Guidelines for Repacking Food At Food Pantries

Food pantries are NOT allowed to repackage any foods except raw produce.

- Repackaging increases the risk of contamination of food.
- If you do receive foods in large packages, make these foods available to the large families that you serve. (No food service size items will be distributed to food pantries by the Food Bank of Central New York)
- <u>NOTE:</u> USDA does NOT allow repackaging of any government commodities distributed through The Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP).

Allowed to Repackage	NOT Allowed to Repackage
All raw produce: • Fresh greens (cabbage, lettuce, kale, spinach, etc.) • Fresh fruits (apples, oranges, bananas, berries, etc.) • Fresh vegetables (squash, peppers, tomatoes, celery, carrots, etc.) * See below for safe repacking techniques	• Dry Granular Foods (rice, beans, flour, sugar, salt, baking mixes) • Non-fat dry milk and mixes containing dry milk • Meats, poultry, or fish (fresh or frozen) • Margarine, butter, cheese • Canned foods (vegetables, fruit, chili) • Dry Cereal, crackers

When repacking raw produce, take these precautions to avoid contamination:

✓ Repackage foods in a clean, sanitary place. The best place to use is a kitchen in a church or agency that has a current food service permit from the local health department.

✓ Clean the work surface and then sanitize with a solution of two ounces of bleach to one gallon of cold water.

✓ Wear disposable gloves and hair restraints (a cap or bandanna is fine)

✓ Repack into new plastic bags that are intended for storing foods. **Do not** use recycled bags or bags intended for trash or recyclables.

✓ Label each bag with the name of the raw produce, the date it was repacked, and a recommendation to wash before use.

If you are interested in receiving a license for repackaging foods, contact your local NY State Department of Agriculture and Markets representative. Additional questions about repacking foods can be answered by the Food Bank Nutrition Resource Manager at (315) 437-1899 or 1-800-444-1562.