

TABLESETTER

Foodbank®
St. Louis Area Foodbank

Tis the Season for Giving

By Meredith Knopp, President & CEO

As the holiday season approaches, it's a time for reflection, gratitude, and acts of kindness. At the St. Louis Area Foodbank, **we're especially grateful for the unwavering support of our community.** This year, more than ever, your generosity can make a significant difference in the lives of those facing food insecurity.

2024 has been a year of challenges, but also opportunities. Rising food costs means even more families are seeking food assistance. Food is a uniter, and it is present in many fond memories of holiday gatherings. **We believe that everyone deserves the opportunity to have a filling, nutritious holiday meal** and our teams are working to keep plates full in homes across the communities we serve. *This year, we will work with our pantry partners to distribute 4,000 Thanksgiving dinners to our neighbors.*

Throughout 2024, we've focused on building a healthy and secure food system for the communities we serve. We recognize that our communities are diverse, and they have different needs for culturally relevant foods, as well as food that meets high nutritional standards. We are working to source foods that meet these cultural needs, so families can cook meals that are familiar and meaningful to them. **We have also prioritized sourcing as much of our product locally as possible.** The Foodbank implemented the H.E.R. (Healthy Eating Research) guidelines to categorize food donations, prioritizing options low in added sugar and sodium. "Healthy pantries" were established to educate both the Foodbank and its partner agencies on healthy choices. *Food on the Move* mobile pantries received a makeover, with prominently displayed healthy options at eye level.

We couldn't have done this meaningful work without your incredible support. **This holiday season, we ask you to help us make sure our neighbors have a holiday meal by donating food, funds, or your time.** Every contribution, no matter how small, can make a big impact.

By sharing the holidays with your community, you're not just providing food; you're offering hope and support to those in need. Let's come together to make this holiday season truly special for everyone.

Thank you for your continued generosity and support. Together, we can make a difference.

For more information on ways to get involved, visit stlfoodbank.org/give-help.

NEWSLETTER • NOV. 2024

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

- Illinois LFPA Program
Apple Gleaning Event
- 9/11 Day of Service Meal
Packing Event
- Thanksgiving Together
- School Markets and Pantries
- SLBSA's Scouting For Food

Thank you to our Thanksgiving Together Partners:

Harlene and Marvin Wool
Foundation

Super Bright LEDs

Hogan Truck Leasing

Midwest Mechanical
Services & Solutions

Staenberg Family Foundation,
a supporting foundation of
Jewish Federation of St. Louis

McKelvey Homes

ARCO Construction

Olympia Auto & Tire

Thank you to the following organizations for their ongoing sponsorship and support:



CRAWFORD TAYLOR
FOUNDATION



Edward Jones



PARTNER
FOOD BANK OF
**FEEDING
AMERICA**



Illinois LFPA Program APPLE GLEANING EVENT

On Thursday, September 19, volunteers and staff with the *St. Louis Area Foodbank* attended an apple-picking event at Liberty Orchard in Edwardsville, IL. *Liberty Orchard* is a pick-your-own destination for families in the region. They invited the *St. Louis Area Foodbank* team to pick as many apples as they could during the event, all of which were then distributed to neighbors in need of food assistance.

The *St. Louis Area Foodbank* also partners with *Liberty Orchard* through the *Illinois LFPA program*. The LFPA program is a statewide food assistance program that provides food to families facing food insecurity. The program is administered by the Illinois Department of Agriculture. Through the LFPA program, the *St. Louis Area Foodbank* purchases apples from *Liberty Orchard* at a discounted rate. These apples are then distributed to food pantries throughout the region. **The St. Louis Area Foodbank sources as much product as possible locally, keeping funds and food in the communities we serve.**

"As a kid that grew up on a farm, *there is nothing more exciting than harvest*," said Tim Morrison, who volunteered during the event. "One literally gets to touch and taste the fruits of their exhaustion, their prayers for timely sunshine, rain, and protection from infestations! Your senses are tantalized to smell the aroma of the fruit and trees, to see bees and pollinators taking sugar from fruit on the ground to savor for winter, to listen to the birds awaiting their turn, and to hear the cheerful voices of others picking and collecting apples. During harvest, people gather 'in thanksgiving' to celebrate meals together. We're enriched to hear the farmer's experience and to meet the staff. *Gleaning the apples to share with others who are hungry and in need* offers an invitation, a welcome to the table to celebrate with their families, their friends and their communities. It not only brings food, but it brings the soil, the rain, the roots and foliage, the precious gifts of this earth to the table."

