



*Expanding Produce Storage to
Increase Access for Families in Need*

 **Food Bank**
of Central New York

hunger & hope



FOOD BANK OF CENTRAL NEW YORK is a not-for-profit organization working to eliminate hunger through nutritious food distribution, education, and advocacy in cooperation with the community. The Food Bank is the primary food supplier for 262 emergency food programs in our eleven county service region of central and northern New York.

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Executive Director's Message

As the new year begins, we pause to take note of the work our partner agencies do every day throughout the year. We are blessed with 364 partner agencies helping to distribute nutritious food to individuals and families in need.

The demand to provide additional food resources to the emergency food network is more vital than ever. We have seen an increase in meal requests as we move through our fiscal year. From July to October 2017, we provided 394,067 more meals than we did in 2016.

Certain individuals or families will only need short term assistance yet some will seek out services monthly to help make ends meet, allowing them to maintain a budget and not use food dollars toward other needs.

In September 2017, we completed our Regional Hunger Assessment. The data is being compiled and the summary will be released by the end of February. We interviewed 347 emergency food recipients to gather information on their needs and resources. The findings show more people are using emergency food programs as a way to make ends meet. Look for our *Scope of Hunger 2017* report soon.

As you read through this issue you will view the ways in which the Food Bank and our partners are working together to ensure that families have access to wholesome food when they need it the most. You are part of the solution. You are one of the partners we rely on. Thank you for believing in our mission and for caring that children, adults, and seniors get the food they need. I look forward to continuing our work alongside of you. Happy New Year!

Warmest regards,

Kathleen L. Stress

Please log on to foodbankcny.org to view our full length annual report. Our new digital format offers in-depth program information while informing you about our sound fiscal practices.

PRODUCE SPECIFIC COOLER *(cover photo)*

On a Monday morning in November, two trucks pulled up to the Food Bank docks, loaded with bins of donated squash, newly harvested by an area grower. The Food Bank's pursuit of fresh produce and relationships with our agricultural partners is nothing new, but what made this event noteworthy was the volume: 24,000 pounds at a single time; all of it intended for distribution to our partner agencies at times of their choosing.

A recent upgrade to our distribution center has had an immediate impact on the way we think about perishable food and improved our capability to properly handle a variety of items. Take, for instance, yogurt and potatoes: both perishable items, but with vastly different handling requirements. An environment where one item flourishes causes the other to falter.

Through generous funding by the Central New York Community Foundation, a third environment for perishable food was constructed in the summer of 2017. Specific to produce items, this space allows for controlled temperature to create the best possible environment for the fruits and vegetables stored within, extending their viability and maintaining the quality and desirability of the produce for the families who receive it. The ability to provide ideal conditions for food in our care has far reaching effects, increasing the amounts we can seek and giving those who depend on us a better choice of nutritious food.

A MOBILE SOLUTION

Mobile Food Pantry has entered the second year of operation by building on the success of the first. The upgrade to a larger vehicle and the addition of a full time Mobile Food Pantry Coordinator has allowed the program to expand, providing more food to the community and reaching new destinations.

The initiative has proven effective in reaching the areas of unmet need it was intended to address. A recent distribution held in Syracuse provided a much needed supply of fruits and vegetables to residents reeling from the closure of their neighborhood market, while ongoing distributions on the west side of Utica have been successful in getting resources to families unable to access other options.

Mobile Food Pantry continues to hold distributions throughout Cayuga, Oneida, and Onondaga counties, with immediate plans to expand into Cortland and Oswego counties during the winter. Long term, the Food Bank intends to provide the nutritious food and flexible service of the program throughout our entire service area.



The first quarter of the fiscal year saw 17 distributions totaling over 72,000 pounds; an increase of over 400% from last year.

FEEDING OUR FAMILIES, NURTURING OUR FUTURE

In January, you don't usually think about the school year ending. However, when summer begins, children lose access to the breakfast and lunch programs they rely on during the school year. The loss of these meals puts an additional hardship on families who do not have reliable access to a sufficient amount of affordable and nutritious food. The loss also contributes to families having to turn to emergency food programs more often to fill the gap during the summer.

The Summer Food Service Program helps to address these unmet needs during the summer months. Food Bank of Central New York provides nutritious meals at sites that offer educational, recreational, and physical activities. During the summer of 2017, the Food Bank sponsored 15 sites in Cayuga, Lewis, Onondaga, and St. Lawrence counties.

The Food Bank provided 23,816 meals to children to help close the summer hunger gap.

SPECIAL GIFTS OF COMMEMORATION

For individuals and groups looking for ways to help fund Food Bank of Central New York's fight against hunger, there are a variety of alternatives to traditional donations to consider. Incorporating charitable giving into life events is a wonderful way to commemorate a special occasion and share blessings with your community. Weddings, birthdays, and holidays are all opportunities to communicate your values by designating a donation to Food Bank of Central New York as your gift of choice. An Honor Gift is a way to demonstrate your esteem for a loved one, pay tribute to friends and family or mark a special anniversary while participating in the fight against hunger.

For more information on alternative giving opportunities, please contact Lynn Hy, Chief Development Officer, at (315) 437-1899 ext. 247 or lhy@foodbankcny.org.

WAYS TO GIVE



Donate Online



Mail a Check



Give us a Call



Transfer Stock



Make a Legacy Gift

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

January/February: Check Out Hunger at Tops Friendly Market

January 25: Food Bank Telethon on NBC3

February/March: St. Patrick Hunger Project

February 8: Dine Out at Cavallo's in New Hartford

March/April: Check Out Hunger at Wegmans

April 12: SavorSyracuse

May 5: Hunt for Hunger in downtown Syracuse

July 10: Food Bank Golf Open

Please visit our website at foodbankcny.org or follow us on Facebook and Twitter for up-to-date information about our events and volunteer needs.

