

# 4-H CAN Make A Difference



**PROGRAM ORIENTATION • CLUB ACTIVITY IDEAS  
USE THE MEDIA • UNIQUE IDEAS • AREA FOOD BANKS**



Illinois State 4-H Office  
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Champaign, IL 61820  
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July 5, 2008



Dear Illinois 4-H Club Leader:

Illinois 4-H youth are launching their annual 4-H CAN Make A Difference campaign to help feed the hungry. Since the program began, Illinois 4-H members have collected nearly 2.5 million pounds of food and contributed more than 2 million hours of volunteer service at food banks, pantries, shelters, and meal programs throughout the state. We appreciate your leadership and your 4-H club's efforts to help address the growing problem of hunger in your community.

As you may know, summer months are especially critical at local food pantries. Illinois food bank officials indicate that supplies are dangerously low. In many areas, hungry children and adults are being turned away because the pantry shelves are bare.

We invite your 4-H club members to join in this important effort. Please contact the food bank director for your area or stop by your local food pantry to learn how your 4-H club can Make A Difference.

Sincerely,

*Sharon R. Petefish*

Sharon R. Petefish  
University of Illinois Extension Specialist  
4-H Youth Development

**4-H Can Make a Difference**



## **PROGRAM OBJECTIVES**



**Provide 4-H youth with factual information on hunger and challenge them to plan and carry out a community service project that is designed to make a difference.**



**Inform Illinois citizens about the problem of hunger and explore ways they can help.**



**Encourage 4-H youth to work collaboratively in local communities to collect nonperishable food and deliver the donated items to local food banks and pantries as a result of 4-H sponsored community service projects.**



**Engage 4-H youth in volunteer service at area shelters, pantries, and meal programs.**



**Help 4-H youth expand their leadership and citizenship skills, experience volunteerism and develop their caring spirit.**



# HOW YOUR CLUB CAN HELP



## Statewide 4-H Food Drives

The 4-H House of Food will be prominently featured at the Illinois State Fair in Springfield, August 8-17. During the fair, 4-H youth will line the walls of the house with donated food items by fair visitors. This unique exhibit symbolizes 4-H members' hopes that the pantry shelves in all Illinois homes are stocked with food.



Many volunteers are needed to staff the 4-H House of Food display, respond to media inquiries, host special guests, and provide leadership for special activities.

## Agricultural Commodity Groups Partner with 4-H



Illinois 4-H is proud to partner with the Illinois Department of Agriculture and several commodity groups on this important campaign to eliminate hunger. For the past twelve years several commodity groups have partnered with 4-H youth on this important cause. The Illinois Pork Producers Association, Illinois Beef Association, Illinois Corn Growers Association, Illinois Farm Bureau, and Illinois Grape Growers and Vintage Association continue to support the 4-H CAN Make A Difference program. Your club may wish to partner with county affiliates of these state organizations to expand participation in your club's project.

Please contact the State 4-H Office if your club members would like to help with these events. Their participation is greatly appreciated.

The sky is the limit to what your club members can do! Investigate the problem of hunger in your community or area. Find out what other individuals and groups are doing and how 4-H can help. Create a unique club project that allows 4-H youth to experience hunger first hand. Ideas are as simple as collecting food for roll call at monthly club meetings, preparing a meal at a local shelter, growing an extra row of vegetables, straightening the shelves at the food pantry, or hosting an event to which admission is a can of food. All of these events would be a fun and effective way for 4-H members to be part of the solution. Your 4-H club can make a difference!





## National 4-H Week

National 4-H Week, October 5-11, provides an excellent time to showcase your community service projects. It is a great time to

demonstrate how your club members make positive differences in their communities.

Consider sponsoring a 4-H CAN Make A Difference food drive or hunger related activity during this time. You may wish to join forces with other 4-H clubs or community groups to gain greater participation.



## Parade Entries

Several 4-H clubs construct floats to publicize their 4-H CAN Make A Difference activities in their hometown parades. One 4-H group annually coordinates a walking unit called "Groceries on Parade," in which the 4-H members wear costumes of canned foods, fresh fruits and vegetables, cereal boxes, milk cartons, and other food items to call attention to their

project. Other club members form a

"Shopping Cart Brigade" and collect donated food items from viewers as they "wheel" along the parade route. This is a wonderful opportunity for 4-H youth to demonstrate their enthusiasm and creativity while publicizing their commitment to this critical community issue.



