



Creative Ideas for Food and Cash Drives: Corporations and Businesses

Food Drive Ideas: Corporate Employee Food Drives

- **Set a "pounds per employee" goal** to encourage giving levels that will exceed previous years. Display a goal thermometer poster for visual tracking of the drive goal.
- **Give out "I Gave to Minnesota FoodShare" stickers to those who make donations.**
- **Use helium-filled FoodShare balloons to decorate the food collection area.**
- **Have a competition between different divisions.** Managers and executives raise the stakes by issuing challenges and risking doing some agreed-upon stunt if their department loses.
- **Hold entertainment during lunchtime**, offering live music (karaoke, or employees and supervisors who play instruments) or old movies (like a Three Stooges hour, or an Elvis Presley film festival) to dine by. Ask for a food or cash donation as admission.
- **Hold a drive to collect a specific food item needed by the food shelf**, such as peanut butter, toilet paper, etc. Then, issue a specific challenge, such as Medtronic's "Tuna Fish Challenge." You can even crown the head of the division which donates the most as "King or Queen of the Sea" or another appropriate title.
- **Have the executives or manager weigh in, and have the company match the total weight in food donations.**
- **Have an employee parking challenge** - the employee bringing the most food gets a prime parking space for a week.

Fundraising Events

Sales Ideas

- **Run bake sales, donut sales or sell "bagels for a buck."** Sales are often the most brisk right before a work shift begins, or at a meal break.
- **Use a traveling dessert cart** to sell homemade desserts at the office lunch/dining room, or department-to-department.

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- **Issue a Chili Challenge.** Serve batches of chili that get progressively hotter each day (have the server of the hottest batch dressed as a fire fighter). Sell tickets to benefit a your local food shelf.
 - **Sell ice cream cones** in the cafeteria at lunch.
 - **Rent a popcorn machine** and sell fresh popped popcorn during the afternoon.
 - **Barbecue brats and/or burgers in the parking lot at noon for lunch or dinner break.** Charge for the meal to benefit your local food shelf.
 - **Sell singing telegrams** with proceeds to go to the local food shelf.
 - **Host a spaghetti supper, pizza lunch or "Soup-R-Bowl" lunch near the Super Bowl to raise funds for your local food shelf.**
 - **Hold a rummage sale** to benefit the local food shelf.
 - **Donate unneeded or outdated company equipment to an employee sale.** All proceeds are donated to your local food shelf.

Auctions & Raffles

- **Have a live or silent auction** of merchandise, weekend get-aways and dinners, services like dog walking or child care, skills like carpentry or special items like quilts or homemade pies. Solicit local business owners for merchandise and tickets. Solicit friends, family and coworkers for special skills and homemade items.
- **Sell raffle tickets** for any valued item. Approach local businesses for merchandise, services or event tickets to raffle.

Special Events

- **Host a “celebrity waiter” lunch or dinner.** The meal can be donated, and a local, business, government, school or media personality serves the participants. The celebrity waiters donate their tips and the meal cost to a local food shelf.
- **Hold an annual brunch or tea** (have a special guest of interest to attract attendees). Proceeds go to the food shelf.

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- **Sponsor a run** (or walk, skate, bike or dog walk) around the lake and raise pledges for the food shelf.
 - **Sponsor a _____ a-thon.** (Dance, karaoke, checkers, storytelling, bowling, etc!) You fill in the blank with an activity that your group would be willing to do for an extended amount of time. Take pledges.

Cash collection

- **Place a cash/coin collection by the cashier in the lunch room or cafeteria during the month.**
- **Collect spare change for hunger.** Encourage group members to bring either all of their change on a given day, or specific coins on specific days. Provide a coin rolling machine.

Entertainment

- **Coordinate a fashion show** with a local clothing store, or a funny/silly fashion show of self-made items. Admission fees go to the food shelf.
- **Host a tacky “debutante ball” or “prom” party** as a fund-raiser. Encourage participants to dress as tackily as possible in old formal wear. The admission cost goes to the food shelf.
- **Host a FoodShare party at your home.** Individuals invite guests and serve dinner and pleasant company in exchange for either food donations or cash.

Competitions

- **Hold “Tacky Outfit” and/or “Tacky Tie” Day:** invite everyone to wear their tackiest. Take cash “votes” for the person wearing the tackiest outfit and/or tie.
- **Run a putting challenge** – set up a single hole, provide a putter and a ball. Participants pay \$1 per stroke until they sink the ball. Those achieving a hole-in-one are posted for recognition.

Other

- **Make a cash donation to FoodShare or a food shelf in lieu of gifts for birthdays, anniversaries, holidays or memorials.**
- **Send a letter to all employees and retirees from the CEO with a contribution card for cash donations to Minnesota FoodShare.** 100% of donations received during the March Campaign go to purchase food. The company may match employee contributions.

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- **Ask employees to bring “meals in a bag,”** such as the following:
 - Spaghetti sauce, pasta noodles, Parmesan cheese, canned fruit, and salad dressing.
 - Tuna helper, cans of tuna, canned fruit, and muffin mix.
 - Cans of beef stew, cans of green beans or corn, muffin mix, and fruit cocktail.
 - Cans of chili, cans of pears, canned vegetables, box of soda crackers, and jar of peanut butter.
 - Cans of soup, box of soda crackers, canned fruit, juice, and jar of peanut butter.
 - **Invite the group to bring a different meal each week** during March:
 - Week 1: Breakfast. Hot cereal, canned fruit, bags of sugar, canned juice, muffin mix, and hot cocoa mix.
 - Week 2: Lunch. Soup, crackers, pickles, tuna, mayo, cookies, and juice.
 - Week 3: Dinner. Canned beef stew or canned spaghetti sauce and pasta, canned fruit, and dinner roll mix.
 - Week 4: Personal products. Toothpaste, tooth brushes, toilet paper and paper towels.

Other

- **Have grocery store customers deposit their receipts into a collection barrel. The store donates a percentage of the total amount to the food shelf.**
- **Grocery stores issue \$1 and \$5 coupons for customers to give the cashier, who adds the amount to their bill. The store gives these funds to the food shelf.**
- **"Food for Fines" drive allows library patrons to bring in overdue books and pay up to \$5 of their late fees either with a food donation or have the \$5 go to the food shelf.**
- **Theaters: sponsor a "Cans Film Festival."** Admission is a can of food for the food shelf, or a food donation gives the moviegoer a dollar off. Theaters can also agree to donate a dollar amount per ticket to the local food shelf.
- **Grocery stores: agree to match food donations collected at school or at business food drives.**
- **Professional services such as chiropractor's office, massage therapist or a hair styling salon: give free or reduced-priced service for customers bringing in a food donation.** The business can also have customers pay a flat fee for the service, and donate the fees for the day.

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- **Dance studios: offer free or reduced-price lessons in exchange for a food donation. Athletic clubs: offer free or reduced-price aerobics classes in exchange for a food donation.**
 - **Restaurants: donate a dollar to a food shelf for each dessert purchased during March.**
 - **Restaurants patrons: "Buy an Extra Meal" for the hungry by adding a certain amount onto the meal charge for the food shelf.**

All of the resources you need to plan a great March Campaign are available at:
www.gmcc.org/foodshare/marchcampaign