

NEW MEMBER APPLICATION PACKET



Thank you for your interest in joining Feeding the Valley Food Bank in working to end hunger in west Georgia. Our programs are designed for serving the food requirements for the ill, needy and minor children. Feeding the Valley is a member of the Feeding America food bank network distributing more than 9 million pounds of food and groceries to partner agencies in our 13 Georgia counties and 1 Alabama county last year. In order to access food items through Feeding the Valley agencies must apply for and be approved for membership. **Organizations must be either an IRS designated 501(c)(3) entity or a qualified church.** The New Member Application Packet will explain what an organization must do in order to qualify as a Feeding the Valley agency. For more information on becoming an agency, please contact:

Agency Relations
Feeding the Valley
P.O. Box 8904
Columbus, Ga 31908
706-561-4755 ext. 109

Main Warehouse
6744 Flat Rock Road
Midland, Ga.

LaGrange Warehouse
118 Gordon Commercial Drive
LaGrange, Ga.

Cuthbert Warehouse
24 Calhoun Street
Cuthbert, Ga

Albany Warehouse
301 South Slappey Blvd.
Albany, Ga

GLOSSARY OF FOOD BANKING TERMS

Agency

A qualified church or nonprofit agency who partners with a food bank (e.g. Feeding the Valley Food Bank) to access product which it will in turn distribute to those in need through food pantries or meal programs. This term is used interchangeably with the term “partner agency”.

Branch

Warehouse location in addition to the food bank’s corporate headquarters. A branch serves the same function as the organizational headquarters in a more convenient location.

Client

Someone who visits an agency program (e.g. food pantry, soup kitchen, etc.) for food assistance.

Donor

Individual or organization who gives food, product, or funds to support the work of the food bank.

Feeding America

The national network of more than 200 food banks (formerly known as America’s Second Harvest). Feeding America food banks have operated in the U.S. for over 30 years. The headquarters of Feeding America is located in Chicago, IL.

Food Bank

Private, nonprofit distribution warehousing organization often affiliated with Feeding America, the national network of food banks. Food banks provide a central location for the receiving of donated food and distribution of food and grocery products to local nonprofits in their communities. (Note: There are some food banks that are not affiliated with the Feeding America network; and some food pantries also use the term “food bank” in their names although they do not fulfill the same function.)

Food Pantry

Community-based, nonprofit food assistance program most often found at churches, synagogues, ministries, and social service agencies. Food pantries are places where those without food receive a supply of food to take home and prepare. Pantries acquire a substantial portion of their food supply from food banks.

GNAP (Georgia Nutrition Assistance Program)

Federally funded program administered by the state to provide funds for food banks to purchase high nutrition food products for distribution to children and families with children. Funding approval comes from the state legislature annually. Agencies must sign a contract to participate in GNAP product distribution, and clients must meet income eligibility requirements. Not to be confused with SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program) which was formerly called the Food Stamp Program.

Meal Program

Agency program which provides meals to those in need; meals may be eaten on site, delivered or picked up by clients. Also referred to as congregate feeding program. Examples are soup kitchens, meals on wheels, or backpack programs.

Nonprofit Organizations

Refers to those legally constituted, non-governmental entities, incorporated under state law as charitable or not-for-profit corporations that have been set up to serve some public purpose and are tax-exempt according to the IRS. All Feeding America food banks are IRS-approved nonprofit agencies under 501(c)(3).

Product

Food and non-food grocery items distributed through a food bank.

Salvage

Food or non-food product pulled from retail shelves and/or donated through food drive, not received in whole case quantity.

Service Area

Each Feeding America certified food bank has an assigned service area. Feeding the Valley's service area is made up of 13 counties in west Georgia and 1 county in Alabama.

Shared Maintenance Fee

Refers to the fee that Feeding America affiliated food bank partner agencies pay per pound of product to help defray the costs of product storage, transportation, and distribution.

Shelter

Place that temporarily houses homeless people, usually overnight; meals are usually served. Some shelters are for families and others for individuals. Some have a limited time that a family or individual can stay, and others will let people stay for extended periods of time.

