# Food Pantries

## Dave Davis, John Ray, Kristi Kingery, and Becky Daughtery

**Introductions and Overview**

***Dave Davis***

* Distributes about 300 meals
* Suggestions for starting a program:
  + Will you need paid employees or a large staff of volunteers? If you need paid staff, where will the funds to pay them come from?
  + Start where you can. Don’t get ahead of yourself. Start slow and small.
* Successful funding models:
  + Apply for grants.
  + Partner with local businesses.

***John Ray***

* Food pantry in a church, prepares a meal once a week
* Small ministries focusing on feeding children (15-80 people)
* Third Monday of each month they distribute boxes
* Book recommendations:
  + Helping Without Hurting
  + When Helping Hurts
* Suggestions for starting a program:
  + Do your homework and know your area. How many people will you serve?
  + Take the Food Bank Orientation
  + Communicate with “clients” in your area. Ask them what their needs are.
* Mistakes to avoid:
  + Don’t forget to celebrate the small victories and keep your staff informed on how lives are being changed (to keep enthusiasm up).

***Kristi Kingery***

* Multiple churches serving the City of Ardmore (Alabama and TN)
* Coalition food pantry- each church has one month a year to supply volunteers
* Four officers (selected by board of directors) have four-year terms of serving the program
* Donations in the form of canned goods from church members and other monetary supporters
* Successful funding models:
  + Go to city council meetings, etc. to show that you are invested in the program and deserve funding.
  + Don’t be afraid to ask! High school band Christmas concert- everyone that comes brings a can and this is donated to the program.

***Becky Daughtery***

* Serve prepacked carts on Thursday mornings
* Sunday school classes bring in items (detergent, etc.) to give out on Thursdays
* Offering through the church fund the pantry, other food supplemented by the Food Bank
* Successful funding models:
  + Make the process fun and involve the community, e.g. competitions for number of cans brought in.

***Laura Fincher (Food Bank of North Alabama)***

* Suggestions for starting a program:
* Homebound individuals need assistance. If you have a car, you can deliver to people who do not have transportation. Consider being a business that only serves homebound seniors.
* Set a limit for how many meals you will deliver (if you can only afford 20, set that limit and start there).
* Diapers, cleaning products, etc. are also needs.
* Ask other local pantries what items they are providing and do not repeat these. Try to fill gaps.
* Successful funding models:
  + Chamber of Commerce website: top employers by county to see who is hiring the most and see what they’re willing to donate. Find company giving programs
    - Call and ask to speak with the HR director: “Do you have a giving program?”
  + Church food pantries:
    - communicate that the financial donations are a separate and EXTRA need (the church does not fund the program). They will be more likely to donate.
    - Show them how financial support will (in the end) supply more food. E.g. buying 14 cans vs. donating 14 dollars to spend at the Food Bank.

**Q&A**

***1. Resources are offered during working hours. Is there an effective way to offer resources at night when more people can come?***

*John Ray*- choose a weekday and set evening hours. Make sure you have staff willing to work those shifts.

*Kristi*- have a box pickup program (other people can pick up the food for her)

*Becky*- let people make special requests. Meet people after hours or have a delivery service.

**2. Should people be allowed to choose their food, or should we make pre-prepared boxes? What are some ideas for allowing individuals to choose their own foods?**

*Laura*- Woody Woodman will answer questions. Lookup Client Choice (it is a model)

***3. Do you give out non-perishables? Do you need to have health inspections?***

*Kristi*- we get inspected because we have frozen items. We don’t serve fresh because we are only open once a week (and these items would go bad). The Food Bank class helps explain what is allowed in food storage.

*John-* have fresh goods delivered the day before.

*Dave*- partner with grocery stores, e.g. Publix. You can pick up more/less frequently and they have proper storage. You would need refrigerated trucks and storage areas for this food still.  
*Laura*- The Samaritan Act covers small programs. Most pantries don’t have a health department visit. Become a USDA member. It is a government program through the Food Bank that provides cheap bulk food items. You must move a high volume of food and have a lot of volunteers for this program to be successful.