



# How to Select Recipes for the Food Pantry

When you consider providing recipes to food pantry clients, use the following checklist to guide your decision.

## Are the recipes consistent with the Dietary Guidelines for Americans?

- Encourage eating fruits, vegetables, whole grains, skim or low-fat milk and lean meats.
- Use salt sparingly or designate “optional” if possible.
- Minimize the use of foods with low nutritional value and high in solid fat and/or added sugar such as whipped topping, chocolate syrup or cream cheese.
- Follow food safety guidelines. Recipes should not include unsafe practices, such as using uncooked eggs in the finished product or marinating meat at room temperature.

## Are the recipes appropriate for your clients?

- Ingredients should be familiar and readily available.
- The recipe should not specify brand names.
- Choose recipes that do not use expensive equipment or ingredients.
- Consider the cultural preferences of your clients.
- Consider client’s experience with food preparation.
- Choose recipes that are quick and easy. If possible, choose recipes with fewer than eight ingredients and can be prepared in less than 45 minutes.
- Pre-testing recipes is highly recommended to make sure the product is the quality you expect.

## Are the recipes written clearly?

- The ingredients are listed in the order they will be used.
- Measurements are spelled out rather than abbreviated (i.e. use tablespoon rather than Tbsp.)
- The recipe specifies sizes of cans.
- The method of preparation is described using short, simple, numbered steps. Pan sizes, temperature and baking time are specified.
- The recipe states expected yield in number and size of servings.
- The recipe includes Nutrition Facts.

Use recipes from public sources such as the U.S. Department of Agriculture or National Institutes of Health. **Get permission to reprint any recipes that are copyright protected.** State your source on the recipe.

### Examples of public sources for recipes:

<http://fyi.uwex.edu/foodsense>

<http://recipefinder.nal.usda.gov>

<http://www.kidsacookin.ksu.edu>

<http://www.fns.usda.gov/fdd/facts>

<http://recipes.extension.iastate.edu>

Adapted from: *How to Select and Use Recipes in Nutrition Education*, Wisconsin Nutrition Education Program, 2007.