United States Department of Agriculture (USDA)

Federal executive department responsible for developing and executing federal government policy on farming, agriculture, forestry, and food.

The Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP)

Program through which federal food commodities are made available to state food banks. TEFAP is administered in Georgia through the Department of Education for USDA. Agencies must sign a contract to participate in TEFAP product distribution and clients must meet income eligibility requirements.

ADDITIONAL REQUIRED APPLICATION INFORMATION

Feeding the Valley New Member Application provides a checklist of membership requirements. Below are brief definitions of some of the items mentioned in the application.

Federal Employer Identification Number

Number issued by the IRS to organizations for tax purposes. Also known as the EIN. Feeding the Valley must have your organization's EIN so we can report the recipients of donated product to the IRS at the end of the year.

IRS 501(c)(3) Determination Letter

A document issued by the Internal Revenue Service to a nonprofit organization confirming its status as an organization exempt from paying federal income taxes and stating the type of exempt organization, for instance 501(c)(3) and the date of that exemption. Feeding the Valley can only distribute to nonprofits and qualified churches. If your agency is a 501(c)(3) organization, please include a copy of your determination letter with your application packet.

Church Qualification Documents

Documents necessary to a church to complete the Feeding the Valley application process if it is not a 501(c)(3) organization.

- These documents must be included:
 - **Church Qualifier Form**: Form which must be completed by the pastor of the church, stating that the agency meets at least 9 of the 14 characteristics of a church set forth by the IRS. Found on page 10 of the application.
 - **Church Qualifier Letter**: Letter written by the pastor on church letterhead following the template provide on page 11 of the application.
 - **Pastor's Ordination Certificate/Minister License**: Copy of the original document. A high-quality digital photograph or scan is acceptable as long as the print on the certificate is legible.

Agency Representatives and Officers

These representatives appointed by your organization or organizational officers are an agency's "shoppers" and may access product on behalf of the agency.

Basic Agreement

The contractual agreement between the agency and the food bank. (All boxes must be initialed by the pastor or the executive director of the program.)

Checklist for Membership

Please be sure to answer all questions to the best of your ability. Should a question not apply to your agency, simply fill in with “N/A.”

Once completed, please make a copy of this application for your records so that you are aware of all regulations and procedures required of you and Feeding the Valley.

If applying as a **Church**, we must have all of the following documentation in order to process your application:

- () Completed New Membership Application
- () Completed Basic Agreement (All boxes initialed, agreement signed)
- () **Must provide** church qualifier form (14 point) and letter from pastor (sample in packet)
- () **Must provide** copy of pastor’s Certificate of Ordination
- () Signature of Pastor/Director on all lines requiring a signature
- () All letters are typed on church letterhead
- () History of the organization

If applying as a **501(c)(3)**, we must have all of the following documentation in order to process your application:

- () Completed New Membership Application
- () Completed Basic Agreement (All boxes initialed, agreement signed)
- () Copy of either:
 - 501(c)(3) Tax Exempt verification form
 - Sponsorship letter (if not a church or 501(c)(3) organization)
- () Signature of Director on all lines requiring a signature
- () All letters are typed on agency letterhead
- () History of the organization

Upon completion of this application, please return to Feeding the Valley to schedule an appointment for both a pre-monitoring inspection and new member agency orientation. Feeding the Valley staff must perform this inspection of your facility and advise your agency representatives of our company policies prior to you attending the new member agency orientation.

All shoppers listed on this application must attend a new member agency orientation before shopping for the first time.

