



BackPack Program

2018-2019 Survey & Needs Assessment



A member of:



Table of Contents

PART 1: Program & Survey Overview	Page 2
Program Statistics	
Survey & Needs Assessment	
PART 2: Program Satisfaction	Page 4
Family Ratings & Comments	
School Staff Ratings & Comments	
PART 3: Backpack Family Use of Emergency Food Programs	Page 9
Food Pantries	
Mobile Food Pantries	
PART 4: Backpack Family Food Preferences	Page 12
Perishable Items	
Shelf Stable Items	
PART 5: Alternative Models for Food Access	Page 14
Family Preferences & Concerns	
School Staff Preferences & Concerns	
PART 6: Recommendations	Page 19
Emergency Food Program Outreach & Education	
Emergency Food Program Capacity & Accessibility	
Emergency Food Program & Youth Program Synergy	
Parent Advisory Group	
Transportation Opportunities	
Pilot Program Opportunities	
Strengthen BP Site Accountability	
APPENDICES	
Appendix A: Summary of Survey Responses by District	Page 22
Appendix B: 2018-2019 Backpack Program Evaluation	Page 23

Part 1: Program & Survey Overview

School Year Program Statistics

The Food Bank of the Southern Tier has been partnering with schools to offer weekend food for kids and families through the BackPack Program since 2006. The 2018-2019 School-Year BackPack Program provided **96,806 packs to approximately 2,775 unduplicated children** – a 2% decrease from the previous school year. The program operated in all 41 School districts, Finn Academy (Charter School), as well as TST and GST BOCES sites. The Food Bank fully funds these packs and the **estimated cost was \$290,418** (based on ~\$3.00 per pack). Each pack weighs approximately 4.5 lbs – more than **435,000 pounds were distributed in total**.

2019 Summer Program Statistics

A Summer BackPack Program operated in Steuben County through GST Boces summer programs and was paid for by the Department of Social Services. This program provided 800 packs to 133 unduplicated children.

The Summer Lunchbox Program that has historically operated throughout Tioga County changed their model for summer 2019 and shifted to purchasing wholesale product to make their own food boxes for families, as did a new program in Lansing (Tompkins County). These models look more like a school food pantry and were fully funded by outside organizations. Through this model, the Tioga County program provided 3824 lunchboxes - averaging 10 lbs each - to 460 unduplicated children. The Lansing program provided nearly 70 unduplicated children with approximately 238 lbs of food over the summer. In all, these fully funded programs **provided more than 56,000 pounds of food to more than 600 children** and their families.

Survey & Needs Assessment

Each school year we ask school partners to distribute surveys to participants, parents, coordinators and staff. Based on the input we've received from more than a decade of survey data, **we know that the extra food is needed and appreciated**. We have also heard concerns – **the bags are too heavy, they lack variety, and families tell us they need more fresh foods and less canned goods**. Kids, especially as they get older, may feel embarrassed taking the bags.

The annual survey process has also been identified as an area that needs to be updated – surveys have gotten too long and the process of completing is cumbersome for schools and families.

For the 2018-2019 school year, we eliminated the participant survey for kids, combined and simplified the survey for coordinators and school staff and refocused the parent survey to better identify what families need and share potential models that have worked in other communities. Surveys are included in Appendix B

This program/needs assessment was sent out in Spring 2019 to all participating school districts requesting input from Parents/Caregivers and School Staff – including District/Site Coordinators, teachers, nurses, counselors, classroom aides, administrators and social workers. Of the surveys returned, **205 were from Parents/Caregivers and 119 were from school staff – 55% of whom were teachers.**

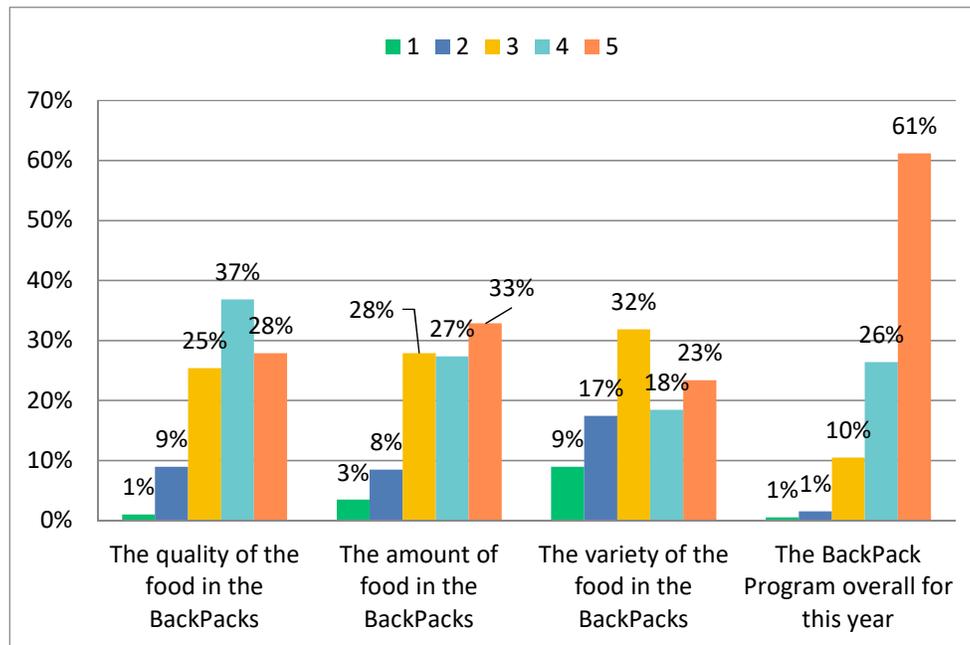
Results from these surveys were then shared with the Food Bank Board, Staff and Speaker's Bureau graduates to help interpret data and determine next steps.

The fully funded summer programs in Steuben, Tioga and Tompkins Counties were not included in this survey.

Part 2: Program Satisfaction

Family Ratings

On a scale of 1-5, where 1 is the worst and 5 is the best:



Although 86% of respondents rated the overall program as a 4 or 5, there were specific areas of critique, including: lack of **variety**; the need for **kid friendlier food**, for **more fresh food** and for more food to **feed a family** versus a single child; and the **weight** of the bags.

