

Guidelines for Filling a Blessing Box

(Print and provide to those who will keep the box stocked)

When donating items please follow CDC handwashing guidance and disinfect the box interior and handles frequently.

Buy canned foods with pull rings when available for easy opening or include small handheld can openers.

Suggested food items for the Blessing Boxes during most of the year listed below.

Some items may be compromised during winter months. Note the asterisk items.*

- Canned soups and sauces*
- Canned Meat (Tuna, Chicken, etc.)*
- Peanut butter, nuts, and alternatives
 - Almond Butter, Sunflower Seed Butter, Coconut Butter, etc.
- Beans, canned, especially garbanzo, chili, & baked beans *
- Rice, white or brown
- Pasta (preferably in boxes)
- Cereals/instant oatmeal packets
- Crackers/granola bars
- Canned diced tomatoes, tomato sauce, & tomato paste*
- Canned Fruits, Canned Vegetables *
- Condiments (ketchup, mustard, salad dressing, mayo)
- Jelly, pancake syrup
- Baking and Pancake Mixes
- Microwave meals/to-go meals and shelf-stable meal kits
- Individual serving size items
- Infant formula, dry infant cereal
- Package protein drinks
- Dried fruit

***Not recommended during winter temperatures below freezing**

Other items needed -

Hand can openers
Shampoo/Conditioner/Combs/Brushes
Toilet paper
Feminine care Pads/Regular Tampons
Toothbrush/Toothpaste
Deodorant

Razors
Hand soap, dish soap, bath soap, hand sanitizer
Laundry detergent
Gloves/Hats/Scarves
Baby supplies (wipes, diapers, etc.)

Food Safety

It is a blessing to donate food to those in need. But it is not a blessing to donate unsafe food.

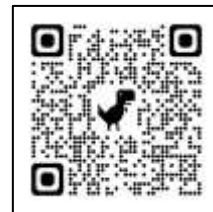
If the blessing box is outside of a building, and outdoor temperatures are extremely cold or hot, many foods can be compromised which could reduce the quality and be unsafe. Keep these tips in mind when deciding the types and forms of food to donate.

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Throughout the year, do not donate the following to a Blessing Box:

- Open or partially used items
- Rusty or unlabeled cans
- Homemade or home canned foods
- Glass because of breakage
- Food in torn cardboard boxes
- Food in torn plastic packaging
- Perishable items - **NO raw meats, eggs, dairy, fresh breads**
- Alcoholic beverages
- Dented, bent, leaking, or bulging cans
- Any packaged food past its “best by,” “use by,” or “sell by” date
- Any packaged food with damaged tamper-resistant seals
- Re-packaged foods
- No fresh fruits or vegetables – these can spoil easily during extreme temperature changes, get easily damaged, or get contaminated by animals or insects. Create a plan for distribution of these nutritious foods that will be safer!

Additional information is available here:
<https://www.ksre.k-state.edu/foodsafety/topics/handling.html>



Thank you to the Riley County Nourish Together organization for the formatting of this *Stock the Box Guidelines* flyer and to Karen Blakesless, Extension Associate, Department of Grain and Food Science, Kansas State University; kblakesl@k-state.edu who compiled this information for K-State Extension.