

PLENTY

Fall 2019

MEMBER OF
**FEEDING
AMERICA**

food gatherers
fighting hunger where we live



The Fight Against Summer Hunger: Feeding More Kids Than Ever Before!

This summer Food Gatherers coordinated with dozens of community partners to feed more kids than ever before! As the largest sponsor of the Summer Food Service Program (SFSP), we served free meals at 34 sites near families with low incomes who struggle to replace the free and reduced-price meals their children receive in school. Each weekday during the summer kids came to SFSP sites, located primarily in Ann Arbor, Ypsilanti, and Ypsilanti and Superior Townships, for two meals, fun activities, and nutrition education. Food Gatherers also provided weekend meals, produce boxes, and groceries for the children and their families.

All together our Summer Food Service Program:

- Served 54,000 meals to 1,700 children (a 79% and 25% increase over summer 2018)
- Provided 1,037 produce boxes (each containing 20 lbs. of fruits and vegetables)
- Sent home 5,020 weekend meals
- Hosted 4 grocery distributions providing 17,364 pounds of food to 337 families

New this summer, Food Gatherers piloted a mobile summer food program to bring meals to kids in isolated communities who otherwise would not have access to a summer meal site. Our summer food van traveled more than 2,500 miles bringing meals each weekday to three different communities - Rawsonville Woods, Van Buren Estates, and Schooner Cove. The parents and residents of these communities were very grateful for the food and often pitched in to help meal service run smoothly.

Here's what we heard while serving the mobile meals:

- A mother that regularly brought her three kids to eat and volunteered to serve meals, mentioned that she was grateful for the program because her SNAP benefits (food stamps) were only \$7.50/day for her family of five.
- A family of four boys living with their grandmother attended regularly to eat lunch and snack, and always asked for seconds when they were available.
- A teenager at lunch mentioned that he hadn't eaten anything in a couple of days.
- Many children came to lunch saying it was their first meal of the day.
- A parent who brought her child to lunch asked if she could make a donation so the program would continue in the future.

This would not have been possible without very generous sponsorship for our summer programming from Toyota, support from the Michigan Department of Education, a grant from the United Way of Washtenaw County for our mobile summer food pilot, and countless community volunteers and donors.

**Your support feeds children in our community all year.
Please make a gift now at foodgatherers.org/donate.**



Mobile summer food van unloading and setting up to serve meals.



Community volunteers helped set-up and serve meals.

Highlights from Food Gatherers Nutrition Policy

Food Gatherers believes that access to nutritious food is a basic human right. We connect the dots between hunger and health, and for many years focusing on healthy food has been a driving feature of our work. In January 2019 our board adopted a formal nutrition policy that prioritizes procuring and distributing nutritious and economically valuable food to our 50,000 neighbors facing food insecurity. Nationally, one-third of food banks have formally adopted a nutrition policy like this. The types of food prioritized in our policy are considered "Healthy Picks*" and they include:

- Fresh fruit and vegetables
- Eggs, fish, meat, poultry, and plant-based protein
- Whole grains
- Milk, cheese, and yogurt
- Convenience foods (ready to eat) that are low-sodium and low-sugar

A leader in hunger-relief for more than 30 years, our commitment to nutrition is demonstrated in our governing values, our strategic plan, and our operating procedures, programming, and community partnerships. Every day we work to build the capacity of our program network to distribute healthy food in the following ways:

- We ensure that more than 60% of the food we distribute is protein and fresh produce.
- We do not charge a fee for distributing donated food to our partner programs; instead, we absorb the cost of food collection, storage, and distribution.
- We partner with local farms, individuals, and community growers to encourage the donation of fresh produce.