Comments: What's Working

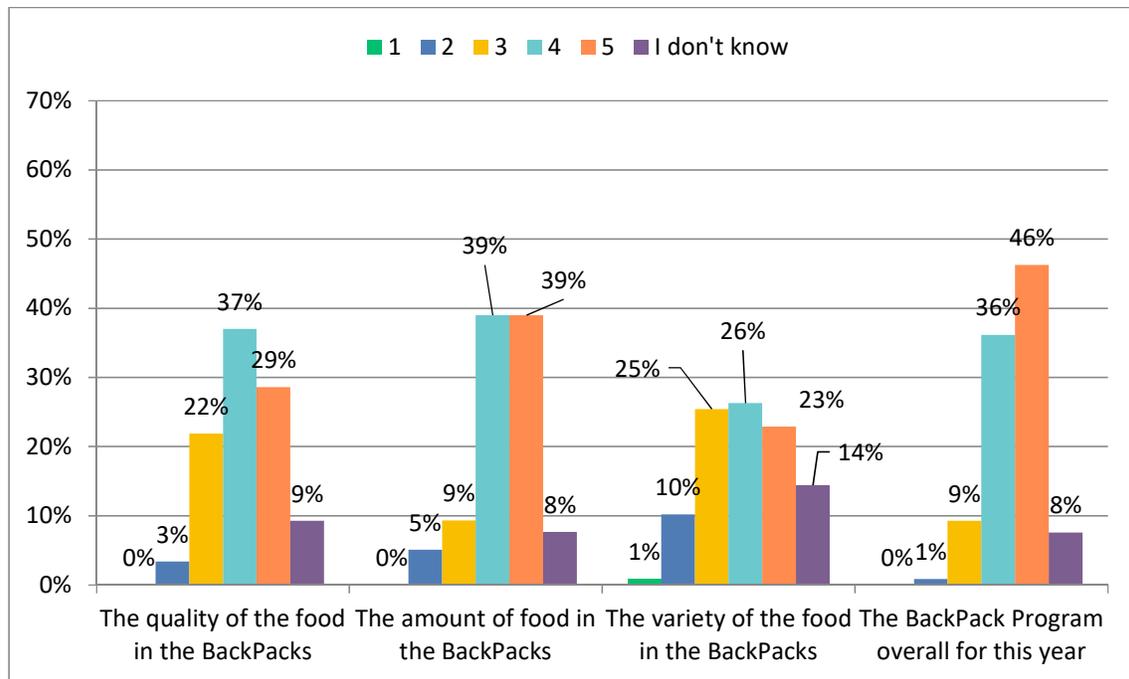
- It gives my kids a variety of food to choose from and its healthy.
- It helps when we are short on food or supplies to feed the family.
- It sure helps with the groceries. We use it all.
- Provides certain things we don't have at the moment.
- It is working well for me. Being a mom of 3 there is always a variety of foods
- It helps to get by when things are getting low.
- Helps when there is nothing to eat.
- It provides my kids with food to eat afterschool & for breakfast. It is working well.
- Great for supplementing.
- My children love the different stuff that comes in the bags. The only thing they argue about is who got the better flavor oatmeal.

Comments: What Could Be Improved

- We appreciate all the food sent home with our child, but we have a stockpile of certain items that we don't really eat/use.
- It's nice there's a food program through the school. I wish it weren't the same food every week though.
- There's no variety, because it's the same exact food every weekend. And it's not very healthy. We'd love some fresh food or even things to make a whole meal.
- Just every week items seem like the same foods. Maybe change it up each week or at least have something different each week would be great. Any food though is appreciated!
- A lot of the same food sets sent home – ex: box mac and cheese. Doesn't get used up as fast and have tons of leftover items not being used. Kids don't always like the food sent home.
- Should be a choice or checklist of things kids will actually eat. My kids won't touch most of it.
- Works well because it puts food in kids' bellies but the variety is not great and could be better nutritional value.
- Right now most of the food sent home doesn't get used. The peanut butter and the mac and cheese does. But most of the other stuff my child won't eat.
- We get the same thing every week. Kids will not eat canned vegetables with no salt.
- It definitely has helped out can food-wise, but could use more fresh foods.
- Less canned foods more fresh food and vegetables.
- Pasta, fruits, veggies – more variety.
- A better and healthier assortment of food.
- Less can food and more fresh. Different food every week and food that the kids will eat.
- The bags are too heavy. Last year and this past year, I had to replace book bags because of this. Also, I have noticed as my child is getting older, her "friends" / classmates will pick on her because "They think she's poor". This program is very beneficial, but I would consider stopping because of that.

School Staff Ratings

On a scale of 1-5, where 1 is the worst and 5 is the best:



82% of responding school staff rated the overall program as a 4 or 5. School staff commented about the **lack of variety** and **weight** of the packs most frequently. They also mentioned the **lack of quality/nutritional value** of the packs and the **embarrassment** that kids felt. Some respondents did note how much they appreciate the Snack Program.

Comments: What's Working

- Students comments of eating, enjoying food.
- Program definitely helps families in need.
- All of the students that use the Backpack Program love the food and getting their food every Friday. Many of the kids mention liking the snacks (dried fruit rolls, granola bars).
- Students are excited to get the bag.
- Families look forward to receiving the food. It's appealing and I believe it makes a difference. Thank you.
- The amount is sufficient and the children are very thankful to have this food to take home.

- Please keep providing the food to the families that want it! I think they appreciate it!
- The ability to help our families out is a wonderful thing. I have families that I reach out to that are incredibly grateful for the help.
- Most students take the bags home with little issue as compared with prior years. Students seem to enjoy many of the items in the bags. Parents appreciate the extra help.

