



**MONTE'S  
MARCH 11**  
2020

**Monte's March XI:  
The Masked March**  
November 23 & 24

In this issue:

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- Q&A with Monte Belmonte

# THANK YOU

The following businesses, organizations and foundations made a gift of \$1,000 or more between July 1 and September 30, 2020 (Updated at the time of publication: November 2020.)

All States Asphalt, Inc.  
American Eagle Credit Union  
Big Y World Class Market  
Blue Cross Blue Shield of Massachusetts  
Boston Foundation  
Burr & McCallum Architects  
C & S Wholesale Grocers, Inc.  
Citizens Bank Charitable Foundation  
Community Foundation of New Jersey  
Danco Modern Furniture & Accessories  
Darden Foundation  
DB ADFUND Administrator LLC  
Disability Management Services, Inc.  
Easthampton Savings Bank Foundation, Inc.  
Eastman Foundation  
Edward W. Wiatrowski Fund  
Edwards Church of Northampton  
Emergency Food and Shelter Program  
Enterprise Rent-A-Car Foundation  
Ernst & Elfriede Frank Foundation, Inc.  
Ernst Financial Services  
Feeding America  
Friends of Pittsfield Council on Aging  
GE Foundation  
Grace Episcopal Church  
Greater Boston Food Bank  
Guardian Life Insurance Company  
Guido's Fresh Marketplace Pittsfield  
Harold L. Eaton Associates, Inc.  
Hillside Agricultural Society, Inc.  
IBEW 2324 Benevolent Fund  
INSA  
International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers Local 2324  
Jewish Community Federation and Endowment Fund  
Joy In Childhood Foundation, Inc.  
Leo S. Walsh Foundation  
Loomis Communities  
Ludcke Foundation  
Morgan Stanley Foundation  
Morgan Stanley Smith Barney  
NiSource Charitable Foundation  
Ostberg & Associates  
PayPal Matching Grants  
Pioneer Valley Coalition for Suicide Prevention  
Price Chopper Supermarkets  
Queenan Foundation  
Quik Foods, LLC  
RISE Holdings Inc.  
Schantz Galleries  
Stop & Shop New England  
Subaru of America, Inc.  
SUEZ North America Foundation, Inc.  
Susan A. and Donald P. Babson Foundation  
Target Corporate Foundation  
TD Charitable Foundation  
Three Friends Charitable Fund  
TJX Foundation, Inc.  
Town of Longmeadow  
UMass Five College Federal Credit Union  
United Personnel Services  
United Way of Hampshire County, Inc.  
Western Area Mass. Dietetic Association  
Western New England University  
YourCause, LLC for Magellan Health  
YourCause, LLC Trustee for Cardinal Health Foundation

## The top food donors between July 1 and September 30, 2020

1. Big Y\*
2. Massachusetts Emergency Management Agency
3. C&S Wholesale Grocers
4. Stop & Shop\*
5. BJ's Wholesale Club
6. Target
7. Walmart
8. Bimbo Bakery
9. Salvation Army/Disaster Relief
10. Cumberland Farms

\*multiple stores combined



The Food Bank  
of Western Massachusetts



For regular updates on Food Bank activities, sign up for our newsletter at [foodbankwma.org](mailto:info@foodbankwma.org)



MEMBER OF  
**FEEDING  
AMERICA**

*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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Cover photo: Scenes from Monte's March X, 2019.

The Food Bank is committed to promoting cultural diversity through its board, staff, volunteers and local member feeding sites. 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 and privacy.*



From the Executive Director

# Our Core Values

Dear Friends,

**I**t goes without saying we are living in very challenging times. We are enduring considerable health, economic, political, social, and environmental crises. Frankly, it's overwhelming for us all and especially for those at risk of hunger in our communities. Life for these households is replete with recurrent anxiety, stress, and even trauma heightened by the fear of contracting the coronavirus since many live in hot-spot communities and must work in the high-risk service industry.

Despite this chaotic moment in our history, at The Food Bank, we possess a hopeful, forward-thinking, and mission-driven culture.

Our management leadership team recently held a half-day retreat to review our accomplishments last fiscal year that ended September 30, and to turn our attention to this new fiscal year. We also met to reflect on our leadership responsibilities and reviewed research on leadership by Gallup – a global analytics and advice firm that helps leaders and organizations solve their most

*Continued on page 4*



*Clockwise from top left: Mobile Food Bank distribution, Gethsemane Food Pantry (pre-COVID-19), Brown Bag: Food for Elders, Food Bank Farm.*



pressing problems. Among other things, Gallup has documented what people most desire from their leaders: trust, compassion, stability, and hope. We reaffirmed our own commitment to these expectations as well as our organizational core values:

### **COLLABORATION**

- We pursue collaborative approaches to solutions based on mutual respect, trust, and accountability.
- We are committed to partnerships and sharing expertise to meet the immediate need for emergency food and address the underlying causes of hunger.

