

Tucson Samaritans

Guidelines for Migrant Food Packs

OVERVIEW [based on years of experience and direct observation]

Essential: All food items must be in their original, sealed, durable packages. They will be stored in a hot shed, bounced around in vehicles, and hauled on trails in backpacks. **Cans must be pull-top**, easy to open.

To avoid, if possible: 1. **Peanut products**, especially if the peanuts are not visible, as in bars made with peanut flour. 2. **Extremely dry foods**, hard for a thirsty person to eat. We don't like to give up good protein sources, as in peanuts, but want to minimize possibility of allergic reaction and negate criticism from Border Patrol.

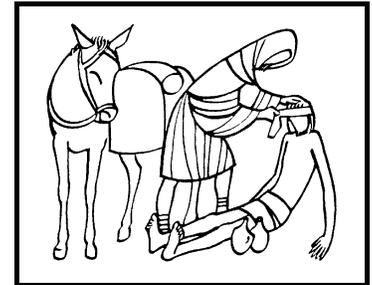
Prohibited: Jerky or pepperoni sticks (packaging just not strong enough, deteriorate rapidly). **Anything not in its original, sealed package.**

What we try for: Nutrition, familiarity, durability, reasonable cost.

HOW TO FILL A PACK – all in a gallon ziplock bag

BASICS

- 1 can Vienna sausages or other protein source (pouch tuna, beans, even a pudding cup)
- 1 applesauce or fruit cup
- 2 breakfast, chewy granola, or energy bars
- small pack gummy fruit snacks
- 4 or 5 hard candies (Jolly Ranchers are great, also peppermints)



Our observations: Migrants in the field invariably choose applesauce or Vienna sausages to eat first. Small cans of beans could also be a good choice. We can sometimes find Viennas at Fry's / Kroger stores for 2 / 88 cents, a good buy. Most other items are cheapest at CostCo.

OPTIONS to flesh out the packs (some, but not all, of these items)

- corn nuts, variety snack packs of chips, etc.
- Annie's snack crackers or Austin cheese crackers
- pudding cup (many Central Americans like tapioca)
- raisins or other dried fruits, small box or pack
- small pull-top can of corn, small pack of cookies
- creative additions that meet the basic criteria: durability, familiarity, nutrition.

EXTRAS: napkin, prayer for travelers in Spanish, "know your rights" card and consulate numbers, hand sanitizer or moist towelette.

GOOD ITEMS TO DONATE IN BULK (not for packs):

- Durable pouches of refried beans (Food City); pull-top cans of chili, soup, spaghetti.
- Socks suitable for tough desert hiking (migrants typically wear tennis shoes).
- Gallon jugs of water, or cases of bottled water.

"You know the heart of a stranger, for you were strangers in the land of Egypt."