Deepening Roots in the Pioneer Valley

In this issue:

- Food Bank Farm Expansion
- Hunger Relief Programs Approved
- Hunger Action Month
The following businesses, organizations and foundations made a gift of $1,000 or more between April 1 and June 30, 2019

Alekman DiTusa, LLC
Ann Mick
Bank of America Charitable Foundation, Inc.
Berkshire Bank Foundation Inc.
Berkshire Mountain Distillers
Boxlunch
Charles H. Farnsworth Charitable Trust
Chicopee Savings Charitable Foundation
Citizens Bank Charitable Foundation
Costco Wholesale
Dennis Group, LLC
Disability Management Services, Inc.
Dr. Hauschka Skin Care, Inc.
Edwards Church of Northampton
Eos Foundation
Feeding America
Freedom Credit Union
Greater Boston Food Bank
Greenfield Savings Bank
Jewish Federation of Greater Springfield
Kimball Farms Residents Association
Ludcke Foundation
NETA New England Treatment Access
OMG Inc.
PeoplesBank
Pioneer Cold
Pioneer Valley Racing
Retail Business Services
Shatz, Schwartz & Fentin, P.C.
ShopRite Partners in Caring
Stop & Shop Family Foundation
TJX
United Way of Hampshire County, Inc.
Valley View Farm
VFW Post 10338 Emergency Food Pantry
Walmart
Webster Bank
Wells Fargo
Yankee Candle Company

The top food donors between April 1 and June 30, 2019

1. Big Y*
2. Stop & Shop*
3. Szawlowski Potato Farms, Inc.
4. C&S Wholesale
5. BJ’s
6. Walmart*
7. Cumberland Farms
8. Coca-Cola/Minute-Maid Co.
9. Target
10. Garelick Farms

*multiple stores combined

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

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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.
Dear friends,

We’re blessed to live in western Massachusetts replete with small farms that grow fresh and healthy fruits and vegetables for us to eat. Unfortunately, far too many people cannot afford to partake in our region’s bounty. Often, they are not even accustomed to eating fresh food. I’ve heard countless stories of children whose understanding is that fruits and vegetables come from a can or a frozen bag rather than grown from the dirt.

For this reason, in 1992, The Food Bank purchased a 59-acre farm in Hadley. Since then to this day, we have partnered with a local community-supported agriculture farmer to grow vegetables on the farm. For the last seven years, we’ve partnered with Ben Perrault of Mountain View Farm CSA, who farms our land as well as his own. In lieu of cash rent, we receive a share of the harvest – 112,000 lbs. of organic vegetables that are agreed upon before the start of the growing season.

The Food Bank Farm has proven so successful that we’ve been planning for several years to purchase a second farm. That day has finally come. Through a long partnership with the Kestrel Land Trust, we are poised to buy a second farm in Hadley. This farm, which has approximately 123 acres, including 58 tillable acres of productive farmland, will expand significantly our local source of healthy vegetables for distribution directly to food-insecure households and indirectly to children in high-poverty school districts through school meal programs. At the same time, we will protect valuable farmland from development and provide opportunities for farmers to gain more access to scarce farmland and new markets for their produce. In the coming months, we’ll have lots more information to share with you about this innovative project. Please contact me if you would like to help us reach our fundraising goal and realize this dream come true.

Andrew Morehouse
Executive Director
The Food Bank, together with the Feeding America nationwide network of food banks, will mobilize across all 50 states in an effort to inspire people to take action and raise awareness of food insecurity.

During Hunger Action Month, there are a number of different ways to take action, including raising awareness of hunger issues, advocating for change, donating food and funds, or volunteering your time and skills. As individuals, charities, businesses and government, we all have a role to play in getting food to our neighbors in need. This is your opportunity to join a movement that has a real and lasting impact to feed more people than ever before.

**Sept 12: Hunger Action Day**
Wear orange-colored clothing to raise awareness. Share on social media using the hashtag #HungerAction.

**Sept 14 & 15: Six Flags Can Hunger**
Six Flags New England, Agawam
Donate 25+ nonperishable food items and receive one free ticket to the park.

**Sept 24: Day of Action**
Massachusetts State House, Boston
Join a rally in front of the State House with speakers. Wear orange and share #HungerAction on social media.

**Sept 27: Food Is Public Health**
Greenfield Community College
Join an oversight hearing on the impact of food insecurity and inequitable access to nutritious food on public health.

