God’s Pantry Food Bank recently completed a groundbreaking ceremony for the Morehead Regional Distribution Center set to open in the Summer of this year. This is the 5th warehouse and distribution facility in the Food Bank’s network. The property is located approximately 5 miles from the I-64 and KY 801 intersection in the John Will Stacy MMRC Regional Business Park.

The 9,000 square foot building will be the permanent food distribution hub for community based hunger relief agencies in Bath, Carter, Elliott, Fleming, Lewis, Menifee, Montgomery, Morgan and Rowan counties. The addition of this building marks another important milestone in the growth of God’s Pantry Food Bank.

Adding the Morehead facility to the network of distribution centers that God’s Pantry operates is an important step to increase the amount of food distributed to areas in need.

The Hope to End Hunger Grows

The 35th Annual Taste of the Bluegrass is only a few weeks away! This year’s event is Friday, May 15 at 7:00pm at the Keene Barn & Entertainment Center at Keeneland. The event annually showcases the best food and beverage in the Bluegrass, features music from live bands, and has a fantastic silent auction. This year’s theme is “Come to the Taste...stay for the party.”

Tickets for the 2015 Taste of the Bluegrass will be available at all Lexington Central Bank locations and online at www.GodsPantryFoodBank.org. An early bird ticket price of $75 per person until May 1st is available. Tickets for a table of 10 are $1,250 which include early entry passes. The individual ticket price increases to $85 per person after May 1st, so be sure to get in early. Last year’s Taste of the Bluegrass event generated more than $100,000, which God’s Pantry Food Bank put right to work. For every $10 given, we are able to distribute $100 worth of food. That means more than $1 million worth of groceries found their way to families in need as a result of the Taste of the Bluegrass last year. Thank you.

Taste of the Bluegrass 2015

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Save The Date!

Come out to support God’s Pantry Food Bank and participate in these upcoming events!

**Nutrition Fuels Fitness 5K:** Saturday, April 11th at Coldstream Park; kids 1 mile fun run begins at 8:30 am and the 5K starts at 9am. Registration is $25, 50% of proceeds benefit God’s Pantry Food Bank

**Golf Fore the Hungry:** Dinner, August 16th and Scramble August 17th

**Burgers and Bikes:** September 20th

**Taste of Southeast Kentucky:** October 22nd in London, KY

**Morehead Chili Cook-Off:** Early November, 2015
Mission Trip to Haiti - A letter from the CEO Marian F. Guinn

This past October my husband, Gene and I had the opportunity to travel with a small group from our church to Port-de-Paix, Haiti. We enjoy traveling to new places, experiencing different cultures and meeting people. Before the trip I had done some research on the culture and history of Haiti – the poorest country in the Western Hemisphere and with my American mindset had made some assumptions about what we would see and experience over the eight day trip.

Our primary activity was to serve as volunteers for the week at Sonlight Ministries Academy, working with Haitian students in an English speaking school. I assisted in the 8th grade classroom, teaching World Civilization and Spelling, grading what seemed like a mountain of homework, and interviewing students to assess their conversational use of the English language. Each afternoon, we visited a different mission or program, ranging from hospitals to orphanages. Through these outings we saw the devastation or chaos that results from long term extreme poverty.

After working 17 years to alleviate hunger in Kentucky through God’s Pantry Food Bank I thought I knew a lot about poverty. This trip taught me so much more...long term extreme poverty results in deprivation on many fronts. But the human spirit has the ability to be kind, compassionate and joy filled under almost any circumstance. We met beautiful people everywhere we went. Haitians who lead very difficult lives but care deeply for their families and their country. Americans who have given up many of the basic comforts we take for granted, to help children and young adults in Haiti learn and grow to become the hope for a brighter Haiti.

Many factors have contributed to Haiti’s struggle to care for itself and its people. Though some of these deficiencies could be reversed or improved, they have been the norm for over two centuries and won’t be changed easily.

Upon returning to the United States, I was filled with an even greater passion to solve the problem of hunger in Kentucky. We live in communities with abundant resources. Food and water are readily available – we simply need to solve some distribution or access issues. If each of us, resolve to take action this year – we will move the meter and come much closer to eliminating hunger in Central and Eastern Kentucky. Will you join me and contribute financially, fill a volunteer need, and/or advocate on behalf of your low income neighbor? To get started visit our website www.godspantryfoodbank.org or make a gift today online at give.GodPantry.org, $50 can provide more than 200 meals to those in need.

