



# harvest

Thanksgiving 2021



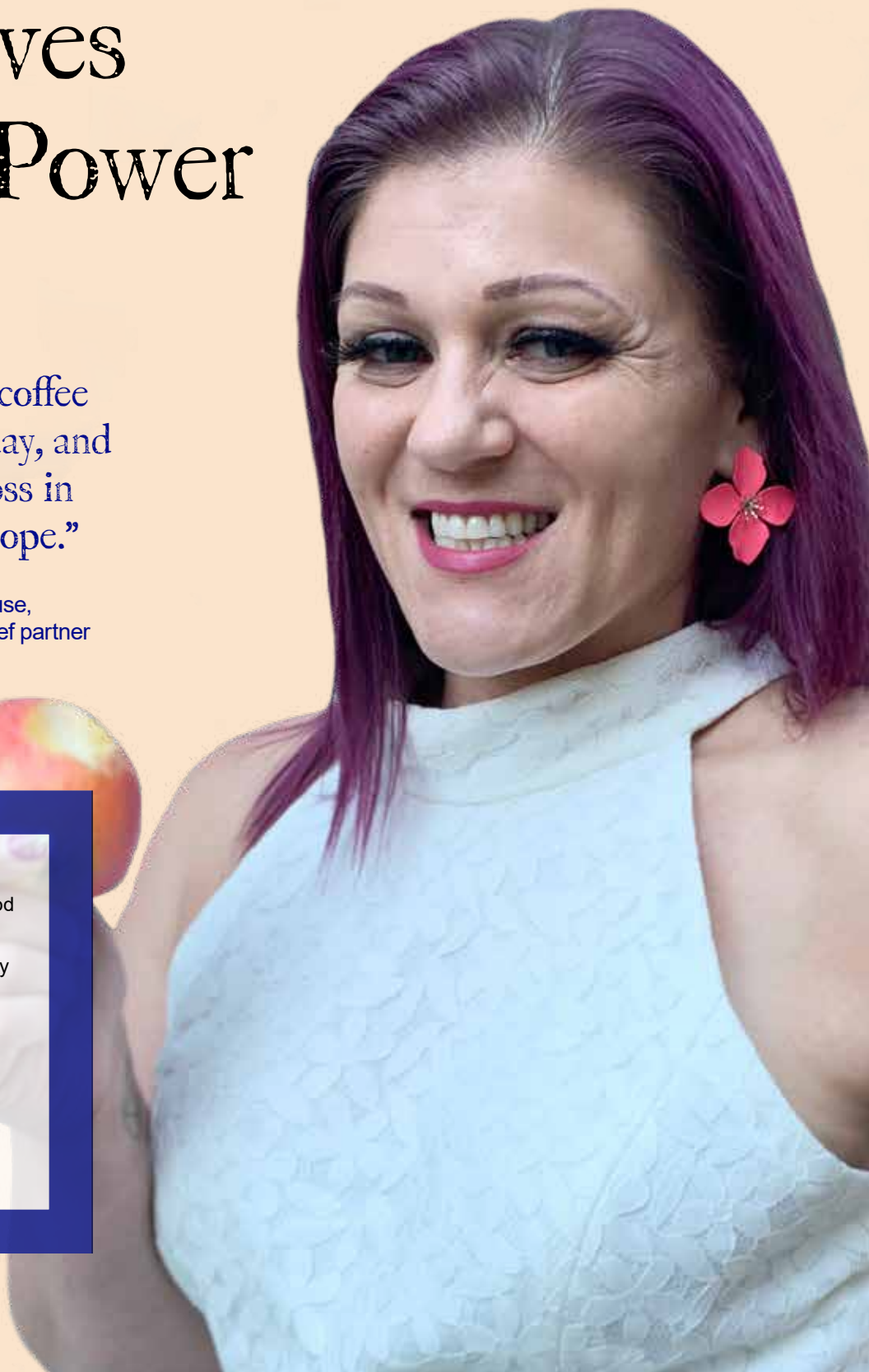
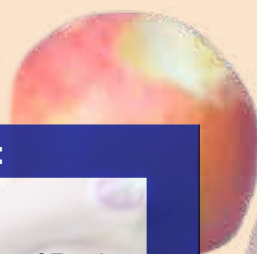
## Saving Lives with the Power of Food

“Offering me a hot cup of coffee  
and a banana to start my day, and  
an apple or an orange to toss in  
my bag for later gave me hope.”