Over 2,070 pounds of apples were picked during the event. The apples will be distributed to families in need over the next few weeks. The *St. Louis Area Foodbank* is grateful to *Liberty Orchard* for its support. The apple-picking event was *a fun and rewarding way for volunteers to help out their community.*

Left: St. Louis Area Foodbank's Jason Huff, Chief Development Officer, and Alice Kellogg, Volunteer Services Manager, box up freshly-picked apples at Liberty Orchard in Edwardsville, IL.



On September 11, the *St. Louis Area Foodbank* partnered with the *911day.org* and *Kids Around the World* to host a meal pack event at the *Enterprise Center* in downtown St. Louis, MO.

The event aimed to turn a day of tragedy into a day of service by **bringing people together to support their communities across the county.**

Hundreds of volunteers, including groups from area companies, banded together to pack 375,000 meals, consisting of rice, lentils and nutritious vitamin supplements. **The meals were distributed to food pantries throughout the Eastern Missouri and Southern Illinois region the next day.**

911day.org is a non-profit organization that promotes volunteerism and community service. *Kids Around the World* is a non-profit organization that provides food and nutrition to children in need.

The meal pack event was a huge success. The Foodbank was able to provide much-needed food assistance to families in need. The event also helped to raise awareness of the Foodbank's work and the importance of volunteerism.



THANKSGIVING TOGETHER 2024



Visit <https://stlfoodbank.org/give-funds/> or **scan the the code** to the left to make a gift to support our annual **Thanksgiving Together** event and to ensure everyone can enjoy a healthy meal with their families this Thanksgiving.

SCHOOL MARKETS & PANTRIES

Imagine trying to focus on a lesson, follow your teacher's instructions, or make friends when you are hungry. This is the reality for millions of children right now. The *USDA* reports that **1 in 5 children in the US experiences hunger**—that's four kids in a typical classroom of 20. Hunger doesn't just impact their ability to learn; it affects their future.

Our **school markets** ensure children have food to thrive throughout the school year. These 35 markets are inside schools across the St. Louis region, with refrigerators, freezers, and shelves filled with produce, dairy, protein, and shelf-stable food items. They allow students and families to choose what foods they want and de-stigmatize the need to ask for help.

In addition to our school market program, we recently launched a new program: **school pantries**. This is an excellent option for schools with less space to devote to a full-scale market but still want to participate in a Foodbank program to support the school's children and families.

School pantries already exist at four locations in St. Louis, with more on the way on both sides of the river. **These two programs combined impact children and families in nearly 40 schools in the bi-state region with more on the way.**

"Running the school market at my schools is one of the most fulfilling and rewarding parts of my job," says Jordan Young, MSW, School Social Worker with *Twillman & Lawson Elementary School*. "**Having food readily available to our students, families, and community is a game changer.**"

Previously, I would spend hours locating various resources, driving to pick up food, and dropping it off at families' homes. But now, our families can shop at the very place they already go every day. They are treated with dignity and respect, and I see the stigma of receiving assistance diminishing."

To help support this critical program, please visit <https://stlfoodbank.org/give-help/> or email philanthropy@stlfoodbank.org.

SCOUTING FOR FOOD

SCOUTS BSA • FOOD DRIVE

This month, the *St. Louis Area Foodbank* will receive approximately 500,000 pounds of food through the annual *Scouting For Food* food drive. We are so grateful for this amazing effort which will benefit and help sustain so many of our neighbors throughout the holiday season and beyond.

On Saturday, November 16, 2024, *Greater St. Louis Area Council Scouting* will place food donation bags at residences across the bi-state area. Simply fill the



BAG DISTRIBUTION DAY
November 16, 2024

BAG COLLECTION DAY
November 23, 2024

bags and leave them out on November 23 for pick up. *Scouts BSA* and the *St. Louis Area Foodbank* will take it from there.

For a list of the best items to donate, please visit bit.ly/HolidayBestFoods.

Foodbank
St. Louis Area Foodbank

70 Corporate Woods Drive
Bridgeton, MO 63044
314-292-6262 | STLFoodbank.org



This Institution Is An Equal
Opportunity Provider