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**Volunteer Services: Tour Guide**

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|  | **Basic Information** | **Housekeeping/Safety Information** | **Details/Key points** |
| **Welcome** | * Your Name, Title, Role/Affiliation   -and if AmeriCorps, purpose   * Explore Group Experience with Harvesters * Harvesters Overview * Pandemic response * Any specific social media asks? | *For all volunteers:*   * Location of restrooms, drinking fountain, wash hands   *If group starts in HAC:*   * Location of volunteer breakroom | * Our vision is a healthy, thriving community where no one is hungry. * Harvesters mission is to mobilize the power of our community to create equitable access to nutritious food and address the root causes and impact of hunger. * Harvesters is a food bank – we are often confused with a food pantry. As a food bank, Harvesters acquires, stores and distributes food to our network of 760 nonprofit agencies. * Through our agencies, we feed more than 226,000 different people each month. * Geographically diverse service area of 26 counties (16 in Northeast KS and 10 in Northwest MO). Includes urban, suburban and rural communities. * Member of Feeding America, nation’s network of 200 food banks * Awarded Food Bank of the Year for Excellence in 2011. * During our last fiscal year, Harvesters distributed 68,843,920 pounds of food providing 61,326,143 meals |
| **Video** | * Introduce video * At conclusion, ask for questions |  | * Did you know that childhood hunger is actually at its worst during the summer months? * For many children, being out of school means they will not be able to eat breakfast and lunch. * While many of us are enjoying the bounty of our local farmers’ markets, low-income families who rely on school meals to nourish their children during the school year are struggling to feed their families. * Food banks like Harvesters know better than anyone that kids aren’t getting enough to eat during the summer. As the school year ends, the pantries and kitchens in our network see an increase in the need for food assistance. * We have four initiatives: Feeding Children, Feeding Seniors, Feeding Families, Promoting Healthy Eating. |

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| **Tour** | * Tour Plan (divide group, etc.) * Direct & give safety instructions | * Stay behind the tour guide for your safety, it is a working warehouse * Stay with the group in designated areas * Do not go under the shelving/racks * No running, pushing…etc. * Turn off cell phones * No open beverage containers * No open-toed shoes |  |
| ***1 in 7***  ***(to the left)*** | * + 1 in 7 individuals in our service area are food insecure |  | * Harvesters is the bridge between the people who have food to give and those who need food. * Nearly 3 million times each year, Harvesters’ network provides food assistance – a meal, bag of groceries or fresh produce -- to someone in our region who is food insecure. * What does being “food insecure” mean? It means that someone does not have consistent access to healthy food because they either don’t have enough money or they have to decide whether to buy food or pay their utilities or rent or pay for their medicine. * What does a hungry person look like? Those who are food insecure are usually not homeless. They are all ages and races. * 49% of households who need food have at least 1 person who has worked in the last year. * How you can help: give food, money, time, voice. |
| **Volunteer Engagement Center (VEC)**  ***Because of You***  ***(to the right)*** | * + The purpose   + Volunteer contribution   + The activities |  | * The VEC is where the majority of volunteer projects take place, we can host up to 200 volunteers at one time. * Volunteers are key to Harvesters being able to carry out our mission. * In a normal year, we average nearly 6,500 volunteer visits each month, between the VEC, our Topeka facility and various off-site events. * Our volunteers process an average of 200 lbs. of donations per hour.   **Sorting Area:**  For nonperishable donated food, primarily from food drives.  **Boxing Stations:**  Where sorted food is packed according to weight/count, then is put into inventory available for agencies to order.  **Washing Station:** Clean donated canned/bottled beverages.  **Produce Stations:**  Sort and bag bulk acquisitions of basic fruits and vegetables, as well as gleaning from donated produce with the bagging machine and by hand.  **Commodities Packing:** Pre-packed boxes of commodities are distributed to seniors through the Commodity Supplemental Food Program, also known as CSFP, and to families through The Emergency Food Assistance Program, also known as TEFAP.  **Breadville and BackSnack** are in the next room: Breadville is where donated bread is packed and BackSnack is the weekend package of kid-friendly food that is packed for students to take home on Friday. |
