



**FOODBANK**  
FOR THE HEARTLAND

# FY 2023 MOBILE PANTRY PROGRAM REPORT

JULY 1, 2022–JUNE 30, 2023



## Grateful for You

Food Bank for the Heartland is grateful for the outpouring of support from our community to combat hunger across the 93 counties we serve in Nebraska and western Iowa. It is only through your compassion that our Mobile Pantry Program delivered more than 2.6 million meals across 403 Mobile Pantries serving children, families, seniors, and veterans in FY 2023. We could not provide this life changing work without your generosity. Thank you!

## Program History

We know—now more than ever—that hunger knows no boundaries. It is a reality for thousands of our neighbors living in urban, suburban, and rural communities. Food Bank for the Heartland recognizes their plight and collaborates with partners to offer Mobile Pantries and conveniently distribute healthy food for neighbors in need.

Founded in 2012, the Food Bank’s Mobile Pantry Program delivers food directly to communities that have a high need but limited food resources. These one-day distributions are free and include a variety of shelf-stable and perishable products, including fresh produce and bakery items. No identification is required to obtain food.



My husband just lost his job, and he found another one, but it’s less pay. I really appreciate everything you’re doing. It means so much. The food held us over for the entire week. It was wonderful.

—Stephanie, Mobile Pantry Recipient

## Making a Direct Impact

### 1 IN 11 INDIVIDUALS

IN OUR SERVICE AREA IS FACING HUNGER. THAT INCLUDES 1 IN 9 CHILDREN, 1 IN 6 HISPANIC INDIVIDUALS AND 1 IN 3 BLACK INDIVIDUALS.

### 403 MOBILE PANTRIES

HELD ACROSS THE FOOD BANK’S 93-COUNTY SERVICE AREA IN FY 2023.

### 2,609,038 MEALS

DISTRIBUTED TO NEIGHBORS IN NEED, HELPING THEM TO FOCUS, LIVE & THRIVE.

### 51 COUNTIES

THROUGHOUT NEBRASKA AND WESTERN IOWA PARTICIPATE IN THE MOBILE PANTRY PROGRAM.

### 69,030 HEARTLAND HOUSEHOLDS

RECEIVED COMMUNITY PACKS OF HEALTHY FOOD.

### \$2,146,772

TOTAL COST OF THE PROGRAM IN FY 2023.



Being a father, you feel like you should be the provider for your family. Coming here gives me hope that you have people who really care about you.

—Shane, Mobile Pantry Recipient

## Communities in Need

According to the latest data from Feeding America, 1 in 11 neighbors—with 1 in 9 being children—across the Food Bank’s 93-county service area is considered food insecure. Many do not know where their next meal is coming from. They are regularly faced with agonizing choices—such as paying for rent, utilities, childcare, medicine and other essentials or paying for food. Despite being employed, many families struggle to earn enough money to cover their basic expenses.

Skyrocketing costs on food and fuel have added extra stress to already strained budgets. Over 60% of mobile distributions occur in what are considered rural counties where access to grocery stores is limited. Partners have shared that it is common for individuals attending Mobile Pantry distributions to drive over 60 miles round trip to have access to fresh produce—creating devastating barriers for families in need.



It’s hard for me to express how thankful I am that the Mobile Food Bank arrived in Oxford, Nebraska. What a wonderful gesture of kindness that is very much appreciated. We can’t just run to a big-box grocery store. The closest one would be fifty miles one way for us.

— Quinn, Mobile Pantry Recipient

In addition to the mental and emotional anxieties of food insecurity, the physical adverse health effects of a poor diet are clear. Food insecure individuals are at higher risk for developing diet-related chronic illnesses such as type 2 diabetes, hypertension, and cardiovascular disease. To help mitigate these debilitating health risks, the Food Bank’s Mobile Pantry Program reinforces the importance of nutritious options with an emphasis on fresh produce, providing a pre-packed box of produce items at each Mobile Pantry event.

