



**News Release**  
**For Immediate Release**  
Contact: Heather Collier  
573-475-7573  
hcollier@semofoodbank.org

## **SEMO FOOD BANK LAUNCHES SUMMER MEALS FOR KIDS CAMPAIGN TO PROVIDE 200,000 MEALS**

**SIKESTON, Mo. (May 13, 2026)** – Southeast Missouri Food Bank is launching its Summer Meals for Kids campaign with a goal of providing 200,000 meals to children across Southeast Missouri this summer, a time when many families lose access to the school breakfasts and lunches they depend on during the academic year.

More than 18,000 children in Southeast Missouri, that's 1 in 4, are currently facing food insecurity. When school lets out for summer, many children lose access to their most consistent source of nutritious meals, while families face the added expense of providing more food at home. Rising food and fuel costs continue to put additional pressure on household budgets across the region.

"Summer can put a lot of extra strain on families who are already trying to stretch every dollar," said Joey Keys, president and CEO of Southeast Missouri Food Bank. "When school meals are no longer available, parents are left trying to fill that gap at home. We want children to have the food they need to grow, stay healthy, and enjoy their summer."

Access to healthy food is critical for children's growth, development, and ability to learn. Through the Summer Meals for Kids campaign, community members can make a direct local impact by helping provide meals for children throughout the region.

To support the campaign, Harps Food Stores locations across Southeast Missouri will offer "Blessing Bags" available for purchase. These pre-assembled bags contain kid-friendly food items and will be donated to Southeast Missouri Food Bank to support children and families throughout the summer months.

Businesses and organizations interested in supporting the campaign by hosting a food and funds drive can contact Rebecca Lambert at [rlambert@semofoodbank.org](mailto:rlambert@semofoodbank.org) for more information.

"This campaign is about making sure children have reliable access to food during the summer months," Keys said. "Community support helps us reach more kids and families across Southeast Missouri when the need is at its highest."

Every \$1 donated helps provide 4 meals, meaning a gift of \$10 helps provide 40 meals for children in Southeast Missouri. To donate online, visit [semofoodbak.org](http://semofoodbak.org).

###

### **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](http://semofoodbank.org) for more information.