



# harvest

GBFB.org

Spring 2021

**COVID-19**

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response and to learn  
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our most vulnerable  
neighbors.

# Keeping Our Neighbors' Plates Full

“Thank you for what  
you’re doing. It’s a huge help.”

- Maria, client at the YMCA Southcoast Full Plate Project

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MEMBER OF  
**FEEDING  
AMERICA**



Dear Friends,

It's been a little over a year since the pandemic brought historic levels of unemployment and food insecurity to Eastern Massachusetts. In that time, friends like you have helped GBFB sustain an incredible response to the historic demand for food across our network and service area. Thank you for your unwavering commitment to ensuring our neighbors in need didn't go hungry.

Your gifts are hard at work in the Southcoast area right now, where our local partner has launched a new program that will serve families in five communities where hunger is especially prevalent.

Within your local communities, thousands of you stepped up to the plate to support our partner Roche Bros. in their "Feed the Hungry" campaign that helped raised enough money to provide 750,000 meals to those in need across Eastern Massachusetts last fall.

And because your steady support helps GBFB stay flexible, we can redeploy our staff smoothly and swiftly whenever and wherever they're needed most.

This is my 25<sup>th</sup> year with GBFB, and I am humbled to be spending it in your company. The kindness you demonstrate toward our neighbors in need inspires me every day. I have never been more confident that, together, we can and will end hunger here.

Sincerely,



Catherine D'Amato  
President and CEO



## Working Together to Help the Southcoast Thrive



(Top) YMCA staff line up to serve hundreds of individuals at a drive-up style Mobile Market at New Bedford while the Full Plate Project truck departs to drop off food to more locations. (Right) YMCA New Bedford Youth & Family Director, Lou Alexander, pitches in at their Mobile Market.



Thanks to friends like you, GBFB supports a hunger-relief network of more than 600 local pantries, shelters, and other organizations. In the Southcoast region, our "boots on the ground" belong to the YMCA, a champion of good health for more than 160 years. In that time, YMCA Southcoast has never faced a greater test than the coronavirus pandemic. But they've not only risen to the challenge—they've set a remarkable goal for 2021!

With GBFB's support, YMCA Southcoast plans to distribute 1 million pounds of nutritious food this year through The Full Plate Project, a new program launched to help meet the historic need caused by COVID-19.

*"I will be able to make so many meals, and I am beyond grateful."*

**- Full Plate Project participant**

In April 2020 alone, this resolute partner provided 60,000 pounds of food in Fall River, a community where 1 in every 5 people faces hunger. "I am amazed at the amount of food I received," said one resident. "Especially all the fresh vegetables and fruit. I will be able to make so many meals, and I am beyond grateful."

With all the momentum on their side—and GBFB supplying produce, proteins, and more—YMCA Southcoast is expanding its Full Plate Project distributions into Dartmouth, New Bedford, Wareham, and Swansea.

Your continued support will help the YMCA meet their goal of providing 1 million pounds of food in 2021. Thank you for being a part of this amazing network that helps people thrive.

[Learn more at:](#)

[GBFB.org/distribution](https://gbfb.org/distribution)



Maria (left) appreciates the nutritious food she receives from our partners at the YMCA Southcoast's Full Plate Project. Jodilynn Machado (right), child care director at the YMCA New Bedford, is one of many helping hands giving out bags full of fresh produce at their Mobile Market.

# Filling Our Neighbors' Plates

Longtime Southcoast resident Maria is a proud great-grandmother and very independent woman. She lives alone and works hard to make ends meet on her Social Security benefit. But at her age, medical bills can be a tremendous burden, and her insurance copays often exhaust her modest income.

"At the end of the month, there's just not a lot of money left for food," Maria shares.

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**"Thank you for what you're doing ... I get everything I need!"**

**-Maria**

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It's a situation many seniors in our community face. In the golden years of lives well lived, they should be able to enjoy quality time with their family and friends. Instead, many are racked with worry because their fixed income doesn't cover the basics.

"Will I eat today, or should I pay the electric bill?" Our older neighbors face impossible choices like these every day.

Fortunately, friends like you are there to make a difference. Thanks to you, Maria is able to visit a Mobile Market operated by our partners at YMCA Southcoast as part of their Full Plate Project. (You can read more about this effort on page 2.)

