



# Fresh Pantry Program Evaluation (2019-2020)



Second Harvest Food Bank of East Tennessee's Fresh Pantry initiative increases the access of healthy foods for people of low socioeconomic status living in food deserts. The Fresh Pantry is equipped with a refrigerated truck to provide:



**Healthy Food**  
Fresh produce, canned veggies, eggs, milk, & protein items



**Cooking Videos**  
Learn how to cook a meal w/ distributed products




**Taste Tests**  
Sample demo recipes

In its first year, the Fresh Pantry distributed **98,232 pounds of food**, equating to more than 80,000 meals for 2,500+ households and more than 6,500 people.

Fresh Pantry monthly distributions at a federally qualified health center:



SHFB partnered with the University of Tennessee Knoxville to support their evaluation and data collection. They surveyed participants at three time points: baseline (in-person/on-site), 1 month (in-person or via phone), and 6 months (via phone or mailed paper copy). Survey items included measures of food insecurity, economic trade-offs (e.g., food vs. health care), demographic variables, and feedback on the Fresh Pantry program to enhance client participation, retention, and to assure food package acceptability and usage. In addition, semi-structured interviews were conducted with Cherokee Health Systems providers.



### Socio-Demographics of Surveyed Clients

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**Avg. Age:** 55  
**Income:** 84% of clients have incomes \$15K or below  
**Transportation:** 59% do not drive themselves  
**Other Assistance:** 89% participate in at least one other assistance program (67% SNAP, 52% Disability, 47% Medicaid)

## Demonstrating the Need for Fresh Pantry as a Means to Address Food Insecurity



More than 40% reported making trade-offs between paying for food and medical expenses, utilities, housing costs, and transportation costs.



More than 85% of participants agreed or strongly agreed that:

- the food tastes good
- the food is good quality
- the food will be used
- they are satisfied with the amount of food
- they enjoy trying new food



### Fresh Pantry Experience

*"[Fresh Pantry has] helped me tremendously. The food is always excellent, it's always fresh and it's good! ...I get the food, go home, and follow the recipes."*





## Rooted in Evidence

In 2019, Second Harvest Food Bank of East Tennessee was selected as a Rooted in Evidence grantee. Established by the Gretchen Swanson Center for Nutrition, this grant program funds eligible food banks working to support innovative and dynamic programming to improve the health and dietary quality of emergency food recipients. Grantees were awarded \$20,000 and received technical assistance and evaluation support.

