

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Blessing Box 101

Across the nation, thousands of residents and families are feeling the strain as the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits have been halted. As Kansas families continue to face this issue, local generosity remains a lifeline.

Across Kansas, community-driven efforts like Blessing Boxes have become a vital source of support. These small, yet meaningful efforts operate on a simple principle: take what you need, leave what you can. Blessing boxes offer immediate access to self-serve foods and essential household items, with no paperwork, no wait, and no questions asked.

As these boxes become more relied upon, food safety becomes more important than ever. Unsafe or temperature-sensitive foods can quickly spoil, especially when stored outdoors. If the blessing box is located outside a building and outdoor temperatures are extremely cold or hot, many foods can be compromised, which could reduce their quality and make them unsafe.

DONATE:

- Canned soups and sauces · Canned Meats · Peanut butter, nuts, and alternatives
- Almond Butter, Sunflower Seed Butter, Coconut Butter, etc.
- Beans, canned, especially garbanzo, chili, & baked beans · Rice, white or brown · Pasta
- Cereals/instant oatmeal packets · Crackers/granola bars · Canned diced tomatoes, tomato sauce, & tomato paste · Canned Fruits, Canned Vegetables · Condiments (ketchup, mustard, salad dressing, mayo)
- Jelly, pancake syrup · Baking and Pancake Mixes · Microwave meals/to-go meals and shelf-stable meal kits · Individual serving size items · Infant formula, dry infant cereal
- Package protein drinks · Dried fruit

DO NOT DONATE:

- Open or partially used items · Rusty or unlabeled cans · Homemade or home-canned foods
- Glass because of breakage · Food in torn cardboard boxes · Food in torn plastic packaging
 - Perishable items - NO raw meats, eggs, dairy, fresh breads · Alcoholic beverages
- Dented, bent, leaking, or bulging cans · Any packaged food past its “best by,” “use by,” or “sell by” date · Any packaged food with damaged tamper-resistant seals · Re-packaged foods
 - No fresh fruits or vegetables

For more information, visit <https://www.ksre.k-state.edu/foodsafety/topics/handling.html> or contact Katherine Pinto, Nutrition, Food Safety, and Health Agent, at kdpinto@ksu.edu or 620-724-8233.

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