### **COMMUNITY**

- We seek community-based approaches that advance self-reliance and capacity, build on existing assets, and allow residents to take leadership of their own solutions to hunger.
- We believe in the power of advocacy and education as a means to create change in communities.

### **DIVERSITY AND INCLUSIVENESS**

- We strive to have the diversity of our community and the people we serve reflected in our staff and board of directors.
- We believe that an understanding of the inequalities in access to food is essential to conducting our work.
- We are committed to increasing cultural competence and inclusion in our organization.

### **INTEGRITY AND ACCOUNTABILITY**

- We act with integrity in our use of resources, partnerships, organizational governance, and

implementation of our mission.

- We hold ourselves accountable to conducting our work efficiently, effectively and with excellence.

### **RESPECT**

- We believe all people should be treated with equal respect and dignity.

### **STAFF RECOGNITION**

- We recognize that the dedication and talent of our staff is the source of our success.
- We support staff through professional growth opportunities, rewarding work, and recognition of accomplishments.
- We believe that work-life balance is important in creating a productive and positive workplace.

### **SUSTAINABILITY**

- We seek to maximize the impact and longevity of our programs and resources.
- We value the commitment and investment of volunteers and supporters in sustaining our work.
- We follow environmentally sustainable principles in our facility operations and workplace practices.

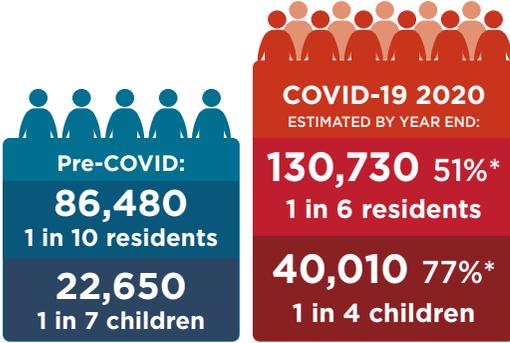
We couldn't carry out our mission effectively without these guiding values and our many stakeholders, including our trusted employees and you. Thank you for your continued support as we do our part to make this a better world for everyone. ♦



Andrew Morehouse  
Executive Director  
andrewm@foodbankwma.org

# COVID-19 & FOOD INSECURITY IN WESTERN MASSACHUSETTS

## FOOD INSECURE NEIGHBORS

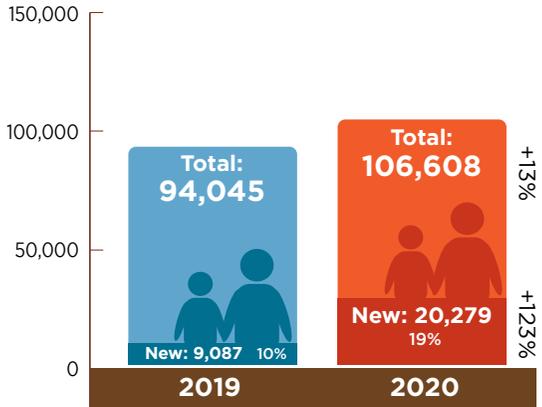


\*There may be a 51% increase in the number of western Mass. residents and a 77% increase in the number of western Mass. children who will be food insecure by the end of 2020. **Source:** Feeding America, The Impact of the Coronavirus on Local Food Insecurity. May 2020.

## AVERAGE MONTHLY INDIVIDUALS SERVED

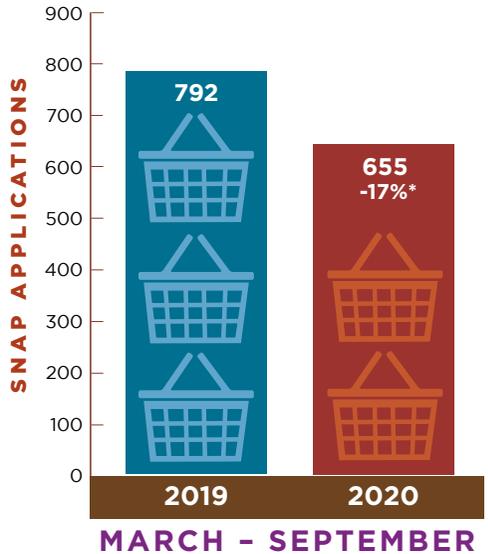
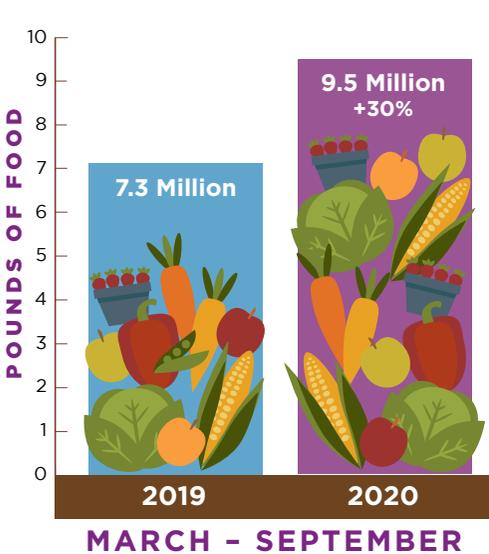
MARCH - AUGUST\*

\*Preliminary estimates due to reporting lag



## RISING DEMAND FOR FOOD

The Food Bank's distribution has increased more than any seven-month span in our 38-year history.



