



# ALLERGY-FRIENDLY PANTRY INITIATIVE

Improving Access for Neighbors  
with Dietary Restrictions

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## THE NUTRITION ACCESS TEAM

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# NUTRITION ACCESS PROGRAM

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## WHO WE ARE

**The Nutrition Access Program aims to improve access to foods that align with our neighbors' preferences & nourish their physical, mental, & spiritual well-being.** We serve our neighbors through cooking classes, educational resources, community outreach, & agency partnerships.

# OUR NUTRITION PHILOSOPHY



People are not defined  
by their bodies.



Each person has the  
right to determine how  
they feel about their  
body & what they do  
with it.



Everybody has a right  
to access foods that  
nourish their bodies,  
minds, & spirits.



We respect our  
neighbors' bodies &  
serve them as they are.

Our Nutrition Philosophy has been inspired by [FoodShare's statement on body liberation & fat acceptance.](#)



**Neighborhood &  
Built  
Environment**

**Social &  
Community  
Context**

**Economic  
Stability**

**Education  
Access & Quality**

**Health Care  
Access & Quality**

**SOCIAL  
DETERMINANTS  
OF HEALTH**

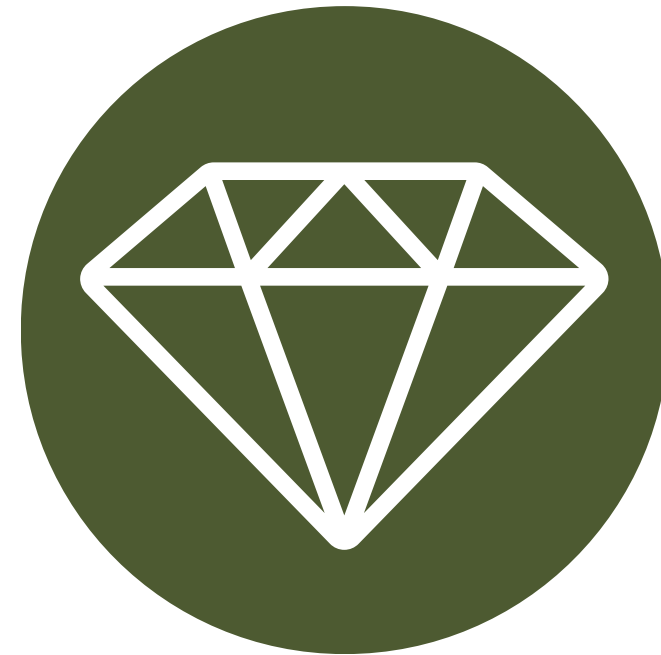
# OUR NUTRITION PHILOSOPHY



All foods fit, as long as they feel good in your body.



Food has no inherent moral value.



Food choice does not determine a person's value.



We avoid using terminology that stigmatizes & shames populations.

Our Nutrition Philosophy has been inspired by [FoodShare's statement on body liberation & fat acceptance.](#)

**DEVELOP  
& DISTRIBUTE**

food & nutrition education  
materials & services in the  
community

**CONSULT WITH  
& SUPPORT**

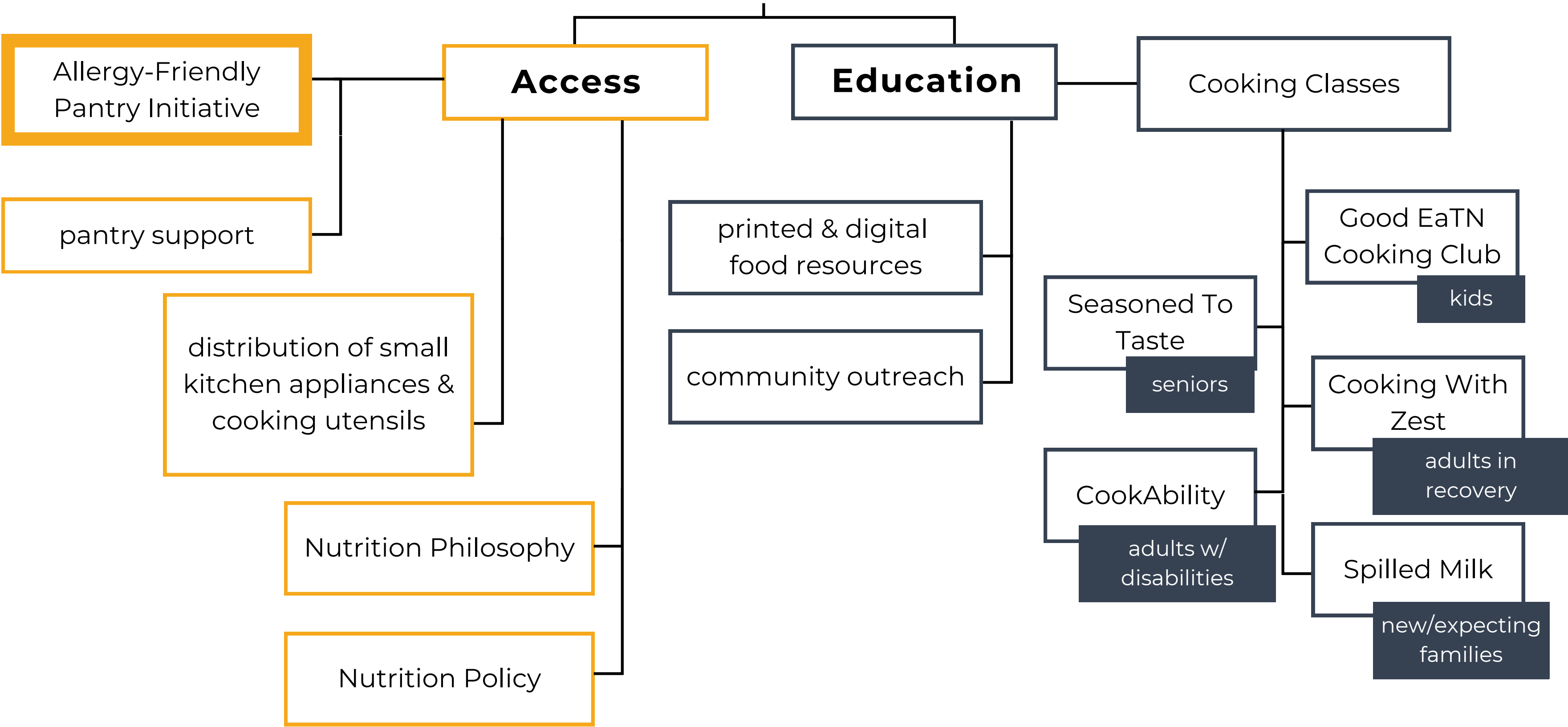
agency partners on  
building culturally-  
affirming, medically-  
appropriate (if applicable)  
food pantries

**PARTNER WITH  
COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS**

to break the cycle of food & nutrition insecurity

**WHAT  
WE  
DO**

# NUTRITION ACCESS PROGRAM



## ALLERGY-FRIENDLY PANTRY INITIATIVE (AFPI)

Second Harvest's Allergy-Friendly Pantry Initiative is a move to increase access to allergy-friendly alternatives for products commonly containing one or more of the Top 9 food allergens\*. We would like to see at least 1 food-allergy-friendly pantry in each county within our 18-county service area.

