

4 years  ARKANSAS
FOOD
BANK



2024



**CASE FOR
SUPPORT**

FOOD SECURITY IN ARKANSAS

Hunger is hidden in plain sight, and thousands of Arkansans don't know where they will get their next meal.

For over 280,000 individuals residing in central and southern Arkansas, ensuring a meal on the table each day presents a daunting challenge. Despite working multiple jobs, many still find it difficult to make ends meet. As inflation drives up expenses for housing and fuel, those with limited income bear the brunt of these rising costs. Faced with the dilemma of prioritizing utility bills or putting food on the table, our neighbors and their families are forced to make sacrifices. Hunger silently permeates our communities, impacting everyone in its wake.

More than 17% of our neighbors are food insecure and do not know where their next meal is coming from. They're our friends. They live on our street. Many have jobs. Their children go to school with ours. They are people we see very day, and, too often, **their struggle is hidden in plain sight.**



1 in 6

Arkansans do not know where their next meal may come from

Arkansas ranks **1st**

in the nation for food insecurity according to USDA's report

1 in 4

children in Arkansas are at risk of going hungry

1 in 13

seniors in Arkansas are facing hunger

Hunger In Arkansas

When you look at hunger in America, Arkansas is unfortunately at the forefront of food insecurity.

Arkansas consistently ranks in the top five for child, severe, and overall hunger.

HOW WE HELP

We provide food, resources, and data-driven solutions to neighbors who need it most.

1. Providing food to those who need it.

Arkansas Foodbank puts food on tables. Through our network of more than 400 community partners, we distribute more than 40 million pounds of food, or 33.3 million meals, across central and southern Arkansas each year.

2. Learning our community needs.

Not every neighborhood has the same needs. We provide food to the very urban to incredibly rural corners of Arkansas, and each requires a unique plan to fight food insecurity and create a network of resources to build better lives for our neighbors. We are committed to learning each of our communities' needs to meet them where they are.

3. Using data to drive hope.

The face of hunger has changed dramatically within the past few years, and needs across central and southern Arkansas are no exception. We use Feeding America, state and local government, and agency partner data to identify underserved areas and efficiently allocate resources by community.



FEEDING OUR COMMUNITY

We combine community partnerships, capital investments, and direct services to feed Arkansans.

Fulfilling our mission requires connecting people, resources, and food to reach those in need. Our approach begins with partnering with established organizations across the 33 counties we serve, leveraging them as distribution hubs. We actively seek opportunities to bolster existing pantries and agencies, ensuring they can adequately address the evolving needs of our communities. In instances where gaps persist, the Arkansas Foodbank steps in, offering direct services and implementing programs to support individuals and families still grappling with food insecurity.



Community Partnerships

More than 90% of the millions of pounds of food we distribute annually is distributed through our more than 400 community partners. Our partners are food pantries, churches, schools, homeless shelters, and other organizations that are dedicated to serving on the front lines of fighting hunger. Their existing relationships and operations are woven into the fabric of their communities and are integral to assuring we can feed hungry people.

Capital Investments

As our community partners' needs change, we invest in them. We determine the communities that have gaps in services and food access, and then we put donations to work. From investing in refrigeration systems for perishable foods to increasing storage capacity at pantries, we create access to food and bring healthier options to people who might not be able to get nutritious foods otherwise.



FEEDING OUR COMMUNITY

Direct Services

Not every community can fully serve the needs of its neighbors. We supplement our network of agencies with programs that target specific geographies and demographics with food security gaps.

Pop-Up Pantries

When our partners can't support a distribution, it can have a devastating impact on a community. We identify areas with the most need and provide targeted Pop-Up Pantries to assure those communities and neighbors have ready access to nutritious food.

Food for Kids

1 in 4 Arkansas children face food insecurity, and in some rural counties, the rate is even higher. We provide food to kids facing hunger through school pantries, backpack programs, and summer feeding initiatives.



Food for Seniors

We improve access to food for older Arkansans through monthly food boxes, ensuring our pantries are stocked with foods that meet seniors' unique dietary needs, and extra financial support to partner agencies, such as mini grants, to help fund making pantries handicap accessible.

Food for Families

We connect our agencies with local, state, and national resources with food and funds to strengthen their programs, ultimately enabling them to better serve people facing hunger.

Improving Access to Food

England, Arkansas, is a town of about 2,700 people. It's an aging farming community and one that's been hit hard by the changing economic climate. In 2021, the only grocery store in town closed and residents were left in a food desert with no close or affordable options for six months. Once a store finally opened, the prices were still out of reach for many on fixed incomes in the community.



While local churches could provide hot meals weekly, it wasn't enough to meet the need. To feed those in need, Arkansas Foodbank provides monthly mobile distributions that feeds hundreds by the boxful, providing an oasis in what was once a food desert.

MAKE AN IMPACT

Partner with us to ensure no one in Arkansas goes hungry.

To assure we can feed our neighbors, we need you. Donations are the best way for us to leverage our food sourcing relationships, lower the cost of acquiring food, and effectively distribute to communities in need. With capital to invest in our pantries and direct service programs, we can effectively create a network of resources to help Arkansans build better lives.



We distribute
40 million pounds
of food across central and
southern Arkansas every year

\$0.94 of every **\$1**
donated goes directly into
our hunger relief programs

Every \$1 donated creates
5 Meals for Arkansans



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