

The Bread Box

Spring 2024 Newsletter



Second Harvest

Food Bank
of Northwest Pennsylvania

Food Bank Focus

A question we often receive is: what's the difference between a food *bank* and a food *pantry*?

A **food bank**, like Second Harvest Food Bank of Northwest Pennsylvania, is a nonprofit organization that solicits, collects, stores, and distributes food to partner entities to alleviate hunger in local communities. As the only food bank in northwestern PA, Second Harvest distributes millions of pounds of grocery products every year so that our 376 agency partners can obtain nutritious food at low cost for their neighbors in need.

A **food pantry** is an individual site that distributes food directly to people in need within a local community. Along with pantries, Second Harvest's network of agency partners includes soup kitchens, shelters, local

schools, churches, and rehabilitation centers within the 11 counties we serve. People facing hunger, including unemployed and underemployed workers, people experiencing homelessness, senior citizens, children, individuals with disabilities, and families in crisis situations, receive food free of charge through these partners.

Getting millions of pounds of food from farms, retailers, or food drives into the hands of people in need is no simple task. When Second Harvest receives food, volunteers sort and repack the items based on how they will be distributed. Some food is temporarily stored in the warehouse for specific programs, and some is immediately transported to agency partners for distribution in their communities.

Historically, food banks have not directly

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How You Can Help

From food drives to cash donations, all of Second Harvest's donors help make a difference across northwest Pennsylvania. In addition to donations prompted by a fundraising event or a letter in your mailbox, we also have options for planned giving, automatic monthly donations, and a tax credit program for businesses making larger contributions.

Examples of planned giving include bequests, life insurance policies, IRA distributions, donor-advised funds, and charitable trusts. Individuals who have remembered Second Harvest in their will are recognized in perpetuity through our Full Plate Society. This includes an ornamental memorial plate displayed in our entryway to all who visit the food bank.

Even a modest contribution through our monthly giving program, Become a Hunger Hero, results in a big impact toward alleviating hunger. These consistent gifts help us better allocate our budget and reduce administrative costs surrounding donations. All types of donors are also welcome to a private tour of the Second Harvest facility to see the work their gift makes possible.

For businesses, Second Harvest annually participates in the PA Department of Community and Economic Development's Neighborhood Assistance Program (NAP). This program promotes collaboration for charitable causes by providing up to a 55% tax credit to businesses with pending contributions to a participating nonprofit.

To learn more about any of these donation options, please contact Director of Development, Breanna Watts, at (814) 459-3663 ext. 114 or bwatts@nwpafoodbank.org.

Perspective



In every community across northwestern Pennsylvania, people are working hard to provide for their families. And yet, tonight, parents will make the difficult choice between paying rent or buying groceries. A grandmother will skip dinner because of the cost of her prescription. A child will remain hungry until tomorrow's school lunch. These are the realities of our neighbors in need.

During 2023, Second Harvest Food Bank of Northwest Pennsylvania saw an overall increase of 57% in attendance at food distributions when compared to 2022. With the help of our dedicated donors, we were able to meet this additional need. Food insecurity can result from short-term setbacks, such as a layoff or hospitalization, or long-term circumstances like high housing and transportation costs, and rising food prices. Second Harvest remains diligent in our mission to provide food to people in need as we work toward our vision of a new reality — a hunger-free community.

Gratefully,

Karen S. Seggi,
Chief Executive Officer

Our Vision: A hunger-free community.

Our Mission: The mission of the Second Harvest Food Bank of Northwest Pennsylvania is to provide food to those in need within 11 counties of northwest Pennsylvania while creating awareness and educating the community on the realities of hunger.

Second Harvest serves 11 counties in northwest Pennsylvania: Cameron, Clarion, Clearfield, Crawford, Elk, Erie, Forest, Jefferson, McKean, Venango, and Warren.

New at Second Harvest

OrderAhead App: Second Harvest is currently running a small pilot program and will expand this initiative through select agency partners. OrderAhead, designed by Feeding America and sponsored by the Walmart Foundation, enables people in need to order food at a pickup time that fits their schedule.

Summer Feeding: Thanks to the Erie Women's Fund, Second Harvest was a recipient of the 2023 Furchak-Ferko Annual Grant, which will fund the expansion of our summer Backpack and School Pantry programs in Erie County. Last summer's programming distributed over 1,300 backpacks of food and supported over 700 school pantry visits.

New Van: At this year's Erie Auto Show, Second Harvest was awarded a 2023 Ford Transit cargo van by Erie Ford Dealers through the Ford Friendship Express Program. This new van will increase our food rescue and delivery efforts across our service area.

Food Bank Focus

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distributed food to the public on a large scale, as they primarily support the inventory of their partnering food pantries. However, to provide additional support to overburdened agency partners, Second Harvest now conducts several hunger relief programs. These include our Produce Express and Military Share mobile food distributions, Senior Box Program, and Backpack and School Pantry programs. Second Harvest's in-house initiatives have expanded our reach to thousands more people facing hunger. While food banking continues to evolve, the core of the mission remains the same: ensuring that all of our neighbors have nourishing food for their families.

Third Annual Empty Bowls

After last year's sold-out event, Second Harvest will host the Third Annual Empty Bowls on **Sunday, October 13, 2024**. This fundraiser consists of a modest meal of soup and bread as a reminder that too many of our neighbors are facing hunger with "empty bowls." Guests will enjoy a variety of soups, breads, and desserts donated by local restaurants. With hundreds of handmade bowls to choose from, all guests in attendance will select a bowl as a memento of their contribution toward alleviating hunger.



If your organization would like to become an Empty Bowls sponsor, please contact Digital Media and Communications Coordinator, Alex Bohman, at abohman@nwpafoodbank.org or (814) 459-3663 ext. 104. Additional information will be available closer to the event.

Upcoming Events

Giant Eagle Full Plates
Zero Waste Campaign
February 29 - June 1, 2024



Country Fair Cares
Pump for Charity 2024
March 15 - September 15
Clarion, Crawford,
McKean, Venango, and
Warren counties



National
Association
of Letter
Carriers'
"Stamp Out

Hunger" Food Drive
May 11, 2024

Warren Gives
May 15, 2024

Highmark Walk for a
Healthy Community
June 1, 2024



Erie Gives
August 13,
2024

Crawford Gives
August 24 - 27, 2024



How You Helped

"Sometimes I don't have food at home, and I know I can always get food at school."

"My mom was excited I brought chicken home and we could make buffalo chicken dip."

"I don't feel hungry as much on the weekend."

These quotes are from a few of the almost 4,000 children who receive food weekly through our Backpack and School Pantry programs, because of supporters like you. Between September 2023 and January 2024, over 500 new students signed up to receive food through these programs.

The impact of our donors and volunteers allows Second Harvest to expand our capacity as more people across our region seek food assistance. We also consistently improve the type of food available. **Over the past three years, we have increased the amount of fresh produce we purchase by 139% to better support our neighbors in need.**

Thank you for all you do to help Second Harvest alleviate hunger in northwest Pennsylvania.

Here's what you helped us accomplish last fiscal year:

Received

\$664,518 through fundraisers

203,787 pounds of food through food drives

15,655 volunteer hours, the equivalent of 8 full-time employees

Distributed

29,797 senior food boxes

80,341 backpacks of food for children

52,474 people fed through over 350 mobile food distributions (includes Produce Express & Military Share)

11,545,949 pounds of food, including 2,141,549 pounds of fresh produce



Want to save paper?

Opting out of paper receipts on your remittance slip helps us focus more funds toward helping our neighbors in need.

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Second Harvest

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