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harvest

Thanksgiving 2023

The Joy of Giving Back

“The pantry generously provides a holiday meal for families in a time of need.”

—Deborah, a client and volunteer at Quincy Community Action Programs.

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**FEEDING
AMERICA**



As I gather with my family and friends this upcoming holiday season, I will be giving thanks and thinking about so many blessings from this past year.

I'm grateful to our network of 600 food distribution partners who work tirelessly to feed our community. Thanks to them—so many families will be enjoying a meal this holiday.

Many thanks to Team GBFB for their unwavering commitment to our mission. Their dedication to our Eastern Massachusetts community—inspires me every day.

As you read this issue, you'll learn about Community Day, an annual GBFB tradition. Our team members spent an afternoon with agency partners across our service area—loading trucks, unloading, sorting, and assembling meal packs and serving food. It's another meaningful way that GBFB supports our partners to help serve our most vulnerable neighbors.

We simply cannot end hunger here unless we work together.

That's why we depend on generous donors like you to help us purchase the healthy food needed to fuel our communities, and dedicated volunteers and corporate partners like Liberty Mutual. Thanks to your generosity, we're able to feed our neighbors this holiday season and throughout the year.

Best wishes to you this holiday season.



Catherine D'Amato
(she/her)
President and CEO

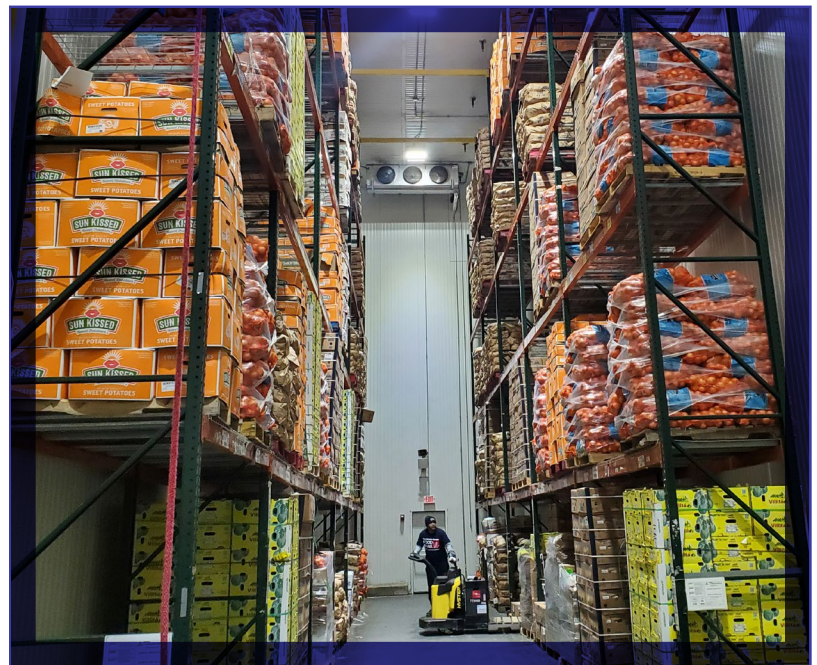


Where does GBFB get its Food?

Have you ever wondered how and where GBFB gets its food? It's a common question.

While we rely on food donations, you might be surprised to know that 75% of the food we distribute across Eastern Massachusetts is purchased. So the reliance on financial support is crucial to feeding our neighbors in need.

We've always purchased a significant portion of our food to maintain the nutritional quality and variety for our communities, emphasizing fresh produce, dairy and meat. Today, with soaring food costs due to the highest inflation in over 40 years, our need to buy more food is greater than ever. Last year, we faced a staggering 20% increase in average food prices, especially for items such as eggs and meat.



75% of the food GBFB distributes across Eastern Massachusetts is purchased by our Food Acquisition Team.

GBFB's Food Acquisition Team, led by our COO Cheryl Schondek, who brings over 25 years of food retail experience, have had to adapt and innovate. They leverage relationships with retailers, manufacturers, wholesalers, and farmers to ensure quality and nutrition, while purchasing mostly full truck loads to maximize cost efficiency.

"Our ability to purchase food is crucial. It allows us to provide nutritious and culturally responsive meals for those in need. And it's the generosity of our donors that acts as a catalyst, enabling us to buy essential items to fill our warehouse," notes Cheryl.

Every bag of fresh fruits and vegetables, every loaf of bread, every carton of eggs or milk in our cooler represents the collective impact of supporters like you.

Learn more at:

GBFB.org/about



Deborah is both a client and volunteer at Quincy Community Action Programs. The five-day-a-week food distribution and other nutrition programming are a part of how Quincy Community Action Programs focuses on helping those experiencing a crisis or in low income households reach economic self-sufficiency.

Best feeling in the world to give back!

Deborah's journey from job loss to community service is a testament to her resilience and the power of giving back. In 2015, Deborah found herself laid off, struggling to make ends meet. She had been working all her life, so when that happened it was a setback. The financial strain made it difficult to put food on the table. It was a tough period for Deborah, but she knew she needed help. Her salvation came when a friend referred her to the local food pantry. "I'm grateful to the Quincy Community Action Programs. As a single mom, I don't know what would be on my dinner table each night without them." Unemployment benefits only covered a fraction of her expenses, like rent. But the food pantry played a pivotal role in bridging the gap, ensuring that she could provide for her family.