- Danielle, a former guest of St. Francis House,  
Boston's largest day shelter and hunger-relief partner  
of GBFB

### Inside Harvest:

- The Taste of New England
- Saving Lives with the Power of Food
- Hunger Relief: A Family Affair
- Green Bean and Mushroom Medley
- Building Positive Experiences with Food
- Give the Gift of Healthy Meals This Holiday Season



Dear Friends,

Things can be difficult for those struggling with hunger on a holiday that's all about sitting around the table and eating delicious food with friends and family. The effects of the pandemic are still taking a significant toll on our community, and many families will be experiencing food insecurity for the first time this winter.

Fortunately, The Greater Boston Food Bank (GBFB) Hunger Free Holidays campaign provides healthy food to families struggling with hunger this holiday season. To get involved and make a difference for our community, please visit [gbfb.org](http://gbfb.org) and start a Hunger Free Holidays fundraising team. You can also donate today to make an immediate impact.

In this issue, you'll read Danielle's success story, a formerly homeless woman who is filled with gratitude as she reflects on her experiences finding sobriety with the help of nutritious foods from St. Francis House (SFH). SFH is Boston's largest day shelter for individuals experiencing homelessness, and a hunger-relief partner of GBFB, serving a hot and healthy breakfast and lunch every single day for anyone in need — even Thanksgiving and Christmas.

That dedication to our community is at the core of GBFB's mission, and for that I am grateful. The theme of this issue is gratitude; my gratitude for you and the community of support rallying behind our mission to end hunger here. Thank you for your time, support, and your generosity. Because of our community, we can continue to make a difference in the lives of our neighbors in need this holiday season — and throughout the entire year. Together, we can end hunger here.

Gratefully,



Catherine D'Amato  
President and CEO



## The Taste of New England

The Greater Boston Food Bank runs on community support. This commitment to our mission allows the food bank to distribute everything needed for a delicious Thanksgiving dinner every year. And not worrying about what to feed their families will allow individuals to do what holidays are for - *creating warm memories with their loved ones!*

This is one of the reasons our partnership with local farms, like New England Apple Products (NEAP) and Carlson Orchards in Harvard, MA, is so special. Thanks to NEAP and Carlson Orchards, The Greater Boston Food Bank has received hundreds of gallons of fresh, Massachusetts-grown apple cider to distribute to our community. This past year, they matched all of the food bank's apple cider purchased for Thanksgiving with a donation - that's 17,280 half gallons of donated cider for families across Eastern Massachusetts!

"What's New England in the fall without apple cider?" Frank Carlson asks. He's one of three brothers who have maintained the Carlson Orchards farm their parents began in 1936. He feels honored to be able to support Thanksgiving meal efforts, "We love this partnership, GBFB allows us to reach so many people in need for the holidays."

Brian Morrill, Senior Manager of Food Donations at GBFB shares, "This farm cares about the integrity of farming, and you can taste it in their product. It means so much to be able to give this to the families in need during the holiday season."



*Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, Carlson Orchards has gone above and beyond in supporting The Greater Boston Food Bank by donating several truckloads of Carlson Orchards Gourmet Lemonade, in addition to all of the cider!*

### Did you know?

Evidence points to the fact that the Pilgrims toasted survival and that the first harvest in America was with mugs of apple cider. Only nine years after first landing at Plymouth in 1620, colonists planted apple trees in the Massachusetts Bay Colony. In Colonial America, cider was the most common beverage. In many places, the water was not safe to drink and most homesteads had an apple orchard, so pressing and fermenting the large fruit harvest was popular. In rural communities, taxes, wages, and tithes were often paid in cider!

