



ANNOUNCEMENTS

- As a reminder, the Foodbank will be closed on Monday, May 29, 2017, in observation of Memorial Day.
- Save the Date for the 2017 Network Summit: Friday, August 11, 2017.

350 Opportunity Parkway
Akron, OH 44307-2234
330.535.6900 phone
330.996.5337 fax
akroncantonfoodbank.org

CLIENT ASSISTANCE

855.560.0850 toll free
GETFOODHELP.ORG

TO PLACE AN ORDER

call: 330.253.7054
toll free: 800.673.6490
online: go.acrfb.org/order

SCHEDULED USDA

canned apricot halves, canned corn, canned potatoes, canned pears, canned carrots, canned peaches, american cheese blend

SCHEDULED OFF/OACP

canned spaghetti rings, canned peas, baked beans, canned cream corn, canned green beans, beef ravioli, canned corn



TEAM APPLE
City of Akron, Holmes, Medina
and Wayne Counties



TEAM BREAD
Carroll, Portage, Stark, Summit,
and Tuscarawas Counties



The Akron-Canton Regional Foodbank is a proud member of Feeding America, the nation's largest domestic hunger-relief charity.

Help Clients Access Additional Food

Helping clients access SNAP (formerly food stamps) is easier than ever! Network Partners are encouraged to join the Foodbank's SNAP Referral Program, which ensures that clients know about the opportunity to apply for food assistance.

It's simple for volunteers or staff at a program; just ask the client if they would like to apply for SNAP, and if so, complete two short forms to send to the Foodbank. The Foodbank will take it from there! Foodbank staff will call the client to complete an application over the phone and give them more details about the process to receive SNAP benefits.



By participating in the Foodbank's SNAP Referral Program, network partners fulfill one of the criteria to achieve either the Collaborative or Champion Partner level in our new Network Partner Program. Continue reading the newsletter for more details about the Partner Program.

INTERESTED IN STARTING SNAP REFERRALS? Contact the Foodbank at snapreferral@acrfb.org or call 330.535.6900 and ask for a member of the SNAP Outreach team.

Borrow a Produce Trailer

Thanks to generous support from Akron Community Foundation and the Disney Foundation, the Foodbank has produce trailers available for network partners to borrow. The produce trailers are refrigerated and can hold up to 4,800 pounds.

THE BEST PART OF THE TRAILER? IT'S FREE TO USE!

Network partners will need to identify a specified vehicle and driver, and the Foodbank will need some paperwork to ensure compliance with traffic laws. If your agency is interested in this opportunity, please contact Keith Freund at kfreund@acrfb.org.





MAY IS OLDER AMERICANS MONTH

Seniors are a growing portion of the population served by the Foodbank's network of partners. Currently, more than 10% of those served by the Foodbank is a senior citizen. Seniors are facing many health issues and making difficult choices to receive the food they need. According to Hunger in America 2014, 81% of households that include a senior have at least one member with high blood pressure. Nearly 1 in 4 households including a senior served by the Foodbank report making difficult choices between buying food and paying for their medical care. Recognizing the needs of seniors, the Foodbank has started a new program to address senior hunger.

The Foodbank has partnered with organizations in 4 counties to start the Commodity Supplemental Food Program (CSFP). The Commodity Supplemental Food Program (CSFP) works to improve the health of low-income elderly persons at least 60 years of age by supplementing their diets with nutritious USDA Foods. Seniors registered for the program receive a box of shelf stable groceries once a month with items specially selected to address their dietary needs by the USDA.

Thank you to our partners in this program: Meals on Wheels of Stark and Wayne Counties, Lodi Family Center, Barberton Area Community Ministries, North Canton Church of Christ, Sarah's House, OPEN M, Grace Fellowship, and Green Good Neighbors.

If you would like to learn more about this program, or share with the Foodbank how your program works to better serve seniors, contact Erica Banks at ebanks@acrfb.org.