The pantry gives wonderful Thanksgiving boxes filled with turkey, potatoes, carrots, gravy, cranberry sauce.

—Deborah

At first, she was a client, but soon she was invited to volunteer. Deborah eagerly accepted the opportunity to give back. She started volunteering two days a week, but her commitment grew, eventually leading her to dedicate five days a week. She experienced firsthand how crucial food assistance was for families like hers and she wanted to put others at ease. "It's the best feeling in the world to give back and help others."

Deborah's story highlights the importance of community support, especially during challenging times. She emphasized the significance of donations and encouraged others to be kind and generous. Even small contributions make a significant impact on families, especially during the holidays. "The pantry gives wonderful Thanksgiving boxes filled with turkey, potatoes, carrots, gravy, cranberry sauce—all that they need to enjoy a holiday meal with their families and that's so important."

Her journey from client to volunteer showcases the incredible strength of the human spirit and the positive ripple effect of helping one another during tough times.

National Grid is committed to helping our community thrive

National Grid is an example of how corporate citizens can play a crucial role in addressing pressing issues facing our community. In the words of Melissa Lavinson, Head of Corporate Affairs, New England, they're focused on building stronger communities because "when our communities thrive—we thrive."

Naturally, National Grid is committed to environmental stewardship, clean energy, and measures to mitigate climate change. Through the lens of economic opportunity and social justice, they're also working to build sustainability and resiliency in our community. They support GBFB because we serve the same communities in Eastern Massachusetts and our work to remove food barriers dovetails with National Grid's philanthropic priorities.



National Grid employees volunteered at the 5th annual WCVB Day of Giving in September, and are regulars during our volunteer shifts.

She's saddened but not surprised that 1 in 3 adults in Massachusetts face food insecurity. They see the depth of need—with more than 30% of their customers qualifying for energy assistance, people are struggling.

She adds, "it is critically important that we address foundational needs such as food and power. Food is foundational—it just is. Power, heat, they are also foundational and necessary. We and GBFB provide a necessary service. People want to be warm; they want to be safe and fed. When their basic needs are met—people can thrive." As a place-based company, National Grid gives back to GBFB because they want to help their neighbors and communities thrive.

This year National Grid and its employees set an ambitious goal of 14,000 volunteer hours—making a difference where they live and work. Lavinson sums up why GBFB is an ideal partner, "GBFB's impact is measurable. We know that our money and volunteer hours translate into meals." Thanks to National Grid, GBFB will be able to provide more than one million meals to our neighbors in need.

Click 'N Cook® Recipe



Msickquatash

Ingredients

- 1 cup ground beef, lean
- 1 cup lima beans, frozen
- 1 15.5-ounce can corn, drained
- 1 15.5-ounce can diced tomatoes
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 1/4 teaspoon pepper

Directions

1. Heat a pan over medium high. Brown ground beef in pan and drain fat.
2. Add remaining ingredients. Cover and simmer 5 minutes until heated through.

Recipe Tips

Serve with tortilla chips, over rice, or on top of baked potatoes.

For more healthy recipes, visit clickncook.org.

Uniting to End Hunger: GBFB's Annual Community Day



Team Members from across all of GBFB's departments volunteered at Catholic Charities – Yawkey on an afternoon in late August.

In August, our Team at GBFB celebrated the return of our annual Community Day since the COVID-19 pandemic. This year, the tradition held even greater significance, especially since 1 in 3 residents of Massachusetts currently experiences food insecurity. Returning to our partner agencies across Eastern Massachusetts for a day of service was a timely reminder of why our mission and purpose to end hunger is vital.

Our partner agencies serve as important lifelines for our neighbors who rely on them to access meals.

Our GBFB team dove into the Community Day, joining forces with volunteers and partner agency teams. Together, we tackled various tasks, from packing nutritious meals to loading trucks with essential supplies. The sense of unity and purpose that radiated throughout the day was infectious. Interactions with fellow volunteers and partner agency members strengthened our commitment to ending hunger in Eastern Massachusetts.



Team Members worked an afternoon shift at partner agencies, like Salem Pantry, helping to feed the 600,000 people across Eastern Massachusetts who receive food from GBFB each month.

Our partner agencies serve as important lifelines for our neighbors who rely on them to access meals.

We extend our gratitude to our partner agencies for our partnership and their dedication to uplifting our neighbors. Their commitment to providing food and resources continues to inspire our GBFB team during the holidays, and all year long. Together, we can end hunger here.



Team GBFB putting the mission in action at Bread of Life Pantry in Malden.

Special thanks to our partners who hosted us:

- CI/Haven From Hunger Pantry and Meals (Peabody, MA)
- Community Servings (Jamaica Plain, MA)
- Mystic Community Market (Medford, MA)
- Walpole Food Pantry (Walpole, MA)
- Catholic Charities – Yawkey Center (Boston, MA)
- Boston YMCA (East Boston, MA)
- Interfaith Social Services (Quincy, MA)
- Salem Pantry (Salem, MA)
- Catholic Charities – Lynn (Lynn, MA)
- My Brother's Keeper (Dartmouth, MA)
- Bread of Life Pantry (Malden, MA)
- Food For Free (Somerville, MA)



Hunger Free Holidays



GBFB.org/Holidays

Presented by



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 \$35 you donate provides a complete holiday meal for a family in need and thanks to a generous donation from Stop & Shop, all gifts will be matched up to \$350,000!**

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.