Through corporate partnership or volunteering, get involved with GBFB! Learn more:

[GBFB.org/get-involved](http://GBFB.org/get-involved)



## Apples and Oranges, Stability and Sobriety

Danielle Sylvester grew up in a loving and supportive family from South Boston.

"My dad would have done anything for me. He worked hard to get me out of the inner city because there was a lot of violence and substance use in the neighborhood." She remembers. He relocated her to the South Shore to attend high school. But Danielle missed her family, and the distance brought her closer to her cousins - who ran in a bad crowd.

"I first experimented with crack when I was younger, but it scared me so much, so, I stopped." Danielle continues, "From there, I did well for a really long time. I graduated, had a job, a fiance, and my kids."

Then, her fiance died in a car accident. She painfully remembers, "His death was extremely traumatic, I developed post-traumatic stress disorder and I was overwhelmed with grief. My kids moved in with my parents and I began using drugs again, and it just spiraled out of control."

Danielle quickly became addicted to crack cocaine, lost her home, and began living on the streets of Boston. Crack cocaine provides a powerful dopamine stimulation to the brain and is an addictive and popular choice for people suffering from PTSD.

Danielle began visiting St. Francis House in downtown Boston, a homeless shelter offering basic needs and services and a hunger-relief partner of The Greater Boston Food Bank. St. Francis House offers hot meals every day of the year for people in need using produce, grains, proteins, and fruit from GBFB.

Anxious to get the help she needed, her fear first stopped her from going inside, but she soon developed a friendship with employees doing outreach in front of the building.

They would always tell me, "When you're ready, we're here," and would bring me fresh fruit from the dining room," Danielle remembers. "I needed encouragement and time to face my trauma and the reality of my addiction."

Danielle continues, "Offering me a hot cup of coffee and a banana to start my day, and an apple or an orange to toss in my bag for later gave me hope." For Danielle to begin getting the help she needed, it was access to fresh, nutritious food, made available to people in need by you and your commitment to The Greater Boston Food Bank.

---

**"You can't take care of yourself when you're starving. I'm so grateful for The Greater Boston Food Bank. You're really helping so many people."**

**-Danielle**

---

Today, Danielle is two years sober and works with people in substance use recovery as a Care Coordinator at Revive Recovery in Nashua, New Hampshire. She is engaged to her fiance, Jonathan, and they have a young toddler together. She has since connected with 2 of her 3 adult children and attends sobriety meetings consistently.

Danielle says, "The kindness I received at St. Francis House inspires my approach to clients in recovery. You need to meet people where they're at, and you can't take care of yourself when you're starving. I'm so grateful for The Greater Boston Food Bank. You're really helping so many people."



## Hunger Relief: A Family Affair

Kathy and Kasey Devaney are not only mother and daughter - but best friends and star volunteers at The Greater Boston Food Bank. The two women are a part of the unique group of over 5,800 volunteers to support the food bank's mission on-site during the coronavirus pandemic this past year.

Kathy, mother of three, begins, "It all started when my son, James, began volunteering. Watching her brother get involved with My Brother's Keeper, an organization that collects furniture for families, inspired Kasey."

Kasey then began helping with "garden duty" at The Family Pantry of Cape Cod in Harwich. Upon seeing that the boxes of food distributed by the pantry came from The Greater Boston Food Bank, they took their support a step further and began coming into the warehouse to assist the team in packing Family Meal Boxes.

"Hunger is everywhere, and during the pandemic, we recognized that we were in a less vulnerable position, and it spurred us to take action." Kasey explains, "It's such a well-run operation, and everyone puts in the work during volunteer shifts. Together, it feels like we're really making a difference."



*Kathy Devaney (left) stands with her daughter Kasey (right) outside of The Family Pantry of Cape Cod, a hunger-relief partner of GBFB, where their volunteer experiences with food began. The mother-daughter duo quickly became inspired to get more involved and visit the GBFB warehouse to help out regularly.*

Click 'N Cook® Recipe

A great side dish for you and your family's Thanksgiving meal from Click 'N Cook®, The Greater Boston Food Bank's online recipe resource!



