



## FOOD PANTRY GUIDELINES

1. There must be adequate space available to store food and pack the emergency food boxes.
2. Food must not be stored on the floor. It should be stored on shelves or pallets. Shelves must be six to 12 inches off the floor.
3. Food must be stored away from cleaning supplies or other non-food items.
4. The storage area must be dry and clean. It should be locked to insure that the food is used only for food boxes. All doors and windows must close securely, leaving less the  $\frac{1}{4}$  inch of space.
5. Decide what days of the week your food pantry will be open. It is important that you maintain regular hours for families to receive food.
6. Your pantry should be adequately staffed. The estimated number of request for food should determine how many people should staff the pantry.
7. Your pantry should be stocked with food to provide nutritious food boxes. Food box items should be easy to prepare with limited need for other ingredients.
8. Determine how long you plan for an emergency food box to last--one day, three days, one week or more.
9. Determine how often the same family can receive food in a given period.
10. A screening process is required.
11. Records must be maintained regarding eligibility verification, how many households are served each month and how many adults and children are served.

***To be approved for Mississippi Food Network membership, a pantry must be in operation no less than three months. For additional information, call Desiree Dillon, Agency Relations Coordinator, at 601-973-7090.***