\*milk, eggs, wheat, peanuts, tree nuts, shellfish, fish, soy, sesame

# ALLERGY-FRIENDLY PANTRY INITIATIVE (AFPI)

## BECAUSE...

- dietary restrictions add stress.
- many staple foods aren't allergy-friendly.
- removing unsafe foods with no alternative isn't fair.
- a program like this is innovative.
- there's not a lot of existing data.
- lessons learned can be shared.



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# DIETARY RESTRICTIONS

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## FOOD ALLERGY

- immune response
- allergic reaction can be life-threatening
- "Top 9" allergens, but can be allergic to any food



## FOOD INTOLERANCE

- digestive system
- uncomfortable, but not life-threatening
- lactose intolerance, gluten intolerance, etc.



## CELIAC DISEASE

- auto-immune
- uncomfortable & damages intestines
- gluten found in wheat, barley, rye, & sometimes oats



## ALPHA-GAL SYNDROME

- immune response
- allergic reaction delayed 2-8 hours
- red meat & other products from mammals

# TOP 9 FOOD ALLERGENS



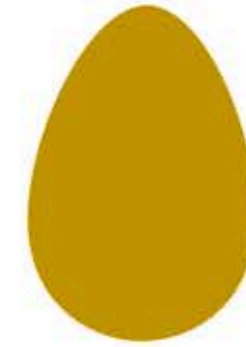
**Peanut**



**Tree nuts**



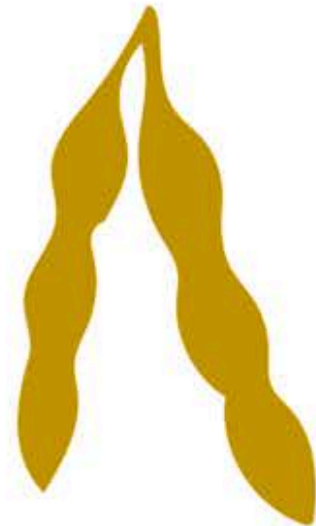
**Milk**



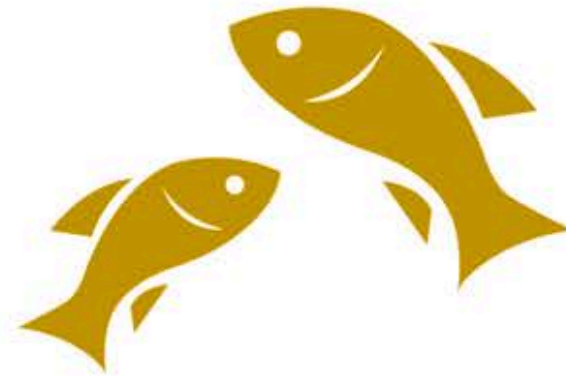
**Eggs**



**Wheat**



**Soy**



**Fish**



**Shellfish**  
(crustacean—  
crab, lobster, etc.)



**Sesame**

# FOOD LABELING LAWS

- Food Allergen Labeling & Consumer Protection Act (FALCPA) & FASTER Act require packaged foods containing Top 9 allergens to be labeled in plain language.
  - Manufacturers do NOT have to include voluntary “may contain” advisory labels.
- FDA rules say foods with less than 20ppm of gluten can be labeled “gluten-free.”
- Alpha-gal is not required to be labeled.
  - Proposed legislation would add alpha-gal to a list of “Top 10” allergens.

Common name in parentheses

“Contains” statement

**Nutrition Facts**

**Ingredients:** Enriched flour (wheat flour, malted barley, niacin, reduced iron, thiamin mononitrate, riboflavin, folic acid), sugar, partially hydrogenated cottonseed oil, high fructose corn syrup, whey (milk), eggs, vanilla, natural and artificial flavoring, salt, leavening (sodium acid pyrophosphate, monocalcium phosphate), lecithin (soy), mono- and diglycerides.

Any Cookie Company  
College Park, MD 20740

**Nutrition Facts**

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**Contains:** Wheat, Milk, Egg and Soy.

Any Cookie Company  
College Park, MD 20740

**INGREDIENTS:** SEMOLINA (WHEAT), DURUM FLOUR (WHEAT), NIACIN, FERROUS SULFATE (IRON), THIAMIN MONONITRATE, RIBOFLAVIN, FOLIC ACID.

**CONTAINS: WHEAT.**

**MANUFACTURED IN A FACILITY THAT USES EGGS.**

BET JUCE, ANNATTO EXTRACT, BETA-CAROTENE, AND TURMERIC OLEORESIN ADDED FOR COLOR, CITRIC ACID, DISODIUM PHOSPHATE, LACTIC ACID).  
**CONTAINS MILK AND WHEAT MAY CONTAIN TRACES OF EGGS AND SOY.**



## QUICK STATS

**33 million Americans have food allergies, including 5.6 million children.**

**There was a 50% increase in food allergies among children between 1997-2011.**

**21% of children with food allergies live in households with low food security.**

**1 in 6 people with celiac disease experience food insecurity.**

**Special diets & allergen-free foods cost U.S. families \$1.7 billion annually.**

**Many people with dietary restrictions opt out of food assistance.**

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**ALLERGY-FRIENDLY**  
**PANTRY INITIATIVE**

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## ALLERGY-FRIENDLY PANTRY INITIATIVE (AFPI)

