



An Example of Help for The Community

While Keturah, a Charleston mother of three, appreciates the food she gets at mobile food distributions, she sees them as something more, something bigger – an example of help.

“There’s a lot of poverty around here, and when you guys do things like this and let the kids help, it is welcomed because we don’t see it a lot,” she said. “All these kids around here see violence and drugs, so when communities and organizations like (Southeast Missouri Food Bank) come in and do stuff like this, that is great. The kids need the positive energy and message rather than fighting and everything else. Help your community grow.”

The past year has been tough for Keturah and her children. She works with an in-home health care service, but her hours were cut and she has struggled to keep food on the table.

“We’ve been really struggling since the pandemic,”

Keturah said. “I work for an in-home health care service, so I try to find out where the food is given out so I can let my clients know as well. A lot of them are scared to get out or they can’t get out. So, I go get (food) for them. Even if it wasn’t my job, I just love to help.”

Keturah and her family have struggled with food, especially when the kids were home from school and needed breakfast, lunch and dinner each day. She considers the mobile food pantries a “blessing.”

“There’s so many people who need this,” Keturah said. “My kids love the food given out, and it helps out my wallet. When you have little kids, they want snacks and stuff from the store that I can’t afford, but you guys give us that and that helps out. The food here keeps our freezer and refrigerator full. I just thank God for you all.”

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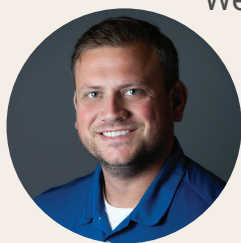
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Mission

To end hunger and leverage
the power of food to build
healthy communities.

It Takes a Lot of Moving Parts – and Funds – to Get Food to Hungry Families

Food banks are complex organizations, requiring many moving parts to fulfill their mission.



We rely heavily on monetary donations to purchase food and administer programs, but we also depend on donated products.

Over the last year, we have received potatoes, beef sticks, watermelons, pork and many other items that we distribute through our programs like mobile food pantries or through our network of agencies. But receiving a food donation is just the first step in the process of helping our hungry neighbors.

Take those potatoes, for instance. Black Gold donated many pallets of potatoes to the food bank. But potatoes don't move themselves, so a truck and driver delivered them to our distribution center in Sikeston. No brainer, right? But it also incurs a cost. Fuel costs have risen, so trucking and freight costs have also increased, which strains our yearly budget.

But back to the potatoes. Once they're delivered, they are stored and added to our inventory. Our 140 partner agencies place orders

from that inventory, making a shopping list just like you or I would at the grocery store. When an order is received – for example 20 bags of potatoes – our awesome warehouse team pulls the correct number from the shelf and gets them ready for distribution, which may be picked up by the agency or delivered by the food bank. This takes us back to freight costs.

Once the potatoes have arrived at the agency – let's say a pantry – they are handed out to a hungry family during a regular food distribution, eventually making their way to a dinner table in southeast Missouri.

From the time the potatoes were donated to the food bank, dollars were invested in the delivery, storage and distribution before reaching the hands of someone facing hunger. All of the parts work together to help our neighbors who need it most. That is why donations – of both money and food – are so important and why we work so hard to make sure 96 percent of donations go to our mission.

Joseph Keys

CEO of Southeast Missouri Food Bank

NAP Credits Save on Taxes, Help Feed Families

Want to help feed families facing hunger and pay less on your Missouri taxes next year? You can when you invest in Neighborhood Assistance Program (NAP) tax credits through Southeast Missouri Food Bank. The program allows eligible Missouri businesses, banks, farmers and rental property owners to earn a tax credit equal to 50 percent of their charitable donation to the food bank.

The food bank uses the funds to purchase nutritious food for the many families facing hunger throughout our 16-county service area.

Contact Lisa Church at church@semofoodbank.org or **573-471-1818** to learn how you can help families facing hunger and save on your Missouri taxes.



/SoutheastMOFoodBank



@semofoodbank

Monthly Donors Make a *Lasting Difference*

Bill Ledbetter has been making a monthly contribution to Southeast Missouri Food Bank for the last eight years. When he first set up the donation, it was an electronic fund transfer from his checking account. Later, he switched to a monthly charge on his credit card. It's something he rarely thinks about, except to know that some child somewhere in southeast Missouri has dinner because of his help.