## Celebrities and Government Officials Endorsements

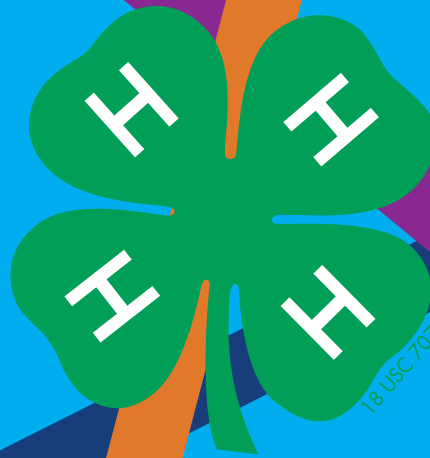
Many celebrities love to endorse a worthy cause. Entertainers such as Reba McEntire, Brooks & Dunn, Brian White, Pam Tillis, Christina Aguilera, Toby Keith, Lee Greenwood, Montgomery Gentry, LeAnn Rimes, and Clint Black have publicly saluted 4-H youth for their work on the 4-H CAN Make A Difference program. State government officials continue to partner with 4-H youth on this important effort. Radio and television personalities serve as spokespersons for the project and capture the attention of local citizens. You may wish to explore ways to involve local celebrities and public officials in your club's project.



# COMMUNITY FAIRS AND FESTIVALS FOOD DRIVES

During the summer months, many communities host fairs or festivals. This is a great time to gain publicity and community participation in the 4-H CAN Make A Difference program. Many clubs and 4-H Federations sponsor countywide food drives in concert with their county fairs and local festivals. These can be quite successful and provide easy opportunities for local citizens to participate in the effort. They also display the leadership talents and caring spirits of your club members in a public arena.

By partnering with local fair boards, incentives can be created to encourage donations such as donating food items to waive entrance fees, donating items in exchange for raffle chances, or sponsoring a competition between organizations.



18 USC 707

Local!



Illinois food manufacturers are committed to helping eliminate hunger. Each year, several companies donate cases of their food products to Illinois food banks and pantries in the name of 4-H. Some businesses provide prizes for local fund raising efforts so 4-H youth can shop for additional food items at local grocery stores. Other businesses help publicize the 4-H CAN Make A Difference projects through newspaper advertisements and promotions at their stores. Some companies provide product incentives, such as discount coupons, free ice cream, soft drinks, etc., to encourage public participation. Your 4-H club members may wish to invite local businesses to join them in their campaign.



# LET THE MEDIA HELP YOU



The media can be a valuable asset in helping to promote your club's efforts. You will find that most people are willing to participate, as long as they know about the 4-H CAN Make A Difference campaign and your club's plans. The following is a sample media release for local newspapers and a copy for recording an announcement at your local radio station. You may wish to contact your nearest television station and cable network to see if your community event or activity could be listed on the community calendar. Your local newspaper may be interested in preparing a feature story on your club's unique project. Perhaps it will inspire other groups and individuals to become involved.

(SAMPLE RADIO COPY)

## Radio Public Service Announcement

Help 4-H'ers feed the hungry! The **(club name)** 4-H club will be collecting nonperishable food items like canned soup, vegetables, pasta, cereal and rice on **(day, date)** to help families in need in our community.

You can help by bringing your food donation to **(location of collection site)** where 4-H members will collect the donations and deliver them to **(name of local food bank, pantry, a shelter, or meal program)**, which are in desperate need of our support.

Please come to **(location)** with your contribution on **(day, date)** and help 4-H'ers feed the hungry throughout Illinois.

**Note:** Contact your local radio station for assistance in preparing this announcement. Public service announcements are aired as "free" announcements on the radio. The staff at the radio station will advise your club members about the appropriate arrangements. You may need to go to the radio station to tape the announcement.

(SAMPLE NEWSPAPER RELEASE)

## Food Drive Seeks Donations

The **(club name)** 4-H club is sponsoring a food drive on **(date)** at **(location)**.