Free Food from the Foodbank

The Foodbank's strategic plan, Foodbank 2020, places a strong emphasis on increasing the capacity of our hunger relief network. One of the goals in the plan is to increase free food distribution to at least 80 percent by 2025, allowing partners to optimize their local resources. In 2016, 72 percent of food was distributed with no cost. The Foodbank continues to seek opportunities for more free food on the menu to support network partners, with this year's goal to distribute 74% of food for free.



WHERE IS THE FREE PRODUCT?

Currently, free food on the menu is supported in these areas:

- **Harvest for Hunger:** All funds collected during Harvest for Hunger are used to acquire food to distribute to the network at no cost. Over _ million pounds of free, fresh produce was purchased with Harvest for Hunger funds in 2016. All food collected as part of this campaign is also distributed for free.
- **Produce:** The Foodbank has a longstanding commitment to provide fresh produce for free. The goal is to have fresh produce as 25% of our total distribution - all with no cost to network partners.

- **OFF/OACP:** The Ohio Food Program and Ohio Agricultural Clearance Program provides free food to network partners utilizing a state program. State tax dollars support the purchase of shelf stable products and excess Ohio produce to be distributed through the charitable food assistance network.
- **Grant-Funded Product:** The Foodbank seeks grant dollars to support free product on the menu. Many times, grant-funded product has a geographic restriction. In addition, grants are used to support food purchases for specific programs, such as the Feeding Kids menu.

When at the Foodbank, network partners can also get additional free product through MarketPlace or the Order Add-On.

- **MarketPlace:** Items in the MarketPlace area continue to provide perishable product at no cost. With the addition of the MarketPlace cooler in XX, this area also provides access to free produce and dairy products.
- **Order Add-On:** The Order Add-On allows network partners to utilize what has been recently been made available for free. When picking up an order, simply ask the staff to add-on to the order and the warehouse will bring the additional product at no cost.





The Future of Food Security in Stark County

In 2014, the Stark Community Foundation commissioned a report to examine the future of food security and hunger-relief services in Stark County. This report, along with initiatives identified in our Foodbank 2020 strategic plan, are informing plans that will create an infrastructure to close the meal gap by 2025. Included in the strategic plan is the establishment of a physical presence in key geographic areas to create awareness, inspire collaboration, and expand our services to hunger-relief partners. Thanks to the generous support of the Stark Community Foundation, the Foodbank has been able to engage in space planning conversations with an architect to start mapping out future facility needs. This includes adding to our current facility and opening a facility in Stark County.

Network Partners were invited to the Foodbank this spring for a meeting to provide feedback on the initial design of a future Foodbank facility located in Stark County. The Foodbank is committed to ensuring the same level of customer service and product availability, including a MarketPlace area, that are offered at the current facility in Akron. In addition, the Stark facility will have adequate storage to meet our growing distribution, provide easier access to pick up food

for Network Partners, engagement opportunities for volunteers as well as space for community partners working to better the lives of those in need.



At the end of the meeting, Network Partners offered some valuable advice to the Foodbank to carry forward in this process:

keep communicating and fine tuning
I like how you are approaching it, keep going **no matter how big the space, it will never be enough** **storage space is really important to agencies** **only put in a pantry, GO BIG**
incorporate more resources for clients
get the distribution set up then foster collaboration
KEEP IT SIMPLE
a pantry if it makes sense

Thank you to those who attended the feedback session. Stay tuned for details about the future Stark County facility in upcoming newsletters and meetings.



VOICES UPDATE

Voices is an initiative of the Foodbank to bring the voice of those we serve into our collective work. With eight network partners participating, the pilot project has gathered feedback from more than 1,500 individuals who seek food assistance. The Foodbank has asked about the wait time at programs, the days and times of food distribution, and the relationship between staff/volunteers and clients.

Those visiting food programs have shared many thoughts and ideas about their experiences. A few are shared below:

“That’s a good thing that you’re asking about time because you usually have to wait outside.”

