

Virtual Food Drives vs. Food Drives

You may wonder why a Virtual Food Drive is the preferred donation option over giving your SHARE Food Bank food collected through a food drive.

Why?

- **Better Food for Clients** – Cash donations help SHARE Food Bank purchase fresh and healthy food full of nutrients. The food most often removed from dinner tables during financially challenging times is fresh and perishable food, milk, dairy, and proteins. This is the type of food that does not come through food drives and needs to be purchased.
- **Purchased Food Reduces Environmental Impact** – SHARE can purchase healthy food when we want, when we need it, to serve the changing needs of our community. When healthy food is purchased when needed, fewer staff resources are allocated to transport and sort food, reducing SHARE's overall carbon footprint. Our community partnerships also help SHARE recover food from retailers that would otherwise be wasted.
- **Costs** – There are costs associated with receiving food from food drives. In many cases, much of the food must be disposed of due to broken packaging, dented cans, or food that is expired or well past the best-before date. Responsible disposal of this requires depackaging, recycling, and composting – resulting in costs.
- **Labour Intensive** – The support required for food drives is labour-intensive and is an inefficient use staff or of volunteer hours. Each item needs to be inspected for best before or expiry dates and sorted by food type. Food banks would also much rather have volunteers doing more fulfilling work such as distributing food to clients.
- **Better Buying Power** – Thanks to our community partnerships, financial donations allow healthy food to be purchased at a discounted price. SHARE can buy more food and better food than consumers due to their buying power and their industry, retailer, and farmer relationships.
- **Equitable Distribution** – Food banks aim to provide the same food to clients regardless of when they visit the food bank. This helps relieve anxiety and ensures clients do not have to change their schedule, leave work, etc. just to be first in line to receive the 'best' food. The assortment of food from food drives does not allow for this.
- **Menu Planning** – Food banks also aim to provide food which any of us would be proud to put on our own table. This often requires planning ahead to ensure they have industrial food donations or purchases that will constitute proper meals. Food from food drives does not allow for the creation of proper, healthy meals.

For more information, please contact:

Darcel Moro, Manager of Community Engagement

Darcel.Moro@SHARESociety.ca

604.540.9161 ext. 561.