My Family Would Have Starved...

Lots Creek Community School in Knott County is one of the last “settlement schools” built in the Appalachian Mountains in the early 1900s. Beyond an excellent education, the school also addresses many basic needs among its families and other community members in need.

Nearly 3,600 of Knott County’s 16,000+ residents are experiencing hunger. Sustainable food assistance programs are vital for children and adults in Eastern Kentucky.

Since 1988, donor generosity to God’s Pantry Food Bank has supported the school’s food pantry. Today, 80-100 families receive food boxes monthly, and some say it’s the difference between life and death.

One grateful recipient said, “My family would starve if it weren’t for this food program.”

Recently, Food Bank funding has enabled the installation of a large commercial refrigeration unit. “Storing perishables until we give them out has been a game changer!” said volunteer Angela Combs. “It is such a blessing to be able to serve milk and produce to families who need it most.”

Lots Creek Community School food pantry volunteers Angela Combs and Jessica Stacy welcome the capacity to distribute fresh produce and dairy to hungry school family members and other neighbors, thanks to the installation of a commercial refrigeration unit made possible by gifts to God’s Pantry Food Bank. They are shown here with Food Bank CEO Michael Halligan.
Why You Mean So Much to Rural Eastern Kentucky Neighbors

People living in some rural mountain areas of Eastern Kentucky have very limited access to fresh foods. Many counties lack enough grocery stores, food pantries, or meal programs to serve neighbors experiencing hunger. Since the pandemic, thousands face added challenges like limited income, illness, or lack of transportation.

Canned, boxed and nonperishable foods go only so far. What is cereal without milk? A boxed meal without beef or chicken to add protein? People need the powerhouse of nutrients found in fresh fruits and vegetables.

Thanks to Feeding America and friends like you, walk-in cooler/freezers were recently installed at food pantries in Bell, Harlan, Knott, Leslie, Letcher, Martin and Perry counties. This essential upgrade allows our Food Bank partners to distribute a far more nutritious selection.

Getting more food to more neighbors in need remains central to the mission of God’s Pantry Food Bank. Thank YOU for all you do to help fight hunger and deliver hope wherever, and whenever, it is needed!

Bob Shoemaker and Betty Hudack of St. Stephen’s Outreach in Cumberland celebrate the installation of a new commercial refrigeration unit with the Food Bank’s CEO Mike Halligan.

This map shows the 50-county region served by God’s Pantry Food Bank, where more than a quarter million children and adults face food insecurity. The highlighted counties indicate where new equipment and services are being provided thanks to donor generosity in 2020.
Fresh Produce and Mobile Pantries—Sharing Hope Through Nourishing Food

God’s Pantry Food Bank is committed to providing fresh, Kentucky-grown fruits and vegetables to Central and Eastern Kentuckians who are facing hunger. Thanks to generous corporate sponsors, caring donors like you, and strong support from the Kentucky Department of Agriculture, special food assistance programs continue in abundance this summer.

By sharing summer’s bounty obtained through Farms to Food Banks (an important fresh produce program originated by the Food Bank in 2009 and now managed statewide by Feeding Kentucky), neighbors throughout our 50-county service area can receive delicious tomatoes, cucumbers, squash, watermelon, cantaloupe and more to complete a healthful diet. Eleven produce distributions are planned this summer in Bath, Boyle, Carter, Harrison, Jackson, Jessamine, Lincoln, Mercer, Rockcastle, Rowan and Scott counties.

The Mobile Pantry Program, generously sponsored by Anthem, brings emergency food assistance to communities lacking enough food pantries and meal programs for people in need. The groceries enable individuals and families to make complete, nutritious meals during times when their food budgets might not last them through the month. Provisions include shelf-stable items such as cereal, soup, pasta, rice, canned fruits and vegetables, plus fresh and frozen foods, dairy items and bakery goods.

Currently, the Mobile Pantry Program serves eight counties (Breathitt, Elliott, Fleming, Letcher, Montgomery, Nicholas, Robertson and Wolfe), providing enough food for nearly 150 families at each distribution. But with its three-year investment totaling $600,000, Anthem will enable the Food Bank to add distributions in more underserved areas in Central and Eastern Kentucky.

We are grateful for each and every supporter of these vital programs!

Annually, fresh fruits and vegetables make up nearly one-third of all food distributed by the Food Bank. In the summer months, delicious local produce comes to us from the Farms to Food Banks program.

Your generosity is providing an increasingly greater percentage of frozen meats, fresh eggs and milk, and seasonal fresh produce. These are the nutrient-dense foods hungry people need most but to which they usually have the least access.

For the 13th year in a row, God’s Pantry Food Bank has been awarded a top 4-Star rating by Charity Navigator, earning an overall score of 98.23/100!

The Food Bank distributed a record 41,773,441 pounds of food in Fiscal Year 2021, including nearly 13 million pounds of produce.

Increased food distribution partners to 480 pantries, churches, agencies, schools and other meal sites—a 32% increase since 2015.
Late winter and early spring of 2021 were challenging times for God’s Pantry Food Bank and many communities in Eastern Kentucky. Icy weather, extended power outages, damaging floods, and continuing economic stress added to the struggles of thousands of individuals and families dealing with uncertainty and hunger.

We asked for help and were overwhelmed by your heartwarming response! Our Faces of Hunger Meal Challenge began in late March with a goal of 500,000 meals. The end result—more than 1.387 million nutritious meals were made possible through generous donations totaling $173,416! More than double the hoped-for response.

On May 14, 160 supporters gathered for A Tasteful Evening to eat, drink and generously support the Food Bank. The evening’s proceeds provided 600,000 nourishing meals for Kentucky children and adults experiencing hunger. A special thanks goes to our generous sponsors: Quantrell Auto Group, LG&E and KU Foundation, Keeneland Foundation, Traditional Bank, Dinsmore and Shohl, Gabriel Group, Kroger, Paul Mulhollem and Valerie Cravens.

Thank you to everyone who helped serve two million helpings of hope! 🍾

At A Tasteful Evening, auctioneer Doug Hampton encourages attendees to bid high during the live auction for special bottles of Kentucky bourbon and an exciting trip to a Cincinnati Reds home game.
Donors and volunteers...
By lending a helping hand to more neighbors each and every day, you are making our rural and urban hometowns more vibrant places to live and work!

Toyota Kentucky...
For your awesome matching gift for Suppers All Summer helping serve over 10 million pounds of food to neighbors in need during June, July, and August!

Anthem...
For your incredible partnership to take our Mobile Pantry Program to some of our region’s most underserved counties, reducing hunger and delivering hope to thousands of Kentuckians!

Quantrell Auto Group...
And all of our generous sponsors of A Tasteful Evening—Y’all are the best!

Critchfield Family Market and The Nathaniel Mission...
Your growing partnership will bring miles of smiles to hungry individuals and families across Lexington!
You and Toyota Fuel Suppers All Summer

From juicy watermelon to sweet cantaloupe and tasty corn on the cob, you and Toyota Kentucky are providing more neighbors with nourishing meals featuring fresh, delicious, seasonal produce.

*Suppers All Summer* will provide Kentucky-grown produce, pantry staples, plus meat, dairy products and bakery goods to hungry children, teens and adults across our area. And for the second year, Toyota will match gifts given by August 31 up to a total of $25,000. Meeting the challenge will serve more than 8.3 million meals for Central and Eastern Kentuckians.

There’s still time to participate! Join our good friends at Toyota Kentucky and double your impact today with a thoughtful gift before August 31.