| ***Feeding Seniors*** | * 20% of who we serve are 60+ years |  | * Volunteers assemble boxes of commodities that are distributed to seniors on a monthly basis. * The network also feeds seniors through Senior Mobile Food Pantries and regular food pantries. * Seniors often have to make hard choices between medication, utilities, and nutritious food. * They are the least likely to ask for help. * 16 percent of our senior clients are raising their grandchildren.   **Senior Story:** George is a 65-year-old retired Army sergeant whose decorations include two bronze stars, who has volunteered with Harvesters in the past to give back to his community and help neighbors who are struggling to afford food. But last year he drove through a Harvesters food distribution at Union Station, on the receiving end — for himself and his niece and her four children because “they don’t have enough.” George said he could count on one hand the number of times he’s needed Harvesters, but he knows the summer months will be especially difficult for his niece and other families when their children no longer have access to the nutritious meals they receive at school. |
| ***Where the Food Comes From*** | * Local * Feeding America * Food Purchased * USDA (the government) * Food Drives * Other Food Banks | * Stay to the left of the yellow pole | * Last FY we acquired nearly 71 million pounds of food and household items from:   **Local:** grocery stores, wholesalers (AWG), producers (MO apple growers), manufacturers (American Italian Pasta, C&C Produce).  **Feeding America:** benefits of being in network of 200+ food banks is equitable access to national food donations and campaigns.  **Purchased by Harvesters:** this year we will spend more than $3 million, of that $1.7 million is for BackSnack.  **USDA:** we distribute 5,000 boxes of commodities (CSFP) to qualifying senior citizens monthly, we distribute 2,700 boxes of emergency food assistance (TEFAP) to qualifying households in Kansas monthly.  **Food Drives:** often the first touch for many with Harvesters is participating in a food drive; fills needs for most nutritious or needed items; a small slice but an important component is the Virtual Food Drive, since every $1 donated = 3 meals acquired.  **Other Food Banks:** we work together to meet the need by exchanging surplus-to-need donations. |
| ***Where does the Food Go*** | * Food Pantries * Kitchens * Shelters | * Stay to the right of the yellow pole * Turn on warehouse light   *For volunteers:*   * If group is ending at BackSnack, point out restrooms & drinking fountain | * Last FY we distributed more than 68 million pounds of food. * Agency network and programs operate in a geographically diverse area. * **Pantries:** brick and mortar, or mobile distributions. * **Kitchens**: prepare and serve an on-site meal. * **Shelters:** prepare and serve meals, short-term or residential facilities.   **Family Story:** COVID-19 is the reason Dominique and her three daughters didn’t get to see her father over spring break last year. It’s also the reason they couldn’t have a funeral in his honor when he unexpectedly died in his sleep a few weeks later. Throughout the personal tragedies of the past year, Dominique has managed to find that silver lining. She got to spend lots of time with her three daughters, ages 7, 9 and 19, and she saw her neighbors really pull together to care for one another. Dominique is a registered nurse, but a surgery that fused her ankle has left her unable to work. She and her children are living with her mother who gets by on Social Security. While visiting a Harvesters’ drive-through food distribution at Park Hill High School, Dominique was deeply moved by the generosity of donors like you who provide an abundance of healthy food and by the compassion of the volunteers she met. |
| ***Disaster Relief: The Supply Line to the Front Line*** | * Disaster Response trailer made possible from Feeding America and Dunkin’ Donuts |  | * We are a regional staging sites for disaster relief. * Feeding America coordinates w/ FEMA & state response to request support. * Harvesters’ 53-foot disaster response trailer that is available to be used by our disaster cohort of food banks in Missouri, Kansas, Arkansas, and Oklahoma. * We store disaster supplies, such as bottled water, cleaning supplies, and shelf-stable food. * Highlight Joplin as example of how we provide relief in the “disaster after the disaster”. * Harvesters transported more than 250,000 pounds of food to Joplin to feed tornado survivors, first responders and disaster relief volunteers. Included in this were 10,000 sack lunches donated and packed by Sprint employees. |
| **Warehouse** | * Since 2004 * 231,796 sq ft | * Turn right into BackSnack assembly area   *For volunteers:*   * If group is ending at BackSnack, continue on to receiving. | * Continually look for ways to improve operational efficiency, reduce waste * Computerized inventory control systems ensure we can quickly and efficiently respond to product recalls * Total warehouse capacity is 231,796 square feet or 5,000 pallets. * Food comes in Monday through Friday and then leaves our warehouse every day except Sunday. * Our total food stock turns over 14 times a year – that’s about every three weeks our warehouse could be empty except that we always have food coming in. |