\*SNAP applications declined due to \$600/week unemployment payments. Enrollments beginning to increase again.



## Monte's March X1: Questions for Monte

*Monte Belmonte, radio personality for WRSI-93.9 The River, is once again leading Monte's March – a 43-mile, two-day March from Springfield to Greenfield to benefit The Food Bank. This year, with safety measures in place, Monte's March is set to take place on November 23 and 24. Learn more about the history of the March and what's in store for this event's 11th year!*

### **1. How did the march get started? What inspired you to go all out for this cause and why did it take the form that it did?**

The station was doing a very traditional radio food drive with The Food Bank every Thanksgiving. But after seeing the success of our ridiculous publicity-stunt fundraiser, *The Cancer Connection Camp Out*, The Food Bank challenged me to think more creatively about what we could do to have a bigger impact on fighting hunger here. One of the folks said, "What if you pushed a shopping cart from business to business in downtown Northampton and asked for donations?" And I said, "What if I pushed a shopping cart from Northampton to Greenfield!" And the rest is history.

### **2. This year has been unique and challenging for everyone. Have you encountered any challenges with this March compared to other years?**

Not yet. I've been practicing putting miles on my shoes while wearing a mask to make sure I don't feel claustrophobic, hyperventilate, and then pass out. And it's a little sad that we won't be able to have as many people along on the March as we have in years past. The camaraderie forged along the way is one of the best parts.

### **3. Do you have any tips or recommendations for someone who wants to get involved, but might be wary of COVID-19 or other difficulties this year?**

Yes! GET INVOLVED! The need is historically great this year. And, even though not everyone will be able to march along with Congressman McGovern and me, I'm encouraging people to start a team, start fundraising and march in solidarity with us separately wherever they are on the same days of the March. This was inspired by the kids, teachers and the school nurse at Conway Grammar School.



They have held a solidarity march at the same time as the actual March in their parking lot for the last several years. Then, last year, someone did a solidarity march in... was it ANTARCTICA? (Editor's note: yes!)

***4. What is your favorite thing about the March? Do you have a favorite year or maybe a leg of the march you like?***

I quite like the end of it. 43 miles is a long way to go. I have loved walking through Mason Square in Springfield and hearing from food justice organizers there about ways to remedy their food desert. I've loved crossing the Willimansett bridge into Holyoke and being greeted by State Representative Aaron Vega, who worked so hard to make "Breakfast After The Bell" a reality in Massachusetts [universal breakfasts in high-poverty school districts]. I've loved stopping in to visit Lucio Perez, living in sanctuary in a church in Amherst, these last few years. I loved when Congressman McGovern and I were showered with prayer scarves from the local Tibetan community. I love when we're on the last mile and the music of Double Edge Theatre propels us on those last steps. I love hearing from the marchers and the listeners about how much this event has come to mean to them, and about how meaningful it is that each dollar donated provides 4 meals for our neighbors. And, I've loved learning so much about food insecurity and why it's something we can and will fix. Chef Neftali Duran, who is the head of Team Taco on the March, says "Food justice isn't charity. It's equity."

***5. Do you have any hopes or specific goals for future marches?***

I'd like to find a better way than a ridiculous 43-mile walk to make sure our neighbors have enough healthy food to eat. Perhaps, by helping to create the "political will" as Congressman McGovern calls it, to invest our state and federal resources to end hunger. But until then, or until I blow out a calf, I'll keep walking. I'd like to raise a million dollars in one March one year.

***6. Your marching outfits are legendary. Can you give us any hints about what you might be wearing this year?***

It's COVID themed. ◆

***Donate today at [www.MontesMarch.com](http://www.MontesMarch.com) or call 1-888-323-HOPE on Monday and Tuesday, November 23 - 24.***

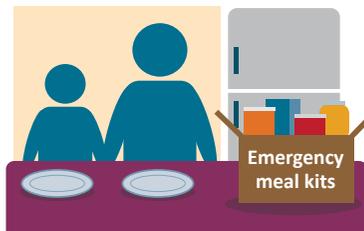
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*"I dropped my son off at my mother's home over the weekend because we are too low on food. I'm too ashamed to tell my mother this is the reason for his visit."*



No parent in our region should feel ashamed because they are unable to feed their child. Yet, many parents and other individuals are struggling to put healthy food on their tables, many for the first time. Supporting households at risk of hunger strengthens the greater community.

[foodbankwma.org/donate](https://foodbankwma.org/donate)

or mail: P.O. Box 160 • Hatfield, MA 01038