In conjunction with our Mobile Pantry Program, the Food Bank also hosts “School-Based Mobile Pantries.” In FY 2023, the Food Bank held 93 distributions to 10 school districts during the school year to support Heartland families who have limited access to healthy food.

## Food Distributed

The Food Bank distributed 6.8 million pounds of fresh fruits and vegetables to families across Nebraska and western Iowa in FY 2023. To ensure consistent access to healthy food, Mobile Pantry recipients receive a 17 lb. box of produce—consisting of hearty fruits and vegetables such as apples, potatoes, onions, cabbage, etc., as well as—a 16 lb. box of shelf stable items, including but not limited to rice, canned vegetables, canned fruits, canned protein, and pasta sauce. In addition, recipients also receive a fresh load of bread.



Without the help of you guys, I wouldn’t have vegetables. Especially fresh vegetables and some fresh fruit. You guys are a blessing. You help so many people, and thank you, thank you, thank you.

— Mobile Pantry recipient



### MOBILE PANTRY PROGRAM COST IN FY 2023: \$2,146,772

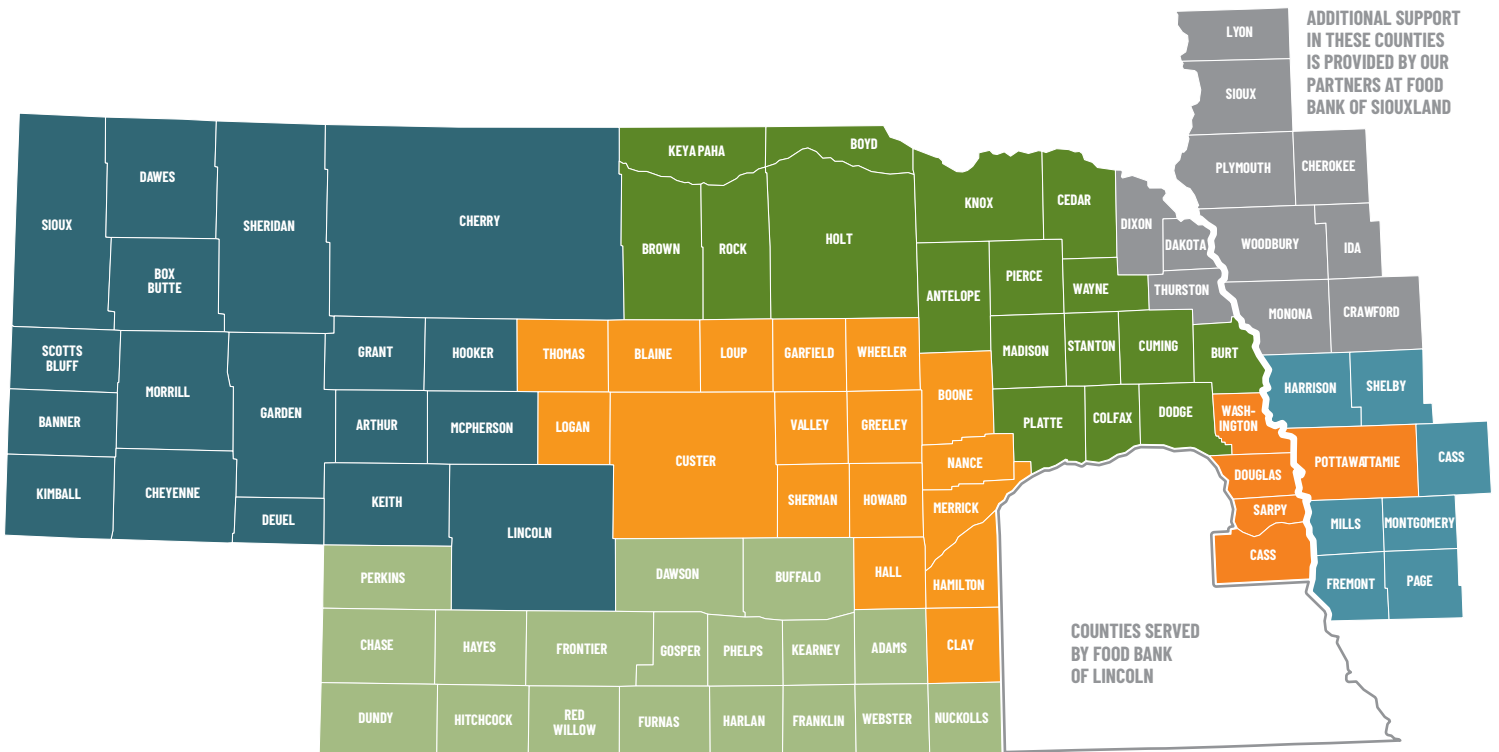
#### SOURCES OF DONATED REVENUE

Foundations	\$270,908
Corporations	\$80,000
Food Bank General Operating Funds	\$1,795,864

# Relationship-Driven Partnerships

In alignment with our mission of eliminating hunger in the Heartland by ensuring consistent access to healthy foods through community partnerships, Food Bank for the Heartland offers a “Regional Service Approach” to better provide our Network Partners with equitable distribution and creative solutions to food insecurity at the local level.

Food Bank for the Heartland’s 93-county service area is split into separate regions, with each region represented by dedicated Food Bank employees who understand the unique needs of those specific communities. These employees are known as Community Service Representatives—or CSRs. They serve as the main liaison for all Mobile Pantries—including communication, scheduling, and monitoring of all distributions—and provide consistent support and guidance to Mobile Pantry Partners.



I started using the Food Bank thinking it would help me financially as well as health wise and it has done both! Plus, it’s given me a chance to share some of the recipes I’ve never heard of before. Some of the foods I had not eaten before, but they are very good and very healthy. I can’t help but be thankful for all the help they’ve given me both in health and in thriftiness.