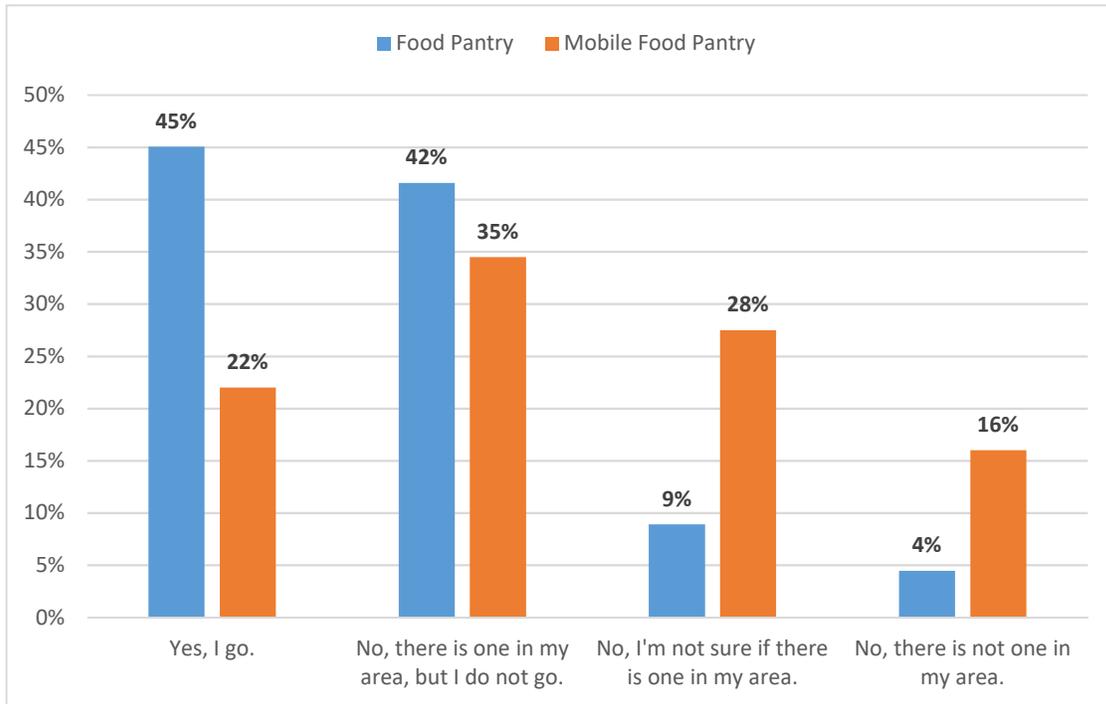
Comments: What Could Be Improved

- I have had a handful parents show their appreciation for the food. I believe that it's time to expand on other food distribution ideas.
- The variety is poor - same food each week!! Bags are too heavy, especially for the younger kids.
- I appreciate my students getting the food. The variety in the bags isn't the best. My students complain they don't like the food.
- I give the program a 5 because we are feeding kids, but overall not kid friendly food per se.
- Sometimes we hear that they complain that the bags are too heavy.
- Too many cans in the packs. Same food in it every week.
- My students appreciate the food they receive. However, the cans can be heavy for the younger children, which you are aware of. It does seem to be a lot of the same food. Side dishes like mac and cheese are great. Maybe hamburger helper, rice, or different side dishes would be great. The extra snacks this year have been WONDERFUL. So many children eat them and don't have to worry if they don't have food or are different than the rest of their peers.
- As mentioned earlier, we have little ones carrying the bags home and they are too heavy for some. The bags have contained a lot of the same things. The snack food has been great! On occasion I will add snack to each of the bags as the kids have mentioned that they like to have the snack food at home as well.
- Maybe consult with school cafeterias to see what kinds of foods kids like the best.... Also, how we could work together with school cafeterias on leftover food, so the kids could take that food home with them. I'm sure it's a refrigeration nightmare and easier said than done. Fresh produce would be great too!!!
- There could be more variety from week to week. Also, the food comes in plastic grocery bags that are sometimes heavy and hard for kids to handle in addition to backpacks. However, overall it's a great program!

- These bags of food are too heavy for some students to carry. Also, other children know who gets food and who doesn't. It would be better for the parents to take more responsibility and pick up the food from the schools rather than small children having to be the responsible ones to carry bags of food home for their families each week.
- Food quality is an issue. Highly processed refined foods (salty, sugary and added oils) and too many canned foods are unhealthy and create poor eating habits. We should be empowering these families in need to eat healthier. I know it's about logistics and sustainable shelf life of the food, but there must be a solution. Maybe we can start with higher quality, whole grain cereals that could be added to the bags, send dried beans (high fiber, nutrient dense and protein rich) and directions how to cook?? Space is an issue in the children's back packs so perhaps the cereal could be pulled out of their boxes and just left in the sealed bags. Perhaps we could provide them with a reusable tote bag? Maybe grocers would donate their sturdy shopping bags? As for fresh whole foods, apples? carrots? potatoes? these are hardier items that may last a few weeks? Perhaps divert some of the funds to the schools independently to purchase fresh fruits and vegetables to send home in addition to the dry staples? We could house loaves of whole wheat bread in our freezers? I know the solutions are not easy and they mean added staff and funding... but if we are giving people already nutrient void shelf stable foods, then we are adding to the problem. It's a huge societal issue, not just under served people are eating poorly. We all are. A weekly pictograph (easier for functioning illiterate and illiterate) of what is healthy and what isn't healthy could be added to the bags as well.
- There were some diet samples in some of these bags just recently. I am not sure how they were obtained but they were nutrisystem. It would be nice to see more items such as canned vegetables and fruits, applesauce, peanut butter, canned tuna etc. A lot of the foods are very processed, like mac and cheese boxes.
- Kids often refuse to take the bags home. Bags are very heavy. Contents require adult assistance for young children. Boxes of cereal is easily accessible for all.

Part 3: BackPack Family Use of Emergency Food Programs

The Food Bank was interested in better understanding if BackPack families have access to and were utilizing other emergency food programs like Food Pantries and Mobile Food Pantries in their community.



Food Pantries

87% of respondents were aware of a food pantry in their area, but only 45% were utilizing the resource.

- Of those that were aware, but didn't attend (84), the most common reasons were a **lack of transportation** (mentioned 7 times) and the **distribution schedule** (7). Also mentioned was quality of the food (4), that they don't need food (2), paperwork requirement (1), CHOW referral process (1) and the perception that others need the resource more (1).
 - No transportation and I work 8-5 daily - when pantries are open. Binghamton
 - There are food pantries in our area but only available certain days and times that do not work for us. Maine-Endwell
 - Pantry hours are hard with my work hours and no vehicle. Dryden
 - Food pantries in our area (Maine) are wonderful, but you have to go through CHOW and make appointments and I am usually working.

- Mostly can food and I don't drive. I'd have to walk far for cans. Union-Endicott
- Food is often not good or gone off date posing risk if consumed. ¹Candor
- It's only open one day a week and hard to get down to around the bus schedule. Candor

13% report that there isn't a food pantry or that they don't know if there is one.