Here, Maria receives fresh fruits and vegetables, along with a wide variety of other nutritious food to last her through the end of the month.

"I like everything I get," Maria shares. "What I don't use right away, I freeze for later."

Just as important, Maria feels truly welcome every time she visits. "Everyone is so nice and so willing to help," she smiles.

And to friends like you, who help ease her worry and end her hunger, Maria says: "Thank you for what you're doing. It's a huge help. Between going to the different distributions, I get everything I need!"

## Roche Bros. Customers Help Provide 750,000 Meals for Local Families in Need

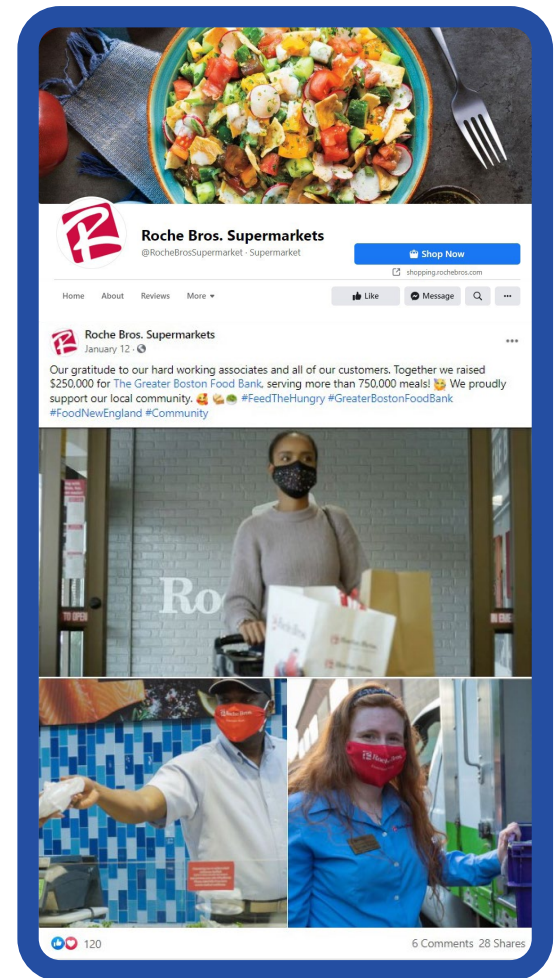
A devoted GBFB partner for more than 30 years, Roche Bros. went above and beyond when the need for food surged in Eastern Massachusetts this past year. To help The Greater Boston Food Bank (GBFB) provide meals for thousands of households facing unprecedented hardship, the grocery chain sponsored an in-store “Feed the Hungry” fundraiser that encouraged customers to add a donation to their cart at checkout.

Roche Bros. customers at the 20 stores in GBFB’s service area responded in a big way: Over the course of six weeks, donations reached a total of \$230,000!

Our partner’s efforts didn’t stop there, either. The Roche Bros. Leadership Team donated an additional \$20,000 in honor of the chain’s amazing frontline workers, who have been tirelessly serving the public during the COVID-19 crisis. Rick’s generous contribution brought the grand total to \$250,000—enough to provide food for 750,000 healthy meals through GBFB’s more than 600 hunger-relief partners.

“As we watched the collection total grow week by week, we were just blown away by the generosity of our customers and so proud of our associates’ efforts,” says Kathy Hathaway at Roche Bros. “Thanks again for allowing us the opportunity to work with GBFB on your extremely important mission.”

“Feed the Hungry” shattered fundraising records; but more importantly, it helped to alleviate hunger for thousands of children, families and seniors during a time of tremendous need. We are deeply thankful to have Roche Bros.—and friends like you—with us as we work to end hunger here.



## Donor Laces Up for A Run Against Hunger



GBFB donor and member of the Board of Advisors, Jay Russell (center)—accompanied by his sons, Turner (left) and Matt (right)—raised thousands to end hunger here.

When the pandemic struck in 2020 Jay Russell hit the road to raise awareness of hunger in our community.

Jay has supported The Greater Boston Food Bank (GBFB) for the past 10 years. In that time, he has also run a few marathons, including the 26.2 miles from Hopkinton to Boston. After recently joining GBFB’s Board of Advisors, Jay decided to organize a fundraiser—and what better way to do it than through his own solo marathon?