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# KEY PARTNERS



FARE



FOODiversity



Other Advocacy Orgs



UTK Baker School



SHFB

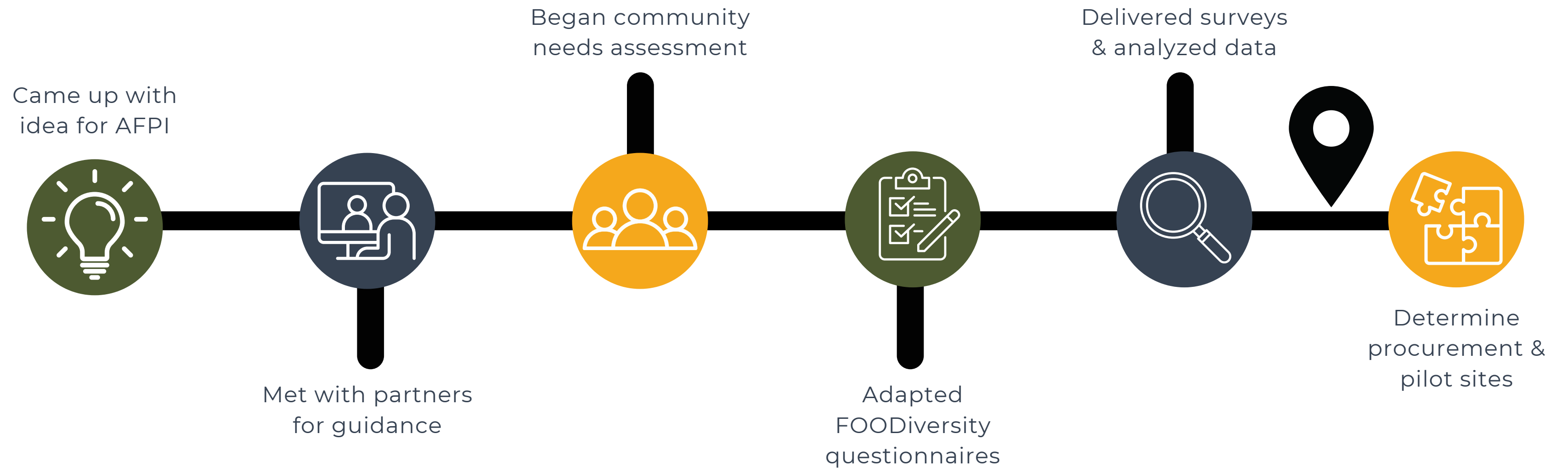


Neighbors



Partner Agencies

# THE ROAD SO FAR



**HAVE DIETARY RESTRICTIONS?**  
WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU!

Help us better serve our neighbors with  
**food allergies, food intolerances,  
celiac disease, & alpha-gal syndrome**

SCAN THE QR CODE  
TO TAKE OUR  
QUICK SURVEY

Responses are anonymous

To find food assistance, visit us at  
**SecondHarvestETN.org**

- AR shared the survey link with agencies via newsletter.
- Bethany visited pantries in-person, emailed, & called to increase responses.
- Neighbor survey flyers were printed & posts shared on social media.
- Only neighbors with dietary restrictions were eligible to take the survey.
  - Did not have to receive services.
- Facebook & Instagram posts were shared in relevant online groups.
- Flyers were distributed at pantries, a pediatric GI doctor's office, & during cooking classes.

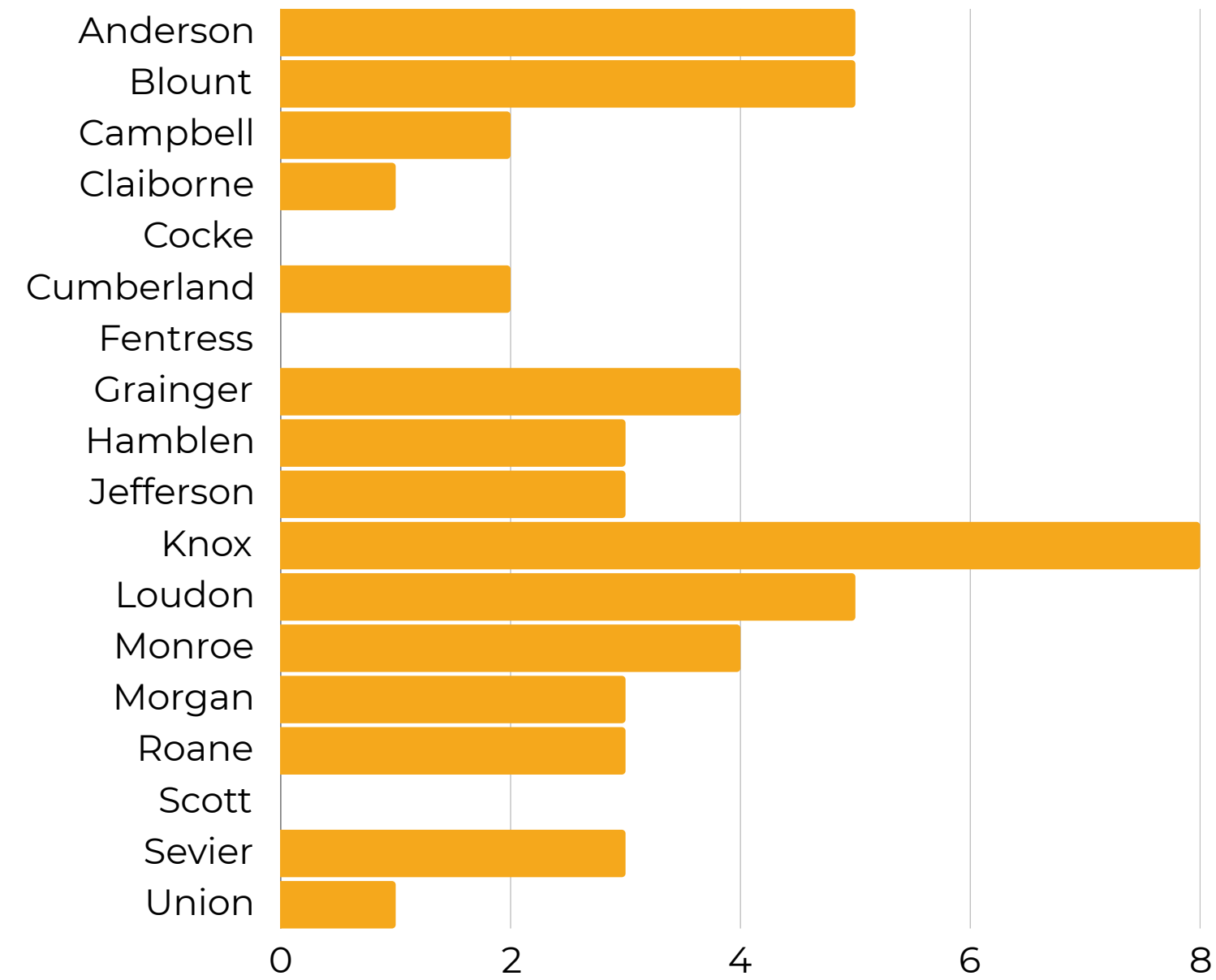
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# Survey Results