Feeding the Valley
New Member Agency Application

*Please provide accurate mailing address and email addresses.
For the entire application: If you are a church, the **Senior Pastor** needs to sign all signature lines. If you are a 501(c)(3) the Executive Director needs to sign all signature lines.*

Federal Employer Identification Number (EIN) _____

1. Name of Organization (i.e. "First Baptist Church") _____

Physical Address _____

City/State _____ Zip Code _____

Mailing Address _____

City/State _____ Zip Code _____

County _____ Phone Number (____) _____

Fax Number (____) _____ E-mail _____

2. Name of Feeding Program (i.e. "First Baptist Church"), ***IF DIFFERENT FROM ABOVE***

Name _____

Physical Address _____

City/State _____ Zip Code _____

Mailing Address _____

City/State _____ Zip Code _____

County _____ Phone Number (____) _____

Fax Number (____) _____ E-mail _____

3. Primary Contact

(Pastor or Executive Director)

Program Director

Name: _____

Name: _____

Email: _____

Email: _____

Phone: _____

Phone: _____

Cell: _____

Cell: _____

Physical Address of Food Distribution Site

Address: _____ **City:** _____ **State:** _____ **Zip:** _____

4. Persons authorized to pick-up products from Feeding the Valley Food Bank (Shoppers)

Name _____ Phone _____ Email _____

Name _____ Phone _____ Email _____

Name _____ Phone _____ Email _____

Name _____ Phone _____ Email _____

5. Type of Food Distribution Program(s)

(A) _____ Emergency Food Pantry

(F) _____ Buddy Pack Program

(B) _____ Residential Program

(G) _____ Rehabilitation Center

(C) _____ Soup Kitchen

(H) _____ Youth Center

(D) _____ Shelter

(I) _____ Other*

(E) _____ Senior Center

*If Other, please briefly explain how food received from Feeding the Valley will be used for your program:

6. Storage Capabilities

Please check the type of food storage equipment available at your site (All storage must be located at agency site).

Dry (Shelves/cabinets) () Refrigerator () Freezer ()

7. Program Information

Expected Agency Client Base:

1-25 clients () 26-50 clients () 51 – 100 clients () Over 100 clients ()

Do you currently have a regular program in operation? () Yes () No

Frequency of Operation:

Daily () Weekly () Bi-Weekly () Monthly () 60 days () 90 days ()

*Other: _____

Hours of Operation:

(Please specify if you only distribute one particular day of the month i.e. 1st Saturday, 2nd Wednesday)

	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Example					1 st & 3 rd 9 am to 12pm		
Food Pantry							
Feeding Sites							

Printed Name of Pastor/Executive Director

Signature of Pastor/Executive Director

___/___/___

Date

Monitoring Information Guidelines for New Agencies

1. Initial inspection monitoring of site(s):

This phase of the application process gives the Food Bank staff a first-hand look at the agency's program(s) and mode of operation. Site visits or monitors are a necessary process because they give the Food Bank an opportunity to meet agency representatives who will be responsible for the day to day operation of your feeding program as well as answer any service questions.

2. What does a monitor look for?

- The existence of all site(s) or program(s) listed on the application.
- Adequate and appropriate storage for food products received from the Food Bank (Dry storage space, refrigerators and freezers).
- The general cleanliness of the food preparation and storage areas.
- Existing record keeping procedures and/or systems.
- Evidence of pest control.

CHURCH QUALIFIER FORM

The Internal Revenue Service has set 14 (fourteen) criteria to determine whether an organization qualifies as a church. In accordance with this provision, Feeding the Valley Food Bank has established a policy that requires an organization, which operates as an independent, unincorporated church, to certify that their program **exhibits at least 9 of the 14 characteristics** from the criteria listed below. Please check the items below that apply to your church:

- _____ 1. A distinct legal existence
- _____ 2. A recognized creed and form of worship
- _____ 3. A definite and distinct ecclesiastical government
- _____ 4. A formal code of doctrine and discipline
- _____ 5. A membership not associated with any other church or denomination
- _____ 6. A distinct religious history
- _____ 7. A complete organization of ordained ministers, ministering to their church
- _____ 8. Ordained ministers elected after completing prescribed course of study
- _____ 9. A literature of its own
- _____ 10. Established place of worship
- _____ 11. Regular congregations
- _____ 12. Regular religious services
- _____ 13. Sunday schools for the religious instruction of the young
- _____ 14. Schools for the preparation of its ministers

As the duly authorized officer of _____ (church name),
I certify that this organization meets the requirements indicated for identification as a church.

