



**FOOD BANK**  
OF WESTERN MASSACHUSETTS

**word *of***  
**mouth**

FALL 2023

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2023 Fall  
Appeal  
inside



# FOOD BANK

OF WESTERN  
MASSACHUSETTS

## word *of* mouth

Volume 11 — Issue 4  
Fall 2023

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Western Massachusetts  
25 Carew St, Chicopee, MA 01020  
413-247-9738  
info@foodbankwma.org  
foodbankwma.org

Editors: Andrew Morehouse,  
Executive Director, and  
Deb Ondo, Communications and  
Engagement Manager  
Writer & Photographer: Clay Gregory,  
Senior Content Coordinator  
Designer: Tom Pappalardo,  
Marketing and Design Coordinator  
Cover Photo:  
Connor Danylenko, Pexels



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PHOTO: JAMES WHEELER / PEXELS

## Dear Friends,

Now that we are settling into our new home in Chicopee, I would like to take this opportunity to thank again all our stakeholders who have invested in our mission to feed our neighbors in need and lead the community to end hunger:

- Visionary donors of our capital campaign who helped us build our new distribution center to increase our capacity to carry out our mission for decades to come
- Committed donors who support our impact year after year across all four counties of our region
- Socially responsible food donors, large and small, local and afar, including our resilient local farmers who persevere despite three consecutive years of significant crop loss due to extreme weather
- Stalwart volunteers who assist us in so many ways, including inspecting, sorting, and repacking healthy donated food for households in need of food assistance
- Committed member food pantries and meal sites
- Community-centered elected officials and non-profit partners
- Our hard-working and adaptive staff
- And, especially, so many people struggling with food insecurity in every town and city across our region who have the right to healthy food

The Food Bank relies on so many diverse stakeholders. Without your investment of time, treasure and/or talent, the Food Bank would be unable to provide food assistance to an average of 96,000 individuals every month and increasing this year.\* One woman I met recently at Lorraine's Soup Kitchen and Pantry in Chicopee explained to me she was there for the first time because she just couldn't make ends meet given the high cost of living due to inflation. She needed a bag of groceries to feed her children that week. It's so heartbreaking to know that so many people across our region are struggling when we, as a society, can do so much to prevent this from happening.

We *can* end hunger when we invest in people, households, communities, and smart government policies and programs that create economic opportunities for everyone to succeed in life. In this edition, you'll read about our increased capacity to provide more healthy food day in and day out as well as our public education and advocacy on the upcoming farm bill debate in Congress. The bill is the federal government's single largest investment in nutrition and agriculture security. Together, we end hunger!



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Andrew Morehouse'. The signature is fluid and cursive, written over a white background.

Andrew Morehouse  
Executive Director, Food Bank of Western Massachusetts

\* [foodbankwma.org/learn/local-hunger-data/](https://foodbankwma.org/learn/local-hunger-data/)



# Answering Your Questions About the Farm Bill

## What is the farm bill?

Every five years, Congress comes together to re-evaluate and re-authorize agriculture in America. This massive piece of legislation called the farm bill covers everything from federal environmental protection and crop insurance to school meals in public schools.

## Why is the farm bill important to the Food Bank?

The Food Bank focuses on the federal nutrition programs renewed and funded through the farm bill. These include the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP, formerly known as Food Stamps), and The Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP), which provides food to Food Banks, pantries and meal sites.

## What is at stake in this year's farm bill?

As of this fall, the House version of the bill proposes drastic funding cuts for SNAP while the Senate version seeks to increase funding. For the bill to pass, a final version will have to be drafted and approved by both legislative bodies. With vast differences in opinion about the value of SNAP on Capitol Hill, passage of a final farm bill could extend into 2024.

## What are the consequences if these social safety net programs are cut?

There is already a disparity between the amount allotted to SNAP recipients each month and the rising cost of food in 2023. Cutting funding for the program would make it even less effective, leaving hundreds of thousands of Americans without adequate access to nutrition. A reduction in TEFAP would cut a major source of donated

food for food banks and pantries that would have to increase their food purchasing to make up the difference.

## What can I do?

Contact your legislators in Washington, D.C. and let them know that more, not less, funding for SNAP and TEFAP is a priority for their constituents. Visit [foodbankwma.org/advocacy-engagement](https://foodbankwma.org/advocacy-engagement) to learn how.



Center On Budget and Policy Priorities, 2023

More than 51% of SNAP participants in Massachusetts are families with children.