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| ***Feeding Children*** | * 1 in 6 kids in our service area are food insecure * 38% of them live in households that are NOT eligible for federal nutrition programs such as SNAP/food stamps, WIC or free or reduced-price school meals. * 25% of those we serve are children. |  | * BackSnack is just one example of how we help kids that are food insecure. BackSnack provides backpacks of food to elementary and middle school children to combat weekend hunger (4 meals, 2 snacks). * Reasonably nutritious, kid-friendly, shelf-stable, w/ 3 rotating menus. * More than 9,900 children will receive a BackSnack every week this school year – we have the largest program of this type in the US. * All food is purchased by Harvesters and packs are assembled by volunteers. * Cost for 1 BackSnack per child for the school year is $250. * Shipped to schools, who work with community partners to clean and refill backpacks every week. * Schools determine which students are in need. * We provide training to schools, and we collect data from schools, students and parents. * Data shows higher grades, lower incidents of tardiness/ absenteeism and misbehavior when children are not hungry. * Also have Kids Café which provides meals and snacks to agency or program sites after school and during the summer.   **BackSnack story:** Jesse is 8 years old and has two sisters. Both his parents work, but even with two incomes, the cost of rent, utilities and other bills exhausts most of their paychecks and they have to spend less on groceries in order to make ends meet. Jesse’s school is a BackSnack program partner and he is able to bring home a backpack full of nutritious, kid-friendly food every weekend during the school year. With the BackSnack program, Jesse doesn’t go to bed hungry on the weekends, but instead has the energy he needs to do his homework, play hard and return to school on Monday ready to learn. |
| **Receiving Area** | * Purpose * Activities | * Stay in back of the yellow line | * Where all donated and purchased product is received into our inventory & weighed. * Goal is to have available for agencies to order within 24 hours of receipt - except Food Drive donations which go to the VEC for further processing. * AIB Standard – Harvesters is 1 of just a few Food Banks in the nation to receive a superior rating – this means we meet all the food safety standards in our warehouse. * Fleet of 33 trucks, w/ largest having fuel capacity of 300 gallons * Have 20 electric jacks, 12 forklifts, 12 riders, and 3 pickers. |
| ***Healthy Eating***  **Cooler and Freezer**  **\*This usually concludes the tour & groups are taken to project or exit** | * 40,000 sq ft * Purpose (after going in and out) | * Proceed down this aisle, toward cooler doors, stop to ensure group is together Look both ways for warehouse traffic * Keep groups together * Walk in Cooler together then into freezer together, turn around and walk out together with the tour guide first. * Exiting Cooler/ Refrigerator and Freezer:   Sensor (auto-open);  Pull string for door to open;  Emergency Release at the door - turn handle to left and then pull and the door will open - if the door is starting to shut, stop the group from continuing to walk through and pull the string to re-open the door | * Last FY we distributed more than 19 million pounds of produce. * Produce is kept in the cooler; frozen items in the freezer. * Capacity for safely storing large quantities of perishable food & produce (50,000 f2). * Freezer is -10 deg, Cooler is 40-43 degrees. * November and December – distribute Holiday Meats to agencies – includes turkeys and chickens – distribute more than 340,000 pounds of holiday meats each year. * Nutrition Services reaches out to clients at food pantries and mobile distributions – providing recipes and tastings to encourage healthy food selection and preparation (our recipes are online). |
| **Additional talking points** | * Environment * Non-food items |  | * Committed to decreasing our “carbon footprint” * Warehouse lights are all “motion sensitive” and we have fluorescent and LED lighting. * We collect household items, cleaning/laundry supplies, personal care products, diapers, etc. for distribution through our agencies. * Increasingly, people have to make hard decisions with limited resources: paying for prescription drugs, housing, utilities, or transportation vs. good nutritious food. |

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| **Demonstration Garden** | * Purpose * Plant a Row * Farm to Table | * Exit through VEC door, and out to garden (weather permitting) | * Developing long-term solutions to hunger is a vital part of Harvesters’ mission. That’s why the food bank partnered with Kansas City Community Gardens and Master Gardeners of Greater Kansas City to develop a demonstration garden. * Community gardens bring neighbors together and empower people to supplement their food supply by growing it themselves. According to the USDA, one 10-foot by 20-foot garden plot can provide as much as $600 in produce in one year alone. * Community gardens can be built and maintained by groups of neighbors, members of agencies, faith-based groups or schools. Yet individuals can adapt many of these principles for personal use –something agencies to pass on to their clients. * Harvesters’ garden, supported by the Master Gardeners of Greater Kansas City, demonstrates affordable ways to grow healthy produce in virtually any setting. The beds are made from recycled materials, organic waste is composted, and the featured fruits and vegetables grow well in Kansas City’s climate. * Member agencies can take advantage of the garden when picking up orders or browsing the shopping floor. Located on the north side of building, the garden shows just how creative planting can be by using old tires and laundry baskets to pot plants. |
| **Closing** | * Ask for questions * Thank group | * Log tour | Visit our website [www.harvesters.org](http://www.harvesters.org) for more information. Follow us on social media: Facebook, Twitter, Instagram to stay up to date on what’s happening, volunteer opportunities and other ways you can help. |