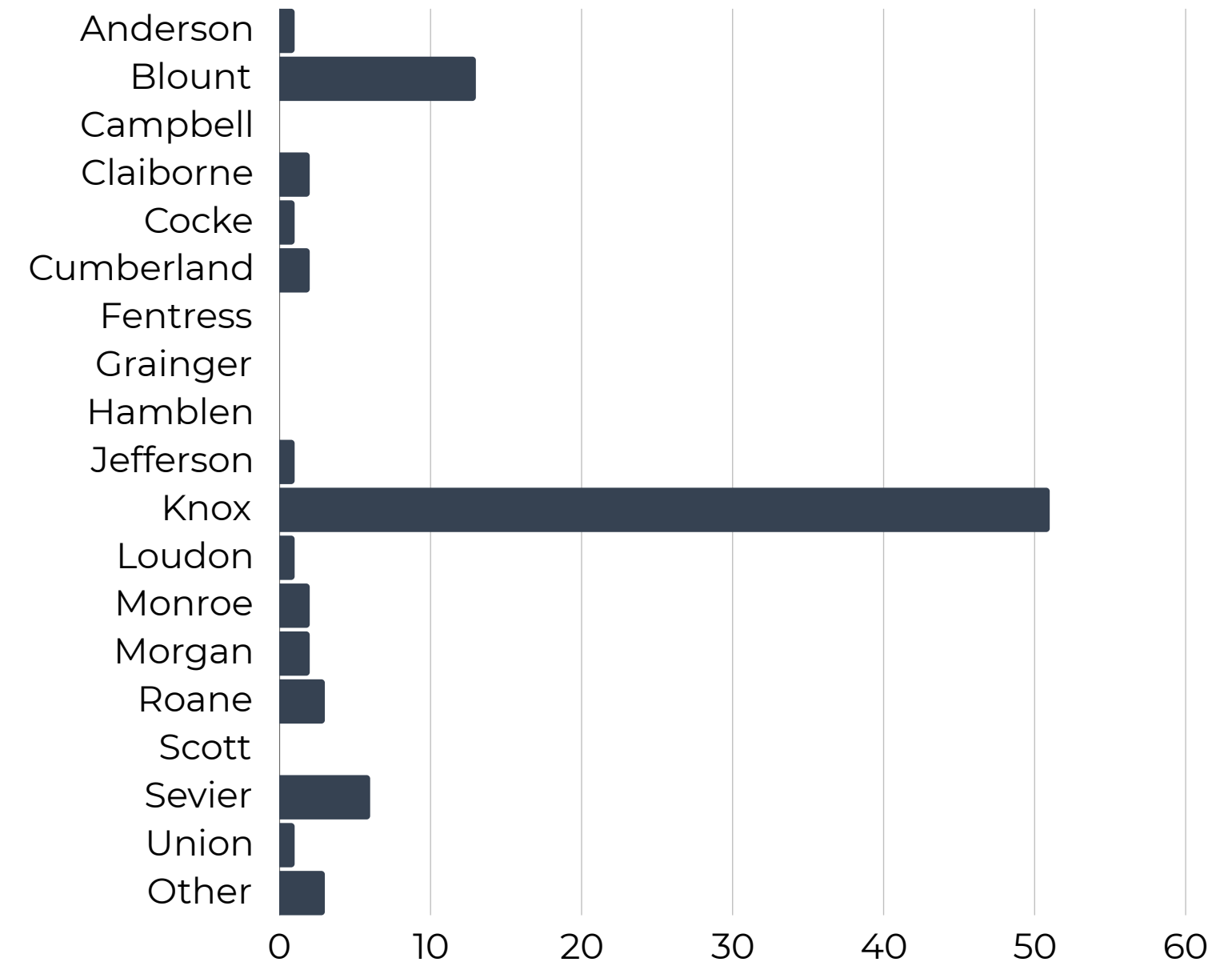
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# COUNTIES REPRESENTED

