403,792 meals provided by local farms

(See more FY18 numbers inside)

In this issue:
- Alekman DiTusa
- Farm to Cocktail Event
- 2019 BusinessWest Difference Maker Award
The following businesses, organizations and foundations made a gift of $1,000 or more between October 1 and December 31, 2018

Aldi’s Hadley
Artic Refrigeration Company, LLC
Avangrid Foundation
Berkshire Brewing Company Inc
Beveridge Family Foundation, Inc.
Blue Cross Blue Shield of Massachusetts
Bob’s Discount Furniture Charitable Foundation, Inc.
Boston Foundation
Boston Mutual Life Insurance Co
Bridgeside Grille
Bueno y Sano
CoBank
Coldwell Banker Residential Brokerage
Country Bank for Savings
Delta Sand and Gravel, Inc
Easthampton Savings Bank
Edwards Church of Northampton
Emergency Food and Shelter Program
Enterprise Rent-A-Car Foundation
Ernst Financial Services
Excel Dryer Corporation
Fair Share Foundation
Fallon Community Health Plan
Farm Credit East
Feeding America
First Church of Christ Congregational
Freedom Credit Union
Gage-Wiley & Co., Inc.
Gould Family Foundation
Greenfield Co-Operative Bank
Greenfield Savings Bank
Greylock Federal Credit Union
Holyoke Community College
HUB International Limited
JK Group
Joy In Childhood Foundation, Inc.
Linde Family Foundation
Massachusetts Bankers Association
Charitable Foundation Inc.
Merriam-Webster, Inc.
Meyers Brothers Kalicka, P.C.
Montague B.P.O. Elks #2521
Mutton & Mead Renaissance Faire
Northampton Brewery
Northeast Solar
Northfield Mount Hermon School
Ocean Spray Cranberries, Inc.
Packaging Corporation of America
Partners HealthCare
People’s United Community Foundation
PeoplesBank
Performance Testing and Balancing, LLC
Perry And Madeline Garver Family Foundation, Inc.
Pioneer Registration Services
Prentice Foundation, Inc.
River Valley Market LLC
Sodexo Foundation
Springfield School Volunteers
Szawlowski Potato Farms
TD Charitable Foundation
The Iqbal and Shelby Mamdani Foundation
Thames Marketplace
Trinity Health
UMass Memorial Health Care, Inc.
United Personnel Services
VFW Post 10338 Emergency Food Pantry
Vivian and Paul Olum Charitable Foundation
Wakefern Food Corporation
Webber & Grinnell Insurance
Xeric Foundation

The top food donors between October 1 and December 31, 2018

1. Big Y *
2. C & S Wholesale Grocers
3. BJ’s Wholesale Club
4. Ocean State Job Lot
5. Stop & Shop
6. Walmart *
7. Coca-Cola Co.
8. Mountain View Farm
9. Cumberland Farms
10. Szawlowski Potato Farms

*multiple chains combined

The Food Bank is dedicated to creating a western Massachusetts where no one goes hungry and everyone has access to nutritious food.

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The Food Bank is committed to promoting cultural diversity through its board, staff, volunteers and member agencies. This institution is an equal opportunity provider.
To file a complaint of discrimination write USDA, Director, Office of Civil Rights, Washington, DC 20250-9410.

Your name is safe. We have never rented, sold, or loaned our donor list, and we never will. Without our donors, our work would not be possible. We value your support & privacy.
Providing food assistance during the Government shutdown

Dear Friends,

The federal government shutdown dramatized how much the national economy relies on federal spending to function. At stake was not only the livelihood of 800,000 federal workers, but also that of millions of Americans who rely on some form of government assistance to make ends meet as they struggle to achieve financial stability. In western Massachusetts alone, 152,000 individuals — mainly children, elders, people with disabilities and working adults — receive monthly federal SNAP benefits to put food on their table. The total economic impact of these benefits on our regional economy is an enormous $614 million annually.

No SNAP benefits were eliminated during the shutdown. The Massachusetts Department of Transitional Assistance, which administers the SNAP program in the Commonwealth, worked extremely hard to distribute benefits early, while federal funds were still available. This disruption caused numerous households to become confused and alarmed; many ran out of money to buy food in February. We are receiving reports from local feeding programs that witnessed an uptick in people seeking food assistance during the shutdown.

The House of Refuge’s Project Hope Pantry in Chicopee opened extra hours in late January for furloughed federal workers. Cathy, a TSA officer at Bradley Airport in Connecticut, was furloughed for five weeks during the shutdown. She relied on this pantry to help with groceries. It was her first trip ever to a food pantry. “I never thought I’d be on this end of the spectrum, receiving food. It’s wonderful to know that there are so many people that want to help us everywhere.”

This situation should serve as a reminder that so many of our neighbors are living without any financial cushion whatsoever. Forbes and CNBC reported in early January that nearly 80 percent of American workers report they are living paycheck to paycheck, according to a 2017 report by employment website CareerBuilder.com.

We are grateful that you invest in our mission so that, together, we can be there for them. 

—Cathy, TSA officer

Andrew Morehouse
Executive Director
For many residents in our region, the words “western Massachusetts” elicit mental images of scenic mountains, sprawling farms, and wildlife. For attorneys Ryan Alekman and Robert DiTusa, they also consider this area to be a region with a great sense of community and a wonderful place to raise a family.

However, for the more than 225,000 people that rely on our emergency food network, it’s a home filled with uncertainty and anxiety.

