

South King County Food Coalition

Nutrition Standards



To unite staff and volunteers around a clear set of common principles that promote health and nutrition for our clients, the food banks of the South King County Food Coalition have created these Nutrition Standards. This policy reflects the passion we feel about creating positive change in our communities while using proven nutrition concepts to guide us.

The situation in **SOUTH KING COUNTY** is unique:

As the cost of housing in King County has skyrocketed over the past decade, families have been driven south to find affordable housing. These same families frequently struggle to provide adequate food for all their family members (food insecurity). These individuals are at increased risk for chronic diseases such as diabetes and high blood pressure.

SOUTH KING COUNTY RESIDENTS experience:

the **MOST** poverty • the **MOST** food insecurity •
the **MOST** Type II diabetes • the **MOST** high blood pressure

Compared to all other regions in King County

1 in 5 families in South King County does not always have enough to eat.

In food banks of Western WA, 54% of households have a member with high blood pressure and 42% have a member with diabetes.

Heart disease death rates in South King County are higher than countywide rates.

South King County has higher rate of diabetes than the rest of the county (10% vs. 7%)

Access to nutritious foods is essential for adults and children to be healthy. As a dedicated group of 12 food banks, we are committed to providing nutritious food and health education to positively impact our neighbors in South King County. Together we can make a difference!

South King County Food Coalition member food banks commit to the following:

1. We will serve our clients with **dignity**.
 - We will create environments that allow clients to have more freedom to choose which foods fit their dietary needs.
 - We will provide healthy choices.
 - We will serve with abundance.

2. We will put our clients' health first by prioritizing the distribution of recommended **USDA's**

MyPlate foods such as:

- Fruits and vegetables, especially fresh
- Whole grains
- Low-fat or non-fat dairy and milk products
- A variety of protein foods
- Foods lower in sodium and with less added sugar

3. We will provide **more fresh foods**.

- We will seek to supplement donated foods with the purchase of fresh foods as well as distribution of Elk Run Farm produce.
- When purchasing food, we will seek to limit processed foods to those that are low in sodium and added sugars.

4. We will use **behavioral economics** strategies to highlight healthy food options so the healthy choice is the easy choice.

5. We will provide **nutrition education** about the foods that we distribute and information on how to prepare them.

- We will focus education on key health concerns for our region, especially high blood pressure and diabetes.
- We will provide information like recipes and pamphlets
- When possible, we will translate materials into languages other than English.
- We will provide food samples and cooking demonstrations when possible.

6. We will **educate our community** about the disparities that exist in South King County.

- We will inform our donors about the importance of donating foods that help to improve our clients' health.
- We will highlight to our community members the importance of their neighbors' health and provide them with a forum to enact change.



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