

SUMMER 2023



Feed My People
FOOD BANK
feeding healthy futures

HUNGER HERALD

Working to End Hunger in West Central Wisconsin



Volunteers and staff at a special distribution for Northstar Middle School families this spring.

Hunger Doesn't Take a Summer Vacation

Kids usually love summer, but for some, it's filled with worry.

According to the Map the Meal Gap 2021 study from Feeding America, 11.5% of children in Feed My People's (FMP) 14-county service area are food insecure. That means more than 1 out of every 10 local children do not have regular access to enough food for an active, healthy life. When school lets out for the summer, these same children can no longer count on regular meals provided by

breakfast and lunch programs. For families already struggling, summer piles on added pressure to feed everyone.

"My husband and I will skip meals so the kids get what they need nutritionally. I have taken on extra shifts at work, which means less time with them," shared Adrienne, a mother in a family of five at a

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pop-up distribution in Eau Claire. When asked how coming to get groceries there helps, she said, "A lot. We are eternally grateful for the help."

Because hunger makes it harder for children to develop, connect, and play, its detrimental effects can turn into lifelong setbacks. This summer, FMP is increasing programming to help reach more kids and their families to help fuel better outcomes.

Beginning in June, additional pop-up distributions in Eau Claire and Chippewa Falls are taking place. The latter pop-up is done in partnership with Y on the Fly, a summer YMCA program designed to reach kids where they are so every child stays active and healthy.

More pop-ups are also traveling to the northern region of our service area in

Radisson, Winter, Weyerhaeuser, and Minong, to reach more people in rural areas where a lack of transportation and grocery stores makes access to food even harder. In total, this puts us at 24 monthly pop-ups in 14 communities.

Through Project FEED, a new youth hunger initiative launched by FMP at the beginning of this year, efforts to reach kids year-round in every school district are well underway. We have also continued to explore partnerships with other organizations dedicated to improving the outcomes of children and their families, such as Western Dairyland. With their support, a program to reach families at local Head Start childcare facilities has grown exponentially, going from 7 to 90 households in just a few months. Families receive pre-packed boxes of groceries and Kwik Trip vouchers for groceries like milk and fruit. Additionally,

FMP continues to support backpack programs at four libraries and Eau Claire summer schools, which provide a familiar access point for families.

We are doing everything we can to meet our communities' needs with our partners, programs, donors, volunteers, and staff, but we can't do it alone. With your continued support, let's make this summer worry-free for kids.

Help feed students over the summer.

Your gift this July 1-14 will be DOUBLED, up to \$30,000, thanks to our Operation Picnic Sponsors.

Thank You

Our sponsors help support major initiatives addressing food insecurity in our communities.

Compeer Financial and Prevail Bank

for purchase of a stand-up, power forklift

County Materials

for funding hunger-relief efforts in the Eau Claire area

A Note From the Director

Recently I had the privilege of spending time with our partners at a gathering in Blair. These folks work with us every day to fill the hunger gap for families and children in their communities during a time of high costs and an uncertain climate. I was reminded of the power of collaboration and how much more impact we can have when we work together.

Soon Operation Picnic will kick off with a goal of engaging our community in addressing summer hunger affecting local youth. There will be a financial match and opportunities to volunteer to help ensure our kids have enough to eat. Please join us, and together we can make a difference in their lives. **Together we are stronger!**

In gratitude,

Suzanne Becker

Suzanne Becker, Feed My People's Executive Director





Volunteers and staff setting up for distribution at a recent pop-up distribution in Eau Claire at Feed My People.



14 partners from 4 different counties gathered in Blair for an Agency Gathering in May with staff from FMP.

Collaborating for Change

Rice Lake

Withee

Blair

Over the next few months, Feed My People is taking its Agency Gathering on the road to visit three communities in different regions of our 14-county service area. Its goal is to network, learn, and share resources. Our partners do amazing work every day to ensure our neighbors have enough food to eat. **Thank you to all who support the critical work they do!**

Feed My People partners with **over 250 hunger-relief agencies**, including backpack programs, meal sites, and food pantries. We also support dozens of direct programs, including school, pop-up, and resident pantries, and outreach to vulnerable populations.

Stories of Hope

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“While I was checking a gentleman in at this morning’s pop-up, he asked if it cost anything. I told him our food distribution was free of charge. He began to cry and said he had 7 kids and this meant so much to him. This is why I love to volunteer especially at Pop-Ups. You feel like you are helping and making a difference.” – TERRY

“My biggest concern is food because going to grocery stores using \$100 doesn’t get you very far. I go to the Pop-Up pantry, and it helps a lot with the extra food on the table...it is a really great help to us.”

– MAI VANG, FAMILY OF 8



Upcoming Events

JULY 5 Rock’n on the River Summer Concert @ River Prairie Park (1445 Front Porch Place, Altoona) **6:30 pm** | Proceeds go to FMP, sponsored by Acquisition Realty & Development | visiteauclaire.com

JULY 13 Operation Picnic Pack-a-thon @ Feed My People (2610 Alpine Road, Eau Claire) | More details at give.fmpfoodbank.org/OperationPicnic

JULY 29 Stuff the Bus with Kids From Wisconsin @ Veterans Memorial Park Band Shell (20 E Stout St, Rice Lake) | **6-8 pm** | Proceeds go to Rice Lake hunger-relief partners | kidsfromwi.org/2023tour

AUGUST 10 WWIB Parking Lot Picnic (Includes food trucks, live music, and family-friendly entertainment!) @ WWIB (2396 Hallie Rd, Chippewa Falls) | **11 am-7 pm** | 100% of tips go to Feed My People | wwib.com



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AGAINST SUMMER
HUNGER IN
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\$1 = \$2

July 1-14

[give.fmpfoodbank.org/
OperationPicnic](http://give.fmpfoodbank.org/OperationPicnic)




**OPERATION
PICNIC**

**Let's get \$30,000 matched
this July!** You can make twice the
difference for families facing hunger
with this limited-time matching
opportunity. Operation Picnic sponsors
are doubling every gift to Feed My
People, up to \$30,000, July 1-14.

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