The 4-H CAN Make A Difference food drive helps feed families in need in our community. You can help by donating nonperishable food items like canned soup, vegetables, pasta, juice, cereal, and rice. **(Club name)** youth will be at the site to collect the contributions. All items donated will be distributed to **(name of local food bank, pantry, shelter, or meal program)**.

The 4-H CAN Make A Difference food drive was initiated eleven years ago in response to the growing numbers of people who are going hungry in this state. The Illinois Hunger Coalition reports that more than half of those reported are children.

The **(club name)** members invite all **(name of community or county)** residents to partner with them in this important humanitarian effort. Over 300,000 4-H members and leaders throughout Illinois are working together on this statewide project. 4-H is a part of University of Illinois Extension. To find out more about 4-H and how to help with this community action project, contact **(name of club leader or 4-H project coordinator at phone)**.





# UNIQUE IDEAS TO RAISE FOOD



The following are examples of how 4-H clubs can help local citizens become aware of the problem of hunger and the need to become involved.



☘ Pick up some canned food and Fill up a Truck!! Hold a "Fill the Pickup" Food Drive! Work with your local grocery store and set up a pickup truck in the parking lot where people could donate non-perishable food items and make a goal to fill the entire bed of the truck.

☘ Host or sponsor a food drive in conjunction with a community event, i.e., county fair, 4-H show, community festival, sporting event, etc. These food drives can be partnered with other 4-H clubs, community organizations, church groups, and businesses.



☘ Prepare and distribute literature on hunger to community residents and ask them to help with your program plans.

☘ Prepare public service radio/television announcements about the problem of hunger and inform local citizens about how they can help. These announcements could run in conjunction with your club's food drive.



☘ Build a giant soup can and challenge community residents to fill it with donated food.

☘ Club members grow a vegetable garden or a large club garden that yields produce to be donated to local food pantries or sold to raise money to feed the hungry.

☘ Write articles on hunger for local newspapers or sponsor a hunger essay contest. Arrange to publish the winning entries in the local newspapers.







# UNIQUE IDEAS



☘ Sponsor a “Snap Out Hunger” booth at a community festival. Design and paint a large picture of a can and cut a hole in which a person’s face could be inserted. Use an instant camera to take photos for a fee and donate the proceeds to a local food pantry.

☘ Prepare a display on hunger and place it in a prominent location in your community.

☘ Place grocery bags with food drive flyers on door handles of homes requesting food donations. Return a week later to pick up donations.

☘ 4-H members bring canned food items as entry fees for 4-H sponsored events in your community.

☘ Sponsor a “Can Structure” competition where structures are built out of canned products. Display these structures at local shopping malls or other prominent locations in your community. Challenge other 4-H clubs and community groups to compete against one another to raise more food. Award prizes for various categories to encourage participation. Encourage local citizens, organizations, and businesses to sponsor the individual structures, which will get more people involved and enhance publicity.

☘ Sponsor a “4-H Harvest Round Up” to gather excess produce from community gardeners to donate to local shelters.

☘ Contact local restaurants, grocery stores, meat markets, or other food retailers to request donations of fresh produce or other food products to give to local pantries or shelters.

☘ Build a replica of the 4-H House of Food and locate it in a prominent location in the community. Have 4-H youth challenge local citizens to help fill the shelves with donated food products.

☘ Coordinate and sponsor a hunger walk. Pledges could be nonperishable food products or money which can be used to purchase food for local food pantries.







# UNIQUE IDEAS



☘ Volunteer at a local soup kitchen to help prepare and serve meals or volunteer at a local pantry to help organize and distribute food to the needy.



☘ Sponsor a raffle and use the proceeds to purchase needed items for local food banks and pantries. Incorporate ideas from the 4-H raffle at the Illinois State Fair in your community!



☘ Paint faces, sell craft items or provide pony rides at a local community festival to raise money to purchase items for local food pantries.

☘ Hold a car wash to raise food or money for local food pantry.

☘ During the holiday season, sing carols door to door in exchange for non-perishable food items.



☘ Organize a “trick-or-treat” for canned food items instead of candy. This could be done any time of the year.



☘ Hand out flyers at local grocery stores asking citizens to pick up an extra item of food to contribute to your food drive. Be sure to locate collection bins next to the exits.

☘ Use canned food donations as an incentive for reduced registration costs for 4-H county, state, and national events, i.e., camps, conventions, seminars, leadership, and career events.

