



GBFB.org

harvest

Winter 2021

COVID-19

Visit GBFB.org
for the most up-to-date
response and to learn
how you can help
our most vulnerable
neighbors.

Your Gift Lifts Seniors

“This food is so helpful. It’s good
and I can save some money.”

- Dinora, resident of the Julia Martin House in Boston

Inside Harvest:

- Your Generosity Feeds Those In Need
- Helping Seniors Thanks To You
- Youth Movement for Hunger Relief
- Our Driver Shares His Love for GBFB
- Providing Family Meals
- A Quick Click 'N Cook® Recipe for Winter
- A Fresh Start: Spring for Meals

MEMBER OF
**FEEDING
AMERICA**



Dear Friends,

Many families and individuals found themselves struggling to have enough to eat for the first time in their lives this past year because of the pandemic. For those who can't always afford enough food, the nutritious protein, produce and dairy items—the items they need most—are usually too expensive to buy in the grocery store.

That's why GBFB is committed to distributing high-quality, nutritious food—helping the people we serve stay healthy. You can help us by supporting our Spring for Meals campaign this March. Visit our website to learn more about our Spring for Meals campaign and how you can help us provide fresh fruits and vegetables to our neighbors in need.

This fresh food helps people like Dinora, a senior living on a fixed income, whose story you'll find inside this issue.

You'll also read about a group of young donors who raised money for GBFB through exercise, and hear from one of our truck drivers on why he has supported our mission at GBFB for nearly three decades.

Your donations help us provide healthy food to seniors like Dinora and thousands of other individuals and families in Eastern Massachusetts.

Thank you for supporting our mission during these difficult times. Together, we can end hunger here.

Sincerely,



Catherine D'Amato
President and CEO



Your Generosity Feeds Those in Need



Prior to the pandemic, thousands of seniors were already receiving free, pre-bagged grocery items through our Brown Bag programs, like at this facility in Brockton pictured above. This spring, we saw a 67 percent increase in the number of clients served by this program, compared to pre-pandemic levels.

When the demand for food skyrocketed across Eastern Massachusetts, The Greater Boston Food Bank (GBFB) stepped up to provide for those in need, especially those most acutely affected by this pandemic—our seniors.

Through our network of partner food pantries, GBFB has served roughly double the number of seniors during this pandemic than at the same time last year.

“As we know, seniors are an extremely vulnerable group and many are scared to leave their homes. I've really been impressed by our program partners who have stayed open and found creative ways to serve their clients safely,” said GBFB Assistant Director of Programs and Community Capacity Christina Peretti.

Christina oversees GBFB's direct distribution programs, including our program designed specifically to serve seniors—the GBFB Brown Bag program. GBFB works with 13 different sites in Eastern Massachusetts to deliver monthly grocery bags to seniors. This spring, we saw a 21 percent increase in the amount of food we were distributing at these distributions and a 67 percent increase in the number of clients served, compared to pre-pandemic levels.

Your generous gift helps us meet the need for our most vulnerable residents.

[Learn more at:](#)

[GBFB.org/Distribution](https://www.gbfb.org/Distribution)



Dinora, a retired teacher, receives a box of fresh food and shelf-stable items at the apartment complex where she and other seniors on a fixed income reside.

Helping Seniors Thanks To You

Like many seniors living on a fixed income, Dinora struggles to keep enough food in her cupboard, especially when trying to stay safe during the COVID-19 pandemic.

A retired teacher, Dinora lives alone at the Julia Martin House, an apartment complex for seniors in the Jamaica Plain neighborhood of Boston. When the COVID-19 pandemic reached Massachusetts in early 2020, the building, like many others, went into lockdown.

“I get all kinds of fruits and vegetables, it’s about a week’s worth of food.”

-Dinora

“We had to stay only in our rooms at the beginning of COVID. I didn’t see anyone for a month,” Dinora said. “A lot of the people here don’t get outside at all to go shopping for food or anything.”

As the need for food in Eastern Massachusetts dramatically grew due to the pandemic, The Greater Boston Food Bank (GBFB) began looking for new distribution methods and partners who could distribute large amounts of food to the community.

We began working with partners like the city of Boston, to directly distribute 20-pound boxes of fresh healthy food and some shelf-stable items to vulnerable residents across the city, including at senior housing complexes like the Julia Martin House.

“This food is so helpful. It’s good and I can save some money,” said Dinora. “I get all kinds of fruits and vegetables, it’s about a week’s worth of food.”

With food insecurity on the rise across the country because of the pandemic, estimates show that food insecurity rates have increased more in Massachusetts than in any other state.

GBFB is distributing more food now than ever before in our 40-year history. Because of your generous support, we can continue getting healthy food and basic staples to people like Dinora, and all our neighbors struggling with hunger.

Youth Movement for Hunger-Relief



A group of neighborhood kids from Weston came together to participate in a 30-person fundraiser in support of hunger relief. Photo courtesy of Meredith Taylor.

At The Greater Boston Food Bank (GBFB), we believe that everyone has a role in ending hunger. Perhaps no one embodies that idea better than a group of young people from Weston who raised over \$9,000 in support of hunger-relief this spring.

