



# Safe Food for the Hungry

A Newsletter for the Staff and Volunteers of Emergency Feeding Programs

Winter 2002

## Keep on Truckin' Food Finders!

### Food Finders Trucks Roll Along Hoosier Highways Delivering Food to 23 Counties

Food Finders Food Bank of Lafayette, Indiana is an independent food bank serving Lafayette and the surrounding areas.

Opened in 1981 in a two-car garage, Food Finders has moved into bigger and better accommodations as their organization has grown significantly. This growth has allowed them to further their mission to eliminate hunger throughout mid-north Indiana.

Now located in a new building on the south side of Lafayette, Food Finders has acquired the space and the resources to expand the amount of food they are distributing by 18% during this past year alone. Food Finders has met with great success due to their commitment to help the agencies in their area and their ready and willing transportation system.

Obtaining and maintaining a fleet of trucks to transport goods has been part of the secret to Food Finders' success and their new refrigerated box truck is a prized possession. Food Finders can even send a truck to a manufacturer to pick up a product on short notice. Quick



*Food Finders has increased their distribution by 18% during the past year. Trucking power has proved an effective key to success.*

response to offers of surplus goods, plus trucking power helps expand the variety and quantity of products for everyone.

Another way Food Finders insures the variety of foods available is through annual food drives, conducting about one hundred each year. Three major drives provide 100,000 pounds of the 160,000 pounds donated in the food drives and among donors this year, the School of Consumer and Family Science at Purdue University contributed 424 pounds of food to Food Finders through their United Way food drive. These food drives provide a needed boost to the supplies available at food banks because a great variety of

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*Opened in February 2000, Food Finders' beautiful new building at 50 Olympia Court, helps them to further their mission.*

#### On the Menu

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undamaged food products are donated.

When groceries arrive at Food Finders they are unloaded into the sorting area of the warehouse. The products arrive unsorted, packed in banana boxes.

Food Finders receives these products when a grocery store is unable to sell them due to a minor dent, torn label, change of product line, etc. Previously thrown out, these products are now donated to food banks across the state.

Volunteers organize the donated food into about 30 categories to facilitate easy selection by shoppers. They inspect each item to make sure that it is still safe to use. Sorters are very careful about following government regulations so that only wholesome food is distributed. These sorted items are then put into the warehouse under each category.

If coming into Lafayette to the food bank is difficult, food pantry volunteers can simply complete an order form requesting delivery of chosen products. This is feasible because of Food Finder's trucking power. The acquisition of a 24 foot refrigerated box truck has supported the delivery of more products to the outlying areas.

Whether shoppers come through the doors of Food Finders' new location off Concord Rd. in Lafayette, or complete an order form from a desktop in another county, a commitment to client choice provides fuel to this user-friendly system.

Obtaining food from Food Finders is very inexpensive: \$.10-.16 per pound, with this small fee covering some of the shipping cost. Food Finders receives most food through donations, but they also purchase some food to round out the variety available for distribution.

This food is offered to their agencies at cost, so it is less expensive than at a regular grocery store. As well, Food Finders receives and then distributes U.S. Department of



*Store-like shelving facilitates easy shopping at Food Finders' new facility.*

Agriculture commodity foods free of charge by participating in Indiana's Emergency Food Assistance Program.

At Food Finders, Rachel Chosnek is responsible for resource development. When interviewed, Chosnek was pleased to show their new 23,700 square foot warehouse with ample freezer and refrigeration units that is operated in compliance with state and local food safety and OSHA regulations for the protection of workers, donors, and food recipients.

According to Chosnek, Food Finders distributed 2,105,395 pounds of food to Indiana residents during the past year – amounting to over 1.6 million meals for those in need. Continuing to further their mission to eliminate hunger in the region, Food Finders Food Bank has eased the burden of 180 social service agencies working to help the needy in our state.

Hats off to all those donors, staff, and volunteers who make the mission a success.

