



# harvest

GBFB.org

Winter 2022



# Your Gift Helps Seniors Stay Healthy

“I can rely on the pantry  
to get what I need.”

— Cecilia with neighbor Ellen while visiting  
The Salem Pantry's mobile distribution

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**FEEDING  
AMERICA**



Dear Friends,

When you struggle to pay for rent, medicine and other expenses—like many seniors living on fixed incomes—you probably can't afford to eat fresh fruits and vegetables frequently, if at all. Medical research shows that older adults who suffer from food insecurity are at high risk for diet-related conditions such as high blood pressure, diabetes, hypertension and heart disease.

That's why GBFB is committed to distributing high-quality, nutritious food that helps those we serve maintain a healthy diet.

You can help us meet the need by supporting our Spring for Meals campaign this March. Learn more and find out how you can help us provide nutrient-packed food to our neighbors in need on our website at [gbfb.org/springformeals](http://gbfb.org/springformeals).

The fresh food provided by GBFB helps seniors living on fixed incomes, whose stories you'll read about in this issue. Cecilia and Ellen are friends who rely on fresh vegetables and fruits from The Salem Pantry every week.

Also, in this issue, you'll read about critical components to meeting the need: GBFB supporters Sean and Lisa share why they care, our network of Cross Docks and Shared Delivery Sites and our partnership with Diesel Direct to fuel our mission.

I thank you for your ongoing support because you, too, are a critical component of helping our neighbors. Together, we can end hunger here.

Gratefully,



Catherine D'Amato  
President and CEO



## Feeding our Seniors Together



*Samantha Johnson, Manager of Operations at The Salem Pantry, helping with a delivery in the summer of 2021.*

Access to nutritious food is critical to maintaining good health and quality of life for the senior population. For many, however, issues such as decreased mobility, fixed incomes and rising health care costs can make affording enough nutritious food a challenge.

The Greater Boston Food Bank works with over 600 partner agencies across our Eastern Massachusetts community. Like The Salem Pantry, many have programs that work directly with local seniors to provide nutritious food through pop-up pantries and home deliveries. While working towards a physical location to open in 2022, The Salem Pantry currently hosts mobile-only distributions. They visit several places every single week, including a free Mobile Market at Salem State University.

“COVID-19 exposed a chronic need, so we stepped up our delivery schedule and are visiting more places than ever before.” Executive Director Robyn Burns shares. The Salem Pantry recently established a partnership with the Salem Housing Authority and has begun to regularly visit senior housing locations, bringing food directly to a population at high risk of food insecurity.

Executive Director Robyn Burns continues, “It’s so important that we focus on the senior population and ensure they are getting what they need. Access to fresh food for our seniors is a big focus for The Salem Pantry moving forward!”

In addition to working with partner agencies like The Salem Pantry to expand the reach of the free Mobile Markets program, GBFB supports government programs for low-income seniors like the Commodity Supplemental Food Program.

Learn more at:

[GBFB.org/about](http://GBFB.org/about)



Ellen and Cecilia visit The Salem Pantry's mobile distributions regularly for the fresh produce provided by GBFB.

# Making Fresh Food Accessible

Bringing vital food to the senior community is a major priority for The Salem Pantry.

Every Wednesday morning, the Salem Pantry truck parks in the cul de sac of a senior housing authority in West Salem. Before the clock strikes 11 and the mobile distribution opens, volunteers have unloaded crisp vegetables, freshly-baked bread, chilled dairy and eggs, frozen proteins and other shelf-stable goods on tables.

Samantha Johnson, Manger of Operations at The Salem Pantry, shares, "We have two other locations to stop at today. We visit the same spots every day, every week. We bring food to the community where it's needed most."

For 45 minutes, the corner is hot. Many visitors are seniors living on limited or fixed incomes, retired and living nearby, looking for fresh food to supplement their diet.

Many individuals, like Peter, walk from their front doors to the sidewalk where bins of vegetables, glistening in the morning sun, wait. He uses a cane and has a volunteer help him pack his bag. Peter was recently discharged from the hospital, and as a person with diabetes and cancer, he requires a specific, health-focused diet. He appreciates the consistency of fresh food and shares that if not for The Greater Boston Food Bank, he fears he would go without.

Ellen and Cecilia are neighbors and friends, living a couple of doors down from Peter. Both women live on limited, fixed incomes and admit that they would struggle to maintain proper nutrition without this access. Cecilia shares, "I can rely on the pantry to get what I need. Every week, I get potatoes, carrots and green beans. I love the kale—

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**"It's changed our lives having  
The Salem Pantry and GBFB bring  
fresh food to us. I don't know what  
we'd do without you."**

**—Cecilia**

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I enjoy putting it in my soups." Ellen adds, "During the winter, she makes great soup with the vegetables we get here."

Cecilia uses a walker, and Ellen helps her navigate the bumpy sidewalk as the women make their way down the display of fresh garlic, eggplants and squash.

"I'm legally blind and have a bad hip, so I need extra help." Cecilia explains, and Ellen comes in quickly, "But I don't mind helping... plus, we live just right there. It's changed our lives having The Salem Pantry, and GBFB bring fresh food to us. I don't know what we'd do without you."

One out of every five people served by GBFB is someone 60 years old or older. Cecilia, Ellen and Peter are just a few of the many seniors who need food but struggle to afford it. Thanks to your continued generosity, the senior population across Eastern Massachusetts can count on us for the most critical of all basic needs: healthy, fulfilling and nutritious food.

## Together, We Can End Hunger Here: Meet the O'Briens

In whom can you find multigenerational hunger-relief support, an appreciation for operational efficiency, and hearts made of pure gold? The O'Brien family from Lexington!

