



News Release

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Help SEMO Food Bank 'Eclipse Senior Hunger'

SIKESTON, MO (March 19, 2024) – In southeast Missouri, 1 in 8 senior citizens are food insecure, left to worry about if they'll have enough to eat.

To mark the total solar eclipse on April 8, Southeast Missouri Food Bank is asking everyone to help 'Eclipse Senior Hunger' by donating an amount ending in 8 to the food bank's senior hunger programs.

"Senior hunger is a big issue for us at the food bank," said Sarah Garner, SEMO Food Bank's chief advancement officer. "When we were thinking about doing something around the eclipse, which everyone in the area is so excited about, we thought it was a great way to help our seniors. Basically, we're asking the public to make a donation based around the number 8, so \$18, \$48, \$108. Every \$1 donated helps provide 4 meals, so it can really make a difference."

Since 2022, the food bank has increased the number of senior boxes it distributes monthly from 5,350 to 5,575. Seniors living on fixed incomes were particularly hard hit by inflation over the last couple of years.

"At some of our distributions, senior neighbors told us they'd never needed help before, but when prices rose, they were having to choose between paying for food or medicine or other basic necessities," Garner said. "That's a choice we don't want anyone to face, but it's especially hard for seniors who are on a fixed income."

Southeast Missouri Food Bank serves 80,000 individuals each month across its 16-county service area. To learn more about the food bank or to donate to the "Eclipse Senior Hunger" campaign, please visit semofoodbank.org.

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About Southeast Missouri Food Bank

The mission of Southeast Missouri Food Bank is to end hunger and leverage the power of food to build healthy communities. The food bank provides food to 140 charitable and disaster relief programs in Southeast Missouri. These member agencies include food pantries, soup kitchens, domestic violence and homeless shelters. Southeast Missouri Food Bank also holds regular mobile food distributions and provides monthly boxes of food to 5,575 senior citizens and weekend backpacks of food during the school year to 1,200 students in area school districts. The food bank's 16-county coverage area includes Bollinger, Butler, Cape Girardeau, Carter, Dunklin, Madison, Mississippi, New Madrid, Pemiscot, Perry, Reynolds, Ripley, Scott, Ste. Genevieve, Stoddard and Wayne counties. Those interested in helping can do so by making a tax-deductible contribution, donating food, or scheduling a time to volunteer. Visit semofoodbank.org for more information.