— Mobile Pantry Recipient



An FCSA-sponsored Mobile Pantry held in Ponca, NE

## Program Supporter Spotlight

The Food Bank is grateful for the support we receive from individuals and corporate partners. Farm Credit Services of America is just one example of a dedicated supporter in the fight against hunger. For the last decade, FCSA has sponsored various Mobile Pantries in rural communities across the Food Bank’s service area—helping distribute food to thousands of Heartland neighbors, while also providing financial support to the Food Bank to purchase the food that is distributed.



Nobody should have to go to bed hungry. It’s why we support the Food Bank and rural food pantries. Getting food to those who otherwise lack accessibility is important to us. We are here to strengthen rural communities.

— Jessica Stroham, Community Relations Manager at FCSA

## Helping Hands

Food Bank volunteers are the lifeline of our mission, and they play a pivotal role in the Mobile Pantry Program. In FY 2023, 39,800 hours were donated in our Volunteer Center—with 3,142 of those hours dedicated to packing community packs, which are distributed to Mobile Pantries across Nebraska and western Iowa. We are beyond grateful for their time, talent, and unending support in the fight against hunger.

The Food Bank’s pantry partners also rely heavily on volunteers to help with the coordination of each Mobile Pantry. Volunteers assist with the flow of distribution, place boxes into each vehicle, and create a positive experience for recipients. These volunteers are essential to ensuring each Mobile Pantry is safe and efficient for recipients, and they help combat the stigma some recipients may feel as a result of experiencing food insecurity.



You see a kid in the car seat, and think ‘Oh my gosh, this child may not have enough to eat.’ This box of canned goods and fresh produce could make the difference.

— Patty Suarez, Mobile Pantry Volunteer



Volunteers pack community boxes at the Food Bank



Patty Suarez and fellow volunteers at a Mobile Pantry

## Conclusion

Thanks to you, the Mobile Pantry Program meets an important need across Food Bank for the Heartland’s 93-county service area. Mobile Pantries are a flexible tool in addressing hunger. As food costs continue to rise, children, families, seniors, and veterans desperately need your help. With support from our generous community, we’re making progress toward improving the mental and physical health of families across the Heartland.