

Food-Buying Clubs

Food-buying clubs, or food cooperatives, provide a great way to stretch food resources. These programs operate by bringing together several people in one community and cooperatively purchasing food. Because of the large volume of the purchase, the cooperative enjoys wholesale prices and the cost saving is passed along to the consumer. Typically, a "food share" purchased through a food buying club costs the members about 50% of what it would in a traditional retail market.

The food is generally passed out to members monthly at a mass distribution site, such as a community center or service organization. There are usually no income or eligibility guidelines for participation.

Spread the word about this innovative way to purchase food and save money. Food buying clubs are often willing to provide people with flyers about their



program that you can distribute in your community.

If you work at an organization, you may want to consider sponsoring a site for a food-buying club in your area. The Regional Food Bank is looking for potential sponsors of food buying clubs in Delhi, the North Country, Delaware, Putnam, Sullivan and Orange counties. If you are not able to start a site, consider working with Hunger Action to identify a potential sponsor in your area.

Here are some organizations that administer food-buying clubs in New York:

- 1) **Self Help and Resource Exchange** (SHARE) 718-518-1513 (sites located in the Bronx, Manhattan, Brooklyn, Staten Island, Queens, Albany, Delaware, Dutchess, Nassau, Orange, Rockland, Suffolk, Sullivan, Ulster, Washington, Westchester);
- 2) **Extra Helpings** c/o the Regional Food Bank of Northeastern New York 518-786-3691 (sites located in Albany, Clinton, Columbia, Delaware, Dutchess, Essex, Franklin, Fulton, Greene, Hamilton, Montgomery, Otsego, Rensselaer, Rockland, Saratoga, Schenectady, Schoharie, Ulster, Warren, Washington); and
- 3) **Food Sense** c/o Food Bank of Central New York 315-437-1899 (sites in Broome, Cayuga, Chenango, Cortland, Herkimer, Jefferson, Lewis, Madison, Oneida, Onondaga, Ontario, Oswego, St Lawrence and Wayne Counties).