



Food for Thought

together, we are hunger's hope.

Fall 2011

An Invitation to Come to the Table



Since being founded by Mim Hunt in 1955, God's Pantry has continually risen to the challenge of meeting increasing needs. We have grown to become Kentucky's largest food bank and source of emergency food service, feeding more than 211,000 people each year in our 50-county service area. The food bank has annually increased the amount of food distributed to those in need, and since 2001, our distribution has increased 234% – from 6.8 million pounds in 2001 to 22.9 million pounds in 2011.

Today, we are once again working to increase our capacity and meet some very aggressive goals for feeding the hungry in

Central and Eastern Kentucky.

Our plan for growth is the next step in addressing the issue of hunger in our region. To make this vision a reality, God's Pantry Food Bank has embarked on the *Come to the Table Campaign*, a \$3.5 million capital campaign to strengthen our organization, expand our reach and feed more people in need. Specifically, our six objectives include a plan to drastically increase the amount of fresh and frozen foods we are able to distribute by overhauling the refrigeration space in our Lexington headquarters. We have already purchased a second warehouse in Winchester to accommodate our ever-increasing food resources, and plan to add two more regional distribution centers in our service area to provide greater access and service for our member agencies. We will also expand and update our current volunteer and office space in Lexington. And to effectively get the food out there, we have already executed plans to purchase our first tractor-trailer.

We have received extraordinary support for our work in the past. Once again, we must trust in the support of our community and know we will be successful because our donors and friends believe in our mission of reducing hunger in Kentucky. To date, we have received more than \$2.8 million in gifts and pledges toward this goal, and are pleased to share this plan with all our supporters and the community at large. We are proud of the work we have been able to do together over the past 56 years and are now ready to take the next step toward eliminating hunger in Kentucky. Please join us and your fellow Kentuckians in making sure that everyone can Come to the Table.

To learn more about the *Come to the Table Campaign*, please visit our website: godspantry.org/cometothetable or scan this QR code with your smart phone!



Sharing Thanksgiving

If you've lived in or around Lexington for any length of time, then you have probably heard about our Sharing Thanksgiving program.

Started in 1995, this program has provided more than 50,000 Thanksgiving dinners to hungry families in Lexington.

The Sharing Thanksgiving program is designed to help relieve the stress of the holidays for those whose finances may not allow them to enjoy a celebratory meal. During our Basket Brigade (Nov. 12 this year!), we pack all of the non-perishable items a family would need to make a lovely holiday meal. Then, the Monday and Tuesday before Thanksgiving, we distribute these boxes, along with a large turkey, produce, eggs and butter to more than 4,500 registered and needy families in Fayette County.

For just \$40, you can help provide a Thanksgiving meal to a Kentucky family struggling to make ends meet.

So please encourage your family, colleagues, religious groups and clubs to give during this time of celebration, and share Thanksgiving with a family in need.

Your support of Sharing Thanksgiving means more than just a bountiful holiday meal; it means hope and blessings for hungry families that will last beyond the holiday season.



a letter from the president



While I'm sure most of us grew weary watching all the wrangling in Washington over raising the debt ceiling, we must now understand the consequences that come from the outcome. For God's Pantry, the impact of certain proposed spending cuts in the House Agriculture Appropriations Bill, which was approved in June this year, have taken a step closer to becoming a reality. The cuts involve the Commodity Supplemental Food Program (CSFP) which leverages government buying power to provide nutritious food packages to approximately 16,000 people each month in Kentucky and over 600,000 throughout the U.S. If approved, these cuts would not only prevent the program from being able to add new participants but also cut the current distribution by at least 25%.

CSFP is an efficient program to distribute a monthly food box to low-income seniors in need. The cost to the government is approximately \$20 per box which includes about \$50 worth of food at retail value. The food boxes are specifically designed to supplement nutrients typically lacking in these individual's diets such as protein, iron and zinc. In Kentucky, our participant count has been continually increasing over the years due to an aging population and the tough economic times we are experiencing. God's Pantry has dedicated our new Winchester warehouse to handling food for this program and we are very well equipped to accommodate the increasing demand.

We have been actively reaching out to Kentucky senators and representatives to educate them on the impact of the Agriculture Appropriation Bill to God's Pantry. CSFP is a small part of this Bill and we believe there is a lack of understanding by our government officials on the real impact to this program.

If the cuts do materialize, this will further stress our existing resources to meet the growing hunger demand. We have just made public our Capital Campaign to raise \$3.5 million to expand our service outreach through new facilities and programs. The Campaign has been very successful so far but our fear is that our original expectations of the amount needed will now not be enough to cover cut-backs to CSFP and expand our distribution efforts. We must then work harder and are readying ourselves for the challenge.

Your help and efforts are welcome and needed. You can reach out to God's Pantry directly and we can help you figure out how to contribute. That may be by volunteering, financially contributing or contacting a government official, whatever suits you the best.

As always – and we can't say it or show it enough – thank you to everyone that helps us, be it financially or through volunteer and advocacy efforts; you are much appreciated. We wouldn't be the organization that we are today without you.

Sincerely,

President, Board of Directors

September is Hunger Action Month



September is Hunger Action Month. God's Pantry Food Bank, a member of Feeding America, joins with our partner hunger relief agencies to ask everyone in Central and Eastern Kentucky to play a role in fighting domestic hunger.

