



News Release

For Immediate Release

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SEMO Food Bank, Feeding America Call on Public to Join Movement to End Hunger

SIKESTON, Mo. (Aug. 26, 2024) – September is Hunger Action Month and Feeding America is encouraging one million actions across the country to end hunger. During the month-long campaign, Southeast Missouri Food Bank will be raising awareness and inspiring action in its 16-county service area. Every action counts, whether it's donating, advocating, volunteering or spreading the word online.

"We can end hunger in the U.S. when we decide to work together with coordinated action and a shared belief that everyone deserves fresh, nutritious food," said Claire Babineaux-Fontenot, CEO of Feeding America. "This year during Hunger Action Month, we are encouraging everyone to take action. Raise your voice. Volunteer. Donate. Our individual actions may seem small, but together they become a powerful movement that can change history."

The USDA estimates 1 in 7 people and 1 in 5 children experienced food insecurity in 2022. Those numbers are even higher in southeast Missouri, with 1 in 6 households facing hunger. The region has some of the highest rates of hunger in the state – as high as 35.5 percent for childhood hunger in Pemiscot County. SEMO Food Bank serves seven of the 10 most food insecure counties in Missouri.

"We know thousands of our neighbors across southeast Missouri are facing hunger, and the difficult choices that brings," said Joey Keys, CEO of SEMO Food Bank. "Hunger Action Month is an opportunity for us, and the Feeding America network, to really shine a spotlight on hunger in our nation. We hope people will take the opportunity to learn more about this issue that affects so many of our neighbors and find ways they can help."

People can get involved locally through actions like:

- **Go orange for Hunger Action Month:** Orange is the color of hunger awareness, so we encourage everyone to wear orange on Sept. 10, which is Hunger Action Day. If your business has exterior lighting, consider using orange lighting during September. Be sure to post on social media and tag SEMO Food Bank!

- **Make a donation:** A monetary gift is an easy way to help our neighbors facing hunger. Every \$1 helps provide food for four meals. If you want to have some fun with it, create a virtual food drive and challenge family and friends to compete to raise the most. To get started, go to semofoodbank.org and click “Get Involved.”
- **Volunteer at the food bank or a food pantry:** Spending a few hours each month volunteering can make an enormous difference to the food bank, our partners and the neighbors we serve. Sign up to volunteer in our Jackson or Sikeston locations at semofoodbank.org/volunteer or use our pantry locator to find one of our partners in your community.

Learn more about how you can take action by visiting semofoodbank.org or hungeractionmonth.org.

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About Feeding America

Feeding America is committed to an America where no one is hungry. We support tens of millions of people who experience food insecurity to get the food and resources they say they need to thrive as part of a nationwide network of food banks, statewide food bank associations, food pantries and meal programs. We also invest in innovative solutions to increase equitable access to nutritious food, advocate for legislation that improves food security and work to address factors that impact food security, such as health, cost of living and employment. We partner with people experiencing food insecurity, policymakers, organizations, and supporters, united with them in a movement to end hunger. Visit www.FeedingAmerica.org to learn more.

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.