

## COVID-19/EMERGENCY 14-DAY MEAL KIT

Developed March 2020: Kathy Draeger, U of MN Extension Regional Sustainable Development Partnerships

### PURPOSE

By developing, selling, and helping to deploy meal kits, Minnesota's rural grocery stores serve as a critical source of emergency food access. This meal kit fact sheet will help grocers working in their communities to prepare and deploy pre-made boxes with 14 days of emergency food that is healthy, shelf stable, easy to prepare, calorie sufficient for vulnerable populations facing hardship due to coronavirus.

People are practicing 'social distancing' in order to prevent the spread of the COVID-19 virus. Many of our rural areas have elderly residents who may need to shelter in place.

This model is intended to allow community members, churches, nonprofit organizations, or others to work with small town grocery stores to purchase kits from grocery stores while minimizing contact among members of the public. These meal kits will allow communities to help each other while also supporting local businesses that serve as a critical resource during times of crisis.

### MEAL PLAN FOR ONE PERSON

**Grocery availability will impact what is included in each 14-Day Meal Kit**

BREAKFAST	LUNCH/DINNER/BRUNCH	SNACKS
INSTANT OATMEAL (10 MEALS)	CHICKEN NOODLE SOUP, CRACKERS, PEACHES (2-5 MEALS)	POPCORN
PANCAKES, SYRUP (VEGETABLE OIL) (4-6 MEALS)	SPAGHETTI, SAUCE, GREEN BEANS (2-5 MEALS)	NUT MIX
CHEERIOS (6 MEALS)	TUNA HELPER, TUNA, CORN, PINEAPPLE (2-3 MEALS)	SUNFLOWER SEEDS
+ APPLESAUCE	VEGETABLE SOUP (SQUASH, MINESTRONE, BEANS) CRACKERS, PEARS (2-3 MEALS)	PRETZELS
+ PEARS	MACARONI AND CHEESE, SPAM, PEAS, APPLESAUCE (2-4 MEALS)	PEANUT BUTTER
+ GRAPE JUICE	VEGETABLE BEEF SOUP AND CRACKERS, CRANBERRIES (1-2 MEALS)	COOKIES
	BAKED POTATO AND BACON SOUP AND CRACKERS, PEACHES (1-2 MEALS)	DRIED FRUIT

## COST

The estimated meal kit cost is \$150. This cost was based upon purchasing food off the shelf from Bonnie's Hometown Grocery store in Clinton, MN on March 12, 2020. Please adjust based upon availability and price (generics, sales, etc) – this kit is not meant to promote or endorse any singular name brand.

## PERISHABLES + STORAGE OF KIT

Do not include perishable items in the meal kit. It is recommended to use three cardboard boxes (no more than ~20lbs of food per box). These meal kits may be stored at room temperature for some time. The National Institutes of Health reports that Coronavirus can last up to three days on plastic or stainless steel surfaces. It may be advisable that recipients of emergency food allow boxes to sit for three days before opening (see attached sample recipient letter).

## DRY GOODS

- Complete pancake mix (add water only) - 1 box
- Pancake syrup - 1 container
- Spaghetti - 1 box
- Parmesan cheese shelf stable canister - 1
- Tuna Helper - 1 box
- Macaroni and cheese - 2 boxes
- Saltine crackers - 1 box
- Other crackers - like Triscuits / Wheat Thins - 1 box
- Instant flavored oatmeal packets - 2 boxes of 10 packets  
OR Canister of oatmeal
- Cheerios - 1 box
- Popcorn microwave - 1 box
- Graham crackers - 1 box
- Pudding - 4 pack single servings
- Mixed nuts, peanuts, or sunflower seeds - nuts only (not in shell) – 2 containers
- Pretzels - 1 bag
- Cookies - 1 package
- Dried fruit - 1 package
- Vegetable oil - 1 bottle
- Tea - 1 box (recommend herbal such as peppermint)
- Coffee - 1 can



Example overview of food of 14-Day Meal Kit

## CANNED GOODS

- Canned fruit (mix of pineapple, peaches, pears, cranberries) - 5 total
- Canned vegetables (green beans, peas, beets, potatoes, corn, beans) – 5 total
- Spam - 1
- Spaghetti sauce - 1
- Tuna - 2
- Vegetable soups (acorn squash, minestrone, etc...),  
chicken noodle soup, vegetable beef soup, baked potato  
& bacon soup - 5 total
- Applesauce - large jar or 1 package of 6 small containers
- Grape juice - 1 bottle
- Gatorade - 2 large bottles
- Peanut butter - 1 jar



## NON-FOOD ITEMS

(\*\*Note: To avoid contamination between disinfectant and food, these items need to be packed in a **separate bag** and distributed with, but not in, the food box. \*\*)

- Toilet paper - 1 pack of 4 rolls
- Can of disinfectant
- Disposable gloves
- Bar soap



## SPECIAL DIETS

Some people in your community may have special diets due to food allergies, medical conditions, religious practices, or personal preference. For example, many people may need to reduce salt/sodium, so lower sodium versions of soups, canned vegetables, and nuts can help people meet their health needs.

Other people may follow a vegetarian diet, which allows people who keep kosher or follow halal to adhere to religious practices when they don't have control over other aspects of their menu. To make vegetarian meal kits, remove all items with meat and replace with vegetarian alternatives. Note that soups often include meat-based broths. Bean based items and soups (check that there are no bacon/pork products) are a suitable protein-rich substitute.

To make gluten-free kits, remove all items that contain gluten (wheat, barley, rye) and replace with items that are rice or nut based. Please check the label for 'gluten-free' rice cakes, or rice crackers can replace saltines or other crackers. Gluten-free pastas (please check label) can replace spaghetti and macaroni and cheese. Check for gluten-free cookies and graham crackers as well. Oats are a gluten free food (as are Cheerios).

Other special diet needs, such as nut allergies, require review of the labels of individual products.

**Note:** This food kit is based on not wasting food and using all food leftovers.



This kit was developed with the input of Extension Nutrition Educators, Abby Gold, Ren Olive, Karen Ehrens, Greg Schweser, Diane Seefeldt, and Caryn Mohr, as well as a variety of community members and grocers via a Facebook poll for input/suggestions.

Dear Neighbor -

We hope this letter finds you safe and well. Inside these boxes you will find food and other items to help you make it through the next 14 (or more) days. The items are all non-perishable/shelf stable (until opened). **Before you open the boxes, please either let them sit for 3-5 days to eliminate germs, or use this disinfectant before you touch the items** (and wash your hands after doing so with the included bar of soap - or any soap!).

Here is a suggested meal plan that can be followed with the contents of these boxes:

<b>BREAKFAST</b>	<b>LUNCH/DINNER/BRUNCH</b>	<b>SNACKS</b>
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GRAPE JUICE	TUNA HELPER, TUNA, CORN, PINEAPPLE (2-3 MEALS)	SUNFLOWER SEEDS
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PEARS	MACARONI AND CHEESE, SPAM, PEAS, APPLESAUCE (2-4 MEALS)	PEANUT BUTTER
PANCAKES, SYRUP (VEGETABLE OIL) (4-6 MEALS)	VEGETABLE BEEF SOUP AND CRACKERS, CRANBERRIES (1-2 MEALS)	COOKIES
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Our best wishes and hopes are with you in this uncertain time.

Please know that your community cares about you and your health! ☺