SNAP is the nation's most effective anti-hunger program, helping 1,024,400 Massachusetts residents afford food.

More than 51% of SNAP participants in Massachusetts are families with older or disabled adults.

More than 33% of SNAP participants in Massachusetts are working families.





# Cultivating For Community

The Food Bank's Cultivating for Community initiative on the Food Bank Farm in Hadley harvested **5,697 pounds** of fresh, local produce that was distributed to Amherst food pantries, beating last year's total by over **1,000 lbs.**



PHOTOS: CLAY GREGORY



**1**

acre

**2**

greenhouses

**395**

volunteers

**1,238**

volunteer  
hours



# THE 14th ANNUAL **MARCH** for the **FOOD BANK** with MONTE BELMONTE

## The Power of Community: It's Your March, Too!

This year's March for the Food Bank with Monte Belmonte travels from Springfield to Greenfield on November 20th and 21st. Join Monte, Congressman Jim McGovern, and Food Bank Executive Director Andrew Moorehouse as they embark on the 43-mile trek to raise awareness about hunger and food insecurity in our region and raise funds for the Food Bank's mission.

### There are many ways to participate:

- Register to fundraise and/or March with Monte
- Host a fundraising event or mini-march in your community
- Donate to the March by calling in or go online during the March
- Celebrate the marchers along the route
- Buy one of 100 exclusive Monte's Mixed Bags – chock full of surprise gifts and treats from local vendors
- Get the word out and spread awareness with #FoodBankMarch
- Have your business sponsor the March
- Visit [marchforthefoodbank.com](http://marchforthefoodbank.com)

For questions about any of these opportunities, contact [events@foodbankwma.org](mailto:events@foodbankwma.org).



# New Food Bank Distribution Center: Settling In and Setting Up for the Future

## Warehouse Square Footage

The additional 18,000 square feet (about four times the area of a basketball court) in the warehouse means storing and distributing more healthy food, more efficiently than ever before.

CHICOPEE  
**38,426**  
s.f.

HATFIELD  
**19,960**  
s.f.

## Loading Docks

HATFIELD  
**2**

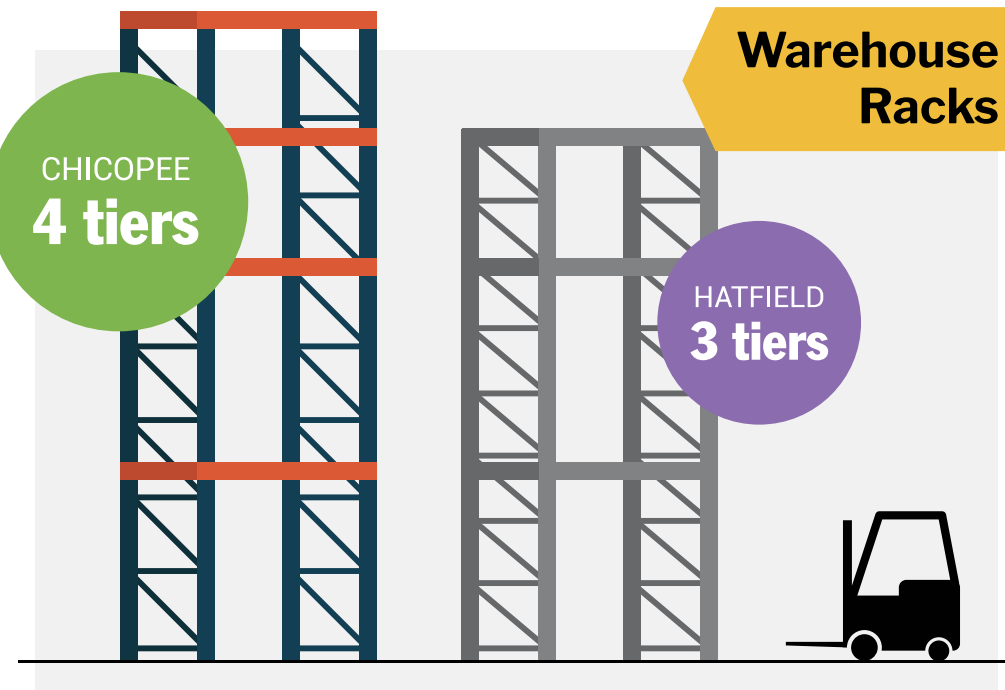
CHICOPEE  
**9**  
(3 refrigerated)



