



News Release

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SEMO Food Bank Served Nearly 13 Million Meals in 2023

SIKESTON, MO (March 6, 2024) – Southeast Missouri Food Bank served nearly 13 million meals to neighbors facing hunger in 2023, providing food assistance to 80,000 individuals each month.

“We saw an increase in people needing help in 2022 that continued into 2023, with a lot of our neighbors struggling with high food costs,” said Joey Keys, chief executive officer of the food bank. “Thanks to the support of our partners, donors and volunteers, we were able to make sure that everyone in southeast Missouri had access to the food we all need to thrive.”

In 2023, the food bank opened its second location in Cape Girardeau County, increasing storage capacity and volunteer opportunities. The food bank’s newest program is also housed in the Jackson office. The Produce Prescription Program provides participants, who must be referred by a healthcare partner, with fresh produce boxes twice a month.

“We all know the connection between food and health,” Keys said. “The Produce Prescription Program is using food to really address chronic health issues. We’re excited to see this program continue to grow.”

The food bank serves families, children, veterans and seniors through a network of 140 partner agencies and direct service programs in a 16-county service area. Other highlights from 2023 include:

- Providing monthly food boxes to more than 5,500 senior citizens
- Partnering with local school districts to provide food for the weekend to 1,200 students
- Distributing more than 2.2 million pounds of fresh produce, donated in part by local farmers and growers
- Holding 316 mobile food distributions, each providing 200 families with nutritious food
- Completing 1,363 SNAP applications to link people to an important resource to obtain food on a regular basis.

You can find the food bank's complete 2023 Annual Report online at <https://www.semofoodbank.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/02/2023-Annual-Report.pdf>.

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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 28 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.