



Food For Thought (And Action!)

9 Keys to Success

1. **CHAIRPERSON** – There must be someone who will take responsibility for the program, including being the spokesperson, contacting the clergy, recruiting other volunteers, assessing the budget, setting the schedule, and, in general, being the driving force behind the project.
2. **VOLUNTEER COMMITTEE** – The program isn't a year-long commitment, but it's too big for one person. There must be at least a few others who are committed and reliable to accomplish the necessary tasks. The chairperson must also be willing to delegate appropriate tasks.
3. **BUY-IN OF CLERGY** – The clergy must not only pledge in the Food For Thought (And Action!) program, but he/she must also publicly announce the fact, preferably in a service, bulletin, newsletter or all three. (Note: It is NOT necessary to have the clergy actively participate in the planning and execution of the program.)

We recommend that you don't start the program until you have these first three!

4. **FLEXIBILITY** – The program is designed to meet people where they are and let them decide how far to go. They have a choice as to pledging all three actions, or one or two. They also have a choice within each action.
5. **BASIC EDUCATION** – A mailing should be done to every household in the congregation, including:
 - a. Cover letter
 - b. Pledge form
 - c. Power of the Plate sheet
 - d. Facts at a Glance
 - e. Further Action Tips sheet
 - f. Return envelope
 - g. **And a mention of the program at two successive services immediately following the mailing, along with handing out the pledge forms personally for return that day or in the future.**

A kickoff program, forum or entire sermon is usually helpful, but it's not critical for success.

6. **CONSTANT REMINDERS** – This includes having the pledge form available in the mailing, at the two services, and every week at a public display table or coffee hour before or after services. It also means having announcements every week in the bulletin accompanying the service and in the newsletter. The program should run 4-10 weeks, or as long as significant numbers of people keep pledging.
7. **VISIBILITY** – **The totals of the number of households participating should be publicly reported each week in the bulletin and at the coffee hour table.** In addition, a fruit or vegetable sticker for the nametag of everyone who pledges is a great way to publicize the popularity of the program and be able to identify who hasn't signed the pledge yet.
8. **SOME MONEY** – The program isn't extremely expensive, but it does require some funding for copying materials and postage. Figure \$50 for the smallest congregations to \$600 for the very largest. A mid-sized congregation should budget \$200-\$300.
9. **TIME OF YEAR** – Since the program asks participants to eat local produce in season, it should be run in the March – September time period. The optimal time is May – August.