“To have kids in our communities recognizing a critical need and working together to help is truly amazing,” said Jessica Crimmins, VP of Marketing, Communications and Brand Identity at GBFB. “Having kids understand the power of giving back to help their community is something that will stay with them for a lifetime.”

“When school went remote in March of 2020, the kids had a lot of free time and needed to get outside,” said Meredith Taylor, mother of two, and one of the organizers of what became a more than 30-person exercising fundraiser for GBFB.

Meredith’s two daughters set a goal to bike over 250 miles each during the month of May. Soon their neighborhood friends joined in and set personal goals for running, biking, sit-ups and other exercises. The girls quickly decided to organize a fundraiser to go along with their athletic endeavors to raise money for those most affected by the pandemic.

“The COVID pandemic has made all of us feel a little helpless. By organizing this fundraiser, we felt like we were doing something to help others, which felt great,” said one of Meredith’s daughters.

By enlisting the support of their friends and family, the group raised \$9,050—enough to help GBFB supply over 27,000 meals to people in need.

Our Driver Shares His Love for GBFB

Our most tenured team member, Senior Lead Driver Juan Encarnacion, shares his struggles with 2020, but also why he has worked at The Greater Boston Food Bank (GBFB) delivering food for nearly three decades.

Every morning at 6 a.m. I roar into the GBFB parking lot on my motorcycle and arrive on site with pride ready to start the day. What eats at me after 29 years of service and working with a mission to end hunger here, hunger hasn’t gone away. I’ve delivered millions of pounds of food, yet people are still going hungry. With this pandemic, it’s only gotten worse.

Back in 1991, I was unemployed and struggling to keep up with my \$600 rent and support my family. I just needed a job. I came to GBFB because I needed work, but I’ve stayed because it has become more than a job. Coming to work at the food bank every day gives me purpose – and my team has become an extension of my family.



When I walk in the warehouse, I’m surrounded by GBFB Team Members who are up, like me, before the first light of morning, giving it our all and coming back the next day to do it all again. The work is physical, exhausting and feels never-ending. But we all know that we are the bridge between hungry families and nutritious food.

There is a long road ahead of us, but we just need to keep driving.

Providing Family Meals



GBFB volunteers help pack Family Meal Boxes filled with healthy shelf-stable items.

During the summer, the Massachusetts Emergency Management Agency (MEMA) spearheaded a program with the Salvation Army and The Greater Boston Food Bank (GBFB) to distribute prepackaged boxes of food to our partner agencies with an immediate need for large quantities of food.

As the summer program came to a close, GBFB looked to the months ahead and began planning how we could deliver a similar package in case a community needed an emergency response of easily deliverable food. This fall, we created the GBFB Family Meal Box program, to accomplish that very task.

“This is the first time we’ve ever curated our own box with our own inventory,” said Erin D’Loughy, GBFB Senior Manager of Community Engagement.

The boxes contain 32 pounds of food that can provide families with food for breakfast, lunch and dinner, such as cereal, peanut butter, pasta, shelf-stable proteins, and more.

Each box also contains two nutritious recipes from GBFB’s online recipe resource, Click ‘N Cook®. All the ingredients for each recipe are included in the box.

We know that this historic demand for food assistance will continue for many months to come. GBFB is prepared and committed to support our network of over 600 distribution points with the food they need to help those struggling with hunger.

Click ‘N Cook® Recipe

Make something refreshing and simple! Try our Red Cabbage, Walnut, and Orange Slaw of Click ‘N Cook®, The Greater Boston Food Bank’s (GBFB) online recipe resource! Cabbage and orange are in season through the winter and this crunchy salad is a snap to pull together.



Red Cabbage, Walnut, and Orange Slaw

Serves 6 (about 1 cup)

Ingredients

- 4 tablespoons lemon juice
- 1 tablespoon honey
- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 1 small head red cabbage
- 1/3 cup raisins
- 2 small oranges
- 1/2 cup toasted walnuts

Directions

1. In a large bowl, whisk together the lemon juice, honey, and oil. Season with salt (in moderation) and pepper.
2. Halve the red cabbage and carefully remove the core (see notes). With cut side down, thinly slice cabbage starting at the side that hasn’t been cut already.
3. Add the cabbage and raisins to the lemon dressing and toss to coat. Place in the refrigerator for at least 20 minutes to soften the cabbage.
4. With a sharp paring knife, cut peel from the oranges (see note). Cut segments out into a medium bowl. Squeeze any juice remaining in the leftover pulp into the bowl with the cabbage and toss. Chop the walnuts.
5. Just before serving, add the segments and walnuts to the cabbage.

For more healthy recipes, visit clickncook.org



Spring for Meals

A FRESH START

Beginning in March 2020, Eastern Massachusetts was hit hard by COVID-19. More people than ever before began to turn to GBFB and our partner hunger-relief agencies and distribution programs for food. And with your support, we were able to meet the rising need.

With the continued increase in demand due to the COVID-19 crisis, this March we're once again kicking off our Spring for Meals campaign to help us reach our goal of distributing more than 24 million pounds of fresh produce. Spring for meals with us this season and help us provide more fresh fruits and vegetables for our neighbors in need.



Help us provide more fresh produce to hungry people across Eastern Massachusetts at:



[GBFB.org/SpringForMeals](https://www.gbfb.org/SpringForMeals)