“I work during the day, so I can’t come on Wednesdays. Even this time (5:30 – 6:30 pm on Thursdays) is hard.”

“When I first went, it was... okay. I expected a little bit more... sometimes the foods don’t match up (make meals).”

“I never feel ashamed asking for help here. Not everywhere is good about that.”

The Network Summit will feature a breakout session discussing what has been learned, and what is shifting as we consider how to create a client centered network.

If you are interested in learning more about Voices and client feedback, contact Katie Carver Reed at kcarver@acrfb.org.

The New Network Partner Program – What’s Next?



The Foodbank’s new Network Partner Program begins this summer. In developing the Foodbank’s new strategic plan, the community agreed that our work together is about more than food. It is about capacity, support, engagement, and so much more. The purpose of the Network Partner Program is to build a strong, sustainable, and collaborative network within the communities served by the Foodbank to optimize the work of our collective work.

The Foodbank included a booklet outlining this new program in the Network Partner Packet, which was mailed out to all partners in February. This booklet includes information about the various levels of the program, what characteristics define each level, and what perks/benefits are provided in each level.

The Foodbank recently mailed a preliminary level review to all network

partners. The preliminary level review is based on information the Foodbank currently has on record about programs operated within our network. As a reminder, network partners are being reviewed at the organizational level rather than the programmatic level. For example, if your organization operates a food pantry and a backpack program, both programs will be reviewed together (to reflect organizational impact/activity) rather than each Foodbank account separately.

If you have questions about the preliminary review or would like guidance on ways to move up in the program, please contact the Foodbank by June 30, 2017.

TEAM APPLE

Programs in Medina, Holmes, Wayne & City of Akron, contact Keith Freund 330.777.576 or kfreund@acrfb.org

TEAM BREAD

Programs in Stark, Portage, Tusc, Carroll & Summit outside of Akron, contact Krystal Levstek 330.777.1051 or klevstek@acrfb.org

A session about the Network Partner Program will also be held at the Network Summit. Visit the Agency Zone to register today!

Network Summit

The Network Summit is an event held every other year with the purpose of bringing together the Foodbank’s hunger relief network for a day of sharing, learning, and networking. This year, the Network Summit will be held on Friday, August 11th at Northeast Ohio Medical University (NEOMED) in Rootstown, Ohio. The day will focus on Goal 3 of the Foodbank’s strategic plan, Foodbank 2020, which focuses on building a strong, sustainable, collaborative network within the communities served in order to optimize our collective work.

More details and registration information can be found at networksummit.org. All emergency feeding programs (food pantries, hot meal sites, and shelters) must send at least one individual to an educational opportunity at the Foodbank each year in order to maintain grant eligibility. This will also meet one of the criteria at the Engaged Partner Level in the new Network Partner Program.

If you have questions about the Network Summit, please contact Jessica Robb at jrobb@acrfb.org.

NETWORK PARTNER FEEDBACK SURVEY: THE RESULTS

The Foodbank conducts a survey with our partners annually to gather feedback and gain a better understanding of the overall value provided to the network by the Foodbank. The 2016 survey was completed in the month of November; thank you to all network partners that took the time to answer.

The questions gave the option of a scale from 1 – 5, with 5 being the highest score. The highest rated questions were as follows:

- Overall, I feel welcome at the Foodbank. (4.83 / 5)
- I would recommend Foodbank partnership to other hunger relief programs in my community. (4.66 / 5)
- The Foodbank customer service staff has a positive attitude. (4.65 / 5)

Through this survey, the Foodbank also identified a few areas of opportunity.

- The Foodbank will be including information in each newsletter about the reason there are fees associated with Foodbank food.
- The Foodbank will continue to promote the Amazing Values section of the menu.
- The Foodbank will seek ways to gather real-time feedback more regularly.

Continue reading Foodbank communications (Extra Helpings, Network Insider, etc.) to learn more about what is happening and to find the latest Amazing Values flyer.