- 18 respondents were not sure if there is a food pantry in their area and 9 said that there is not a pantry in their area.
- With the exception of Waverly, the remaining districts with reporting families do have at least one Food Pantry within the district catchment area. However, district catchment areas are geographically large and this does not ensure that the pantry is located within a reasonable distance of where the respondent is living or working.
- Throughout the Food Bank's service area, there is at least one food pantry (including CHOW) within the catchment area of all districts except Waverly, Arkport & Avoca.
- A full list of schools, pantries, and mobile food pantries is available at: <https://arcg.is/0y0mjm>

Mobile Food Pantries

57% of respondents were aware of a Mobile Food Pantry in their area, but only 22% were utilizing the resource.

- Of those that were aware, but don't attend (68) the most common reason was the **distribution schedule** (7). Also mentioned was transportation (2) and that they don't need food (1).
 - I actually would like to go to one. I have just been waiting for a day off when one is closer to my residence. Binghamton

44% report that there isn't a Mobile Food Pantry or that they don't know if there is one.

- 55 respondents were not sure if there was a Mobile Food Pantry in their area and 32 respondents said that there is not a Mobile Food Pantry in their area.
- Compared to brick and mortar food pantries, there are more school districts that do not have a Mobile Food Pantry in their catchment area. Mobile Food Pantry by design is focused on rural areas that do not have access to traditional food pantries.

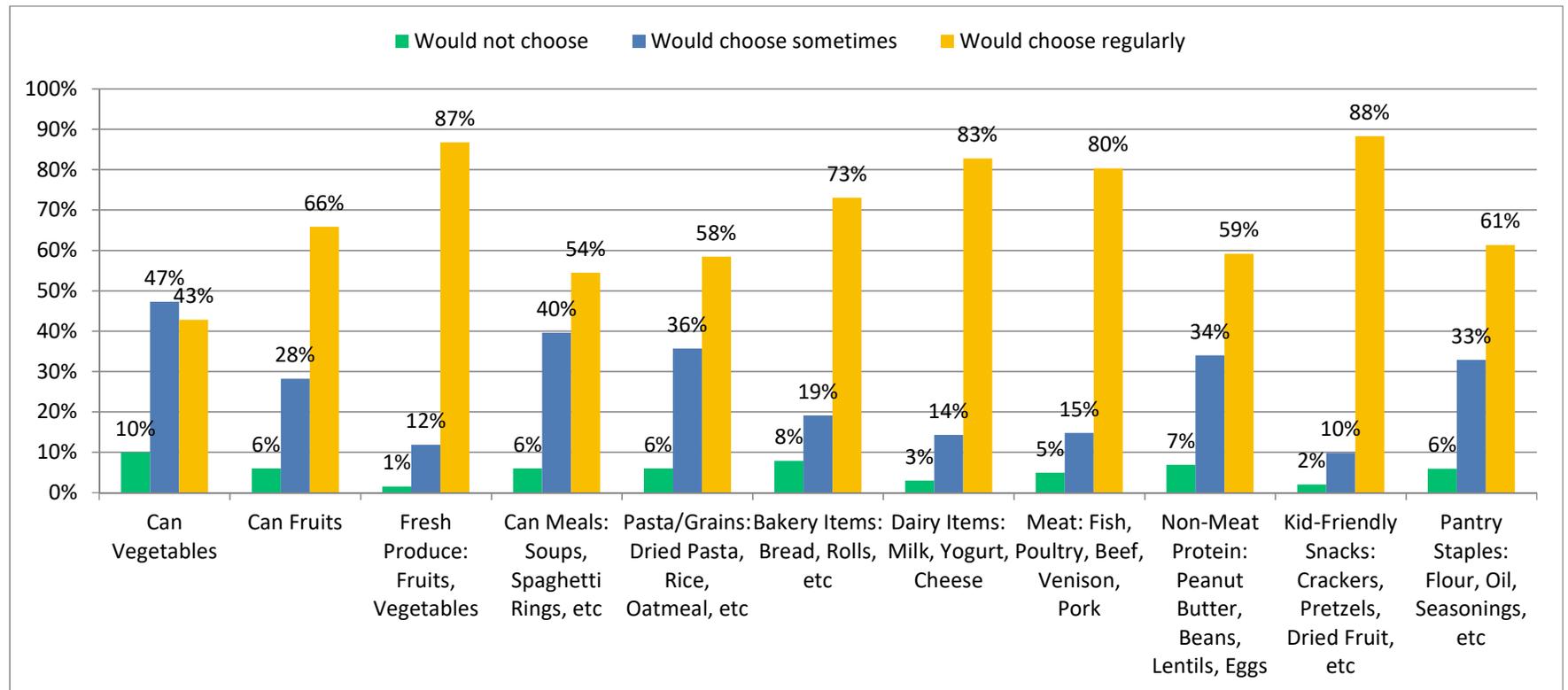
¹ Food is often donated because it is close or past the "Use By," "Best By" or "Quality Assurance" Date. This is the last date the product is likely to be at top flavor and quality, but it does not mean the food is unsafe after that date. "Sell By," "Pull" and "Expiration" Dates may also be exceeded if the donor provides an extension indicating how long it is still safe for. Part 6: Recommendations in this document, discusses the possible need for better outreach and education related to this issue.

- Districts with no MFP within their boundaries include: Arkport, Hammondsport, Watkins Glen, Trumansburg, Newfield, Candor, Groton, Union-Endicott, Chenango Forks, Chenango Valley & Vestal.
- A full list of schools, pantries, and mobile food pantries is available at: <https://arcg.is/0y0mjm>

Part 4: BackPack Family Food Preferences

The BackPack Program is completely shelf-stable, consisting of 1 protein (can tuna or can chicken or peanut butter), 1 box of mac & cheese, 1 can of soup, 1 can of fruit, 1 can of vegetable, and two grains – typically oatmeal packets.

Based on the items that the Food Bank has access to (both donated and purchased), families were asked what they would choose if given the option. The question did not specify what they would choose through the BackPack Program and was part of a survey about other distribution models.



Perishable Items

Based on this survey, **families were most interested in perishable/fresh items and snacks**. More than 80% would regularly choose:

- Kid-Friendly Snacks (88%)
- Fresh Produce (87%)
- Dairy (83%)
- Meat (80%)

The Food Bank can source many of these items readily – particularly fresh produce, but the existing Backpack Program distribution model cannot easily offer these types of items to participating families.