Printed Name of Pastor/Director

Signature of Pastor/Director

Date

PLEASE RETYPE THIS LETTER ON YOUR CHURCH'S LETTERHEAD. This letter is ONLY AN EXAMPLE, and is required for churches without 501(c)(3) certification. When retyping the letter, please fill in the items in parentheses with the appropriate information of your church. In order to be valid, this letter must be signed by the Pastor of the organization.

CHURCH QUALIFIER LETTER

(YOUR CHURCH NAME)
(Church Address)
(Any town, USA 99999)

(Date)
Feeding the Valley
P.O. Box 8904
Columbus, GA 31908

Attention: Agency Relations

I, **(Pastor's name)** am the Pastor of **(church's name)**, I am writing to affirm that **(church's name)** is, in fact, a church. Furthermore, **(church's name)** complies with the spirit of the 14 criteria employed by the Internal Revenue Service in defining a church.

(Church's name) is incorporated under the laws of the State of (Georgia/Alabama) as a nonprofit organization. Our Articles of Incorporation list our creed and form of worship. We are denominational and not affiliated with any other denomination. In addition, we have a distinct ecclesiastical form of government. We have met as a church for the past (____) years, conducting regular worship services and religious instruction at an established place of worship. We have various Sunday school classes and I, the head Pastor, am an ordained minister.

Sincerely,

(Pastor's signature)



Feeding the Valley Food Bank

Agency Membership

Agreement

For office – DO NOT COMPLETE THIS SECTION

Agency Name: _____ Date Returned Agreement _____

Feeding the Valley Basic Membership Agreement

Agency Name: _____

This Basic Membership Agreement must be completed, initialed, and signed by the Agency Executive Director and returned to the Food Bank annually no later than July 1.

Feeding the Valley Inc. (“The Food Bank”) and the Member Agency (“Agency”) agree to the following terms and conditions. The Food Bank agrees to provide donated food to the Agency. This form covers all Agency food assistance programs a year from the annual July 1st deadline. The Food Bank and the Agency acknowledge that each is freely and voluntarily entering into this Basic Membership Agreement. Either party may terminate the agreement at any time by telling the other party in writing of such a decision by its Executive Director/ Pastor/CEO.

Membership

1. Each Agency will pay an annual membership fee before accessing The Food Bank’s services. The fee is due annually by July 1, accompanied by a signed copy of this Basic Membership Agreement. The membership fee is \$50.00 for each emergency food program site (pantry, meal site, shelter). Membership fees are non-transferrable and non-refundable.
2. The Agency must be a private, non-profit, tax-exempt or religious organization. The Agency may not be a private foundation and its sponsored programs may not be private foundations. The Agency must be incorporated for serving the ill, needy or infants (minor children).

Note: Agencies that are not churches must actively maintain their 501(c)(3) status with the IRS. The IRS requires all non-church 501(c)(3) organizations to file an annual return or notice. Those that fail to do so for three consecutive years will have their 501(c)(3) status automatically revoked by the IRS. If status is revoked, your membership with The Food Bank will be suspended until evidence of IRS reinstatement is provided.

3. The Agency assumes programmatic, financial and legal responsibility for all sponsored programs’ obligations with The Food Bank.
4. The Agency will not engage in discrimination against any person on the grounds of race, color, citizenship, immigration status, religion, sex, national origin, ancestry, age, marital status, disability, sexual orientation, and gender identity, unfavorable discharge from the military or protected veteran status.
5. There must be an established need in your community for a new food program. The Food Bank reserves the right to review the concentration of agencies in your community. If a food program already exists in your neighborhood, then it maybe more beneficial to collaborate with them.

Initial _____

Program Requirements

A program site is defined as the physical location where an Agency stores and distributes Food Bank foods and products. Program memberships are non-transferable.

