

## Suggestions for Initiating SWAP

1. Get your whole team onboard for the training; don't be the only one all excited and then try to sell the idea to others. I bought multiple copies of Katie S. Martin's Reinventing Food Banks and Pantries, New Tools to End Hunger and that helped to motivate people to want to make changes.
2. Understand that you can't do it all overnight; have short-term and long-term goals.
3. If the Food Bank gets onboard it makes it much easier for those at the pantry level  
Example – WCFB color coded the MEFAP items for us and provided us with a color-coded sheet to use. It was a great starting point.
4. Don't get discouraged. Once you decide it is a worthwhile venture, stick with it when it gets challenging.
  - One of the challenges is checking all of the donated food items. Even though they might be the same type of product, different brands can vary in fat, salt, and/or sugar content.
  - It takes a while to get used to using the number charts. Like anything else, the more you use them the better you get at it. It is easier if you have the same group of people checking in donated items. When new people come on board they have to be trained in how to do that. Some people are better suited to do the rating. Others could choose to do the date-checking instead.
  - Another challenge is arranging items on shelving. The MFAP corn may be low salt and be classified as green, but Del Monte brand may have a higher salt content and be classified as yellow. Finding ways to arrange both on shelving units takes effort.
5. Be prepared to answer questions about the rating of products – from both your clients and other volunteers. This is not a bad thing, it shows that people are interested. As volunteers, many of us felt that we learned a lot about checking labels to find healthy food when we do our own shopping.