## **Food Bank License Plates Revived**

*October's IFNN UPDATE informed us of the following:*

If you live in Indiana and drive a car, you can maintain a rolling billboard that benefits hungry Hoosiers...keep hunger in the public's eye...and sport a classy license plate, too! Beginning in January 2002, the Indiana Food Bank License Plate will be available in BMV branches across the state. Proceeds will be

allocated to the food bank serving the county in which each plate is purchased...so your dollars stay near home to help your family and neighbors. Have questions? Call Debbie Wilson at 1-800-944-9166 x117.



# You're Invited to Visit Our Website!

<http://www.cfs.purdue.edu/safefood/sfhungry.html>

We've updated our website! One of the exciting new features is our map of Indiana with links to each county's emergency feeding organizations. This is a new way of accessing our online directory of food assistance organizations.

This directory was previously published as a paper booklet and distributed throughout the state. This year we updated the directory's database as thoroughly as we possibly could, and now we are designing ways to keep it as current as possible.

**If you have an update for us, please send us an e-mail: [gipsonm@cfs.purdue.edu](mailto:gipsonm@cfs.purdue.edu), write a note and send it in the U.S. Mail, or contact us by phone: (765) 494-8186.**

Our goal is to keep this online directory up-to-date, providing reference information about emergency food.

### Ready-to-Go Resource Materials

When attending an educational conference recently, participants were offered handouts about food safety from our website. User-friendly and ready to go resource materials are available to print and reproduce for your educational needs. Just go to:

<http://www.cfs.purdue.edu/safefood/sfhungry.html>

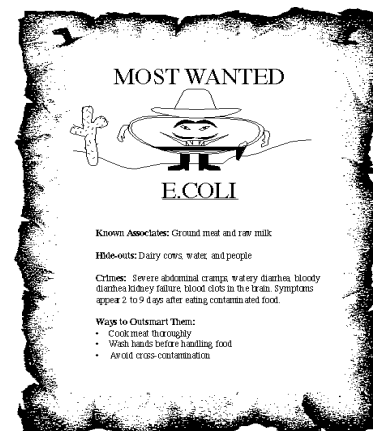
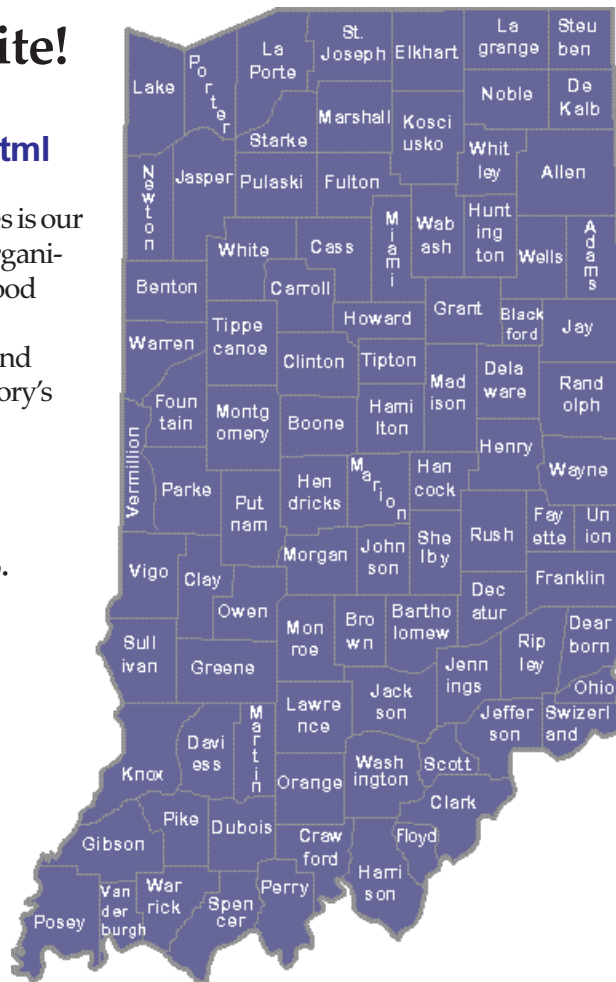
and start clicking around!!!

Many nutritional and food safety issues are addressed and appealing educational posters for you to download and print out are available on various pages of our website.

