



DIY

FOOD NOT BOMBS

**Produced by Sheffield Food Not Bombs
working with Sheffield AF**

Anyone can start up a Food Not Bombs group. The concept is simple and you don't need to wait for anyone's permission (believe it or not Food Not Bombs is anarchist ladies and gents!). As long as your activity involves feeding anyone and not just a clique of close friends you can do pretty much what you like.

Food Not Bombs has 4 basic principles:

- ❖ Recycling of Food
- ❖ Decision making by consensus
- ❖ Non-violence
- ❖ Vegetarianism

Of course, these are just ideals. For example, it may not always be possible that all the food you use will be recycled and many of the groups Food Not Bombs supports are not necessarily pacifist. Being vegetarian, however, is important. Both ideologically - your meals need to be as inclusive as possible, and practically - no one fancies getting food poisoning (or dying!) from some dodgy meat. But most importantly, everyone needs to be involved in these decisions. Allow for disagreement and differences of opinion in your group while trying not to stifle enthusiasm.

It is also essential that you do some research before you start your group officially - Who do you know that might be interested? Where will you be serving? Is there a car available? What are your aims? Is there anyone already doing something similar in the area? How much food can you get?

Food Not Bombs has 3 very simple steps:

1. Collect the food.

What shops are there around you? Most small supermarkets refuse to recycle food that they waste. Food stays edible, if not at its best, for much longer than the display dates. If you can find your supermarket's bins you have a good first source. Most of the food they throw out is due to packaging being either damaged or out of style. Go to small restaurants, co-op greengrocers, allotments, bakeries and anyone else who might be sympathetic. Getting food before the bins will make life easier. But use your common sense; check the food is *actually* ok to eat before giving it out to people.

2. Prepare the food.

You should bear in mind the people whom your food is intended for. Super hot chilli in the middle of summer for an elderly crowd is not going to work. You want to impress people. It's not always going to be possible to make amazing food, but you can do a lot with a few sacks of spuds and the right spices and flavours. It is also important to maintain a good standard of food preparation and hygiene - do not give anything away you wouldn't be prepared to eat yourself. Just because it is free, doesn't mean it has to be sub-standard!

3. Give the food away.

Choosing the right places is important. What do you want to do? You could offer people in the city a free lunch and encourage people to spend less, do the catering for demos or gigs, support existing workplace struggles (or start your own), feed asylum seekers or join up with other active political groups with similar aims. It is important to have clear objectives from the offset. Discuss and establish what the goals of the group ought to be. Remember Food Not Bombs is anti-capitalist and grass roots, it may prove useful to try and network with other like minded people.

Above all, it is important to remember that it is *your* group. Food Not Bombs is all about self-empowerment. It is your project and you should make what you want of it.

Some helpful websites:

<http://www.indymedia.org.uk/> - An independent newswire (you will also be able to post your own FnB news reports here)

<http://www.foodnotbombs.net/> - American home and more info on FnB worldwide

<http://riseup.net/> - Hosts email lists, a good starting point for any group.