

Winter 2026 Newsletter

seeds of

Hope



KANSAS
**food
bank**
HELPING THE HUNGRY • SINCE 1984

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FOOD BANK OF
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YOUR PARTNERSHIP SUPPORTS KANSAS SENIORS

Dear Friend,

All of us have a choice in how we spend our time and resources every day, and there are always a lot of things competing for our attention. Even with everything else going on in your life, you choose to support the Kansas Food Bank and our shared mission. For that, I am so thankful.

This winter, Kansas neighbors experiencing hunger are facing even more difficult choices. The cost of living remains high, putting pressure on our community members who might have to sacrifice essentials to make ends meet.

No one should have to choose between paying a bill or affording healthy food. But it happens frequently, especially at this time of year when it costs more to simply stay warm. Decreasing benefits may make these choices even harder.

Thankfully, your partnership provides vital resources for seniors. In the following pages of this issue of *Seeds of Hope*, the impact of your generosity is clear.

For seniors like Hazel (page 8) and neighbors of all ages, you help make sure reliable food assistance is available through our extensive hunger-relief network. Thank you again — because your choice to give has meaningful impact in Kansas communities across our 85-county service area.

Our hunger-relief efforts would not be possible without your partnership. Thank you.

Gratefully,

Brian Walker
PRESIDENT & CEO



GRACE STAYS ACTIVE AND HEALTHY

Grace's thankful smile says it all

By 6 a.m., Grace and her husband — both in their 80's — are already well into their day, tending to a few animals and keeping up with the small piece of land they've cared for most of their lives.

The daily chores are not easy, but Grace says both she and her husband want to stay as active and healthy as possible in retirement.

Not too long ago, Grace had to leave her job at a local restaurant. “Not by choice,” she explains — after her second knee replacement, it was just

too difficult to be on her feet all day and keep up at home.

Now, Grace and her husband are doing their best to make ends meet on a limited budget. “A lot of times, our expenses are more than what our income is,” she shares.

Thankfully, friends like you are there to make sure healthy food is still within reach at the Genesis Food Pantry, an agency partner of the Kansas Food Bank.

“I greatly appreciate what we get,” she says. “I really, really enjoy the produce box.”

Grace makes sure to use everything she receives, cooking healthy meals for herself and her husband.

Your support helps make it possible for Grace and her husband stay active in their golden years — thank you!

“ I greatly, greatly appreciate what we get. ”

YOU MAKE A LASTING DIFFERENCE

FOOD BANK STATS:



Total Pounds Distributed:
18,315,602 lbs —
28% of which was fresh,
healthy produce



**Senior Food Boxes
provided:** 11,674 boxes



Total Mobile Pantries:
383 pantries serving
85,749 households



**Food 4 Kids food
packets distributed:**
95,650 packets



**Summer Food Program
kids' meals served:**
8,649 meals



Total Volunteer Hours:
20,832 hours



Total Volunteers:
10,181 with 148 new
volunteers joining



DIFFERENCE FOR KANSANS!

This past year,

your partnership has helped make a meaningful impact in the lives of fellow Kansans. Seeing the difference we made together, we are inspired to see how many lives are bettered as we continue working toward our mission in 2026.

Since the opening of the Kansas Food Bank's Garden City warehouse, food has become even more accessible in the 31 westernmost Kansas counties that we serve. The Garden City warehouse has expanded our capacity, not only in storage but also in reach, which puts more fresh produce into the hands of the neighbors who need it most.

Your support makes this possible. Despite the economic challenges that this year brought, the Food Bank remained dedicated to bringing hunger-relief to 85 counties we serve.

In the past year, your generosity filled over **15 million plates** with nutritious meals and provided over **5 million pounds of fresh produce** for neighbors experiencing food insecurity.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT!

Together, we will continue building a stronger, healthier Kansas in the year ahead.



UPCOMING EVENTS

Walmart and Sam's Club Fight Hunger Spark Change

April 6 – May 3

Round up or donate at the register, additional specially marked items will also be donated to the Food Bank when purchased.

Jersey Mike's Month of Giving

March 1 – 31

3 participating Wichita locations:

K-96 & Greenwich, 29th & Maize and Derby Round up at the register to donate. Join us for the Day of Giving at these locations on March 25 when all proceeds will benefit the Kansas Food Bank!