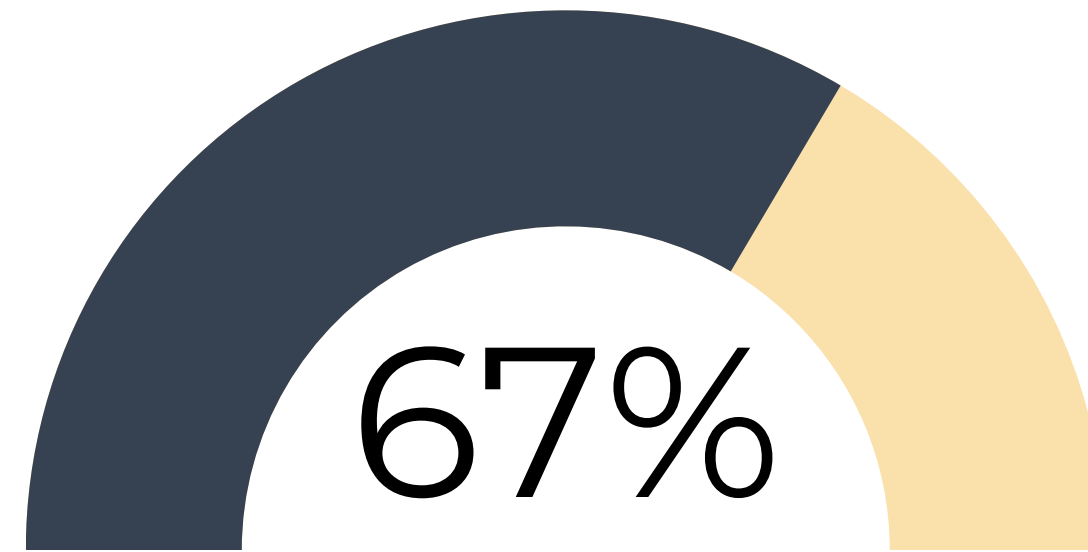
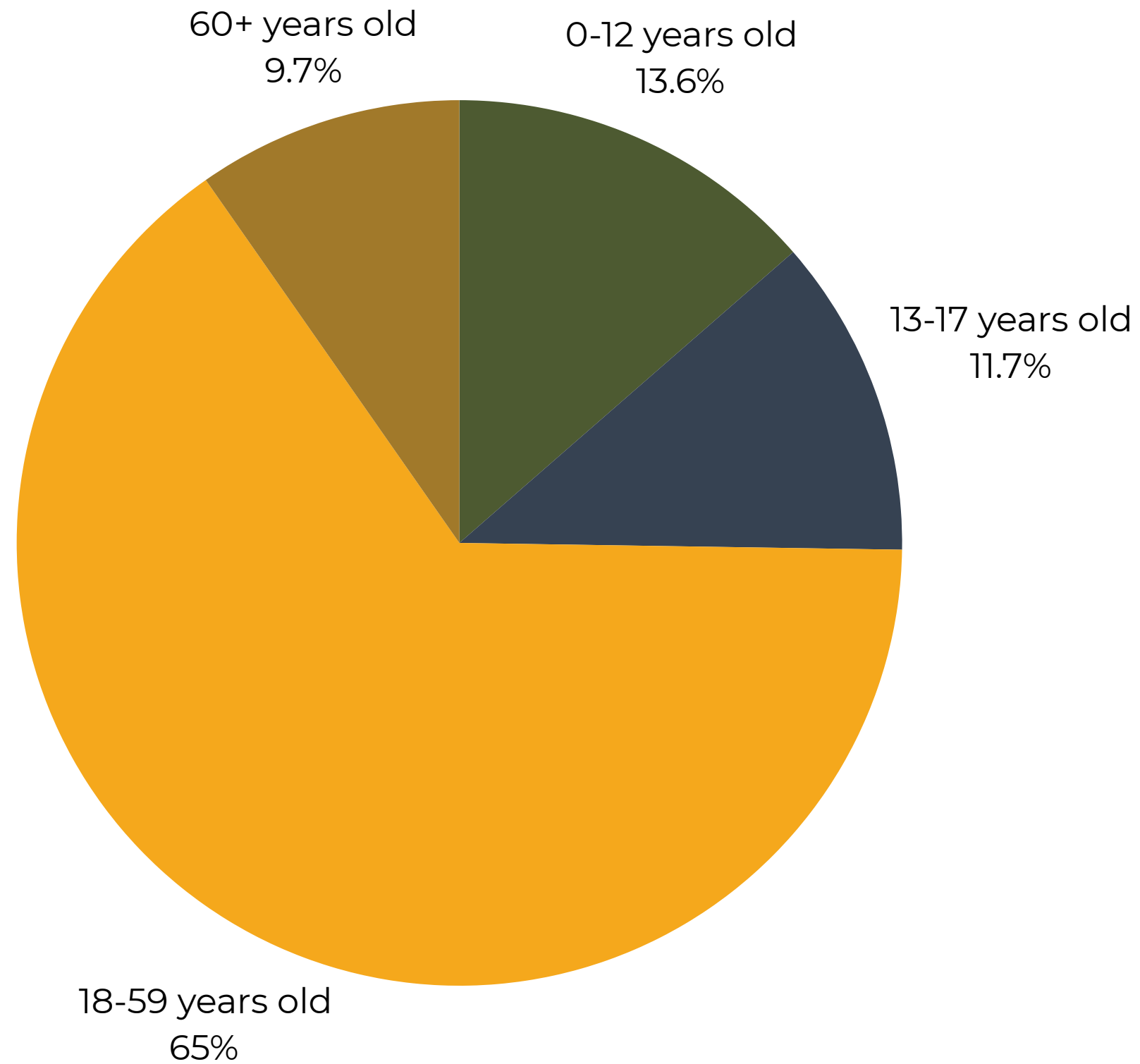
## 20 PARTNER PANTRIES



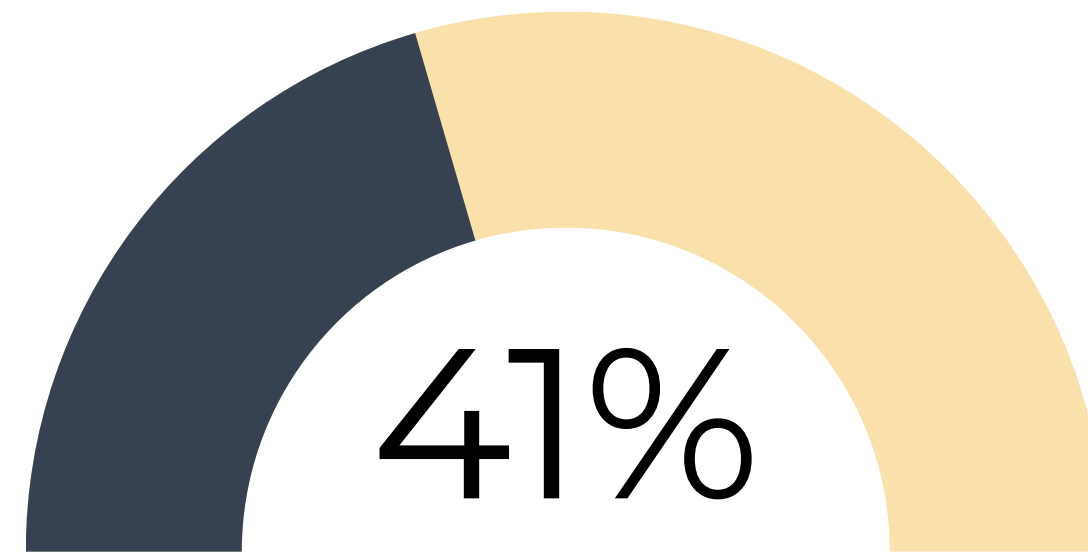
## 61 HOUSEHOLDS



# HOUSEHOLDS WITH DIETARY RESTRICTIONS



showed signs of low or very low food security.



visited a pantry in the last 12 months.

# NAVIGATING BARRIERS

## TOP 3 ISSUES:

**The cost of foods that meet dietary needs.**

**Community food providers don't stock foods that meet dietary needs.**

**Locating foods that meet dietary needs within grocery stores & community food providers.**

- **61%** of neighbors said they were troubled by the need to spend extra time preparing “safe” meals.
  - Label reading, grocery shopping, preparing additional meals, etc.
- **93%** of neighbors said they had moderate to very high confidence in their ability to tell if a food aligns with their or their household's dietary needs.

