

Scouting for Food - Frequently Asked Questions

What is Scouting for Food?

Scouting for Food is one good turn that benefits everyone. Scouting for Food is a BSA National Service Project which first originated at the Greater St. Louis Council in 1985. Virtually every council now has an annual Scouting for Food collection drive to support their local food banks. Scouts promise to “help other people at all times”; this service project fits perfectly with our mission!

When does Scouting for Food take place?

In Grand Canyon Council we will begin collection efforts in January, culminating on February 2, 2019 with deliveries to local food banks telling them to credit the food to Scouting for Food.

How does Scouting for Food benefit my unit and Scouts?

Our Scout Oath calls on us all “to help other people at all times.” Scouting for Food is one of the many ways that Scouts do that, it has a special place in the Scouting experiences of many. Additionally, one aim of Scouting is participatory citizenship; helping to take care of the community.

When coupled with the promise “to help other people at all times,” collecting food for distribution to the needy gives units and Scouts a positive role in helping everyone in their community, not just the Scouts and their families. It also gives Scouts the satisfaction of participating in something much larger than themselves, of doing a good turn. When asked, one Scout replied, “It feels good, because you’re helping somebody.”

This act of service is a reminder of the power and importance of Scouting to our communities and also serves to demonstrate to those outside our program that Scouting is more than just outdoor adventure, according to our Chief Scout Executive. It’s about developing character in youth so they can make a difference in the many places they call home.

Why are Scouts doing Scouting for Food?

The Boy Scouts identified hunger as one of five “unacceptables.” Missed or incomplete meals have their greatest impact on growing children, veterans, and the elderly. Hungry children often worry more about empty stomachs and empty refrigerators than they do finishing their homework.

Food insecurity affects almost one in six Arizonans, a total of more than one million Arizona residents, according to the Arizona Department of Economic Security. This is higher than the national averages. Food insecurity means they may lack access to or the ability to afford enough food to feed everyone in their household. According to data released in 2016, more than one in four Arizona children worry about their next meal. Sometimes free school lunches are the most dependable food supply for children, a shocking fact.

Food collected in metro areas is often routed to more rural areas where the need is the greatest. Apache, Navajo, and Coconino counties had child poverty rates of 41%, 38%, and 35%, respectively, according to U.S. Census Bureau information released in 2016.

Who can participate?

Every unit and every Scout in the State of Arizona can and should participate in Arizona's Scouting for Food project. When it comes to collecting, Scouts can collect door-to-door, they and their responsible adult can place collection boxes at schools, religious institutions, or places of work. Brothers, sisters, and family members can all participate.

How can we participate?

Scouts can participate in one or more ways. The individual unit will decide which approach or approaches it wishes to take. Some units may choose to use more than one approach to collecting food, and that is probably the most effective plan:

- As in the past, units can target an area for a collection effort. Scouts spread out through the area and go door-to-door one weekend (January 26) and collect food if someone answers the door or, if no answer, leave a note requesting a contribution. If the latter, we ask the donor call the individual Scout to collect the food within a short period time, three days. The unit can repeat the process of going door-to-door the next weekend to collect the food left out by residents..
- Individual Scouts and a responsible adult can visit 4-5 of their immediate neighbors to collect food. If they miss the neighbor, they can leave a note asking that the neighbor call the Scout to come back and collect the food.
- Scouts can place collection boxes at their chartering organization, religious institution, or school. If permitted, they can make a short presentation on the nature of Scouting for Food and its importance in helping the needy.
- Parents or guardians can place collection boxes at work and encourage coworkers to bring in food and put it in the boxes.
- Under certain circumstances following a registration process like that in selling camp cards or popcorn, Scouts can gather at storefronts and ask shoppers at certain local groceries to buy an extra can or two of food to support Scouting for Food, and then drop the food off on the way out.
- Scouters can participate by bringing a couple of cans of food to Roundtable, District Committee Meetings, District Banquets or Blue and Gold Dinners.

How can we collect food at storefronts

Certain grocery stores (Safeway and Albertsons) will permits us on a limited basis to collect food in front of their stores. Other stores have declined to do so, and we should respect their wishes.

Safeway and Albertsons have said we can collect on January 26 and February 2. Only 6 or fewer people may be out front at a time. (2 adults and 4 youth) If your unit wants to collect at a storefront, be sure to register for the site through the link on the Scouting for Food page on Council's site. When you arrive, be sure to check in with the store manager out of courtesy to let him or her know you will be out front.

How much food should I collect?

Our goal is 16 cans of food per Scout, which works out to about 15 pounds. If each of our 35,000 registered Scouts collects 15 pounds of food we can deliver over 500,000 pound of food for the needy in Arizona. That will make an impact on hunger in Arizona, it will put Scouts in the eyes of the community, and it may even encourage some to join Scouting. We will know we have done something large and beneficial. Of course, Scouts are not limited to collecting 15 pounds of food, in fact, the more the better!

What do I do if someone wants to give money?

You can accept cash donations, but we aren't set up to issue receipts. Take the cash donations to the Food Banks as they can feed up to 10 people from a dollar donation, based on volume purchasing.

How do I find the nearest food bank and deliver the food?

The food banks have asked that, when practical, we deliver food to the three big food banks in Arizona. They are best equipped to sort and redistribute the food to other centers for distribution to the needy.

These big food banks are:

United Food Bank - Mesa:	www.unitedfoodbank.org	480-926-4897
St. Mary's Food Bank - Phoenix:	www.firstfoodbank.org	602-242-3663
St. Mary's Food Bank - Surprise:	www.firstfoodbank.org	602-242-3663
St. Mary's Food Bank - Flagstaff:	www.firstfoodbank.org	602-242-3663
Yuma Community Food Bank:	www.yumafoodbank.org	928-343-1243

If these locations are not close, here is a link to a food bank directory based on zip code:
<http://www.azfoodbanks.org/index.php/foodbank/index/>

Check the hours of operation before trying to make a delivery. Be sure to attach a delivery form to your food delivery so the food bank knows it came from Scouting for Food

How can I help spread the word on social media or with friends?

First, tell your friends what you are doing and why, then ask for their help. Post your plans and efforts on Facebook. If you have a video of collecting, make an Instagram to share with selected friends.

How do I get collection boxes or flyers?

Each of the three big food banks can provide collection boxes if you advise them in advance that you would like boxes. Every unit leader will be sent the entire toolkit, along with sample forms and templates for individual Scout or unit use. Flyers and other forms can also be downloaded from the Council Website.

What kinds of food should I collect?

Participants should collect non-perishable food, like canned goods or dry beans or pasta. These are ideal because they will not spoil. Glass containers of food are not acceptable because of potential breakage. Preferred foods are:

<u>Beans:</u> Pinto, kidney, refried	<u>Beef Stew and Chili con Carne</u>
<u>Canned Tomato Products:</u> Incl. juice and sauces	<u>Canned Vegetables:</u> spinach, peas, sweet potatoes, carrots
<u>Cereal:</u> Whole grain cereal , raisin bran, oatmeal packets, any cereals not high in sugar.	<u>Meats & Meat Alternates:</u> Canned tuna, chicken, & peanut butter
<u>Milk:</u> canned or dried	<u>Rice & Pasta:</u> Brown rice, egg noodles, whole wheat pasta

How do I weigh my food?

The major food banks will have scales you can use to weigh the total poundage collected.

How do I report my unit's results and request patches?

Visit www.GrandCanyonBSA.org/food and complete the Scouting for Food results form so that your District Executive can bring you patches at the next roundtable.