☘ Hold a food pantry scavenger hunt. 4-H club members can search their neighborhoods for food items on the local food pantry’s “wish list” and then meet up to stock the shelves at a food pantry.







# UNIQUE IDEAS



☘ Prepare a parade float that publicizes local 4-H food drives.

☘ Coincide your 4-H food drive with another local event such as a blood drive, recycling project, clothing drive, book drive, or toy drive.

☘ Coordinate an activity with local businesses that allow employees to wear casual clothes on Friday if they bring canned food donations.

☘ Borrow shopping carts from a local grocer and push a shopping cart brigade through the community to collect canned food donations.



☘ Request community members to bring canned food items to the annual 4-H barbecue. Reduction in price of the ticket may be a participation incentive.

☘ Bring non-perishable food items to your holiday gift exchange instead of buying gifts.

☘ Host a "Taste of 4-H" event. 4-H youth could offer samples of homemade breads and rolls in exchange for canned food items or monetary donations. Cookbooks containing the recipes of the breads and rolls being offered could be available for purchase.

All donations from the "Taste of 4-H" could be used to buy food for the local food pantry.

☘ Volunteer your time at a local community event in return for a monetary donation to the food pantry.

☘ Work with your local 4-H Federation to have them match all monetary donations collected during your food drive. Club members could buy canned food items on budgeted shopping sprees. This activity could help youth gain consumer and financial planning skills.







# UNIQUE IDEAS



☘ Have a food drive competition among 4-H clubs where a pizza party would be rewarded to the club that collected the most food.



☘ Hold a raffle with donated items and donate proceeds toward buying needed food items for your local food pantry.

☘ Sponsor a “4-H Shopping Cart Challenge” with other local 4-H clubs. Challenge citizens to fill a grocery cart to see which club can collect the most food. Locate shopping carts near the exits of local grocery stores to collect donations.



☘ Organize a “Canned for the Cause” campaign. Decorate a large can with the 4-H CAN

Make A Difference name or logo and attach a small chain or rope with wrist or ankle attachment on one end. (This is similar to a “jail and bail” activity used at many fundraisers.) “Arrest” a willing celebrity and have 4-H’ers establish a “bail” or pledge of cash or cans of food to be raised. The celebrity

carries the “can” until they can raise the “bail.” After the bail is met, release the celebrity.



☘ Collect food items needed to make Thanksgiving meals. Prepare meals and feed local families in need.

☘ Put together holiday baskets of donated food for those in need.

☘ Organize a food drive competition in local school classrooms. The winning class at each school could be honored with a party.

☘ Decorate large jars or cans with the food drive logo and place in local businesses for citizens to donate to the cause of hunger. The proceeds can be used to purchase food for local food banks or pantries.



# ILLINOIS FOODBANK

## ASSOCIATION

Contact the staff at the nearest food bank, pantry, shelter or meal program in your area to see how your club can help. If you are not sure of the location of your nearest food distribution facility or the name of the contact person, contact the Food Bank Director in your region. This is a listing of the names of the Food Bank Directors, addresses, telephone numbers, and service areas for the Illinois Foodbank Association network.

1

**Northern IL Food Bank**  
600 Industrial Dr.  
St. Charles, IL 60174  
ph#:630-443-6910  
fax:630-443-6916

**Northern IL Food Bank  
(location #2)**  
320 South Avon  
Rockford, IL 61102  
ph#:815-961-0036  
fax:815-961-0036

2

**Greater Chicago Food Depository**  
Kate Maehr,  
Executive Director  
4100 West Ann Lurie Place  
Chicago, IL 60632  
ph#: 773-247-3663  
fax: 773-247-4232

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**River Bend Food Bank**  
Tom Laughlin, Executive Director  
309 Twelfth Street  
Moline, IL 61265  
ph#: 309-764-7434  
fax: 309-764-9388  
tlaughlin@secondharvest.org

3

**Peoria Area Food Bank**  
Richard Adams,  
Operations Manager  
721 West McBean Street  
Peoria, IL 61605  
ph#: 309-671-3906  
fax: 309-671-3925

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**Central Illinois Food Bank**  
Pam Moloritis, Executive Director  
2000 East Moffat, PO Box 8228  
Springfield, IL 62791  
ph#: 217-522-4022  
fax: 217-522-6418

