



News Release
For Immediate Release
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TICKETS ON SALE NOW FOR SEMO FOOD BANK'S SECOND ANNUAL EMPTY BOWLS

JACKSON, MO (Oct. 19, 2026) – Tickets are now on sale for Southeast Missouri Food Bank's second annual Empty Bowls event, offering the community a chance to enjoy a warm bowl of soup while helping provide food for neighbors facing hunger across Southeast Missouri.

Empty Bowls event will be from 10:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. Friday, Nov. 6, at Southeast Missouri Food Bank's Jackson facility. Tickets are \$15 for dine-in or carry-out, with delivery available for \$16 in Cape Girardeau County (minimum order required). Tickets can be purchased in advance online at semofoodbank.givecloud.co/emptybowls or at the Jackson office, 4536 E. Jackson Blvd. Dine-in and carry-out tickets will also be available at the event, while supplies last. Every ticket includes a commemorative bowl.

"As we head into the holiday season, we know the need for food assistance can increase as families work to stretch their budgets and make the holidays special for their loved ones," said Joey Keys, president and CEO of Southeast Missouri Food Bank. "Empty Bowls gives our community a meaningful way to come together and support neighbors who are facing hunger. Every ticket purchased helps us provide food to families, children and seniors throughout Southeast Missouri, and we're grateful to everyone who helps make this event possible."

All proceeds from Empty Bowls support Southeast Missouri Food Bank's mission to end hunger and leverage the power of food to build healthy communities.

The event brings together local businesses, restaurants, students, and community members in support of a shared goal: Ensuring neighbors have access to the food they need. Participating restaurants are generously donating soups for the event, giving attendees the opportunity to enjoy a variety of options while supporting a good cause.

This year, Southeast Missouri Food Bank is partnering with the Cape Girardeau Career and Technology Center's Culinary Arts program for the first time. The partnership gives students hands-on experience preparing food for a community event while developing their culinary skills, practicing teamwork, and contributing to an effort that benefits their neighbors.

"We're thankful for the businesses and restaurants that have stepped up to support Empty Bowls, as well as the students who are putting their skills to work and everyone who will join us for a meal," Keys said. "It's a great example of neighbors helping neighbors, and we hope the community will come out, enjoy some good soup and help us fill plates across Southeast Missouri."

Southern Bank is the event's Full Table Sponsor, with Soup Sponsors including Feeding Missouri, KBSI, KFVS, Midwest Sterilization, Montgomery Bank and Nationwide. Their support, along with the generosity of participating restaurants and other event sponsors, helps make Empty Bowls possible.

SEMO Food Bank serves families, children, veterans and seniors through a network of 140 partner agencies and direct-service programs across a 16-county service area. Southeast Missouri has some of the highest rates of hunger in Missouri, with 1 in 5 individuals, 1 in 4 children and 1 in 8 seniors living in homes that are food insecure. The six most food-insecure counties in the state are in Southeast Missouri.

To learn more about Empty Bowls and Southeast Missouri Food Bank, 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 5,600 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 time to volunteer. Visit semofoodbank.org for more information.