Dillons & Girl Scout's Food Drive

April 11

Girl Scouts will be collecting food donations at all locations across our service area.

Letter Carrier's Food Drive: Stamp Out Hunger

May 9

Set food donations by your mailbox and your letter carrier will handle the rest!

FOR MONTE, TIME DONATED IS TIME WELL SPENT

Four years ago, Monte's wife came home from a volunteer shift at the Kansas Food Bank. "She has a passion for making sure schoolkids get fed, especially on the weekends," he explains. That passion was an inspiration to him.

He adds, "When I retired, we talked and decided, let's volunteer together."

Now, volunteering is not just a hobby for Monte. It is a lifestyle, one that he is glad to share with his wife and the tight-knit group they volunteer with.

"We really get a lot out of giving... not concentrating on us, but on

how we can affect the community in a positive way," he shares.

During a typical volunteer shift, the couple helps put together packets of food for *Food 4 Kids*, the Kansas Food Bank's weekend backpack program for school-age children.

Their involvement has had a ripple effect on Monte's social circle, even inspiring his former fraternity brothers to donate time and funds as well.

If volunteering is something you are interested in, Monte has a word of encouragement for you. "Give it a try," he says. "We don't bite," he adds with a laugh.



"We really get a lot out of giving... not concentrating on us, but on how we can affect the community in a positive way."

The Kansas Food Bank can provide nutritious food to so many Kansans because of volunteers like Monte and his wife. If you would like to join him in giving your time, please visit kansasfoodbank.org/volunteer.



A DECADE OF CARING SUPPORT

Jim, 73, has traveled the country, working in every industry from trucking to cooking. Yet nothing ever made him as happy as working in carpentry. “My dad was a carpenter,” he explains. “You drive by something and go, I did that. There’s pride there.”

Although Jim’s son, Joseph, didn’t follow him into carpentry, Jim is proud of his son’s achievements as a marine and soon-to-be mechanic. Joseph, 22, lives in Lincoln, Nebraska, and texts with his dad daily. The pair is especially close because Jim raised Joseph on his own.

“Believe me, it [helps]!”

When Joseph was young, Jim first learned of the Bird City Food Pantry, a Kansas Food Bank agency partner. Money was tight as a single parent, and the pantry was a lifeline.

Now retired, Jim returns to the food pantry to pick up food when he needs it. Much of his budget is



Jim receives food at Bird City Food Pantry, a Kansas Food Bank agency partner.

used to manage his COPD, so he is grateful to have one less worry.

Over the years, he’s seen the quality of food improve, especially as fresh vegetables became more available. “We’re getting good stuff,” he says of the food he receives. “You go to

a store and buy it, it’d be pretty expensive.”

The pantry is a vital resource for Jim. “Believe me, it [helps]!” he says. Your support helps make food available for even more neighbors like Jim — thank you!



HAZEL'S PLATE AND HEART ARE FULL

Hazel has called Chase County home her whole life.

At 98 years young, Hazel still enjoys keeping up with her favorite hobbies. “I love to bake,” she says, adding with a smile, “it just takes longer when you’re old.”

A Chase County native, Hazel has seen many things change as time passes and neighbors come and go. She and her husband lived in Cottonwood Falls until he passed away in 1996. She recalls seeing the population change drastically in the last few years they lived there.

“Our town just dried up... there’s no place to buy groceries [anymore],” she explains.

Because Hazel does not drive, she needed to live closer to easy

food access. So, she moved to Strong City, a neighboring town. With her mobility hindered by age, and her limited budget, a trip to the grocery store requires careful planning and is not always possible.

Thankfully, your partnership helps Hazel remain independent. Every month, she looks forward to receiving a grocery box from Chase County Care and

“ I think it’s a wonderful thing, what they’re doing, and I hope they never stop. ”

Compassion, a Kansas Food Bank partner agency who delivers her box with a caring hand.

When Hazel reflects on the kindnesses shared with her over her lifetime, she feels especially grateful for a close-knit community of neighbors and friends. You are one of those friends.

“I think it’s a wonderful thing, what they’re doing, and I hope they never stop,” she says with heartfelt thanks.

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