

HUNGER HERALD

Working to End Hunger in West Central Wisconsin



Volunteers packing ready-to-eat bags in the Hunger Action Center.

A Year of Compassion, Community, and Change

IMPACT REPORT: We're taking a look through all you helped accomplish over the last year.

At the heart of Feed My People is a simple yet profound mission — to alleviate hunger and foster food security. This mission only becomes a reality through the tireless efforts of our team, volunteers, and the unwavering support of our community.

Reflecting on the past year, we are filled with gratitude and a sense of accomplishment. Your support has empowered us to take bold steps in our

mission to address local hunger in new ways. More than 250 hunger relief partners walked beside us, turning shared visions into impactful realities.

Key Achievements

People Served

We're on track this year to distribute food to over **75,000 children, seniors, and individuals** who

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Stories of Hope

"My kids get excited when there is fruit. We don't buy it often, it's so expensive."

— Megan

"There have been times that we wouldn't have had any food if it weren't for food pantries. This has helped tremendously."

— Kat

"This food helps us get by so that my family can pay our heat and electric bills."— Deb

2023 GRANTS

(January - November)

Charles M. and Joan R Taylor Foundation
Community Foundation of Chippewa County
Community Foundation of Dunn County
Compeer Financial
Dunkin - Joy in Childhood Foundation Inc
Eau Claire Community Foundation
Empower Eau Claire
Green Bay Packers Foundation
Lippert/Curt Group
Marshfield Area Community Foundation
Mayo Foundation for Medical Education and Research
Nordson Corporation Foundation
Otto Bremer Trust
Prevail Bank
Riverland Community Foundation Inc
Sonntag American Foundation Inc
Spirit Lutheran Foundation, Inc.
State Farm Companies Foundation
Trinity Lutheran Endowment Fund
Walmart Foundation

Thank You

...continued from front.

visited our programs and partners, ensuring no one is left hungry. This is a staggering 28% increase compared to the previous year.

Food Distributed

We're also on our way to distributing **over 8 million pounds of food** to our neighbors in need this year - a 14% increase from the previous year, illustrating our shared mission's growing impact.

Program Highlights

Hunger Action Center - Still fresh from a ribbon cutting earlier this year, this new building addition allows us to serve an average of 800 Eau Claire families monthly through pop-up distributions. It also provides flexibility to expand special packs for seniors and homeless individuals and develop culturally responsive resources.

Project FEED - This new program addressing youth hunger through tailored programming has fast-tracked conversations with every school district in our service area, launched a youth volunteer education program, and began new programs and sustained many more to feed more kids equitably.

Farm to Food Bank - Also new in 2023, this program has drastically altered our distribution landscape. We needed more resources for fresh, quality produce at the beginning of the year. Today, thanks to secured partnerships with local growers, we have an abundance of good produce making its way to tables across the area. In the new year, we aim to secure partnerships for a steady meat and dairy supply.

Thank you for making a bold difference in the lives of our community members. We look forward to 2024 and the work we will continue to accomplish together to ensure healthier futures for all.

A Note From the Director

Recently during a Monday evening food distribution, I met a mother with tears in her eyes, struggling to make eye contact with me. She shared that she had never done this before, but she needed to do what she could for her kids and that meant food for their table. She had raced from work to daycare and then to the food bank. Prices were high and if she could get food assistance, she could direct her limited funds to help pay for daycare. She was one of many parents there that night, trying to do what was best for their families during a difficult time. I was grateful that she shared. I was grateful that she went home with groceries in her trunk.

In October, the U.S. Department of Agriculture released its annual report: *Household Food Security in the United States*, showing the number of people living in food insecure households in 2022 saw a 31% increase from 2021. For children, the increase was 44%. This is the highest rate and number since 2014 and falls in line with what Feed My People (FMP) and our partners are seeing every day. **By the end of September this year, we have provided food to as many individuals as we did all last year.**

FMP's staff and board have renewed their commitment to filling the food gap for struggling families in our community. What we do every day, however, is not possible without you, our community. It takes a collaborative team of donors, volunteers, agency partners, farmers, media, and so much more. If you can give financially or share your time, please do. If you are struggling, please reach out. Together we hope to spark thankfulness and generosity so all our neighbors facing food insecurity have full plates this holiday season and beyond.

In gratitude,

Suzanne Becker

Suzanne Becker, Feed My People's Executive Director





Some of our volunteer transportation drivers gathered for training this fall. Over the last year, they logged over 150,000 miles delivering food throughout our service area.

Our Volunteers Make a Vital Difference

Over the last year, our volunteers have helped us pack and sort food, transport deliveries to partners across our region, distribute food at pop-up events, provide administrative support in our office, clean floors and equipment, and so much more. It is an astonishing amount of dedication. Without them, the work we do would not be possible. Since 2004, the board and staff of Feed My People have annually chosen an organization to honor, along with a handful of dedicated volunteers. The selection process is challenging, given the abundance of exceptional individuals and groups we work with. Our heartfelt appreciation goes out to everyone who generously supports the food bank through their time and dedication throughout the year.

2023 Volunteers of the Year



Allen and Dorine Ebel

This couple is truly a dynamic duo of volunteerism. They are willing to do any task we ask with enthusiasm and efficiency. They help

sanitize the clean room, clean the warehouse floor, pack orders for projects like Project PEEK and Order Ahead, deliver food for special projects, and repack miscellaneous donated products. Because of their behind-the-scenes work, our warehouse shines bright!



Darcy Way

A volunteer truck driver delivering one to three times a week, Darcy is always willing to drive a delivery route at the last minute too if needed. When he

delivers to Pop-Ups, he is quick to roll up his sleeves and help distribute. He has a positive attitude that our partners adore and is highly encouraging with our staff. He is also in his first year on the FMP board and helps support the development team on an ad-hoc committee.



2023 Organization of the Year

Russ Davis Wholesale (Hammond, Wisconsin)

This year, during historic decreases in food donations nationwide, we have seen a massive increase in donated fresh fruits and vegetables from Russ

Davis. This has given us the opportunity to provide even more nutritious fresh food to our neighbors. Bob Drazich, Operations Manager at Russ Davis, shares that it "breaks his heart" seeing food go to waste, and it makes him and his employees feel better knowing that they are keeping quality food in the system by donating. Partnerships like Russ Davis are part of the forward-thinking strategies that Feed My People is using to overcome challenges to meet a rising number of people struggling with food insecurity.



There's Still Time to Give

There's still time to make a lasting impact in 2023!

Every donation, big or small, adds up to create meaningful change in the lives of those facing food insecurity in our community.

Consider taking advantage of the remaining days of the year to make a tax-deductible gift to Feed My People. Making a contribution is simple. Visit our secure donation page at give.fmpfoodbank.org/donate.





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 FOOD BANK
feeding healthy futures

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2024

Save the Date!

Upcoming Signature Events



Feed the Love

Campaign Feb 9-16 | Donor Event Feb 13 | Pack-a-Thon Feb 14

Matching Campaign - Volunteer Pack-a-Thon - Exclusive Donor Experience
 Strengthening programs for children and teenagers, which include school markets, backpack food resources, and special distributions during school breaks.



24th Annual Empty Bowls

Thursday, May 16 • 11 am—7 pm

Food Trucks - Locally Crafted Ceramic & Wooden Bowls - Silent Auction - Tours
 Bringing together the community for an all day mission-sustaining event at the food bank to support our neighbors facing food insecurity across west central Wisconsin.