- We provide Carrot Credits to partner programs to purchase items from our inventory, including low-sodium canned goods, whole wheat pastas, or frozen fish.
- We use a Go, Slow, Whoa labeling system in our inventory database to easily identify healthy foods.
- Our Shoppers Pantry in the warehouse models best practice strategies to promote healthy food choices.
- We provide technical assistance, nutrition education, and resources to partner programs through direct service programming including: Healthy Pantry Conversion Project, CookStars Nutrition Ambassador Training Program, and Community Cooks.
- We offer training and outreach so our partner programs can connect clients to SNAP and other federal food programs.
- Our Healthy School Pantry Program provides fresh fruits and vegetables for families at participating schools.
- The Health Care and Food Bank Partnership Initiative creates strategic relationships with health care institutions to increase food insecurity screening and referrals, and raise awareness of food insecurity as a social determinant of health.

To learn more visit foodgatherers.org

*Healthy Picks are based on the Dietary Guidelines for America, Feeding America's Detailed Foods to Encourage (F2E) framework and Food Gatherers' own data about client food preferences.



Meals served in our Community Kitchen in the Delonis Center feature healthy proteins, vegetables, whole grains, and fruit for dessert.



Carrots
Key Points
 • For the best buy, choose carrots that are firm, smooth and without cracks.
 • To prepare carrots, wash well before eating.
 • To keep fresh, refrigerate unwashed carrots for up to 2 weeks. Refrigerate cooked carrots for up to 3 days.
 • Carrots contain vitamin A, which is good for healthy eyes and skin.
Quick Tips
 Food Gatherers meal kits and recipes distributed at pantries support healthy eating.



We rely on our community - individuals, gardeners and farmers, and retailers - to donate fresh produce!



Thousands of volunteers sort, package, and process produce before we distribute it to our community partners.



Partner food pantries are organized to highlight fresh produce and protein, and encourage healthy picks.



Our Healthy School Pantry Program hosts monthly produce distributions for more than 600 families at 16 local schools.

Food Gatherers is standing up for SNAP and Summer Meals!

This fall, Food Gatherers told the federal administration “NO” to proposed changes to SNAP that would result in more than 160,000 Michiganders completely losing their food stamps. Now, we are working with Congress to protect and strengthen the Summer Food Service Program, so we can feed more children in the summer when school is out. Want to learn more or stand up with us? Check out foodgatherers.org/advocate.



Congratulations NSF

NSF International is celebrating their 75th anniversary of protecting and improving human health. Founded in 1944 at U-M School of Public Health, NSF's first challenge was to develop hygiene and sanitation standards for commercial foodservice equipment, including soda fountains and luncheonette equipment. Since then, NSF has developed over 100 national standards and certifies products that meet these standards with the widely recognized NSF mark.

Food recovery efforts simply would not exist without the standards and best practices in food safety and sanitation that NSF has championed. How lucky for Food Gatherers to have grown up in the same neighborhood as NSF! They are a major corporate sponsor of Food Gatherers, their staff regularly volunteer at our warehouse and donate produce from their garden, and every year NSF chooses to host their company picnic at Grillin'! Thank you NSF for being so good at what you do and for doing such good in our community.

Food = Love

This was recently posted on our Facebook page and we wanted to share it with everyone who is fighting hunger in our community.

“ When I was a teenager, I lived at the Delonis Homeless Shelter in downtown Ann Arbor and Food Gatherers came to feed us every day. I was and am so incredibly grateful to every single volunteer, donor, and organizer. Because of all your efforts, none of us went hungry while we were at some of our lowest points. Almost 10 years later, I still think about that and from the bottom of my heart, I'm so thankful to you all. Thank you, a thousand times, thank you. ”



Upcoming Events

Cheers to Volunteers

October 27, 4:00 - 6:00 p.m.

To celebrate the amazing contributions of our volunteers we are hosting an appreciation event at Babs Underground, 213 S Ashley St. in Ann Arbor. Please RSVP by October 13 to the volunteer team (724.761.2796 or volunteer@foodgatherers.org). We hope to see you there!

Season of Sharing

November 18 - 27

Busch's annual food and fund drive to support Food Gatherers and our community partners. Please visit any Busch's store to participate.

Rockin' for the Hungry

December 3 - 8

Ann Arbor's 107one radio will broadcast live at our largest annual outdoor food and fund drive. Gifts made during Rockin' are matched by lead community members and local businesses.

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