**Sept 29: Will Bike 4 Food**
Hatfield Lions Club Pavilion
Donate or register to ride in our charity cycling event: willbike4food.org

For more information, visit foodbankwma.org/HAM
Berkshire Bank awards The Food Bank with $20,000 grant

The Food Bank recently received a $20,000 grant from Berkshire Bank Foundation to support the distribution of healthy food throughout the region. With this grant, we will distribute even more nutritious food in Berkshire and Hampden counties through our 57 partners and our direct-to-client feeding programs: the Mobile Food Bank and Brown Bag: Food for Elders.

In addition to Berkshire Bank’s monetary support, the employees recently sorted, packed, and donated the equivalent of 111,000 meals of oatmeal for households at risk of hunger during their Xtraordinary Day of Service.

“We are so pleased to support the Food Bank of Western Massachusetts and their comprehensive approach to addressing food insecurity in the communities that Berkshire Bank serves,” said Lori Kiely, Director of the Berkshire Bank Foundation.

“Too many families find it difficult to provide enough food for their members, and we applaud The Food Bank’s effort to both address the issue and solve the problem through their work with the Coalition to End Hunger.”
The Food Bank would like to thank Massachusetts Governor Charlie Baker for approving state spending on three major hunger-relief programs in the Fiscal Year 2020 budget. In late July, Baker signed off on the $43.3 billion budget passed by the state legislature without a single veto, giving the green light to spending increases for programs that provide healthy food to households with lower incomes.

Hunger-relief programs included in the FY20 budget are MEFAP (the Massachusetts Emergency Food Assistance Program), HIP (The Healthy Incentives Program), and the Close the SNAP Gap Pilot Program. Spending for MEFAP — which provides emergency food to all

Feeding America’s Map the Meal Gap 2019:

Map the Meal Gap 2019 is the latest report by Feeding America® on food insecurity and the cost of food at both the county and congressional district level. Map the Meal Gap 2019 reveals that food insecurity exists in every county in The Food Bank’s service area and is higher than the statewide average. Overall, food insecurity in western Massachusetts ranges from a low of 8.8% of the population in Franklin County up to 9.7% in Berkshire County.

Governor Baker approves hunger-relief programs in FY20 budget
four food banks in the state — was approved at $20 million, an increase of $2 million over last year’s budget. For FY19, The Food Bank has received so far 2.5 million pounds of food through MEFAP (the equivalent of 2.1 million healthy meals). The expected increase in food will provide a much needed boost to households facing food insecurity in our region.

HIP, which matches SNAP benefits 100% when recipients use them at farmers markets, CSAs, and more, has an approved spending budget of $6.5 million. Last year, HIP’s $4 million budget could not cover the program’s expenses due to its unexpected popularity with SNAP recipients. It was forced into a temporary hiatus.

Finally, the FY20 budget includes $1 million to fund a new Close the SNAP Gap Pilot Program. The SNAP Gap refers to the more than 700,000 MassHealth recipients who are likely eligible to receive SNAP benefits but are unaware that they may qualify for the program. The pilot will test the viability of creating a common application for both programs.

“We are very pleased with the outcome of this year’s budget negotiations,” Christina Maxwell, The Food Bank’s Director of Programs said. “The hard work of the legislature and the governor will help many people in western Massachusetts—and across the Commonwealth—access the food they need to be healthy and productive. At a time when nutrition support from the federal government is increasingly coming under attack, it is so important for Massachusetts to do all it can to provide a strong safety net for those who need it.”

Read more news updates at foodbankwma.org/news

Berkshire County Spotlight

**Estimated Federal Food Assistance Program Eligibility Among Food Insecure People**

- **All**
  - **INELIGIBLE**: 68%
  - **ELIGIBLE**: 32%

- **Children**
  - **INELIGIBLE**: 70%
  - **ELIGIBLE**: 30%

To learn more about the *Map the Meal Gap*, visit map.feedingamerica.org.
FOOD BANK UPCOMING EVENTS

September 29
Will Bike 4 Food
Lion’s Club Pavilion, Hatfield MA
Donate Today: willbike4food.org

October 23
Food Bank After Hours
The Food Bank, Hatfield, MA
foodbankwma.org/afterhours

November 25 & 26
Monte’s March
Springfield to Greenfield
montesmarch.com

For more information, visit foodbankwma.org/events