
Partners in Hunger Relief



With many thanks to our
dedicated partners in hunger relief



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The Food Bank of Eastern Michigan distributes to more than 700 hunger relief partners in 22 counties, providing food for more than 331,000 people in need each year.



Our dedicated Outreach Coordinators work with agencies and retail store partners throughout their regions

Northern Region

Melissa Burns - 810-922-1187

Northern Central Region

Chris Aller - 810-955-3164

Central Bay Region

Katie Wisneski - 810-922-1274

Genesee County

Kelly DelReal - 248-343-1663

Thumb Region

Heather Bearden - 810-922-0849



Forty years ago, a small, grassroots organization was developed in Flint, Michigan in response to growing hunger within the Genesee County community. What began as a staff of three in a rented warehouse has now grown to an organization that serves more than 700 hunger relief partners in support of 22 eastern Michigan counties. We could not be more proud of what our staff, volunteers and partners have accomplished especially given the incredible challenges that we have overcome during the past four decades.

Most recently, the global pandemic forced an immediate shift in needs and priorities. The vast majority of our partners continued to serve their local communities, the National Guard stepped in for volunteers to move food through our facilities, community leaders took action, and our partners and donors assured we could access and distribute nutritious food.

We stand ready for what the future may hold and committed to serving the people of eastern Michigan now and throughout the recovery. It finally seems possible that the pandemic will wind down. But there is no vaccine for hunger, and the financial impact of this pandemic will continue to be felt by many for years to come. We will be there for those in need of our help tomorrow, as we are today, helping thousands of Michiganders keep food on their tables. We do not know what the next 40 years will hold, but we do know that our mission of eradicating hunger within the communities that we serve will remain steadfast. Thank you for your continued support and partnership in our success.

Sincerely,

Kara Ross, President and CEO



Hunger in Michigan



It is estimated that 40% of the individuals that received help during the pandemic were seeking food assistance for the first time.



In 2019, there were nearly 1.3 million people struggling with food insecurity in Michigan. These numbers have increased significantly due to the pandemic.

13%

Food Insecurity Rate



Average Cost of a Meal

\$2.93

The number of homes with children facing hunger has more than doubled, especially with reduced access to school nutrition programs.



Partner Agencies

Feeding People



The Walmart store pick-up program allows our partner agencies to stock their pantries with dairy, meat, bakery items and fresh produce.

Walmart has also helped fund refrigerator trucks for distribution and freezers for agencies that needed space to store the donated food.



The people in need of assistance are not just clients with income below the poverty threshold, but also neighbors, friends and family who are median income households but



cannot make ends meet due to the effects of the pandemic. Some could not work due to restrictions or they had to take time off to care for their families. Others have had to close businesses and cannot pay their bills and afford groceries.



"With the abundance of fresh produce that Walmart has donated, our volunteers have been able to put together several boxes of food for our clients in need. Approximately half of the product was donated by Walmart and it was beautiful!"

-Atlanta Church of Christ, Atlanta, MI



"We served 112 families today. One lady told me she had never been to anything like this before and that she was 88 years old. Numerous other people thanked me, telling me of being laid off and having to struggle. After we quit serving another car pulled in

and asked what we were doing. He had been without food for a while and hadn't known where to get help. We loaded up the car with enough for three people."

Bethel Missionary Church; Yale, MI



Prior to the beginning of the pandemic, James saw that people in his community were struggling with hunger. He began partnering with local agencies to acquire food for his small pantry. During Michigan's shelter-in-place order, James began making home deliveries for people who couldn't get to food distributions. He provides food, and a sense of security, to nearly 30 families each week.



"Because of the partnership with Walmart, we are able to continue to feed the community. People are amazed at what they can get when they come into the Food Pantry. When they leave, they have enough food to last their family approximately two weeks."

-Heaven Sent Food Pantry; Snover, MI



"The donations from Walmart have been substantial for us during this trying time in our community. Because of these donations we have been able to cut back on our purchases and are able to give more!"

-St. Vincent De Paul; Alpena, MI

Providing Meals for Families in Need

Bonnie's daughter and son-in-law have seven biological children and three additional children in their care. With 12 people in the household, the family began to struggle soon after he was laid off from his job at the railroad. But then their house burned down and their septic tank went bad. Unable to put food on the table, the family reached out to Trinity Assembly in Mt. Morris for assistance. Now they ALL volunteer at the pantry every week to give back and contribute to the agency that provided comfort and stability for them.



Dawn is a single-mother with three kids at home. She had a good job but was laid off due to Covid.

Then, her kids began remote learning and no longer had access to the school lunch program. She found herself struggling to pay the bills and increase her grocery budget. With the help of her local food pantry, she and her kids receive fresh produce, dairy, proteins and other nutrition they need.

Joey is a farmer and father of four children. He worked a part time job to supplement his farming career. Early one morning, he fell down the stairs and broke his ankle. His eldest son, just 16 at the time, had to take over the farm in addition to attending school. Joey's first surgery went well, but his body ultimately rejected the hardware. He was laid up for over a year recovering from his accident. Joey was able to get assistance with food, diapers, and even dog food. He now volunteers at the distribution every week to thank them for taking care of his family.





Dennis was having a hard time making ends meet and putting food on the table. He reached out to the Food Bank's SNAP Specialists for help navigating through the Assistance Applications. After reviewing his paperwork and completing a

recertification, Dennis was able to get additional food and Medicaid assistance totaling nearly \$200 dollars a month! But Dennis didn't stop there.

He then helped three other families complete applications and secure additional funds for food as well.



Donna was living in a homeless shelter when she first contacted the Food Bank for assistance. She received a check from Social Security but it wasn't enough to afford rent, utilities and food. Donna worked with the Food Bank's SNAP Specialists to complete an application and was able to receive assistance. With the additional support, Donna was able to move out of the shelter and into her own apartment.



After struggling through the pandemic in 2020, many families wanted to make 2021 extra special. For one family in Cass City, this meant celebrating Easter with a traditional family meal. But, that's not always easy to do on a tight budget. Thanks to a partnership with Walmart, the local food pantry was able to provide the family with all the fixings along with some extra meals and snacks for the kids.



The work we do to feed families in need goes beyond just providing food. We also strive to provide a connection with our community and those we serve. Sam has been with the Food Bank for 5 years. Over the course of his time here he has made a lasting

impact throughout our organization and in the communities where he delivers. A group of young children recently greeted Sam at one of his deliveries with a gigantic paper cut-out heart that was signed by every child, expressing how much they enjoy and appreciate not only the food that is provided to them but also being able to visit with Sam.