ENSURING ACCESS TO HEALTHY FOOD FOR ALL

Our community thrives when everyone has access to healthy, nutritious food. Fresh food is expensive and too many families are forced to go without. It is no surprise that nutrition-related illnesses are high among people with low incomes. There is plenty of healthy food for all, but not everyone has access to it. It is our mission to ensure that all people have access to the foods they need.

Last year, we embarked on an ambitious fundraising campaign to double our freezer and cooler capacity, taking us from space for 96 pallets to 192 pallets. Thanks to our generous community, the funds have been raised and the cooler and freezer units have been constructed. Now, we reenergized our fresh food distribution to offer a comprehensive approach to supply the healthiest foods possible.

Our FreshForward program includes several initiatives:

- Mass distributions to our network of 200+ nonprofit agencies;
- Deliveries to our pantries at the time they serve the public, where participants can receive their fresh foods directly from our trucks, resolving the issue of storage issues at the pantry; and
- Pairing fresh food distribution with nutrition education and health screenings through our Healthy Pantry Initiative.

“For many of the disadvantaged families we serve, the only fresh and healthy food they eat comes from what we provide.” - Aracely Mitchell

Supporting our network of nonprofit agencies is integral to what we do. Aracely Mitchell, Pastor and Director at Passion for Christ Church Food Pantry in East Stroudsburg, says, “Hunger is unacceptable, and eating healthy food is a necessity. For many of the disadvantaged families we serve, the only fresh and healthy food they eat comes from what we provide.”
GIVING THE GIFT OF YOUR TIME

Danielle Lucceese’s life motto is to enjoy every day. Danielle truly does live her life like this! She has been volunteering at Second Harvest for two years, and is a genuine bright spot; always bringing her positivity and dedication. In fact, Danielle elected to cut hours at her job where she works as a process architect, so that she could also volunteer at Second Harvest.

Danielle usually helps with our distributions of fresh foods to our network of 200+ member agencies. These events take place on Fridays, infusing our pantries with healthy foods in time for the weekend. It takes a lot of coordination and people-power to make it happen.

We couldn’t do it without volunteers like Danielle!

Danielle started volunteering because she wanted to give back, and when asked why she continues to help, she said it is because everyone is friendly and appreciative.

“Everyone made me feel like part of the team from the first day.”

In her spare time, Danielle enjoys weightlifting, crafting, baking, and spending time with her husband, Steve and dog, Roscoe. We are lucky to have Danielle on our team!

STAFF SPOTLIGHT

Khushboo Jain, Nutrition Educator

Second Harvest is a proud member of Feeding PA, the statewide association of Feeding America food banks. We are collaborating with Feeding PA to administer the Healthy Pantry Initiative, which will improve the pantry experience, increase healthy options, and provide resources to participants.

Khushboo Jain, Nutrition Educator, joined our team in November. She coordinates our Healthy Pantry Initiative. We caught up with her for a quick Q&A.

What were you doing before coming to Second Harvest?
A: I was working at Drexel University with the Center for Nutrition and Performance in the Nutrition Department as an Assistant Manager.

What does your job at Second Harvest entail?
A: I work with our food pantries to help them provide healthier foods, and I supply nutrition education tools and resources to pantry participants. I also teach nutrition education classes customized for families, adults, teens and children with the Cooking Matters program!

What is something you wish people understood about poverty and hunger?
A: Not everyone has the same access! Providing nutrition education without the understanding of the pitfalls of food access makes the education less relatable and less useful.

What is your favorite part of your job?
A: Working with the people at our food pantries and knowing what I am doing is making a difference in someone’s day-to-day life!

What do you like to do in your spare time?
A: I enjoy boxing, painting and cooking!
HELPING IN A RURAL COMMUNITY

Growing Lackawaxen (GL) is a nonprofit agency in the rural community of Lackawaxen Township, Pike County. In September 2019, the agency opened their food pantry, the Care Cabin, and has been nourishing residents ever since. GL also recently joined the Second Harvest MilitaryShare program, helping to distribute food to military families.

When people think of hunger and poverty, urban settings often come to mind. But, rural areas face many challenges, too. One in 10 people in Pike County are food insecure; 51% of county residents qualify to receive Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits; and 55% of students in the Wallenpaupack Area School District qualify for free or reduced school meals.

Jeff Shook, Chairman of the Lackawaxen Township Board of Supervisors, and Treasurer of the GL board, oversees the Care Cabin. He says,

“The people we serve could be your next-door neighbors.”

Shook says, “Maybe with a mortgage, car payment, utilities, and a child in college, there’s not enough money for food. You just don’t know.”

The Care Cabin typically operates using a “choice model,” meaning that participants are welcomed into the building to shop and choose groceries. Now, due to COVID precautions, everything is pre-bagged to limit personal contact. Prior to March 2020, the Care Cabin served about 50 families a month. During the height of the pandemic, that number rose to over 100 families.

Operations were tough in Spring 2020. Jeff says, “When things got thin and our shelves were empty, Second Harvest made it possible for us to rent a truck and restock.”

Today, the Care Cabin serves about 70 families a month.

LITTLE BITES

Last year, we distributed 11.8 million pounds of food, including 1.3 million pounds of fresh produce.

Care Cabin Pantry
Location: 169 Urban Road
Hawley, 18428
Phone: 570-685-2273
Pantry Hours: 3rd Saturday of the month; 8:00 – 11:00 AM

Care Cabin Pantry volunteers
UPCOMING EVENTS

The Seed Farm’s 7th Annual Spring Plant Sale

The Seed Farm’s 7th Annual Spring Plant Sale is online again this year!
Choose from 200+ varieties of vegetables, herbs, and flowers. As always, starter plants are grown in The Seed Farm’s greenhouse. We’ll have your favorites on hand as well as plenty of new, exciting varieties. All plants are grown without synthetic fertilizers or pesticides, and we never use genetically modified seeds.

Our online shopping procedure is safe and low-contact!

1. **Online ordering**
   - opens Sunday, May 2
   - and remains open until we’re sold out!

2. **Schedule your on-farm pickup**
   - for May 6-8 or May 13-15

3. **Pick up safely and easily at the farm**
   - 5854 Vera Cruz Road, Emmaus PA, 18049

For more information, visit theseedfarm.org

For every $1 donated, we can provide 6 meals to the people that need them most.

DONATE ONLINE at SHFBLV.ORG

Second Harvest Food Bank of the Lehigh Valley and Northeast Pennsylvania

6969 Silver Crest Road | Nazareth, PA 18064 | 484.287.4015

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