Shelf Stable Items

Current Backpack Program items categories were not as popular as fresh/perishable items. However, most categories would still be chosen regularly by more than 50% of respondents:

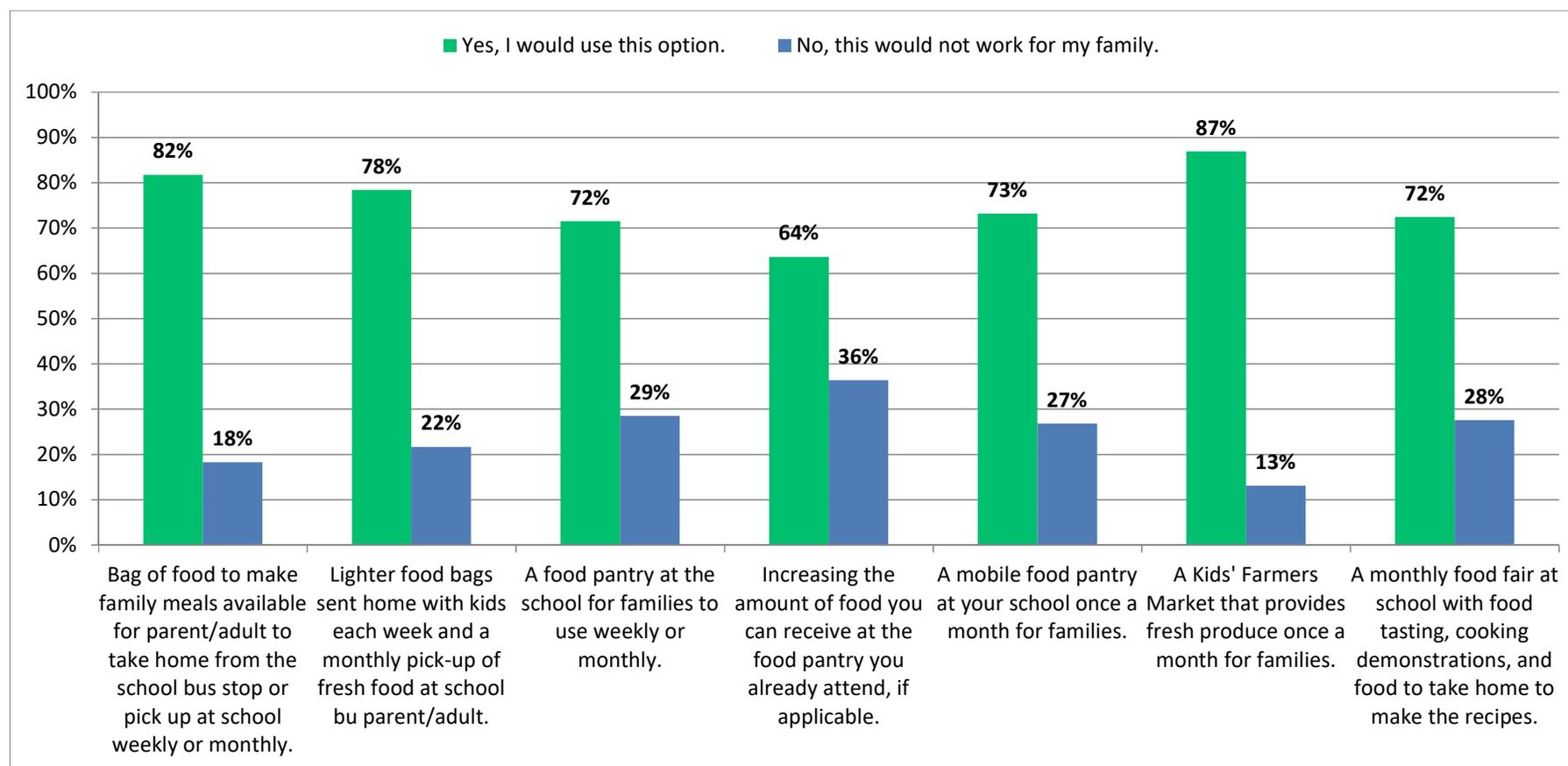
- Canned fruits (66%)
- Non-meat proteins (like Peanut Butter) (59%)
- Pasta/Grains (58%)
- Canned meals (like soups) (54%)

Canned Vegetables were the Backpack category least likely to be chosen regularly – only 43%, but 47% would choose sometimes.

Part 5: Alternative Models

Family Preferences

Several alternatives to the Backpack Program were shared with families and they were asked which of these models would or would not work for their family.



- Families were **most interested** in **KFM (87%)** and **Family bags to pick up at school or bus stop (82%)**.
- Families were **least interested** in **increasing amount they receive at a Food Pantry (64%)**. However, this **increases to 78%** when isolating responses from families who reported that they **do currently attend a Food Pantry (91)**.

