Red Barrel donations of food and cash from shoppers at a store for a few hours to make a big impact!

CREATIVE IDEAS FOR YOUR DRIVE



Tape a Person to the Wall

Sell feet of tape so that you can literally tape a designated person to the wall!

Shave a Person's Head (or Facial Hair)

Similarly, set a fundraising goal and find a willing volunteer to have their head (or facial hair) shaved off when the goal is met!



Free Ticket with Donation

Host a happy hour fund or food drive and encourage donations by providing a free drink ticket to people who bring in a donation. You can also provide tickets for a door prize or choose another way to incentivize donations.



Coin Banks: Red Barrels and Trucks

Our mini Red Barrel and DMARC truck coin banks are a great way for kids of all ages to raise money for DMARC. Contact us to get your coin banks!



Canned Food Sculpture Contest

Get creative—and competitive—by hosting a sculpture contest using the food collected during your drive. Be sure to share your best creations on social media and tag DMARC!

Jeans Day

Provide an incentive for people to donate to your workplace fund or food drive, like a sticker that lets you wear jeans for a day.



Host a Trivia Night

Plan a trivia night to raise funds for the DMARC Food Pantry Network! Make your event fun with a theme for the evening and prizes for the winning team. A suggested fee of \$25 per person to attend is recommended. Raise additional funds by selling Mulligans or bonus questions to increase points.



Mini Golf Courses

Have teams each construct a hole for a mini golf course using non-perishable food donations collected during your drive, then have everyone play through the course and award prizes!

Hold a Friendly Competition

Hold an inter-office competition to raise the most funds or food for DMARC! This is a perfect type of drive to hold in conjunction with an Iowa vs. Iowa State football tailgate event or other big game! Have a representative from the losing team volunteer for a form of playful humiliation—like a pie in the face!



Holiday Party Fund & Food Drive

Many organizations, businesses, and other groups hold holiday parties, and these events are perfect to pair with a fund or food drive for the DMARC Food Pantry Network! To encourage donations, sell tickets for a door prize, hold contests, and think of other creative ways to spread holiday cheer and give back to your community.

A TIMELINE FOR HOSTING YOUR DRIVE

1

Planning Your Drive

- Contact DMARC**—Reach out to our Volunteer & Outreach Manager, Amandat at AParkins@dmarcunited.org or (515) 277-6969 x220, to let us know you're planning on hosting a drive for the DMARC Food Pantry Network.
- Determine what type of drive you will host**—Are you raising funds, food, both, or maybe a special drive? See page 5 for more details.
- Set a fundraising goal for your drive**—Setting a goal for your fund or food drive will help motivate participants and give them a sense of accomplishment when the goal is met! It also helps us know how much to expect.
- Check your organization's giving policy**—Does your workplace provide corporate contributions or matching gifts for employee donations/volunteer time?

2

Preparing Your Drive

- Make a promotional plan**—Determine how you will raise awareness of your drive. Set a promotional calendar and timeline to plan out when you will inform people of your drive and provide reminders and updates along the way. Get promotional materials created and ready to launch your drive!
- Spread the word**—Get the word out with flyers, emails and social media! (see page 11 for tools and resources)

3

Launching Your Drive

- Collect donations**—Whether it's collecting bins of food or asking people to donate through a virtual drive, get your drive going and start gathering donations! Let people know your goal and deadline.
- Send notifications and updates**—Let people know how the drive is progressing! Give periodic updates throughout your drive and be sure to make one final push for donations before your drive is complete.

4

Completing Your Drive

- Count and box your donations**—Counting and boxing your donations helps DMARC save time and manpower! Package similar items together and put the number of items on the outside of the box.
- Notify DMARC and drop off your donation**—Let us know how your drive went and when you will be dropping off your donation. Then, deliver your donation to our warehouse (east side of building) located at 1435 Mulberry Street, Des Moines, 50309.
- Share the results**—Let everyone know how you did. Take a photo and share your results — and don't forget to mention DMARC and tag us on social media!
- Volunteer in the DMARC warehouse (optional)**—What better way to finish off your food drive than by volunteering in our warehouse to sort and date-check your donated food?

Sample Internal Email #1

Hello!

This week we will be holding a fund and food drive for the DMARC Food Pantry Network! DMARC assists ~20,000 people every month through its Network of 14 partner food pantries, multiple Mobile Food Pantry locations, and food delivery service. They are committed to providing healthy food options and fresh fruits and vegetables.

That's why we're excited to support their work with our fund and food drive! Bring in your donations of healthy food, personal care items, and cash—DMARC is able to purchase 2-6 times the amount of food with your dollar than you can at the grocery store.

Last year, DMARC assisted over 65,000 people right here in our community, and over 1/3 of them were children. We're proud to support DMARC and the work they do here, and we hope you will be, too!

From now until [COMPLETION DATE], drop off your donations at [DONATION LOCATION] and help us meet

Sample Internal Email #2

Hi everyone!

As you (hopefully) already know, we are holding a fund and food drive for the DMARC Food Pantry Network this week. We've gotten some donations already, but for anyone who has not yet contributed, DMARC has provided us with a couple tips on how to make the most impact with your donation:

- 1. Donate Funds**—DMARC is able to buy two to six times more food per dollar than a consumer can buy at a grocery store with the same amount of money. That's because they buy in bulk and at wholesale rates. So if you want to do more with your dollars, donate funds.
- 2. Donate Healthy Options**—If you are donating non-perishable food items, look for healthy options, such as fruit canned in water or its own juice, whole grain cereal, no sugar added peanut butter, low sodium canned vegetables, brown rice, etc.