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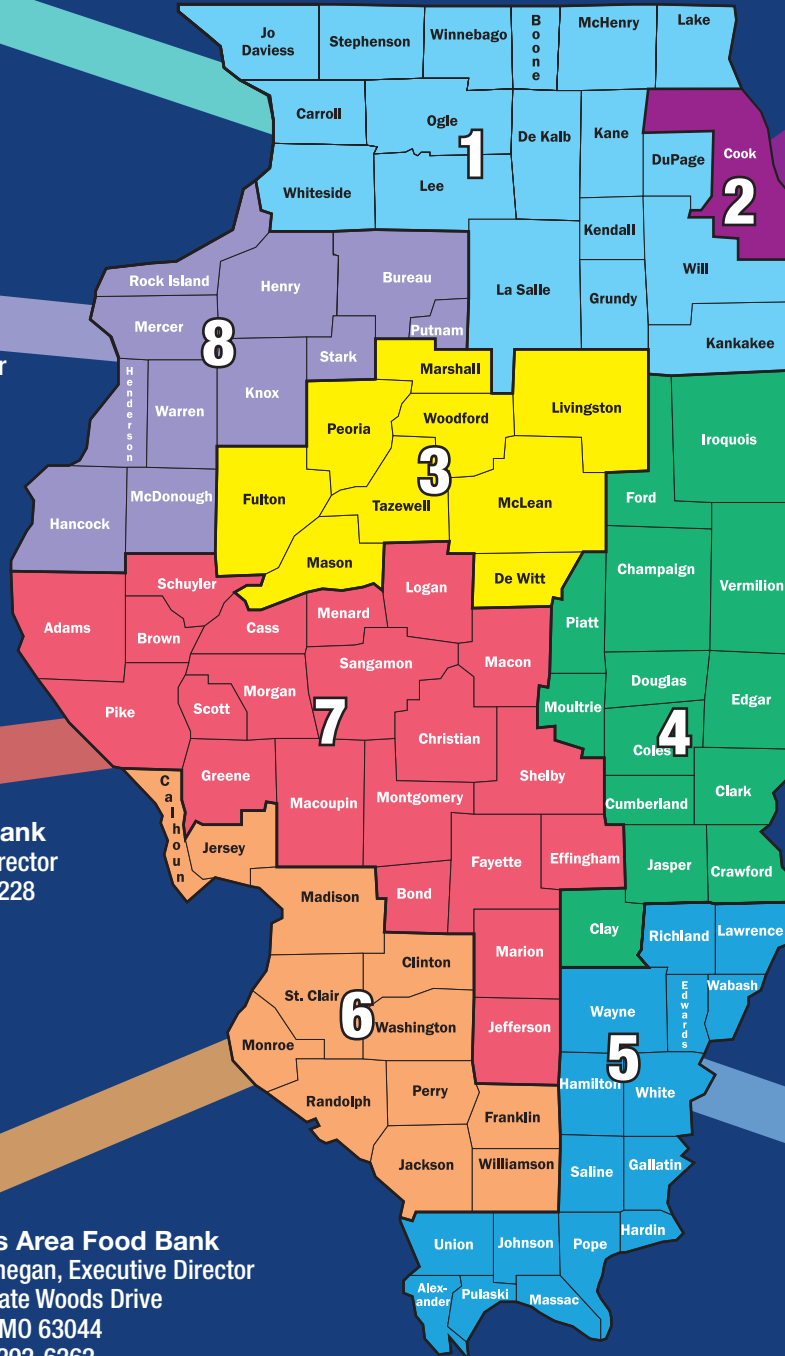
**Eastern Illinois Food Bank**  
Jim Hires, Executive Director  
2405 North Shore Drive  
Urbana, IL 61802  
ph#: 217-328-3663  
fax: 217-328-3670

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**St. Louis Area Food Bank**  
Frank Finnegan, Executive Director  
70 Corporate Woods Drive  
St. Louis, MO 63044  
ph#: 314-292-6262  
fax: 314-292-6266

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**Tri-State Food Bank**  
Mary E. Blair, Executive Director  
801 East Michigan Street  
Evansville, IN 47711  
ph#: 812-425-0775  
fax: 812-425-0776







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