Transportation Concerns

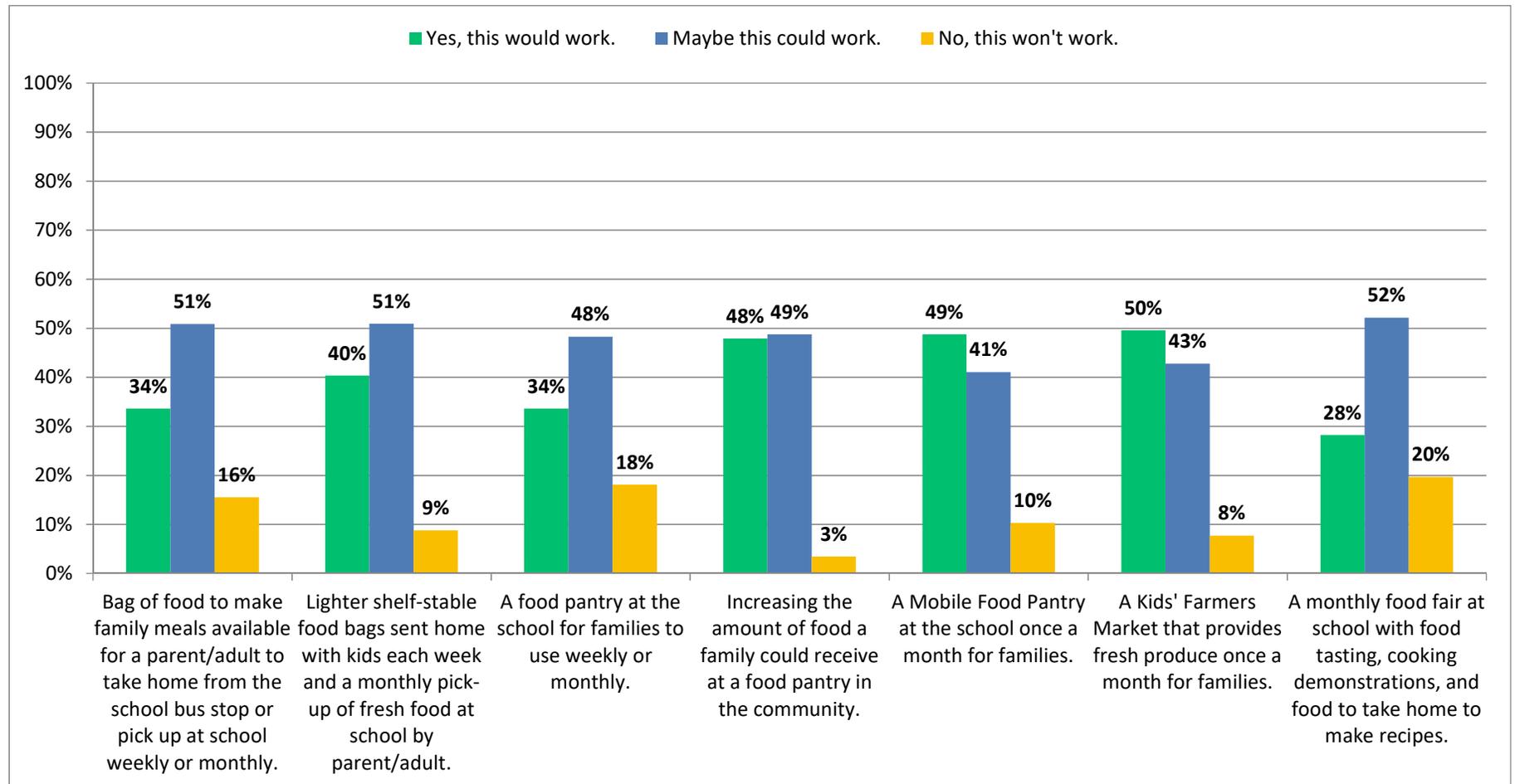
- Families seem very interested in alternatives to the BackPack Program, but for those who have transportation issues (~7%) – it's still the preferred delivery option.
 - All would be nice, but not everyone has transportation.
 - All sound great, but not everyone - like myself - has transportation to and from school with groceries
 - Only reason I say no is lack of transportation.
 - I would be interested in the school-based options if they were closer - like at the Union-Endicott High School.
 - I don't have transportation so it's hard for me to get to the westside, i live on the northside
 - Like these options, but need easier access/delivery options for parents with no vehicle
 - Not all of us can get to the school if you did these.
 - The only way I could use these options is if I had available transportation.
 - Due to lack of transportation, the BP program is really the best option.
 - No car, so none of these options would work.
 - All would be nice but not everyone has transportation.

Embarrassment

- A few families reported that there is embarrassment and stigma around getting food from the school in a way that is visible to others. Only three families specifically identified this as an issue in their comments.
 - Food pantries are nice, but I can definitely say that having things like that at the school could be embarrassing to parents and students. Woodrow Wilson Elem in Binghamton
 - Being a visible need is uncomfortable. Maine-Endwell MS
 - My grandchildren are embarrassed if I pick up food at the school. Maine-Endwell HS

School Staff Preferences

These alternatives were also shared with school staff and they were asked which of these models would work, might work or wouldn't work at their school.



- School staff were **most confident** in the possibility of **KFM (50%)**, **MFP (49%)** and **increasing amount of food** a family could get from a **community food pantry (48%)**.
- Staff were **least confident** in the possibility of a **monthly food fair (28%)**, followed by a **food pantry at the school (34%)** and **family bags to pick up at school or bus stop (34%)**.

Transportation Concerns

Lack of transportation was stated most frequently as an issue around these alternative models.

- Our families in Crossroads do not have vehicles to drive to Harpursville School.
- Our students come from 15 different school districts housed at WA Olmsted, so, unfortunately, they do not have the means to pick up food. Relying on the student through backpacks is the only option.
- Many of the families that utilize the BackPack Program have difficulty with finding transportation to the school, and some live in rural areas. I like the idea of fresh produce, which would add variety to the meals. As previously stated, a Mobile Food Pantry at the school would be a great idea, unsure of turnout, but maybe this could be advertised district wide as a resource.
- Being at TJW is difficult because some parents don't have transportation and we are not on a county bus route. Getting to TJ to pick up anything (even sick kids!) or to attend nighttime programs is a challenge we always face due to our location.
- The biggest barrier for our school is location. Many of our needy families do not have transportation, and we are not on the bus route. The cost of a taxi to our school is prohibitive.
- The school is not accessible for our families in need due to transportation issues, so sending the food directly with the students works well.
- Many of our students' families have no transportation to our school due to its location (no public transit). These are all wonderful ideas, but may not work with TJW.
- The biggest obstacle would be transportation as many families do not have cars.
- The only reason I said "Maybe" is because some of our families don't have transportation to get to our building, and we're miles away from their homes.
- Some of our parents do not have transportation and we're not on a bus route, so it's hard for some parents to come to school to get things.
- Some of these ideas might work at one of our other schools in the district. We are really far away from town and many don't have transportation to get here, plus we don't have any room to set up a pantry.
- It is difficult for families to come to our school because of the distance. not sure having food at school would work here. Perhaps at Diven would be best.

- Anytime a parent/guardian would need to come to school, to pick up food or for a demonstration, there may be issues with transportation.

Other Issues

- Concerns about **security**, **storage space** and the **school's role** in providing food also came up.
 - Why do these options need to be at the school? Fire station, church, park, town hall would be better.
 - A place for parents to come pick up larger food bags seems like a good idea. However, much planning and space must be considered. Worth a discussion.
 - Food would best be provided separate from schools. School is a place for learning where kids come to in some cases, escape their worries. It is not to put more responsibility on them. Also, the more we do for families, the more they expect. We are responsible to teach their children and provide a safe atmosphere where they can grow and learn instead of placing parent responsibilities on children.
 - Storage space is always an issue. Also, due to more strict regulations for school visitors having extra adult traffic in the building could be a safety issue.
 - Anything involving the buses would be difficult. I could see a food truck in the parking lot at dismissal. This way families who want to can pick out food.
 - These ideas sound good - not sure if getting the volunteers to organize suggestions would happen. Difficult to get parents to pick up items.
- Respondents also **may not have the info/power** to make these decisions.
 - I am open to more details on any of these ideas. However, some of them are not within my position to say yes or no to.