CHICOPEE  
**4 tiers**

HATFIELD  
**3 tiers**

## Warehouse Racks



## Parking Spaces

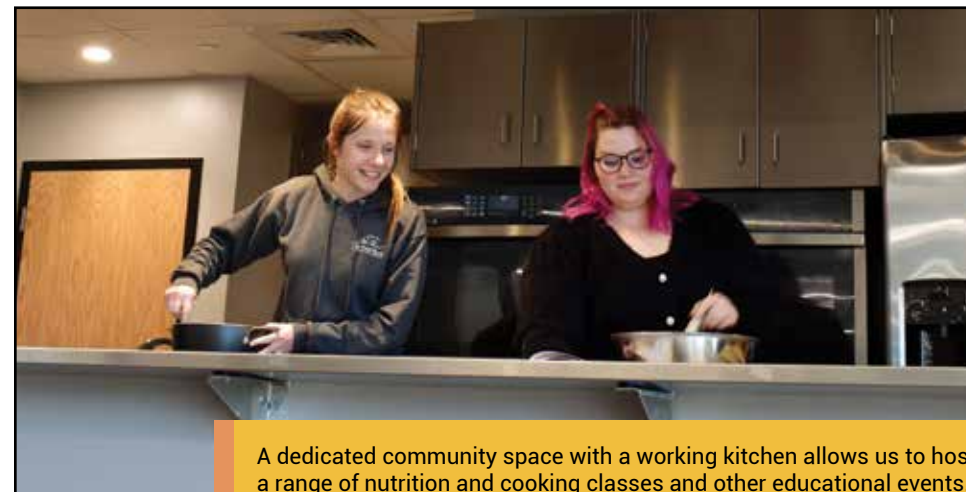
CHICOPEE  
**+100**

HATFIELD  
**35**



For the first time in many years, our building has the capacity to comfortably hold all our staff and volunteers that make our day-to-day operations possible.

PHOTOS: CLAY GREGORY



A dedicated community space with a working kitchen allows us to host a range of nutrition and cooking classes and other educational events.



# Support the Food Bank Today

Dear Friend of the Food Bank,

To unlock the full potential of our new food distribution center and advance our mission, we rely on the steadfast support of our community — individuals like you.

Every dollar you contribute will provide three nourishing meals, ensuring fresh, nutritious food finds its way to the tables of our neighbors, today and tomorrow. Your support also underpins our commitment to improving lives by addressing the underlying causes of hunger. We're grateful for your partnership.

Together, we end hunger.

***Donate Now***

[foodbankwma.org/donate-now/](http://foodbankwma.org/donate-now/)  
or use the enclosed envelope.



# THANK YOU!

The following businesses, organizations and foundations made a gift of \$1,000 or more between July 1, 2023 and September 30, 2023:

Community Health Charities	LN Consulting
Cooley Dickinson Health Care	MGM SPRINGFIELD
Costco Wholesale	Moderna Foundation
Hyundai Motor America	Noonan Energy Corporation
Jamrog HVAC Inc	Partners HealthCare
Knights Of Columbus	Quadrini-USA Inc
Amherst Council 1619 Inc.	Scalora Consulting Group
Liberty Bank	Stop and Shop
Lions Club of Pittsfield, Inc	The Dowd Agencies

The following businesses are the top ten donors of food between July 1, 2023 and September 30, 2023:

Big Y	C&S Wholesale
Stop and Shop	Cumberland Farms
BJ's Wholesale	Target
Walmart	Costco
Atlas Farm	Red Fire Farm





13th ANNUAL

SEPT 24, 2023

# WILL BIKE 4 FOOD

The 13th Annual Will Bike 4 Food took place at the Lions Club Pavilion in Hatfield on Sunday, September 24th. The event was presented by Stop and Shop to raise funds for the Food Bank of Western Massachusetts.



**Total Raised:**  
**\$221,163.73**  
**Participants:**  
**325**  
**Teams:**  
**49**

PHOTOS: CLAY GREGORY





# Donate Today

Every dollar you contribute will provide three nourishing meals, ensuring fresh, nutritious food finds its way to the tables of our neighbors, today and tomorrow.



*Donate Now*  
[foodbankwma.org/donate-now/](http://foodbankwma.org/donate-now/)  
or use the enclosed envelope.

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BANK**  
OF WESTERN  
MASSACHUSETTS  
25 Carew Street  
Chicopee, MA 01020

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