## Green Bean and Mushroom Medley

### Ingredients

- 3 cups green beans, cut into 1-inch pieces
- 2 carrots, cut into slices
- 3 tablespoons olive oil
- 1 large onion, sliced
- 1 pound mushrooms, sliced
- 1 teaspoon lemon pepper seasoning
- 1/2 tablespoon garlic salt
- 1/4 cup almonds, slivered, toasted

### Directions

1. Place green beans and carrots in 1 inch of boiling water. Cover, and cook until tender but still firm, about 3 minutes. Drain.
2. Add oil to heated skillet. Sauté onions and mushrooms until almost tender.
3. Reduce heat, cover, and simmer 3 minutes. Stir in green beans, carrots, lemon pepper, and garlic salt.
4. Cover, and cook for 5 minutes over medium heat. Serve warm.

### Recipe Tips

This makes a great vegetable side dish to go with your favorite main dish. Serve with lemon potatoes.

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

# Building Positive Experiences with Food

"Food is expensive," Head Chef Seth Green begins. Seth is the man behind the menu at St. Francis House, Boston's largest day shelter for individuals experiencing homelessness, "which makes The Greater Boston Food Bank so important. It's an absolute blessing!" St. Francis House has worked with GBFB as a hunger-relief partner since its inception as a refuge for the homeless in the 1980s.

Seth has been in the business for 40 years, spending the last nine at St. Francis House. Every day, he plans, prepares, and serves, with the help of some volunteers, hot, homemade meals to approximately 500 people experiencing homelessness and poverty who rely on St. Francis House for food every day. Seth estimates he serves around 16,000 meals a month – each complete with a lean protein, a vegetable, a whole grain, and a piece of fruit.



Jason Ercolano (left) and Seth Green (right) partner with GBFB to offer fresh, hot food every day to individuals experiencing homelessness at St. Francis House.



Every Monday, Seth "shops" at GBFB, and plans his entire weeks' worth of meals on Tuesday based on his haul, "We serve breakfast and lunch every day, no questions asked. The people experiencing homelessness who eat here, this may be their only meal of the day, so it must be nutritious, and filling. I do a lot of scratch cooking thanks to the raw ingredients I pick up from the food bank every week – which makes up about 90% of what I use."

"The delicious food is the carrot we dangle to get people in the front door." Jason Ercolano, Assistant Director of Shelter Services, reinforces the importance of food in helping the houseless: "Our engagement services revolve around mealtimes, it enables us to begin creating positive experiences for our guests, many who suffer from trauma, so they keep coming back, build trust, and access the help they need – whether safe housing, recovery from substances, or just a clean change of clothes."

"We wouldn't be able to do what we do without GBFB," Jason continues, "We're saving lives, and food is a critical piece of the puzzle."

"My favorite meals are always Thanksgiving and Christmas, they're the best days to serve. It may take me an entire week to prepare, but so many of these people don't have families they can go to... I feel honored to be able to serve good, hot food to people who need it most during the holiday season. We have GBFB to thank for that."

**-Seth Green, head chef of St. Francis House,  
GBFB member agency**



Danielle Sylvester with Neysa Johnson, Guest Engagement Coordinator at St. Francis House. Neysa has been welcoming homeless guests inside the shelter by name for almost 20 years. She shares, "Trauma and addiction change the way our brains operate, so things don't change overnight. Kindness and offering access to basic needs, like nutritious meals, goes a long way."



# Give the Gift of a Healthy Meal This Holiday Season

Help The Greater Boston Food Bank provide more than 23 million healthy meals to thousands of people across Eastern Massachusetts this holiday season by joining our Hunger Free Holidays campaign. Every \$25 you donate provides a complete holiday meal for a family in need.

**Donate today** or form a fundraising team to bring together family, friends, or coworkers.

**Visit us** online to learn more including how to set up your own fundraiser.

## Hunger Free Holidays



[GBFB.org/Holidays](https://GBFB.org/Holidays)

Presented by



With support from