## PANTRY EXPERIENCE



of pantries offer full or partial client-choice.



of pantries regularly ask about dietary restrictions.



of pantries are unsure how many neighbors with dietary restrictions they serve.



of pantries visited by neighbors in the past year offered full or partial client-choice.



of neighbors who visited pantries said they had ever been asked about their dietary restrictions.

**Client-choice allows neighbors to pick foods that meet their needs, but only if those foods are available...**

# FOOD DISTRIBUTION

## MOST PANTRIES SAID...

- allergy-friendly products are not regularly donated or stocked (75%).
- the food distribution process is no different for neighbors who say they have dietary restrictions (65%).
- there is no additional training for staff or volunteers about how to assist neighbors who have dietary restrictions (55%).

**Unsafe foods are removed  
from pre-packed boxes.**

**OR**

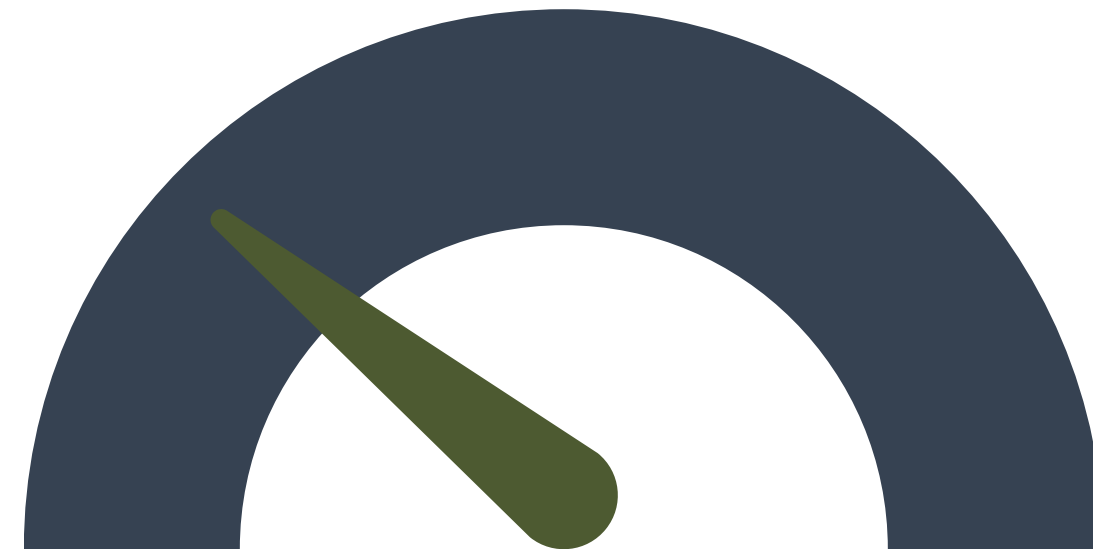
**Neighbors select safe foods  
on their own.**

## CONFIDENCE

**80%** of pantries answered that they were confident they could safely serve a neighbor with one of the Top 9 food allergies.

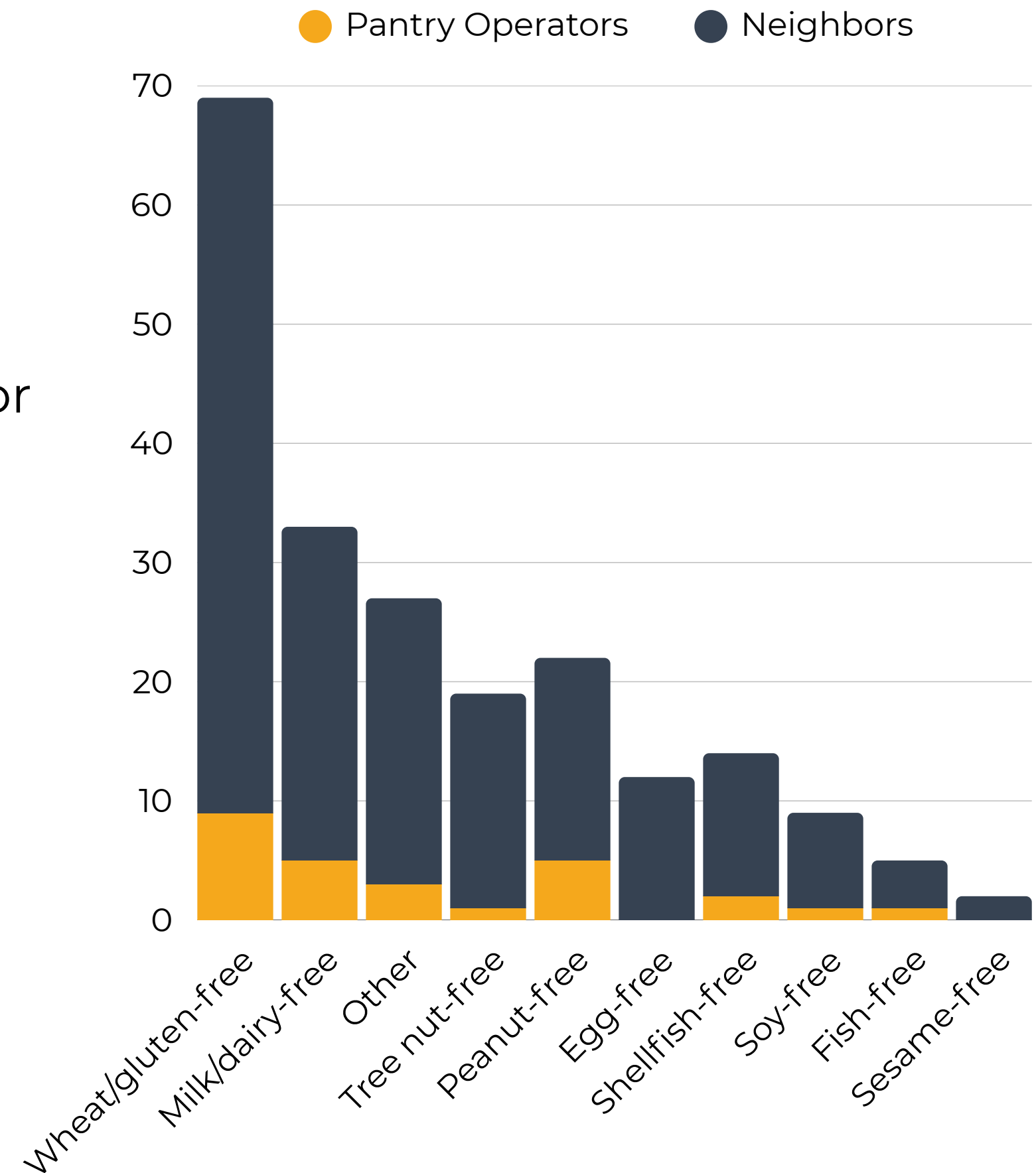


But only **24%** of neighbors said they were confident they would be able to find & receive enough safe foods from a community food provider.