“The Food Bank works hard to make the community aware of the issue of food insecurity, which people may not see otherwise in their daily lives,” explains Ryan Alekman.

That is why, for more than eight years, Alekman DiTusa, LLC, Attorneys at Law, have supported our mission. In 2011, their participation in Legal Food Frenzy (a competition within the legal community) raised the most food and funds per capita in western Massachusetts. They have sponsored all our galas and spring events for the past five years, and every major fundraising event The Food Bank held in 2018. In addition to sponsoring and riding in our annual Will Bike 4 Food, they have donated major billboard space to us for the past two years to promote the charity ride. For the past two Monte’s March events, the pair have generously sponsored a matching gift hour, doubling callers’ contributions. Over the years, their support has provided the equivalent of 65,385 meals to food-insecure individuals.

This winter, the law team partnered with the Springfield Thunderbirds for a special ‘Goals for Groceries’ campaign. During the Thunderbirds’ 2018–19 season, Alekman DiTusa is generously donating 100 meals to The Food Bank for every Thunderbirds’ goal. Through the first five months of the season, the campaign provided 8,900 meals (with three months remaining).

“There is a great sense of community here in western Massachusetts,” explains Ryan. “We’ve been supporting The Food Bank for years because it is important to us to make a difference in the lives of those in our community.”

Read the full story at: foodbankwma.org/news
Back by popular demand

Our Farm to Cocktail competition is returning on Wednesday, May 8 at Valley View Farm in Haydenville. Join us for this straight up bartending competition to benefit The Food Bank. Some of the area’s most creative bartenders will compete as they shake, stir and dash creative cocktails using locally-sourced ingredients. You’ll have the chance to sample all their concoctions and vote for your favorite.

Enjoy delicious hors d’oeuvres and desserts prepared by Wheelhouse, and live music from local acoustic singer/songwriter, Grayson Ty. There will also be exciting silent auction items, oversized lawn games, fire pits, goodie bags, a full cash bar, and much more. We’re excited to have Berkshire Mountain Distillers as our official alcohol sponsor.

General admission tickets are $50 each and available online beginning March 7 at farmtococktail.org. VIP ($60) and designated driver ($40) tickets are also available. This is a 21+ only event and valid ID will be required at the door.

Space for this event is limited.

WHEN:
Wednesday, May 8, 2019
5:00 p.m. VIP
5:30 p.m. General Admission
Event ends at 9:30pm

WHERE:
Valley View Farm
16 Walpole Road, Haydenville, MA

COST:
$60 VIP
$50 General Admission
$40 Designated Drivers

PURCHASE TICKETS:
www.farmtococktail.org
21+ ONLY with Valid ID

Tickets sold out quickly in 2017, and we’re expecting the same this year. Don’t miss out on this fun evening to benefit The Food Bank.

If your business would like to be a sponsor for this special event, call (413) 247-9738, or email heatherc@foodbankwma.org.

More info: farmtococktail.org
The Food Bank named ‘2019 Difference Maker’

The Food Bank is honored to have been named one of Business West’s 2019 Difference Makers. Since its inception ten years ago, this recognition program has stood as a symbol of excellence and dedication to improving the quality of life in this region, and clearly demonstrates there are many ways to make a difference.

Although we served more than 225,000 food-insecure people in our last fiscal year, The Food Bank’s work does not end with merely feeding people. We are committed to raising awareness of hunger in our region. For many people, hunger is invisible and isn’t easily comprehended.

“Most people are not going to wear a sign around their neck saying, ‘I’m hungry,’” explains Andrew Morehouse, in a recent interview with Business West. “There is a lot of stigma and shame attached to not being able to meet your basic needs, especially food. There’s a real challenge there in terms of public education.”

The Food Bank would like to thank all our member agencies, community partners, donors and supporters for their contributions to feed our neighbors in need. We share this honor with them as we continue to ensure everyone has access to healthy food, regardless of their circumstances.

Working together to create a hunger-free community

Throughout the year, The Food Bank relies on donations from individuals, businesses, foundations, civic organizations, faith-based groups, schools and government to fulfill our mission. Thanks to your support, we provided...
Thank you for raising $294,720 for Monte’s March IX

Neither snow nor rain nor sleet nor gloom of night prevented Monte’s marchers from completing their goal. The rain and cold during every step of the 43-mile march didn’t slow down WRSI – 93.9 The River’s Monte Belmonte or the dozens of community supporters, political representatives, and business leaders that accompanied him on this year’s Monte’s March to prevent hunger. On November 19 & 20, Monte once again pushed a shopping cart from Springfield to Greenfield to raise vital funds for The Food Bank.

Thank you to everyone who supported this year’s event. With your help, Monte’s March raised $294,720 to support our mission, providing the equivalent of 884,160 meals. Since 2010, the annual event has raised a total of $1,177,720 for The Food Bank, making it one of the most successful fundraising events in western Massachusetts.

Learn more at MontesMarch.com

the equivalent of 9.6 million meals in our previous fiscal year (Oct. 1, 2017 – Sept. 30, 2018) — the most ever in our history. We are grateful to count you as partners as we work together to create a hunger-free western Massachusetts.
FOOD BANK UPCOMING EVENTS

April 25
Food Bank After Hours
The Food Bank
Hatfield, MA

June 15
Brews & Brunch
Westfield River Brewing Co.
Southwick, MA

August 4
Cider Pairing Dinner
Apex Orchards
Shelburne, MA

For more information, visit foodbankwma.org/events