Videotapes are available for purchase on a variety of subjects (some include Ken McKan the Food Safety Man!) Just take a look at our archives section to place an order. If you haven't already heard about Ken McKan, "The Food Safety Man," it's time you did! He uses humor and fun to teach folks about important food safety issues.

Our Food Safety Reference page has numerous posters you can print out and use, like the one at the right, featuring the dangers of Ecoli.

Visit our site and discover how it can help you to more fully serve your clientele.



Purdue University  
Cooperative Extension Service  
School of Consumer & Family Sciences

### PUZZLE ANSWER

The S.T.R.E.T.C.H. materials are available for your downloading at our Safe Food for the Hungry website. Here's the explanation you've been searching for:  
Safety Training Resources and Education to Combat Hunger

# Cooking With Salmon

*Here are some recipes for that endless surplus of potatoes! Some include salmon, another food item in large supply.*

*Whether or not your organization has loads of canned, fresh, or frozen salmon, hopefully you'll enjoy these recipes!*



As coordinator of the East Central Indiana Food Bank Lois Rockhill brought in a chef to do a "Day of Fish" with volunteers from food pantries and staff from Purdue University Cooperative Extension offices.

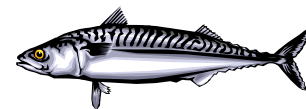
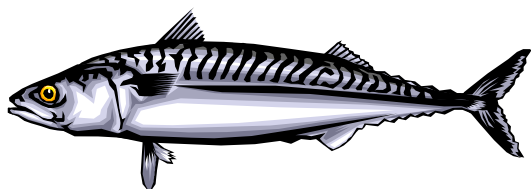
As a part of the Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program, this educational workshop was offered to publicize the availability of salmon as well as to demonstrate how best to use it.

Among other lessons gleaned from the "Day of Fish" session, the following tips were noted:

- Salmon is one food product that should not be overcooked. The fish should be cooked until it is 145° F. for 15 seconds.
- After the fish is fully cooked, separate the skin from the flesh with a fork or knife.
- A lemon wedge is always a nice addition to any piece of fish.

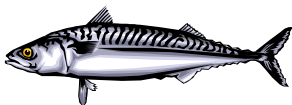


Linda Echelbarger and Vicki Shafer, Family Nutrition Advisors, conduct "Day of Fish" ...experiential learning in Madison County.



### Mini Idaho Potato and Salmon Pancakes

Yield: 26 mini pancakes



**Ingredients:**

- 2 cups Instant Mashed Potatoes, prepared according to package directions and cooled
- 1 egg
- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- Additional oil for frying
- ½ cup finely chopped shallots or onions
- 1 stalk celery, finely chopped (1/2 cup pieces)
- 1 carrot, peeled and shredded (1/2 cup shreds)
- 6½ ounce can boneless, skinless salmon, drained, or 4 ounces smoked salmon, chopped, or 4 ounces cooked salmon, flaked
- Salt and pepper

**Directions:**

1. In medium mixing bowl, stir egg into mashed potatoes; set aside.
2. In a medium skillet over medium heat, sauté shallots in 1 teaspoon olive oil for 2 minutes, or until shallots begin to brown. Add celery and cook another minute. Remove from heat and add vegetables to potato mixture. Add carrots and salmon to potatoes. Season to taste; chill.
3. When thoroughly chilled, form small patties – pressing mixture together using 2 tablespoons of bread crumbs.
4. Heat 2 tablespoons olive oil in large, heavy skillet over medium-high heat. When oil is hot (not smoking), cook patties in several batches, 3 – 4 minutes, or until well browned on each side.
5. Serve with plain yogurt or sour cream and chopped green onions (or scallions).

*Printed with permission from Idaho Potato Commission*

### RumbleDethumps

Yield: 8 servings

**Ingredients:**

- 4 ounce grated cheese
- 1 ounce butter
- 2 cups mashed potatoes
- 2 cups cooked cabbage
- Salt and pepper to taste

**Directions:**

1. Preheat oven to 350° F.
2. In a bowl, mix potatoes, cabbage, butter, salt and pepper. Add half of the grated cheese.
3. Grease a baking dish and spoon mixture into dish. Smooth top.
4. Sprinkle the remaining cheese over the top of the mixture.
5. Bake till the cheese on top is melted and bubbly.

