

PLENTY

Winter 2024

food gatherers®
fighting hunger where we live

PARTNER
FOOD BANK OF
**FEEDING
AMERICA**



Dear Gatherer,

I look forward to annual newsletters from friends and family full of photos of growing children and their joys and challenges of the preceding year.

I am pleased to present our annual report for our 2023 fiscal year. Behind every graph and data point in this newsletter, there are stories of our neighbors and our partners, volunteers and staff, food donors, and financial donors gathering good food and goodwill on behalf of our Washtenaw County community.

Sadly, there are many stories of great hardship fueled by the high cost of food and essentials.

While inflation rose at a slower pace in 2023, the price of basic needs like groceries and housing are still at historic levels. It will likely be many more months, if not years, for many to regain financial stability.

The same pressures impacting our neighbors also strained our operating budget. Facing a decline in federal food resources, Food Gatherers purchased 40% more pounds of food in FY2023 to ensure our neighbors continue to have access to nutritious food.

There are joyful stories, as well. Active Faith Community Services, one of our pantry partners, recently shared this testament to our collective work:

“A young mother of two who struggled with deep depression during the challenging times of Covid has transformed her life with the support of our food pantry. Overcoming the difficulty of even leaving her bed, she now shines as a college student at Washtenaw Community College, getting all A’s. She’s on a remarkable path to becoming an outstanding social worker, turning adversity into triumph. We are so proud of her.”

Resilience, determination, compassion... Our neighbors facing food insecurity and our nonprofit partners continually overcome obstacles and challenges to create a brighter future for everyone. Together, we write a story of hope.

Eileen Spring
President & CEO

Food Gatherers Annual Report

Fiscal Year 2023: July 1, 2022 – June 30, 2023

To meet the incredible need for food assistance in Washtenaw County in fiscal year 2023, Food Gatherers provided the equivalent of **18,000 meals per day** through our network of more than **140 hunger-relief agencies and programs**. Together, we helped individuals and families access food at schools, clinics, affordable housing sites, shelters, social service agencies, and many more.



More people relied on our network last year during continued inflation and a significant reduction in SNAP benefits. Counting every person in every household, each time they received services, Food Gatherers and our network helped **1,021,652 people** access the healthy food they need. We assisted 500+ callers, distributed 13,500+ flyers in six languages, and received 35,000+ views on our Find Food webpage.



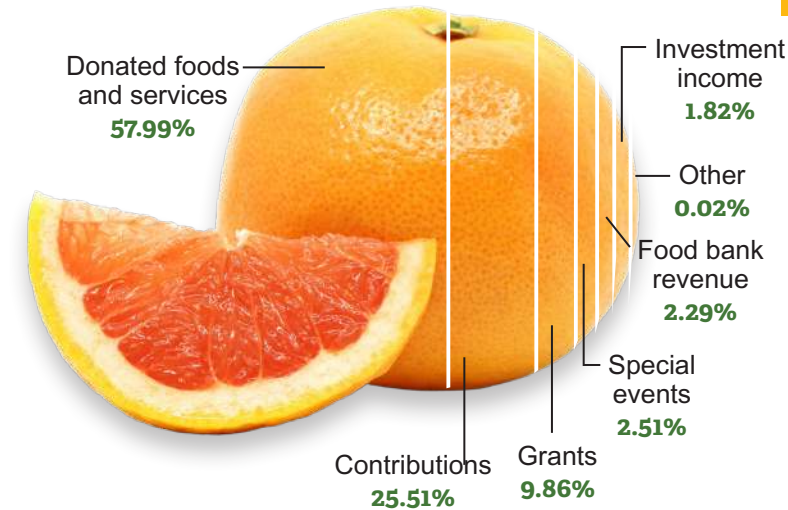
Revenue

Total revenue: \$19,509,555

Donated foods and services	\$11,313,835
Contributions	\$4,976,737
Grants	\$1,922,796
Special events	\$490,069

Other revenue

Food bank revenue	\$447,112
Investment income	355,971
Other	\$3,035



Expenses

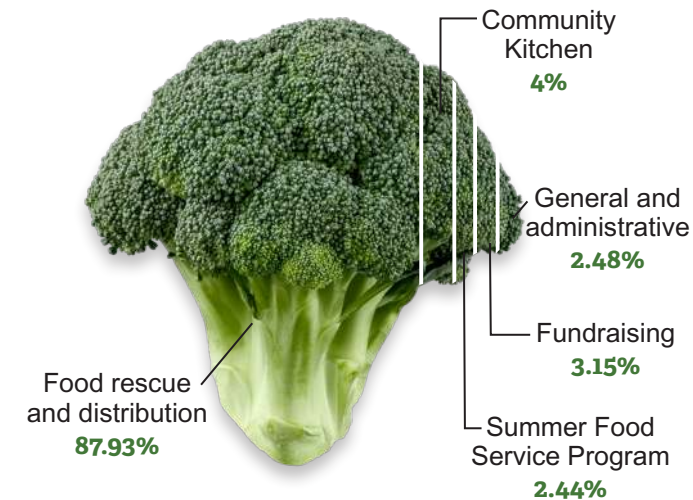
Total expenses: \$18,571,954

Program services

Food rescue and distribution	\$16,329,622
Community Kitchen	\$741,696
Summer Food Service Program	\$453,959

Core mission support

Fundraising	\$585,654
General and administrative	\$461,023



Our Programs

Food Gatherers Community Kitchen prepared and served **58,060 plates of food**.

