Foodbank Looking for New Programs to Help Close the Meal Gap

Strengthening and growing the infrastructure of our hunger-relief network is key to the Foodbank's goal of closing the Meal Gap by 2025. With the intention of providing enough food for everyone in need, the Foodbank is committed to sourcing enough product to meet the demand. This is no small task, but equally important, is the need for more like-minded community organizations, churches and nonprofits like you, to join the network.

By growing the number of programs across our eight-county service area, together, we will ensure there are enough locations, days and times available for individuals and families to access food easily. Whether it is adding a new activity to an existing program or encouraging a new organization to join the network, more is better. No single program can end hunger alone.

If you would like to recommend a potential new partner of the Foodbank, or if your program is interested in brainstorming ideas on how we can partner together to serve your community more effectively, we want to hear from you! The Foodbank wants to hear your ideas and is interested in collaborating to achieve our vision of a thriving community free of hunger.

Please contact Gary Green at ggreen@acrfb.org or Linda Steinhebel at lsteinhebel@acrfb.org to learn more.
Foodbank hosting Hunger-Relief Networking Events

Please come represent your organization, bring your volunteers, and invite other community stakeholders to take part in one of these dynamic, collaborative events where we will SHARE DATA surrounding the need for food in your area, DISCUSS CHALLENGES unique to addressing hunger in this specific area, and WORK TOGETHER to create solutions.

CARROLL COUNTY
June 19, 2019 1:00pm-3:00pm
Carroll County Council on Aging
100 Kensington Rd. NE
Carrollton, OH 44615

HOLMES COUNTY
May 23, 2019 9:30am-11:30am
Love Center Food Pantry
1292 Massillon Rd., Ste. A
Millsburg, OH 44654

MEDINA COUNTY
May 15, 2019 1:00pm-3:00pm
Montville Township Police Department
6665 Wadsworth Rd
Medina, OH 44256

PORTAGE COUNTY
May 8, 2019 1:00pm-3:00pm
Chestnut Conference Room at the
Ohio Means Jobs Building
253 S. Chestnut St.
Ravenna, OH 44266

STARK COUNTY
MAY 7, 2019 9:30AM-11:30AM
First Christian Church in North Canton
6900 Market Ave. N
North Canton, OH 44721

SUMMIT COUNTY
June 12, 2019 1:00pm-3:00pm
Barberton Area Community Ministries
939 Norton Ave.
Barberton, OH 44203

TUSCARAWAS COUNTY
July 16, 2019 1:00pm-3:00pm
LifeWay Church
742 Cookson Ave. SE
New Philadelphia, OH 44663

WAYNE COUNTY
May 21, 2019 9:30am-11:30am
The Salvation Army Wooster
437 South Market St.
Wooster, OH 44691

THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT OF THE HARVEST FOR HUNGER KICK-OFF BREAKFAST!

On February 26, 2019, we welcomed nearly 500 community members, many of them representing hunger-relief programs within our network, to help us kick off the 28th annual Harvest for Hunger Campaign. This Campaign is the Foodbank’s largest fundraising initiative and helps support food distribution all year long. All proceeds from the Campaign go directly to providing free food for our network of partners.

To learn more on how your program can get involved with this year’s Campaign, visit akroncantonfoodbank.org/hfh.

Inspiring Community Collaboration in Mantua

It all started with a phone call from a volunteer from Mantua Center Christian Church. From there, a grassroots effort to feed the Mantua community snowballed!

The Foodbank received several phone calls from multiple individuals in a matter of days, all from Mantua, a city in Portage County. All these individuals wanted to learn how their respective organizations could partner with the Foodbank to serve their community in a bigger way.

The timing of so many calls from the same community was unusual, so Foodbank staff facilitated a collaboration meeting to bring these Mantua residents together with Crestwood 4Cs, an existing hunger-relief partner of the Foodbank.

After coming together, each group determined a role they will play in making this dream a reality. They are now well on their way to establishing a food pantry in a community center that will be open weekly to serve members of their community. This was an incredible example of what can happen when our network works together to create innovative solutions to meet the needs of our neighbors.

Nearly 500 guests joined us for breakfast to kick off the 2019 Harvest for Hunger Campaign.
Understanding Food Date Labels

Partners who have attended the Network Partner Orientation will likely recall learning about packaging dates on food. In a recent survey, researchers at John Hopkins University discovered that more than half of participants incorrectly thought date labeling was federally regulated, or said they were unsure what dates on food actually mean. Very few food items are likely to become unsafe based on the date shown on the product. Most often, dates refer to product quality, not safety.

Here are some basic guidelines on food packaging dates:

SELL BY DATE
This date indicates how long a store should display an item and allows a reasonable amount of time for the product to be used after the date.

BEST IF USED BY DATE
Often determined by the manufacturer, this date usually reflects the last date a product is likely to be at peak flavor and quality.

PACKAGE DATE
This is the date the food was packed or processed.

EXPIRATION DATE
For most products, this date indicates the last date it should be eaten or used. However, if perishable foods are packaged and frozen properly, they will be safe to eat after the expiration date.

Not All Families in Poverty Use Government Assistance

Several different programs exist in the United States to assist individuals and families living in poverty, like food assistance and subsidized housing. People of all ages, races and geographic areas rely on assistance from various safety net programs.

However, an Urban Institute analysis recently found that 13 million people living in poverty do not utilize these programs. Among the very poorest Americans, nearly one-third of households receive no benefits from safety net programs.

A few theories provide insight into why some groups of people are more likely than others to receive benefits. For example, some families might have access to other resources or family support available during difficult times.

Many of our hunger-relief partners have witnessed another theory - social stigma preventing someone from utilizing available programs.

Yet another reason is some individuals and families may rely on local programs instead of utilizing government assistance. For example, they may visit a food pantry or hot meal program. To ensure people in our communities do not go hungry, the existence of local emergency food assistance programs is vital.

THANK YOU FOR ALL YOU DO FOR YOUR LOCAL COMMUNITY!