

NETWORK INSIDER

JANUARY 2023 | A publication for Network Partners of the Akron-Canton Regional Foodbank



ANNOUNCEMENTS



- The Foodbank will be closed on Monday, February 20, 2023 in observance of Presidents Day.
- **NEW ORDER ADJUSTMENT NOTIFICATION**
The Foodbank strives each day to receive and distribute orders efficiently and accurately. Occasionally, we need to adjust a partner's order after it's submitted. To better communicate this change, we will email partners an updated invoice with a note describing the change.

MAIN CAMPUS

350 Opportunity Parkway
Akron, OH 44307

STARK COUNTY CAMPUS

1365 Cherry Ave. NE
Canton, OH 44714

330.535.6900 phone
330.996.5337 fax

akroncantonfoodbank.org

TO PLACE AN ORDER

akroncantonfoodbank.org/order

TO ADJUST YOUR ORDER

330.253.7054

SCHEDULED OFF/OACP

Canned Goods (Applesauce,
Beef Ravioli, Diced Tomatoes),
Cornflake Cereal

SCHEDULED USDA

Apples, Canned Goods (Carrots,
Corn, Diced Tomatoes, Green Beans,
Mixed Veggies, Potatoes), Chicken,
Dates, Eggs, Grapefruit, Mandarin
Tangerines, Milk, Mixed Fresh Produce,
Oranges, Raisins, Shrimp, Walnuts

FOR A MAP OF PANTRY & MEAL LOCATIONS

akroncantonfoodbank.org/need-food

A Note to the Network

In 2022, rising costs and supply chain issues created significant challenges for our hunger-relief network and the neighbors we serve. **In our service area, we saw a 14% increase in people served by our pantry network.** Of the families visiting pantries, 30% were new, meaning they've never visited a pantry before. We heard stories from neighbors about how rising costs presented difficult choices for them, and how grateful they were that our hunger-relief network was there to provide support when they needed it.

Inflation not only impacted our neighbors, but also the Foodbank and our network of partners. Supply chain issues and the increased cost for food meant our hunger-relief network had to respond to a rise in demand with limited food availability. The food donation shortage was unlike anything we've seen in our 40-year history. A few of our food streams have shown signs of stability in the fourth quarter, and we will continue to work hard to advocate for and source quality, nourishing products for your programs and the people you serve.

Despite these challenges, we came together to distribute 23.3 million meals to neighbors facing hunger in our community. We also began construction at the Main Campus in Akron. A series of critical renovations will better serve our hunger-relief network and our neighbors facing hunger. And we led many focus groups and listening sessions with community stakeholders, including many of our hunger-relief partners, as we plan to launch a new strategic plan this year.

All of this work is made possible through our collaboration with you, our hunger-relief partners. Through the many uncertainties of the past few years, you've never wavered in your commitment to serve our vulnerable neighbors. All of us at the Foodbank continue to be grateful for you and the tremendous work you do to further our collective vision of a thriving community free of hunger.



Daniel R. Flowers

Daniel R. Flowers, *President & CEO*

Network Partner Feedback Survey Results

In October 2022, the Foodbank sent its annual network partner feedback survey to the entire hunger-relief network. The 111 surveys completed provided valuable information for the Foodbank to focus on moving forward.



MENU

The survey asked what mattered most to the Foodbank's hunger-relief

partners about their partnership with the Foodbank. Over half of the respondents felt that availability of food was most important and over a quarter of the responses indicated that cost of food was most important to them. The Foodbank is continuing to utilize its partnerships with food donors to receive more products at lower rates, and more USDA and state products are anticipated in 2023.



CUSTOMER SERVICE & SATISFACTION

Overall, the network saw a positive return on investment with their Foodbank partnership and would recommend partnering with the Foodbank to others. The network felt that the Foodbank staff were welcoming and helpful and, overall, had good experiences picking up and receiving their orders.

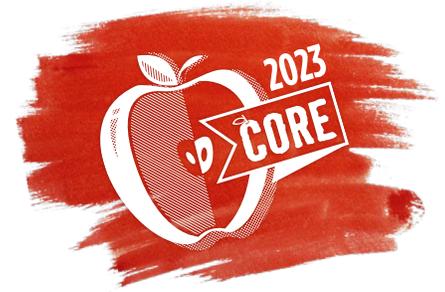
The Foodbank will continue to focus on providing a high-quality experience for partners when receiving orders at either campus and/or via delivery.



THE FUTURE

Responses to the survey also indicated that network partners' two largest

concerns in relation to the future of their programs were finances and volunteer/leadership support. The Foodbank continues to focus on providing a menu of desirable products at no or low cost to our partners. In 2022, 79% of food was provided to the network at no cost. As the Foodbank and our network look to the future, we will explore the creation of a leadership academy to develop the next generation of hunger-relief advocates in our region. Partner responses also informed the roundtable and training opportunities available this year. Visit akroncantonfoodbank.org/agency/events for a full list of trainings.



CORE, the Foodbank's group for young professionals

Does your hunger-relief program have or know any young professionals in the area wanting to network and learn more about hunger within the community? Join the Foodbank's group for young professionals, CORE, today! CORE is a group for motivated, energetic, YPs interested in growing their professional network while helping to feed neighbors struggling with hunger. Interested applicants can visit akroncantonfoodbank.org/CORE to learn more.

UPCOMING NETWORK EDUCATION

With a new year comes new learning and training opportunities! Monthly FreshTrak and orientation trainings are now available for registration on the Foodbank's website. There are also interesting and helpful roundtables listed below for the first quarter.

JANUARY 31, 2023 Annual Civil Rights Training

FEBRUARY 2, 2023 Deepen Our Impact: 3-Year Strategic Plan Preview

FEBRUARY 24, 2023 Putting the FUN in FUNdraising

MARCH 8, 2023 NEW Partnership & Liability Agreement

APRIL 13, 2023 Pantry Simulation

To register for any upcoming roundtables or trainings, visit akroncantonfoodbank.org/agency/events.



Save the Date for the Biennial Network Gathering

The Foodbank holds a gathering every other year for our network of hunger-relief partners. This gives the Foodbank and its partners the opportunity to share, learn and grow together. **The 2023 meeting will be held on Friday, September 15, 2023.**