The Agency agrees to the following:

Receipt of Food

1. Each member program must place an order with The Food Bank at least once every 3 months. Programs that are unable to do so will be suspended or inactivated, and will not automatically receive annual membership renewal materials. Programs on suspension or inactive status must reapply for membership and will be considered according to regional needs determined by The Food Bank. Renewal of membership is not guaranteed for programs with lapsed membership.
2. Each Agency will contribute to the “shared maintenance” of The Food Bank. This Shared Maintenance Fee (SMF) is assessed for every pound of donated food received by member programs. The SMF is set by The Food Bank, but shall be no greater than 19 cents per pound. The SMF is subject to change and may be waived or reduced if deemed appropriate by The Food Bank.
3. Agencies will accept Food Bank food “as is” and will store it safely and securely at the program site. Food and products from The Food Bank must be locked when not in use by the feeding program.
4. The Food Bank reserves the right to limit the amount of product available to each program and to change the method and policies for food distribution to member programs. Such changes will not warrant a refund of membership fees.
5. The Agency will keep their receipts on file at the program site for three years plus the current fiscal year.
6. All products from The Food Bank must be transported directly to the program site, adhering to time and temperature food safety regulations in transit.
7. The Agency agrees to adhere to donor requirements about all donated product.
8. The Agency agrees to hold harmless the original donor, The Food Bank and Feeding America from any claims or obligations in regards to the Agency or the donated product.
9. The original donor, The Food Bank and Feeding America offer no express warranties in relation to the product.
10. Consistent with Federal regulation 7 CFR 205.1, anyone who receives TEFAP foods is prohibited from reselling those foods. Local agencies/eligible recipient agencies (ERAs) distributing CSFP and TEFAP foods should ensure that recipients are aware of and understand this prohibition. Anyone who receives food from The Food Bank is prohibited from reselling those food items. Adequate steps to safeguard foods from theft must be taken. Any person, who embezzles, willfully misapplies, steals, or obtains by fraud any donated foods (or funds, assets, or property deriving from such donated foods) will be subject to Federal criminal prosecution and other penalties. Any person who receives, conceals or retains such donated food or funds, assets, or property deriving from such foods, with the knowledge that they were embezzled, willfully misapplied, stolen or obtained by fraud, will also be subject to Federal criminal prosecution and other penalties.

Initial _____

Distribution of Food

1. Products from The Food Bank will only be used to feed people in need of food assistance in a manner related to the tax-exempt purpose of the organization.
2. Products from The Food Bank will be distributed within two months from time purchased at The Food Bank. Failure to do so will result in the program being suspended until the situation is rectified.
3. Products from The Food Bank will only be distributed to clients, not to staff or volunteers unless they go through the same qualifying and distribution process as other clients. Staff and/or volunteers who do qualify to access food will not be given preferential or priority treatment.
4. Any Agency caught selling food, which includes donation boxes in the distribution area will be subject to termination.
5. Religious materials and activities (such as worship, proselytization and/or religious instruction) must be separate from food distributions in time or location.
6. Food Bank products obtained for one food program site will not be shared with or redistributed to other program sites within the Agency, nor shared with other agencies or organizations.
7. Product acquired from the Food Bank for the purpose agreed upon in the Agency application, may not be used for any other programs.

For example, if the Agency applies for membership as a Food Pantry, the Agency may not use the food for other programs including, but not limited to, soup kitchens/meal programs, retreats, Sunday School, convents, Bible studies, Church fellowship functions, appreciation banquets, fundraisers or any other institutional uses.

Initial _____

Location, Communication and Hours of Operation

1. Emergency feeding programs (pantries, meal sites, and shelters) must be available to clients by telephone at the number on file with The Food Bank. The Food Bank will share this number with the public.
2. Emergency feeding programs (pantries, meal sites and shelters) must be open during the hours they have on file at The Food Bank and must inform The Food Bank in writing/email of any changes. Failure to do so will result in suspension until the situation is rectified.
3. Products from The Food Bank should only be distributed during posted hours at the location on file at The Food Bank. Emergencies should be handled on a one on one basis.
4. Emergency feeding programs (pantries and meal sites) must post their hours of operation on an external part of their program's site.
5. Emergency pantries or meal programs that change their location or days/hours of operation must have prior approval (written or electronic) from The Food Bank.
6. Programs that change the location of their food storage, preparation or distribution must first have that space inspected and approved by The Food Bank.

