



News Release

For Immediate Release

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Southeast Missouri Food Bank Calls on Community to Take Action Against Hunger This September

SIKESTON, Mo. (Aug. 25, 2025) – Hunger is a daily reality for thousands of our neighbors in Southeast Missouri, but together, we can change that.

This September, Southeast Missouri Food Bank is inviting communities across its 16-county service area to come together for Hunger Action Month, a nationwide campaign to inspire people to take simple, meaningful steps to help end hunger.

“Hunger is a real issue in Southeast Missouri,” said Joey Keys, CEO of Southeast Missouri Food Bank. “Especially in our rural communities, accessing enough healthy food for a family can be a challenge. But it’s one our food bank, our network of partners, volunteers, and supporters is committed to meeting. We know that the only way to end hunger is by working together.”

According to Feeding America, food insecurity in the United States has reached its highest rate in more than a decade, with over 47 million people—including 14 million children—facing hunger. In southeast Missouri alone, nearly 64,000 people, including 18,280 children, are food insecure. The region is home to the five most food-insecure counties in the state.

“People across the country have demonstrated immense care for their neighbors in crisis time and time again, helping to build stronger, more resilient communities,” said Claire Babineaux-Fontenot, CEO of Feeding America. “Ending the hunger crisis in America is no different. When we all work together, alongside our neighbors facing hunger, we can find solutions to ensure that everyone has the food they need to thrive. This Hunger Action Month, our hope for the nation is to start building this new reality together, through unified action toward a shared vision of a hunger-free America.”

Raising awareness is an important first step. Hunger is often hidden, yet its effects are felt in every community—impacting children’s education, families’ health, and the overall strength of our region. Hunger Action Month is an opportunity for individuals,

businesses, schools, and civic groups to come together, learn more about the issue, and take steps that make a real difference for neighbors in need.

Ways to Get Involved:

- **Go Orange:** Orange is the national color of hunger awareness. On Tuesday, Sept. 9, Hunger Action Day, the food bank encourages everyone to wear orange to show support for ending hunger, and share photos on social media. Hunger Action Month t-shirts are available for purchase at bonfire.com/semofb-go-orange.
- **Make a Gift:** Monetary contributions are one of the most effective ways to fight hunger. Every dollar donated helps provide approximately four meals for families, seniors, and children in southeast Missouri. Donations can be made at semofoodbank.org or by texting SEMOFB to 91999. Monthly giving options are also available through the SEMO Full Plate Club.
- **Volunteer Your Time:** Volunteer opportunities are available at the food bank's Jackson and Sikeston locations, as well as the Good Neighbor Pantry in Sikeston. Tasks include sorting food, packing boxes, and assisting at food distributions. Volunteer registration is available at semofoodbank.org under "Get Involved."

Keys said Hunger Action Month is both a call to compassion and a call to action.

"We can't solve hunger alone, but when we stand together, we make real progress," he said. "Every meal donated, every hour volunteered, every voice raised brings us closer to a hunger-free Southeast Missouri."

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 5,600 senior citizens and weekend backpacks of food during the school year to 1,100 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.