# REQUESTED FOODS

- Most needed “free from” foods are **wheat/gluten-free**, followed by **dairy-free**.
  - Of pantries who receive requests, these are the most difficult to provide.
  - **55%** of pantries do not have a process for neighbors to request specific allergy-friendly foods.
- Many neighbors indicated they had more than one dietary restriction.
- Other responses include:
  - corn-free
  - beef/red meat/mammal product-free
  - mustard-free
  - onion-free
  - garlic-free



“

I stop[ped] being able to get food anywhere because they don't give for dietary [restrictions].

- surveyed neighbor

”

## KEY TAKEAWAYS

- **There is a need** for allergy-friendly food in our service area.
- **Keep client-choice**, but with allergy-friendly alternatives so neighbors don't get less.
- **Wheat/gluten-free, milk/dairy-free, & nut-free** substitutions are needed most.
- **Kid-friendly & multiple allergen “free from”** options are needed too.
- **Neighbor perception** is a barrier to access.
- **Streamlined processes** should be developed by SHFB-ETN, NAP, & partner agencies.

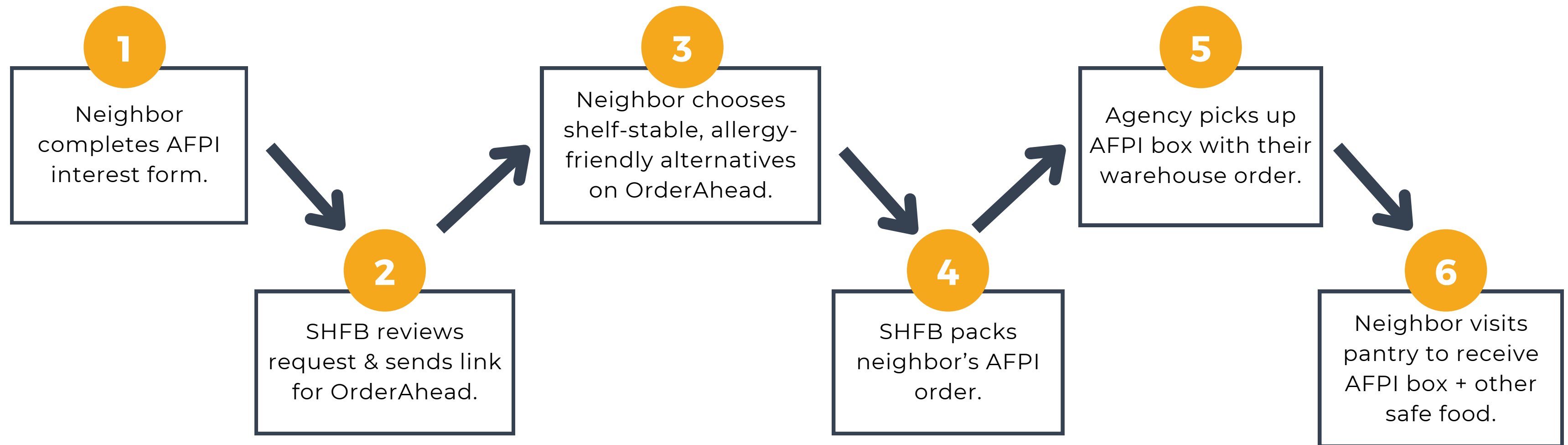
**10 pantries across 7 counties are interested  
in being AFPI pilot sites!**

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**How Will  
It Work?**

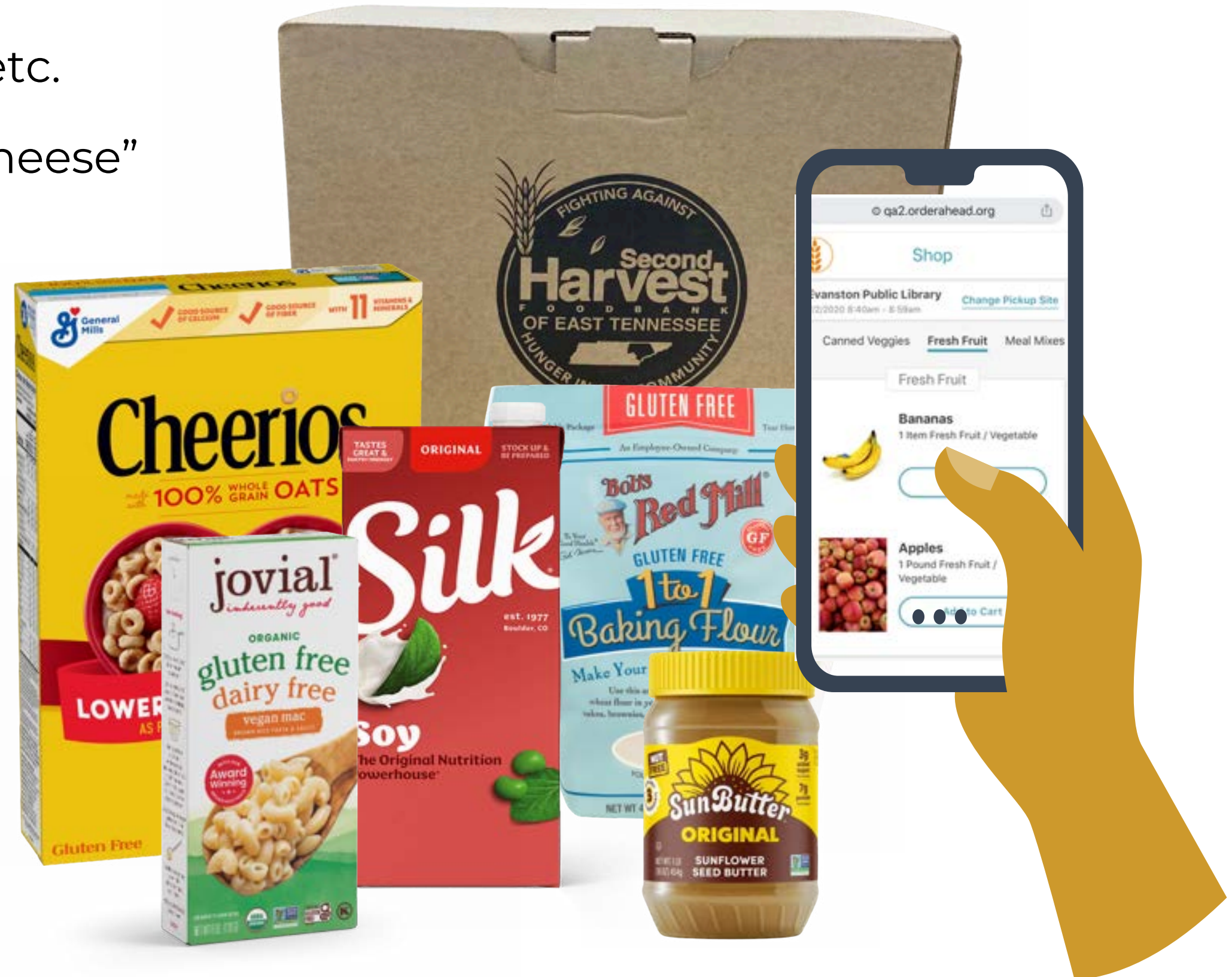
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# PROPOSED AFPI PILOT PROGRAM