Part 6: Recommendations

Emergency Food Program Outreach & Education

- Work with Community Engagement to develop an easy to read Food Finder/211 print piece. Distribute to all BackPack families and schools with a community Food Pantry and/or Mobile Food Pantry location in the district catchment area.
- Consider how to best educate communities about best by/use by dates and Emergency Food Program sourcing.

Emergency Food Program Capacity & Accessibility

- Inventory Food Pantry & Mobile Food Pantry locations with evening hours, weekend hours and/or delivery options. Determine opportunities for expansion of these services.
- Assess Mobile Food Pantry strategy and ensure locations/hours are in alignment.
- Update Agency Capacity Study (Horn Research and LL work) metrics.
- Work toward integrating Pantry Trak data and Mobile Food Pantry/Food Pantry client interviews to help us better understand how services are working – identify bright and weak spots.

Emergency Food Program & Youth Program Synergy

- Consider how Food Pantry, Mobile Food Pantry & Youth Programs can best align.
 - What schedules, locations & services are best for families with children?

Parent Advisory Group

- Follow up interviews/focus groups with parents who expressed interest in being part of a Parent Advisory during 2019-2020 school year to report what was learned from 2018-2019 assessment and dive deeper into areas of interest:
 - Better understand preferences around food categories. What could a better shelf-stable menu look like? What types of fresh produce? What types of kid friendly snacks? What's the problem with canned veggies – poor taste, inundated from other sources, nutrition concerns?
 - How best to get people the foods they want – perishables especially.
- Consider Speaker's Bureau/Action Research opportunities as next steps in key communities. Particularly around implementing Pilot Opportunities (below).

Transportation Opportunities

- Consider ways to better understand roadblocks and opportunities around transportation:
 - What can we learn from the Tioga Summer Lunch Box home delivery model?
 - How can we get more food, especially fresh food to families without relying on kids?
 - What transportation networks already exist and can be maximized - Meals on Wheels, EOP?
 - Is there a role for technology - similar to Food Delivery Apps? Volunteer drivers?
 - What role can schools (busses etc) play? What role can neighbors/community play? What conversations need to be had at the community level around – tap into County transportation groups?

Pilot Program Opportunities

- **Kids' Farmers Market** is the most popular of the options among both families and schools. The Food Bank should pilot a model in partnership with a school in 2020.
 - Currently working with Enfield Elementary in the Ithaca SD and two Cornell Masters in Public Health (MPH) students to design a Kids' Farmers Market program alongside the current Backpack and Farm to School Programs, as well as a monitoring and evaluation plan.
 - Consider opportunities to replicate in other schools.
- A **BackPack-type Model/Hybrid** may still be the best option for families with transportation issues. Determine 2020-2021 school year pilot opportunities for:
 - **Family Packs** designed for pick up or delivery by school bus (or other delivery mechanism)
 - **Teen Snack Packs** that focus on ready-to-eat foods. Focus on High Schools/homeless teen population.
- Based on findings of the Emergency Food Program Capacity & Accessibility update (above), consider opportunities for **School or Mobile School Food Pantries** to supplement communities with weak/underperforming Food Pantries & Mobile Food Pantries.
 - Currently working with Franklin Elementary and Binghamton High School in the Binghamton City School District to test a school food pantry model where the Food Bank covers the cost of donated foods and the school can purchase wholesale product.
 - Consider opportunities to replicate in other schools.

Strengthen BackPack Site Accountability

- Incorporate a grading system based on Roadrunner Food Bank's Model for each BackPack School District during the 2019-2020 School Year. Things to consider:
 - Completed monthly statistics
 - Inventory tracking and accounting for "missing" packs
 - Completed annual surveys
 - What else?
- Consider a competitive Request for Proposal application process for implementing new interventions beyond BackPack and continued funding of existing program.

Appendix A: Summary of Survey Responses by District

County	Both Stakeholder Groups	Parent Only	School Staff Only	None
Broome	Chenango Valley Harpursville Johnson City Union-Endicott Vestal	Binghamton City Main-Endwell Windsor	Chenango Forks Susquehanna Valley	Deposit Whitney Point
Chemung	Elmira City Horseheads		Elmira Heights Finn Academy	
Schuyler		Odessa-Montour	Watkins Glen	
Steuben	Avoca Bath Bradford Campbell-Savona Corning Prattsburgh	Campbell- Savona	Canisteo-Greenwood Jasper-Troupsburg	Hammondsport Hornell Wayland- Cohocton
Tioga	Candor Newark Valley Spencer-VanEtten Tioga	Waverly		Owego- Apalachin
Tompkins	Dryden Ithaca City Lansing	Groton Trumansburg		Newfield
Boces			TST Boces	GST Boces-Broad Horizons

Appendix B: 2018-2019 Backpack Program Evaluation



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2018-2019 Backpack Program Evaluation Instructions

The Food Bank of the Southern Tier has been partnering with schools to offer weekend food for kids and families through the Backpack Program since 2006. Each year we ask school partners to distribute surveys to participants, parents, coordinators and staff.



Based on the input we've received over all these years of survey data, we know that the extra food is needed and appreciated. We have also heard concerns – the bags are too heavy, they lack variety, and families tell us they need more fresh foods and less canned goods. Kids, especially as they get older, may feel embarrassed taking the bags.

Thanks to this input, the Food Bank is looking at how we can better serve families and kids.

The Backpack Program will remain the same for the 2019-2020 school year as we learn more about what each community needs and what strengths we can build on. Our goal is NOT to take away food or limit access to food pantries or other resources. We want to better understand what the food needs are in your community and how we can help meet them. In order to do this well, we want to collaborate with families, schools and other partners working in the community.

The annual survey process has also been identified as an area that needs to be updated – surveys have gotten too long and the process of completing is cumbersome for schools and families. For the 2018-2019 school year, we have eliminated the participant survey for kids, combined and simplified the survey for coordinators and school staff and refocused the parent survey to better identify what families need and share potential models that have worked in other communities.

Instructions:

Parent/Caregiver Evaluation Form

1. The evaluation is available through Survey Monkey at <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/9DHWFKN> and a PDF of the survey is included in this email.
2. We ask that a form be sent home with each child and that a system be in place for return to the Site Coordinator or families can choose to mail the form directly to the Food Bank.
3. Many schools and families are now connected through email or text systems. If possible, we would appreciate if you can send the above Survey Monkey link to parents electronically.

School Evaluation Form

The survey has been simplified and can be used by Site Coordinators, classroom teachers, nurses, social workers and anyone else at the school working with the program and interested in giving feedback.