This past December, after a 16-week training schedule, Jay covered a 26.2-mile route through Natick, Wellesley, Needham, Newton, and Boston. Friends and family members cheered him on along the route, including his wife Catherine, who joined him for the final 12 miles of the run.

“Everyone understands the importance of supporting a cause like GBFB.”

-Jay

Jay blazed right past his \$10,000 fundraising goal, raising more than \$20,000 with the help of over 70 friends and family members. He is deeply gratified to be able to help provide tens of thousands of meals for our neighbors in need with the support of his network.

“I’ve been blown away by the support and generosity people put forth,” Jay says. “A lot of people may have been in a situation where they faced hunger in their own lives. Everyone understands the importance of supporting a cause like GBFB. It’s easy to understand the impact.”

## Rising to A Once-In-A-Lifetime Challenge

*Redeployed GBFB staff share their experiences serving during the pandemic*

The pandemic has required all of us to step outside our comfort zones. We're so proud of—and grateful to—the 20 team members who left their regular roles to support the distribution team as GBFB worked to meet the increased demand for food this past year.

“I love doing what I do here.”

- Carmen



**Carmen Mercado**  
Agency Relations Associate

“At the beginning of the pandemic, we went from distributing 150,000 pounds [of food] a day from our warehouse to almost 400,000 pounds each day in no time. That's when the warehouse had to ask for help, and I was redeployed. Working on the shipping dock could be stressful sometimes, but it's also very rewarding. Knowing that I make a difference gives me great pleasure.”



**Rachel Weil**  
Programs & Capacity Associate

“I was redeployed to help Spanish-speaking applicants apply for SNAP (food stamps) and to find their nearest pantry. I felt humbled to be able to connect people to these vital resources when so many had been recently laid off and didn't know where they would get their next meal. I am grateful to be part of this work during these challenging times.”



“What particularly struck me was the enormous amount of respect that [our partners] have for the hard work Team GBFB puts in to make sure every agency gets what they need.”

**Gary Roy**  
Senior Manager, Public Relations

Thank you again to Carmen, Rachel and Gary—and all of our fearless, dedicated team members who make our ongoing pandemic response possible. Thanks also to friends like you, whose support is the foundation of everything we do. We are in this together!

Put your seasonal springtime ingredients to use with our Grilled Asparagus and Mushroom Tacos from Click 'N Cook®, The Greater Boston Food Bank's online recipe resource!



## Grilled Asparagus and Mushroom Tacos

**Serves 6 (about 1 cup)**

### Ingredients

- 3 tablespoons canola oil
- 4 cloves garlic minced
- 1 tsp. ground chipotle chile (or chili powder)
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1 bunch asparagus ends removed
- 8 ounces mushrooms kept whole and rinsed
- 1 bunch green onions kept whole, roots trimmed
- 8 each corn tortillas warmed
- 1 medium avocado sliced
- 1 medium lime cut into wedges
- 8 sprigs Cilantro washed, chopped
- hot sauce for serving

### Directions

1. Heat grill on medium. In a large baking dish, combine oil, garlic, chipotle, and salt. Add asparagus, mushrooms, and green onions; toss to coat. Grill asparagus until tender and lightly charred, turning occasionally; 5 to 6 minutes.
2. Grill mushrooms and green onions until lightly charred, turning occasionally, 4 to 5 minutes (see notes). Transfer vegetables to cutting board.
3. Cut asparagus and green onions into 2" lengths and slice mushrooms. Serve with corn tortillas, avocado, lime wedges, cilantro, and hot sauce.

**For more healthy recipes, visit [clickncook.org](http://clickncook.org)**



# DRIVE OUT HUNGER

Get your "Stop Hunger Now" license plate

Only together, can we end hunger here. That is why GBFB has teamed up with Boston Medical Center and Citizens to drive out hunger.

Visit [stophungerma.org](http://stophungerma.org) to order your "Stop Hunger Now" license plate. Proceeds from every registration will help provide nutritious food for our neighbors facing hunger.

When 1 person out of every 10 struggles with hunger here, your message encouraging others to join our mission can make a real difference.

For more information, or to order your "Stop Hunger Now" license plate, visit: [stophungerma.org](http://stophungerma.org)



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