Our drive ends on [COMPLETION DATE], so make sure to get your donation dropped off at [DONATION LOCATION] before then to help us meet our goal of raising [GOAL] for the DMARC Food Pantry Network!

Sample Internal Email #3

Hey folks!

Our drive for the DMARC Food Pantry Network is nearly complete! As of today, we're [X]% of the way to meeting our goal of raising [GOAL] for people living with food insecurity in our community.

Help us finish this drive strong! Drop off your donations at [DONATION LOCATION] before [COMPLETION DATE]. Your contribution will make a positive difference in the lives of tens of thousands of people in our community living with food insecurity.

Sample Press Release



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

MEDIA CONTACT:

MEDIA CONTACT:

Blake Willadsen, Marketing and Communications Manager
bwilladsen@dmarcunited.org; (515) 277-6969 x227

[Your Company] Hosts Drive Benefiting DMARC Food Pantry Network

DES MOINES, Iowa (DATE)—The Des Moines Area Religious Council (DMARC) Food Pantry Network recently received a donation from [YOUR COMPANY] of [DONATION AMOUNT]. This donation will allow the DMARC Food Pantry Network to provide more than [DONATION AMOUNT X2] healthy and nutritious meals for families in Greater Des Moines.

“DMARC is grateful for the generous contribution from [YOUR COMPANY],” said DMARC CEO Matt Unger. “Providing healthy, nutritious food for people living with food insecurity in our community is so important, so we thank [YOUR COMPANY] for their assistance in this effort.”

[QUOTE FROM YOUR COMPANY]

DMARC thanks [YOUR COMPANY] for their partnership with DMARC in the fight against food insecurity in Greater Des Moines.

The Des Moines Area Religious Council (DMARC) is an interfaith organization with a mission of working together to meet basic human needs for the greater Des Moines community.

The DMARC Food Pantry Network consists of 14 partner pantry sites, multiple Mobile Food Pantry locations, and a home delivery program. The DMARC Food Pantry Network is committed to providing healthy food options and fresh produce to the people we assist. Last year DMARC celebrated its 70th anniversary, assisting over 53,000 unique individuals living with food insecurity in Greater Des Moines.

DMARC could never do the work of feeding so many people without the partnership of many, diverse faith communities. Faith communities from across the religious spectrum support DMARC with cash support, donations of food, and service. Because we can do so much more together than we can on our own, DMARC has a commitment to helping our faith communities learn about one another and build relationships.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ABOUT DMARC

Is DMARC a food bank?

No, DMARC operates a Food Pantry Network. Food banks are organizations in all 50 states that operate under the umbrella of Feeding America. Food banks service other organizations, including DMARC.

Is DMARC a food pantry?

More than just a pantry - DMARC keeps the shelves stocked at pantries across the metro. DMARC operates a Food Pantry Network, partnering with organizations across the metro area to provide them with food free of charge and managing a common database system. We operate a centralized warehouse to bring food in from donors and wholesalers and send food out to our partner pantries.

The DMARC Food Pantry Network has been in operation since 1976. In October 2022, we opened the first food pantry operated by DMARC at our new headquarters under the name the DMARC Southside Food Pantry.

What are your most needed items?

Because our Food Pantry Network has healthy food guidelines, we always need more healthy options of nonperishable food items (low in sugar, fat, and salt), most specifically whole grain cereal, peanut butter, and fruit canned in its own juice. And keep in mind that we can purchase more with your dollar than you could in the grocery store.

Why do you have healthy food guidelines?

Back in 2007, Iowa State University did a research study that found that people who used our food pantries had three times the incidence of diabetes than the general population of Polk County. Since then, we've adjusted our food supply to focus on healthy food and fresh produce. For us, it's not enough to just fill stomachs, we want to nourish bodies and minds.

What does a typical food pantry visitor look like?

We are often asked what a "typical" visitor to a food pantry looks like. In truth, there is no such thing as a "typical" food pantry visitor. We assist people of all races, genders, ages, incomes, and educational attainment.

But if we look at the most common responses to the intake questions, we can say the most likely person to visit a food pantry is: **A White - Not Hispanic woman who graduated high school, has one child, is living below the poverty line, does not receive SNAP benefits, is in and out of employment, and only visits a food pantry once per year.**

What is the eligibility to receive food?

There are no income guidelines to receive food from the DMARC Food Pantry Network. While it is not a requirement, we ask that you provide a photo ID for the head of your household if possible.

Can DMARC pick up my donation?

Under certain conditions where a large amount of food (typically over 2,000 items) is raised and you are unable to transport it to DMARC yourself, a pick up may be arranged on a case-by-case basis. Scheduling a pick up needs to be done in advance due to our drivers' busy schedules.

In addition to food drives, how else can we engage with DMARC?

DMARC's Data Visualization Dashboard provides a big picture look at food insecurity in Greater Des Moines. We can share data about food insecurity in the community around your workplace, school or organization. Hunger Simulation is another way to engage with DMARC providing a "week in the life" of a real person living with food insecurity. More information at : dmarcunited.org/hunger-simulation/.



UNITED TO MEET THE NEED

Des Moines Area Religious Council

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Connect with us!



Des Moines Area Religious Council



@DMARCunited