1. We strongly encourage school staff to submit this evaluation through Survey Monkey at <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/YN6539B>
2. If online submission is not possible, a fillable PDF is included in this email.
 - a. You can print, distribute and collect paper copies to be mailed back to the Food Bank at 388 Upper Oakwood Ave, Elmira, NY 14903.
 - b. Or share by email with instruction to complete and email directly to Jennifer Bertron at the Food Bank of the Southern Tier - jennifer.bertron@foodbankst.org.

Please submit or mail by Friday, June 28th. Thank you for your help!

**2018-2019 BackPack Program
Parent/Caregiver Survey**

1. What school district does your child(ren) attend?

2. What school(s) do they attend?

3. On a scale of 1-5, where 1 is the worst and 5 is the best, how would you rate the following?

	1	2	3	4	5
The quality of the food	<input type="checkbox"/>				
The amount of food	<input type="checkbox"/>				
The variety of the food	<input type="checkbox"/>				
The program overall	<input type="checkbox"/>				

Please share any examples of how the program is working well and/or could be improved.

4. Do you currently get food at a food pantry?
 - Yes
 - No, there is not a pantry in my area.
 - No, there is a pantry in my area, but I do not go.
 - I'm not sure what a food pantry is or if there is one.

Please share any thoughts or comments about pantries in your area:

5. Do you currently get food at a mobile food pantry?
 - Yes
 - No, there is not a mobile food pantry in my area.
 - No, there is a mobile food pantry in my area, but I do not go.
 - I'm not sure what a mobile food pantry is or if there is one.

Please share any thoughts or comments about mobile food pantries in your area:

6. We want to know what foods your family wants. Please tell us what food items you would use if you had a choice:

	Would Not Choose	Would Choose Sometimes	Would Choose Regularly
Can Vegetables	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Can Fruits	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Fresh Produce: Fruits, Vegetables	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Can Meals: Soups, Spaghetti Rings, etc	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Pasta/Grains: Pasta, Rice, Oatmeal, etc	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Bakery Items: Bread, Rolls	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Dairy: Milk, Yogurt, Cheese	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Meat: Fish, Poultry, Beef, Venison, Pork	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Non-Meat Protein: Beans, Lentils, Peanut Butter, Eggs	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Kid-friendly Snacks: Crackers, Pretzels, Dried Fruit, etc	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Pantry Staples: Flour, Oil, Seasonings, etc	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Please share any other thoughts about what foods would be most helpful.

7. Do any of the following impact your household? Check any that apply.

- Unpaid medical bills
- Health problems
- Transportation costs
- Rent or mortgage
- Lack of transportation
- Utility bills
- Unemployment
- Low wages/not enough hours
- Cost of extracurricular activities for kids

Other (please specify):

8. Please tell us if you would be interested in any of these options for getting food:

	Yes, I would use this option	No, this would not work for my family
Bag of food to make family meals available for a parent/adult to take home from the school bus stop or pick up at school weekly or monthly.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Lighter food bags sent home with kids each week and a monthly pick-up of fresh food at school by parent/adult.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
A food pantry at the school for families to use weekly or monthly.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Increasing the amount of food you can receive at the food pantry you already attend, if applicable	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
A Mobile Food Pantry at your school once a month for families.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
A Kids' Farmers Market at your school that provides fresh fruits and vegetables once a month for families.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
A monthly food fair at school with food tasting, cooking demonstrations, and food to take home to make the recipes.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Please share any thoughts or comments about how we can best provide additional food to your family.

9. Are you interested in being part of a Parent Advisory group to help make improvements to the BackPack Program and improve food access in your school district? This could be through in-person meetings, by phone or through email.

- No
- Yes

If yes, please share your name and the best way to contact you.

Thank you for your time and input!
 If you have any questions or would like to discuss this survey,
 please contact Jennifer Bertron at the Food Bank of the Southern Tier
 607-796-6061 ext. 4056 or jennifer.bertron@foodbankst.org

2018-2019 BackPack Program School Survey

The Food Bank of the Southern Tier has been partnering with schools to offer weekend food for kids and families through the BackPack Program since 2006.

Based on annual surveys with stakeholders who participate in or are involved with the program, we know that this extra food is needed and appreciated. We have also heard concerns about the program – the bags are too heavy, they lack variety, and families tell us they need more fresh foods and less canned goods. Kids, especially as they get older, may feel embarrassed taking the bags.

Thanks to this input, the Food Bank is looking at how we can better serve families and kids in our community.

The BackPack Program will remain the same for the 2019-2020 school year as we learn more about what each community needs and what strengths we can build on. Our goal is NOT to take away food or limit access to food pantries or other resources. We want to better understand what the food needs are in your community and how we can help better meet them.

In order for us to do this well, we want to collaborate with families, schools and other partners in the community. The following survey is only 7 questions long and should take about 5 minutes to complete.

1. What school district do you work at?
2. What school are you at?
3. What is your position at the school?
4. On a scale of 1-5, where 1 is the worst and 5 is the best, how would you rate the following?

1 2 3 4 5 I don't know

The quality of the food in the BackPacks
The amount of food in the BackPacks
The variety of the food in the BackPacks
The BackPack Program overall for this year

Please share any examples of how the program is working well and/or could be improved.

5. Do you provide referrals to families about emergency food programs, like Food Pantries and Mobile Food Pantries, in your community?

Yes

No, giving referrals is not
part of my role. No, I'm not
aware of programs like this.

Please share any thoughts or comments about emergency food programs in your area.

6. The following are models that have worked at other schools. Please share which you think would be beneficial for families and could work at your school.

Yes, this would work. Maybe this could work. No, this won't work.

Bag of food to make family meals available for a parent/adult to take home from the school bus stop or pick up at school weekly or monthly.

Lighter shelf-stable food bags sent home with kids each week and a monthly pick-up of fresh food at school by parent/adult.

A food pantry at the school for families to use weekly or monthly.

Increasing the amount of food a family could receive at a food pantry in the community.

A Mobile Food Pantry at the school once a month for families.

A Kids' Farmers Market that provides fresh produce once a month for families.

A monthly food fair at school with food tasting, cooking demonstrations, and food to take home to make recipes.

Please share any thoughts or comments about any of these options or other ideas for providing families additional food.

7. Please share any stories, comments or quotes about the Backpack Program or the need families at your school have for supplemental food.

Thank you for your time and input!