# SHELF-STABLE SUBSTITUTIONS

- shelf-stable soy milk, almond milk, etc.
- gluten-free &/or dairy-free mac & “cheese”
- sunflower butter
- gluten-free pasta
- gluten-free crackers
- 1:1 gluten-free flour mix
- certified gluten-free oat cereal



# ADVANTAGES OF PILOT DESIGN

- Promotes client-choice & is equitable.
- Reserves allergy-friendly alternatives for neighbors with dietary restrictions.
- Utilizes primarily SHFB-ETN warehouse volunteers.
- Requires less training for pantry staff & volunteers.
- Supports financially responsible food procurement.
- Builds trust with impacted neighbors.
- Gives us a starting point before expanding.





Take the  
**pantry  
operator  
survey**



Express  
interest in  
being an AFPI  
**pilot site**



Host an  
allergy-  
friendly  
**food drive**

# ALLERGY-FRIENDLY FOOD DRIVE



## Suggested Food Allergy-Friendly Donations

- Sunflower butter
- Pasta made with gluten-free flour
- Gluten- & nut-free flours
- Shelf-stable dairy alternatives
- Allergy-friendly snacks
- Gluten-free cereals
- Any packaged products free from the top 9 food allergens

@secondharvestetn



# QUESTIONS



## **Courtney Liles**

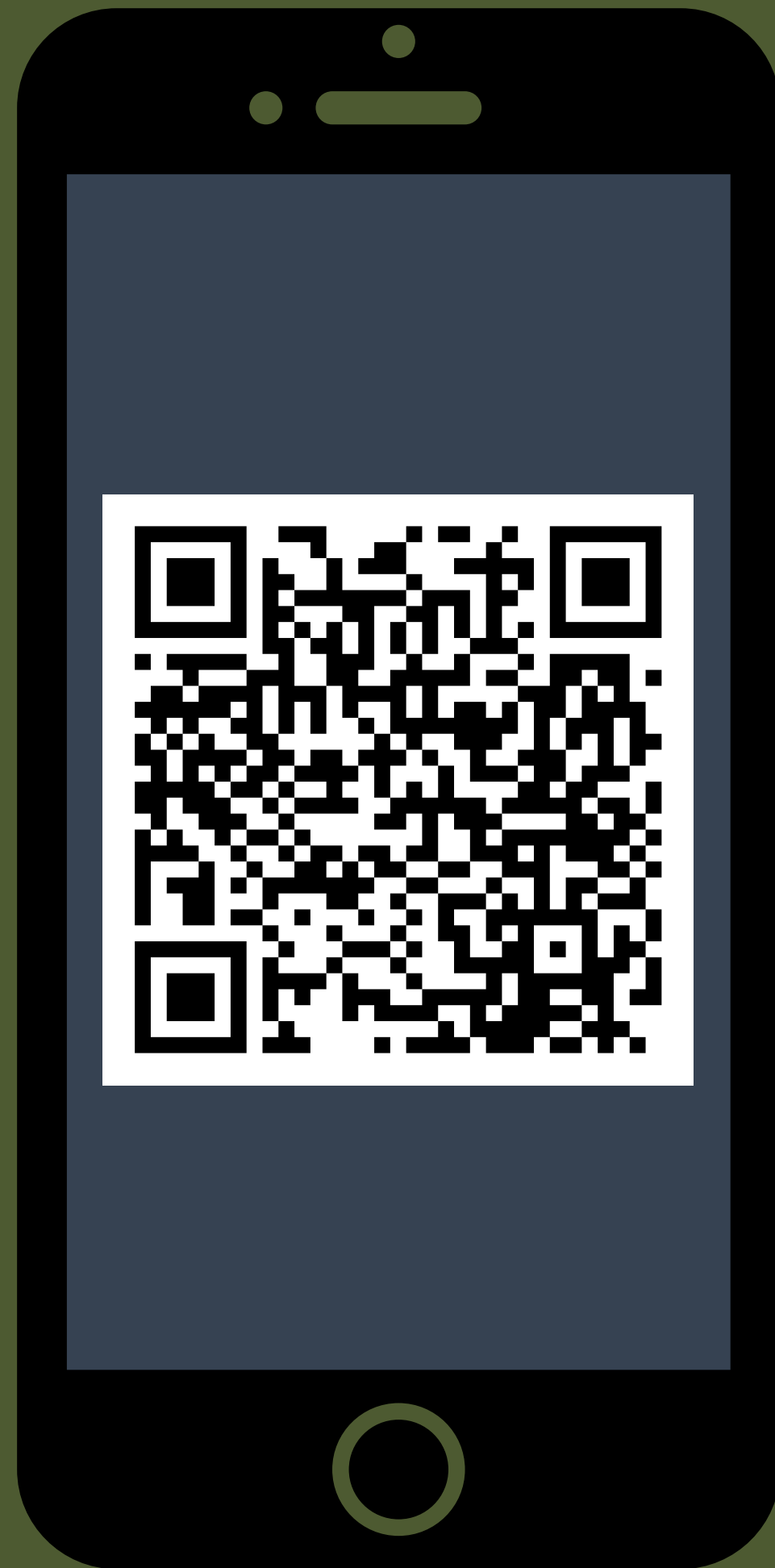
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TAKE THE  
SURVEY