Hunger affects communities all across the country—rural, urban and suburban. Right here in Central and Eastern Kentucky, 1 in 6 neighbors struggle with hunger. The problem is closer than you think, but so is the solution.

Throughout the campaign, God's Pantry Food Bank will call on you to take action. In addition, we've teamed up with celebrities to tell the real stories of those struggling with hunger.

Watch Matt Damon tell his story at godspantry.org. Share the video with your friends and family. Get involved by learning local hunger statistics and downloading God's Pantry Food Bank's 30 Ways in 30 Days calendar to find daily ways to make a difference.

Our nation is in recovery from a massive recession, and we're working harder every day to assist individuals and their families right here in Central and Eastern Kentucky in these tough economic times. Whether it's by advocating and raising awareness, making donations, or giving of your time and energy, everyone can play a role in ending hunger during Hunger Action Month.

To learn more about Hunger Action Month, and the work that God's Pantry Food Bank and Feeding America do all year long, visit the national website at www.HungerActionMonth.org. Or, for local information, visit godspantry.org.

Get involved this Hunger Action Month! Together we create a voice for those struggling with hunger in Kentucky.

God's Pantry Food Bank Receives \$100,000 from Walmart Foundation

God's Pantry Food Bank learned in August that the organization had been selected by Kentucky's Walmart employees as the recipient of a \$100,000 grant.

Called the Associates Choice Program, Walmart chooses five non-profit organizations per state, then leaves the ultimate selection of the grant award winner up to employees of Walmart and Sam's Club stores in Kentucky. Voting ended on August 6 and God's Pantry was the top vote-getter in Kentucky.

God's Pantry Food Bank will use \$75,000 of the award toward the purchase of fresh fruits and vegetables, and the remaining \$25,000 for the costs associated with distributing that produce.

The food bank has made securing produce a priority and distributed 6.1 million pounds of it in FY2011. This contribution will certainly help us toward our goal of handling seven million pounds of produce in FY12.

Fresh fruits and vegetables are often difficult for our clients to access and to afford, yet we know the importance of including them in a healthy diet. In addition to being a source of vitamins and minerals, studies have linked diets that are rich in

fruits and vegetables with lower incidences of diabetes, cancer, heart disease, and other ailments.



This Walmart Foundation grant comes after a \$200,000 award from the foundation last fiscal year in support of the Retail Store Donation Program, which started in 2009. That program includes slightly flawed dry goods (dented, dinged cans, etc.) and meat products frozen on their sell-by date and donates them to the food bank. Last year, the food bank was able to distribute 1.4 million meals due to contributions from this program alone.

March Madness Dream Dinner

God's Pantry Food Bank is teaming up with the Incredible Food Show at Rupp Arena again and is raffling another "Dream Dinner".

This year, we are raffling off the chance for a courtside dinner for eight people at famed Rupp Arena this coming March, followed by an exclusive behind-the-scenes tour of the Kentucky Wildcats' home venue and a chance to play pickup basketball in the mecca of college basketball.

The dinner is being prepared and served by local standout chef Jonathan Lundy of Jonathan at Gratz Park.

The **winner** will be **drawn** at the Incredible Food Show on **Saturday, Oct. 8** (need not be present to win). Tickets are on sale now at godspantry.org or by calling 859.255.6592. Tickets will also be sold at the Incredible Food Show Oct. 8. A maximum of 1,000 raffle tickets will be sold.



Basket Brigade is November 12

On **Saturday, November 12**, God's Pantry Food Bank will host the 7th annual Basket Brigade. This event is held to pack 5,000 boxes to provide low-income families in Fayette County with a Thanksgiving meal to enjoy.

The event, organized like a walk-a-thon, is broken up into five shifts of participants. Each group will pack between 900-1000 boxes which include all the non-perishable items necessary to prepare a Thanksgiving meal. Those boxes are paired with a turkey, eggs and produce the week of Thanksgiving and distributed to hungry families in Fayette County through our pantries.

Event registration is \$20 and includes an awesome event t-shirt. This is a great activity for work groups, worship groups, social clubs or families. (Volunteers must be at least 13 years old.)

Call Susie at 859.288.5332 or visit godspantry.org/events for more information.



Find us on
Facebook

www.facebook.com/godspantryfoodbank



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Fall 2011 Newsletter

Great Grants

God's Pantry Food Bank received \$510,830 in grant funding in FY 2011. Many of our programs are possible because of support from foundations.

The following organizations have made gifts of \$5,000 or more since April 1, 2011:

Supporting general operations:

- The William R. Kenan Foundation, \$25,000
- MAZON: A Jewish Response to Hunger, \$9,000
- The Grainger Foundation, \$5,000

Supporting our child hunger programs:

- Children's Charity Fund of the Bluegrass, \$22,500 for Kids Cafes
- PricewaterhouseCoopers and Feeding America, \$10,000 for the Backpack Program
- Woodforest Charitable Foundation, \$5,600 for the Backpack Program

Supporting our transportation and rural distribution:

- The E.O. Robinson Mountain Fund, \$15,000

Giving the Perfect Gift ...

Everyone loves the holiday season, but loathes the traffic and long lines at the mall. God's Pantry Food Bank has the perfect solution. This holiday season, avoid the crowds and make a gift to the food bank in honor or memory of a friend or loved one. In return, we'll notify your honoree with a lovely card.



You can help hungry families in need and save your sanity. For more information, call 859.255.6592.

... is Easy!

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Download a free QR Reader on your smartphone and scan away!