Initial _____

Primary Contacts and Authorized Shoppers

1. Agencies will name one individual at each program site as that program's representative and primary contact with The Food Bank.
2. The primary contact may designate and terminate authorized pick-up personnel and online ordering contacts and must do so in writing. The Food Bank reserves the right to approve or withdraw the privileges of any individual shopper.
3. All primary contacts will maintain and use a valid email account, as email is the primary form of communication with The Food Bank.

Initial _____

Reporting

Programs will submit accurate and timely statistical data about clients served and the distribution of Food Bank products.

1. Agencies must submit reports monthly. Reports are due on the fifth working day of the next month.
2. Agencies that have not submitted complete and accurate reports by the stated deadline will be suspended until their reports are brought up to date.

Initial _____

Site Monitoring

The Food Bank is required by Feeding America to conduct a site-monitoring visit of each program at least once every two years.

1. Agencies will participate in a scheduled site-monitoring visit at least once every two years. Food Bank staff will interview program staff, review program's records and receipts, inspect the program's food storage site to ensure food safety and will provide on-site food safety guidance.
2. Agencies that are not compliant with this requirement will be suspended until a site visit can be conducted.
3. The Agency's assigned primary contact with The Food Bank must be present and available during the site-monitoring visit.
4. Agencies will keep a copy of all Food Bank invoices and monthly reports on file for a period of three fiscal years plus the current fiscal year. Fiscal year is July 1 – June 30.

Initial _____

Food Safety

1. The Agency must have a system for securing donated product received and have adequate refrigeration/freezer space and dry storage at your distribution site to ensure the food safety.
2. Every Agency must have at least one staff member trained in basic food safety.
3. Agencies will adhere to The Food Bank's "FTV Food Safety Manual".
4. The Food Bank will notify Agencies of recalled products via email, signs in the warehouse or phone calls. Member programs will remove all recalled products from their inventory, dispose of recalled products, notify their customers of product recalls and maintain records of removal and disposal of recalled products.
5. Critical violations of food safety regulations may result in suspension or termination of the Agency's membership with The Food Bank.
6. The Agency must agree to meet any applicable local, state and federal health and safety requirements regarding the safe and proper handling of donated food.

Initial _____

Billing and Payment

1. Shared maintenance fees and other fees may be paid in person at the time of service or can be charged to the Agency's account.
2. The Food Bank will provide monthly statements for each Agency. Agency agrees to pay all charges within thirty days of the statement date and to keep its financial account with The Food Bank in good standing.
3. The Agency agrees to make all payments in the form of a check from the Agency or its program. The Food Bank cannot accept cash, money orders, personal checks or payments from third parties. The Food Bank will charge a \$30.00 fee for each returned check.
4. The Food Bank reserves the right to limit services, restrict access to certain foods, and/or suspend the membership of Agencies (all of their sponsored programs) with overdue accounts and to place overdue accounts into collection.
5. Termination of Agency membership does not eliminate outstanding financial accounts with The Food Bank.
6. The Food Bank reserves the right to levy the following fees for service or violation of agreement
 - Membership Fees: \$50.00 due annually by July 1
 - Returned Check Fee: \$30.00 per incident
 - Restocking Fee (for missed pick-up): \$40.00 per incident

Initial _____

Disaster Planning and Protecting Personal Information

1. To ensure the network's ability to provide adequate support during an unplanned disaster, all emergency feeding programs should have a written disaster plan on file.
2. In order to protect the privacy of the people visiting programs sites, programs will not provide personal identifying information to anyone outside of the emergency food network (Staff from The Food Bank, officials from USDA, GNAP and Feeding America) may inspect records at the Agency site.

Initial _____

Grievance Procedure

Agencies may voice concerns or appeal any decisions made by Food Bank personnel. Place your concerns in writing and send to the Director of Operations and/or President & CEO. Appeals will be reviewed and written notification will be sent to the Agency’s primary contact.

By signing below, the parties agree to the terms and conditions stated in this Basic Membership Agreement.

Signature, Executive Director or Pastor

Date

Feeding the Valley Representative

Date

**This signed agreement and the annual membership fee must
be returned by July 1**