*Recipe source: Old Scottish favorite from our friend and former newsletter editor, Isobel Miller*

### Potato Salmon Bisque

This microwave recipe for Potato Salmon Bisque is a velvety soup that's low in fat and high in flavor.

Yield: 4 servings



**Ingredients:**

- 1 (7 ½ -ounce) can salmon, drained and flaked
- 1 (14 ½ -ounce) can chicken broth, undiluted
- 1 ½ cups skim milk
- 3 green onions, chopped
- 2 tablespoons green or red pepper
- 1 teaspoon grated lemon rind or 1 tablespoon lemon juice
- Dash pepper
- ½ cup instant mashed potato granules

**Directions:**

1. Combine salmon, chicken broth, skim milk, green onions, green pepper, lemon rind and pepper in a deep 3-quart microwave-safe casserole dish; cover with plastic wrap.
2. Microwave at HIGH for 5 to 6 minutes, or until thoroughly heated.
3. Stir in instant potatoes.
4. Cover and microwave at HIGH for 1 to 2 minutes, or until heated.
5. Stir well, serve immediately.

*Printed with permission from the Idaho Potato Commission*

# Starting a Food Pantry

*Angie Boss, minister of the First Church of Friends in Anderson, gave the following address when attending the Second Harvest Annual Food Bank Meeting in October 2001.*



In 1999, Anderson First Friends Church won a church growth grant from our denomination. The money was to be used for a demographic study of about 15 thousand people in a five-mile radius, which encompasses Edgewood, and a good portion of Anderson. The intent was to determine perceived needs of the surrounding community, and to see what church programs we could offer to meet those needs.

The church was thinking in terms of childcare, divorce recovery programs, grief and loss programs, and so on. Instead, the results shocked us. Across all age groups, from young families with single parents in their teens or their twenties, to seniors in their eighties, the most urgent need, the most pressing concern in daily living was having enough food. While there were pockets of poverty within the five-mile radius, there were also lots of families living in lower middle class homes, who worried at least once a month about having enough food to feed their children. The board sat, stunned. We didn't know how to address hunger.

Give us any other type of program and we could patch one together, but feed people? We were out of our league. We agreed to come back in a few weeks and decide what to make of the report. As we opened the next meeting, a member said, "I can't live with the thought of having children go to bed hungry two miles from here. We have to do something." We didn't know what, but we knew enough to say we had no clue what to do. And so we joined the local Second Harvest Food Bank.

The people at the Second Harvest walked us through the process of opening a pantry when we had no idea of how or where to begin. Their assistance made the difference between just operating a food pantry and doing it with excellence. We opened our doors in March of 1999 and had 13 people the first month. Discouraged, we wondered if we misinterpreted the data. We sent fliers to every public school within ten miles. Last Monday night, we had 97 families – about 400 people come through in an hour and a half.

When we first began, our concept of what a food pantry should look like was outdated. We pictured making up bags

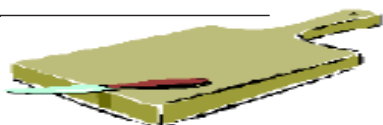
of healthy foods of what people should eat, regardless of their needs or likes. We were surprised by the numbers that indicate half of the food in those prepared bags is given or thrown away. The client choice model seemed like a radical concept, but it was the one that offered the most dignity and respect to the guests who passed through our doors. None of us would be satisfied if the grocery store offered no options and treated us as small children not capable of deciding what our families needed. We have become convinced since then that no one knows better than the guest what they already have in the cupboards at home or what their family will or won't eat.

We do not require our guests to provide proof of income or need to receive food. We only ask that they provide picture identification. Our guests range from six weeks old to their eighties. Many of our families will have to wait two weeks or more before they can get to the grocery store. Under the United Way funding grant, guests can come as often as they need. We are open one night a week from 6:00 – 7:30 p.m. Having an evening pantry allows the working poor, those who are underemployed, to receive assistance. Generally, guests are allowed to take as much as they need of an item, unless it is in very short supply.