Over the past few years, Lisa and Sean O'Brien have played a role in ending hunger here. Lisa is a member of GBFB's Women Fighting Hunger, and she regularly volunteers in our warehouse. Sean is a member of GBFB's Board of Advisors.



For the O'Briens, ending hunger is a family affair. Their three children get involved by coordinating school group volunteer sessions during the year and by volunteering alongside their grandparents over the summer at the Family Pantry on Cape Cod. Lisa got involved with GBFB directly when she learned that it supplied fresh product to the Family Pantry.

"I wish everyone could take a tour of the GBFB warehouse and meet Team GBFB," Lisa shares, "You appreciate the effort, time, thought, and care that is put into everything that they do."

"For me," says Sean, "GBFB is working on a problem that shouldn't exist, they do it well, and they do it at scale. I'm really impressed with GBFB's warehouse and distribution capability, especially with the increased demand from Covid. We are happy to be a part of it."

"It may be cliché, but we are all on this earth together. We have to do what we can to help each other." Lisa continues, "We love supporting GBFB because we know that the work they do makes such an impact for those in need."

As exemplified by the O'Briens, GBFB can continue to distribute hundreds of nutritious meals to over 600,000 people in need across Eastern Massachusetts because of the dedication found within our community. Thank you for your support—together, we can end hunger here.

Click 'N Cook® Recipe

This hearty soup is perfect for a cold winter day. To make it a little healthier, it calls for turkey kielbasa instead of the traditional pork sausage.



## Portuguese Kale Soup

### Ingredients

- 1 tablespoon vegetable oil
- 1 cup onion, chopped
- 1 clove garlic, minced
- 1 medium carrot, peeled and sliced
- 6 cups water
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1/4 teaspoon hot pepper flakes
- 1 pound potatoes, about 4, washed and peeled
- 1/2 bunch (4 cups chopped) kale
- 1/4 pound reduced-fat turkey kielbasa sausage

### Directions

1. Heat oil in a large stock pot. Add onion, garlic, and carrot. Saute 10 minutes.
2. Add water, salt, and pepper flakes. Cover, and bring to a boil.
3. Add potatoes to boiling water and cover. Cook 10 minutes.
4. Wash kale, remove stems and chop. Slice sausage, and add to soup. Cook uncovered 5 minutes.

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

# Building a Network to Meet the Need

Efficiency is a priority of The Greater Boston Food Bank. Serving over 600 agencies with food, including many perishable items that require proper refrigeration, creates a substantial logistical puzzle. To reach more communities, GBFB uses Cross Docks and Shared Delivery Sites to get the job done.

Cross Docks enable our drivers to take food to a location with shipping docks, where agencies can pick up orders built and shipped from our main Boston location. Cross Docks are donated warehouse space in the community and serve approximately 125 agencies. We operate four Cross Docks across Eastern Massachusetts—New Bedford and Harwich serve the southeast, the Cape and the islands, and Framingham and Peabody help support the north and Metro West.

On the other hand, Shared Delivery Sites typically serve 3–4 agencies through one agency site that can accommodate a tractor trailer load. The host agency agrees to receive and distribute orders sent from the GBFB main warehouse. Shared Delivery Sites are in Salem, Plymouth, Walpole, Falmouth and the newest addition this fall in Weymouth, which began operations in October 2021.

Over the past year, GBFB numbers have skyrocketed. Shared Delivery Sites have surpassed 1.2 million pounds of food delivered, an increase of more than 750% from last year's 140,000 pounds. Cross Dock sites total 8–9 million pounds of food on average every year.

Assistant Manager of Agency Relations, Michael Reaney, shared that these sites offer convenience, enabling agencies to order more food and ease the workload for both parties, freeing up resources to help more people in need. He continues, "Because space is donated, we rely on our network to ensure the 600,000 people GBFB serves can get the food they need."

This effort is an excellent example of how together, we can end hunger here.



*21 agencies receive their food from this New Bedford Cross Dock, reducing their travel time and increasing efficiency.*

## Fueling the Food



*The trucks at the loading docks of 70 South Bay are kept fueled up and ready to go thanks to Diesel Direct.*

In the over 40 years that The Greater Boston Food Bank has served our Eastern Massachusetts community with fresh, nutritious food—not once have our trucks ever run out of gas. That's because of Diesel Direct.

Transportation Supervisor Matt Maguire confirms, "We pay fair market value for fuel, and the service they provide is outstanding. Every Tuesday and Thursday, Diesel Direct team members are on site at the crack of dawn fueling our trucks. It's just one less thing our drivers have to worry about."

Whether drivers are responsible for a reload, or making two deliveries in one trip, or backloading, picking up product on their way back to the warehouse, they only have to worry about one thing: getting fresh food to their destinations.

"Over 600 agencies rely on our fleet of tractor-trailers, it's critical for us to always be prepared." Matt smiles, "And thanks to Diesel Direct—we always are."



# Spring for Meals


## FRESH FOOD FOR OUR NEIGHBORS IN NEED

This March, help us increase our distribution of fresh produce to our neighbors in need.

For thousands of hungry people across Eastern Massachusetts, the high cost of fresh fruits and vegetables puts them out of reach.

With your support, we can distribute more healthy food to our network of partner food agencies and through GBFB's free Mobile Markets.

**There's no better time to Spring for Meals** than this March in recognition of National Nutrition Month®, a time to raise awareness about the connection between hunger and health.



Join us to help provide fresh produce and better nutrition to our hungry neighbors across Eastern Massachusetts:



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