The Healthy School Pantry Program (2022-2023) partnered with **15 schools** to connect **1,500+ families** per month to produce and groceries.

The Summer Food Service Program (2022) hosted **24 sites** to ensure **1,216 children** could access healthy meals when school was out.

Neighborhood Grocery Initiatives provided **679,648 pounds of food** to residents at **24 low-income housing sites**.



“After the COVID-19 support ended for the SNAP benefits, we had many residents struggle with balancing buying food and affording their basic necessities: rent, medications, etc. Food Gatherers’ Neighborhood Grocery Initiative has provided residents with no-cost food and allowed residents to continue to balance their budget.”

– Program staff, senior living community

Working Together

Volunteers are the driving force behind our mission. We welcomed **3,399 volunteers** who dedicated **48,122 hours** to meet the soaring demand for our services.

Warehouse and food run volunteers like Miriam (left) helped inspect, sort, pack, and deliver groceries for our network. Helen (middle) enjoys preparing healthy food and is one of many neighbors who cooked and served meals at the Community Kitchen. Volunteers like Dave (right) and his team at Old National Bank helped by freezin’ for a reason at Rockin’ for the Hungry to raise 1 million meals.

Board of Directors

Simon Whitelocke, Chair, Vice President, ITC Holdings Corp.

Frank Carollo, Vice Chair, Managing Partner, Zingerman’s Bakehouse (Retired)

Christopher Tressler, Treasurer, Senior Director of Tax and Asset Accounting, Wacker Chemical Corporation

Jim Lee, Secretary, Altarum Fellow, Altarum Institute

Eileen Spring, President/CEO, Food Gatherers

Susan Aaronson, Lecturer/Director of Dietetics Program, Department of Nutritional Sciences, University of Michigan School of Public Health

Gary Bruder, Attorney, Bruder PLC

Tony Denton, Senior Vice President and Chief Environmental, Social and Governance Officer, University of Michigan Health System

Nell Dority, Chief of Staff, Vice President for Government Relations, University of Michigan

Mary Kerr, President & CEO, Destination Ann Arbor (Retired)

Jackie Lapinski, Vice President Performance Excellence, Trinity Health Michigan

Cindy Leung, Assistant Professor of Public Health Nutrition, Harvard University

Veretta Nix, Human Resources Director, Zingerman’s Community of Businesses

David Rhoades, Vice President, Digital Operations, Dawn Foods

Equity in Action



Systemic inequities impact economic opportunity, health, and hunger in Washtenaw County. To help address these root causes, Food Gatherers completed an Equity Self-Assessment in 2023.

Participants from every department evaluated practices and policies in

a variety of areas including community collaboration and workforce composition and culture. Based on these discussions, we identified three areas to focus on incorporating more equitable practices in the next year: improving guest experience, volunteer outreach, and staff recruitment.

We are grateful to staff for sharing their diverse insights and experiences and are excited by the work ahead of us!

Advocacy Corner



In December, Food Gatherers supported two neighbor-led listening sessions with community members who have lived experience with food insecurity. The conversations looked closely

at hunger in Washtenaw County and the importance of federal nutrition programs like SNAP.

These federal nutrition programs serve as the first line of defense against hunger and are one of the main focus areas in the Farm Bill, which is up for reauthorization in Congress.

We will be sharing the insights from the listening sessions with Senator Debbie Stabenow to help shape a Farm Bill that addresses the needs of our community. We are also summarizing feedback from neighbors about their food pantry experiences that we'll be sharing with our hunger-relief partners locally to help inform best practices.

Learn more about our advocacy efforts and sign up for email alerts at FoodGatherers.org/Advocate.

Upcoming Events

Rotary Fights Child Hunger

March 4-15, 2024

Get ready for this annual food and fund drive hosted by local Rotary clubs. Details will be available at FoodGatherers.org/Rotary.

Stamp Out Hunger

Saturday, May 11, 2024

This is the largest one-day food drive in the country and is hosted by the National Association of Letter Carriers. Look for details in your mailbox.



Food Gatherers is committed to sound fiscal management, accountability, and transparency. For the 19th year in a row, Food Gatherers received a four-star rating from Charity Navigator, putting us in the top 1% of charities nationwide. We also earned the Platinum Seal of Transparency from Candid. You can view all our annual reports, 990 forms, and audited financial statements on our website.



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