

# POPCORN SALES FOR LDS SCOUTING UNITS

*This document has been prepared by C. Bradford Allen, LDS Relations Director, BSA. The purpose is to assist with frequently asked questions relative to using popcorn sales as a fund-raising tool and to provide clarification of current LDS fund-raising guidelines.*

**Q:** Can LDS Scouting units sell popcorn as a unit fund-raising tool?

**A:** Yes. In a letter written on August 17, 2005, by Charles W. Dahlquist, Young Men General President of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, President Dahlquist stated: **“While the LDS Church does not endorse any specific fund-raiser or product, if conducted in accordance with the LDS Church *Budget Allowance Guidelines*, (1998), the sale of popcorn would be an appropriate fund-raising tool for LDS-sponsored units.”**

**Q:** What is the *Budget Allowance Guidelines* (1998) for LDS Scouting units?

**A:** It is a publication from The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints that governs the use of funds allocated to local Church units for various purposes.

**Q:** What does the *Budget Allowance Guidelines* publication state with respect to fund-raising for youth activities, including Scouting activities?

**A:** The *Budget Allowance Guidelines*, page 2, addresses “Funding Youth Activities” as it relates to Scouting:

1. Stakes and wards should fund all youth activities (including Scouting) from the budget allowance. The only exceptions are covered in numbers 2, 3, and 5.
2. If budget allowance funds are insufficient, young men may individually earn their own money for the cost of one annual camp. **(The annual camp is the long-term summer camp for the troop, team or crew and includes day camp for Cub Scouts).**
3. If budget allowance funds are insufficient and young men are unable to individually earn enough for the one annual camp, they may hold group fund-raising activities.
4. Wards should not charge young men dues for weekly or monthly activities.
5. Young men (Scouts, Varsity, and Venturing) and Cub Scouts may hold group fund-raising activities to pay for equipment for the unit if there is not sufficient budget allowance.

**Q:** If the sale of popcorn is an appropriate fund-raising tool for Church-sponsored units, what are the guidelines for a Scout to earn his annual summer camp or day camp fee, or assist with the purchase of equipment?

**A:** The *Budget Allowance Guidelines*, page 2, addresses “Fund-Raising Guidelines for Annual Camps and Equipment.” Those conducting fund-raising activities should:

1. Comply with tax and liability guidelines as outlined by the Church.
2. Not sell products or services door to door.
3. Provide meaningful value or service.
4. Provide a positive experience and build harmony and unity within the group.
5. Obtain the bishop’s approval for the activity.

**Q:** Is it acceptable, then, for popcorn to be used as a fund-raising tool for an LDS unit to assist a young man in earning his camp fee and unit equipment purchase?

**A:** Yes. If a unit meets the guidelines as noted and follows the council plan, the experience is beneficial to the Scout and his family. It builds harmony and unity within the group. The sale of popcorn can be a positive experience. In most cases the budget allowance from the Church is not sufficient to pay the entire annual camp fee. Many young men need the opportunity to help earn a portion of the annual camp fee. The council popcorn sale is a proven successful fund-raising tool for Scouting units and is the only product sale fund-raiser supported by the National Council of the BSA.

**Q:** If an LDS unit or youth member cannot sell popcorn “door to door,” then what methods does he use to sell popcorn?

**A:** The popcorn sale provides several methods to assist youth and units in the fund-raising effort without going “door to door.” The following is a list of several methods that have proven to be successful for youth and units who participate:

1. **Show and Sale:** For LDS units, this method has merit. The product is consigned to the unit from the council and arrangement is made to sell the product at a local business or “storefront” for the duration of the sale.
2. **Parent Sale:** The parent sale is a great opportunity for LDS units to involve the family. Order forms are provided to the parents and can be shared in the parents’ work place. This is a simple, easy, and efficient way for a co-worker to place an order with the Scout through the parent of the Scout.
3. **Corporate Sale:** This is one of the untapped areas of potential. The company or business of a family member or friend makes a purchase of popcorn and designates the sale to a Scout or unit. Many companies use popcorn as a holiday gift.
4. **Order Online:** This method provides the Scout an opportunity to invite and encourage family and friends to order online. The person making the purchase enters the Scout’s personal key code, and he will receive credit for the purchase. The product is shipped directly to the doorstep of the person making the purchase.

**Q:** Besides assisting the Scout with his annual camp fee and his unit with equipment purchases, how else does the popcorn sale help Scouting?

**A:** The funds from the popcorn product sale are divided into three areas: (1) the sale commission to the unit/Scout, (2) payment for product to the popcorn company and, (3) financial support to the local council. The sale of popcorn allows the young man and his family to earn his way to camp, helps the unit with equipment purchases, and supports the local council in its efforts to serve units.

**Q:** Does the popcorn sale replace the annual Friends of Scouting campaign?

**A:** Participation in the popcorn sale **does not replace** Friends of Scouting. The LDS Church endorses Friends of Scouting and encourages each ward and stake to participate actively in this annual event. Families and friends should be provided an opportunity to contribute to Friends of Scouting and assist in supporting the local council.