We try to operate the pantry in a fluid manner, being open to change it as needed. In a recent survey, guests indicated that they would like help with their children while they are shopping. We have responded with a teenager who volunteers to watch the children. The pantry has benefited greatly from FEMA funding, USDA commodities and the United Way grant.

With those resources, we are able to do significantly more than we could on our own. Two years later, our food pantry has been through some changes, but remains at its core, dedicated to preserving dignity, offering assistance, and easing the struggle one family at a time.

There is much that our food pantry does not accomplish. It doesn't offer job training or technical skills. But when a member of the community stole from the church, we've asked the judge to let her serve her sentence volunteering in our pantry. It doesn't offer enough food to live on, but it subsidizes food dollars stretched thin in a weakening economy. It makes the difference between a child going to school hungry and one going fed, and ready to learn. The pantry isn't open many hours, but it helped a grandmother not have to shoplift to feed her six grandchildren. It doesn't offer very glamorous work, but it offers children, teenagers, and adults an opportunity to serve someplace greater than their own needs. At its core, giving away food, changes lives. And I'm thankful to be a part of it.



### Cutting Board Etiquette

How many cutting boards do you have in your kitchen? While some cooks enjoy using separate cutting boards for different types of food and preparation, one is enough if you use it right and if you have the right kind!

Cleaning cutting boards properly is essential; all those little grooves your knife left behind can provide a home for bacteria.

Whether wood or plastic, your cutting board needs to be cleaned carefully to be safe – it can turn into a life and death situation!

Here’s what the US Food and Drug Administration’s Center for Food Safety and Applied Nutrition suggests:

**1. Choose a good surface.** Select a board that can be cleaned easily, that is smooth, durable, and nonabsorbent. Plastic is less porous than wood, making it less likely to harbor bacteria, and easier to clean.

**2. Wash your board.** Wash your cutting board with hot water, soap, and even a scrub brush, to remove food and dirt particles.

**3. Sanitize your board.** After washing it, sanitize your board in the dishwasher or by rinsing it in a diluted chlorine bleach solution of 1 tablespoon bleach to 1 gallon water. You can keep such a solution handy in a spray bottle near the sink.

**Remember: Always clean and sanitize your board after using it for raw meat, poultry, and seafood and before using it for ready-to-eat foods.**

### Indiana’s own Pam Altmeyer quoted in New York Times

In the wake of the events of Sept. 11<sup>th</sup>, charities around the country have not received as many donations as usual. While the nation’s economy is struggling, and unemployment has increased, resources available at social service agencies have been duly challenged. Pam Altmeyer, President of Gleaners Food Bank of Indiana, was quoted in the New York Times Oct. 14, as she graciously described the predicament:

*“I understand everyone giving to New York, out of grief, and love and a sense of powerlessness. Even I sent money to New York. But at the same time, the layoffs here have really increased the need for food. I know hunger and housing and all the day-to-day needs are never going to look the same as this horrible thing purposefully inflicted on innocent people. But I just don’t know how small charities are going to survive.”*

Now, more than ever, we all need to help one another. That is what social capital is all about. Robert Putnam defines social capital as: “The features of social organization such as networks, norms and trust that increase a community’s productive potential.” By helping our neighbors we build connections that in turn help us to build our communities into stronger and healthier places to live. If not now, when?

*Look for more about social capital in our next issue of Safe Food for the Hungry!*

### Puzzle This: S.T.R.E.T.C.H. Materials

At our website, we offer these materials. What in the world does S.T.R.E.T.C.H. stand for? The clues are here—fill in the blanks to make this acronym meaningful!

*The answer to the question: look at our website archives!*

<http://www.cfs.purdue.edu/safefood/sfhungry.html>

Or turn to page 3 of this newsletter for the missing letters of the words:

S \_ \_ \_ \_ t \_ \_ T \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ g  
 R \_ \_ \_ \_ u \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ and  
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## Safe Food For the Hungry

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### Food Safety Questions?

Educators at your local Purdue University Extension Office can answer your food safety questions. To contact your local extension office, call: **1-888-EXT-INFO**



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Winter 2002

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