Great Grants — Thank You to our Supporters!

Many of our critical programs rely on grants to operate. The organizations below have made grant gifts of $3,000 or more in 2015. If you know someone affiliated with these groups, please thank them for supporting the Food Bank, and if you are involved personally, our thanks to you!

Child Hunger Programs
Dr. Scholl Foundation
Lexington-Fayette Urban County Government
Orphan Society of Lexington
PNC Foundation
Second Presbyterian Church
Share Our Strength and Arby’s
TJX Foundation
Woodforest Charitable Foundation

Equipment
General Mills Foundation and Feeding America
Honorable Order of Kentucky Colonels

Fayette County Pantry Program
Costco
First Presbyterian Church
John Parker Pope Foundation
Lexington-Fayette Urban County Government

Food for Underserved Counties
Kentucky Social Welfare Foundation
Walmart Foundation

General Operations
AARP
Crutcher Family Foundation
Hoskins Family Foundation
William R. Kenan Jr. Charitable Trust
Norfolk Southern Foundation
Spray Foundation
Walnut Hall Foundation
Walmart Foundation Gifts Update

Two recent gifts from the Walmart Foundation are supporting multiple programs at God’s Pantry Food Bank and three of our member agencies. Through the Fight Hunger, Spark Change Facebook voting campaign, the Food Bank was successful in securing a $45,000 grant in support of produce purchases and member agencies in Clark, Floyd, and Pulaski counties benefited from equipment to increase produce distribution.

Another gift from the Walmart Foundation is supporting the Food Bank’s Food for Underserved Counties distributions in areas where neighbors in need have difficulty accessing pantries.

The Walmart Foundation is supporting deliveries in as many as 15 Kentucky counties through God’s Pantry Food Bank.

Food Bank Day 2015 a Success!

Attorney General Jack Conway, Commissioner of Agriculture James Comer, Secretary of State Alison Lundergan Grimes, and several state lawmakers spent the morning of February 4th at the Capitol Rotunda rallying Kentuckians to join the fight against hunger.

The Kentucky Association of Food Banks’ Farms to Food Banks program helps farmers recoup losses for product that would not otherwise be sold because of cosmetic imperfections or overproduction. In 2014, 373 Kentucky farmers from 66 counties were paid an average of $1,450 for the produce they provided. Over 3 million pounds of Kentucky-grown fruits and vegetables were distributed to struggling Kentuckians in all 120 counties rather than going to waste in the field.

60+ state legislators heard directly from constituents or their proxies about hunger in KY and why the state should continue funding the Farms to Food Banks program.

3 constitutional officers and 2 gubernatorial candidates saw a sea of orange in the Rotunda.

Every member of both the House and Senate heard resolutions read and fellow legislators speak up about the good work being done to fight hunger in KY by Feeding America food banks.

Kentuckians who struggle with hunger were given a voice in Frankfort!

Bryan Station High School Pantry

God’s Pantry is now sponsoring the Bryan Station High School Defenders’ Pantry as a part of the School Pantry Program. The pantry opened in early March of this year. This pantry provides food for students who might not otherwise have food in the evenings and/or weekends when they cannot eat at school. All students are eligible to participate in the School Pantry Program. The pantry strives to alleviate child food insecurities by implementing this program as a way to meet the needs of high school aged students.

The pantry has an open referral system, so both administrative staff and students will be eligible to make referrals to the pantry.

Students are able to make appointments between 8:00 am and 3:30 pm in order to pick out their food items. The student will receive approximately a week’s worth of food supply. There will be volunteers in the pantry to assist the students with selecting, storing, and transporting the food.

The amount of food received depends on the size of the family. Students with siblings will receive more food than those without siblings. The pantry selection will include grains, fruits, vegetables, dairy, protein, bread, fresh produce, eggs, and other items available for the students.

Funds for the School Pantry were provided by grants from The Orphan Society of Lexington and the William R. Kenan Jr. Charitable Trust.
Child Hunger Programs

God’s Pantry Food Bank serves almost 20,000 meals each year and more than 8,000 snacks to children in Central and Eastern Kentucky through BackPack, Kids Cafe and Afterschool Snack Programs.

To read more stories from families we serve, follow our Food Bank on Facebook, Twitter, You Tube and Instagram @GPFoodBank.