"It's one of my ways to help out and give back," Bill said. "I know it's going someplace where it can help people in need. What got me started is that I heard the food bank did those backpacks of food for the schools. That's when I called and set up a donation. I like donating to someplace that isn't wasteful and is using the money to really help people."

More than 100 people make regular donations to the food bank – some monthly, some twice a month or even weekly. Some mail their donations, but most like the ease of automatic drafts from their checking account or credit card. Amounts range from \$10 to a few hundred.

"I set it up on a monthly basis," said Sharon Martindale of Wappapello. "It's in my budget, and it comes out every month, and I don't have to think about it or mail anything in. It just happens."

She set up the donation shortly after she and her husband relocated from Texas to the Lake Wappapello area.

"I felt very much that when my husband and I moved here, we were very blessed to have what we did. I felt led to pass on my blessings," Sharon said. "That scripture verse, 'When I was hungry, you fed me, and when I was thirsty, you gave me something to drink,' kept popping in my head. One thing I was concerned about is people having enough to eat because that is so essential to life. So I felt led to give to the food bank."

Bill and Sharon are members of Feed365, a caring and compassionate community of givers who help feed hungry families by making recurring monthly donations to the food bank. This provides a reliable source of ongoing support and nutritious food for those who need it most.

To join Feed365, start your donation today by calling Lisa or Heather at 573-471-1818, or visit our website at SEMOFoodBank.org, click on the red "Donate" button in the upper right corner, and select the "monthly" option in the "Donation Frequency" dropdown menu.



Supplementing *SNAP benefits*

Being without a vehicle can make things like going to work tough for a person. Michael, 59, from New Madrid, lives with this struggle.

"When you do have an interview, one of the first things they question is how you are going to get back and forth with no vehicle," he said.

With no steady job to bring income in, this predicament has Michael going with limited to no food at times. He does get support from SNAP, formally known as food stamps. The increased benefits during the pandemic helped, but at times it still isn't enough.

"When I can find work here and there and keep things going, I don't use food pantries but with coronavirus, things get really tough and I have to," Michael said.

Michael is thankful for the support in his community.

"I appreciate the help," he said.

A Lifetime of Caring *Feeds Neighbors*

Parents go above and beyond to make sure their children are well-fed and taken care of as they grow up. The food bank hears stories all the time from parents who skip meals so their children have enough to eat.

Even when a child becomes an adult, parents still provide love and support. But for some parents, that support is much more crucial to a grown child's well-being.

Francis, from Marble Hill, and her husband have taken extra special care of their son Mark throughout his lifetime. Mark, 64, is developmentally disabled.

"As soon as Mark became an adult, I began to apply for different programs

to help him like disability, food stamps and things like that," Francis said.

The couple even built a small house on their property for Mark to live in, so he has some independence while remaining close to his parents' support.

Mark doesn't have much money coming in, so Francis regularly visits Marble Hill Food Pantry to get him food for the month. She said his favorite food is pizza, but he loves everything he gets.

Francis is grateful for the food that she gets from Marble Hill Food Pantry and Southeast Missouri Food Bank.

"Thank you, thank you, thank you," she said.



Daily Choices are Tough for People *Facing Hunger*



For most people, a meal is just a choice of what to eat: hamburger or pizza, tacos or sushi. For people facing hunger, a meal poses a vastly different kind of choice:

Gas for the car or food?

Electric bill or food?

Prescribed medicine or food?

These are choices thousands of people across

southeast Missouri make every day.

Southeast Missouri Food Bank and Feeding America commemorate Hunger Action Month every September to drive awareness and inspire action to end hunger. This year, we're focusing on the tough decisions people facing hunger make every day. Because food shouldn't be an impossible choice.

The food bank serves about 70,000 individuals each month in our 16-county service area, helping make the choice easier for some families.

Look again at the questions our hungry neighbors ask themselves each day and then ask yourself: **How will I choose to end hunger?**

Visit **semofoodbank.org** to donate or set up a virtual food drive and follow us on social media for updates on Hunger Action Month activities.



Leave a legacy that makes a difference for families facing hunger. Ask us how to include Southeast Missouri Food Bank in your estate planning. Contact Lisa Church at 573-471-1818.