



MARYLAND
FOOD BANK
UNTIL HUNGER ENDS.

SPRING 2013

Farm to Food Bank

ENDING HUNGER FROM THE GROUND UP



A NEWSLETTER FOR FRIENDS OF THE MARYLAND FOOD BANK

IN THIS ISSUE *Breaking Ground on New Freezer • Behind the Scenes: What is Salvage?*

Programs Take "Giant" Leap Forward

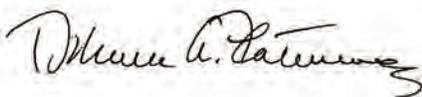
Innovation, Not More of the Same

In one of my favorite Luther Vandross songs, he says “If you always do what you’ve always done, you’ll always get the same old stuff.” This really resonates with me as we think about what it will take to accomplish our mission of ending hunger. Just in the past 16 years that I’ve been involved with foodbanking, the changes have been endless. What started out as a simple concept—capturing unsalable yet useable food for redistribution—began with basic damaged dry goods. Today, especially with an increased focus on nutrition, food banks see themselves as part of a larger sustainability picture—supporting local agriculture, reducing waste and fostering economic growth to build a vital, hunger-free country.

To get the job done we need to innovate and create.

In this issue you will learn about the latest fresh approaches to our work. Luckily, a couple of them include passionate partners that have wholeheartedly joined the movement to end hunger. For me, the inspirational stories in this issue truly widen my perspective on what is possible. Who would have thought that our Farm to Food Bank Program which started with two farms a few years ago would now be expanded to 51? How amazing is it that we’re receiving 22,000 pounds per week—over a million pounds each year—of high-quality, chicken, beef and pork that previously went to waste? And finally, I’m hoping that you’ll be as excited as I am about the news of Giant Food’s unprecedented three-year, \$900,000 commitment to expand youth programs.

As exciting as these initiatives are, believe me, there are several equally exciting ones still in the works. It will be the continuous flow of new ideas and well-crafted, systemic execution that will take us to where we need to go. A long way away from the “same old stuff.”



DEBORAH FLATEMAN PRESIDENT & CEO



ABOUT OUR NEWSLETTER

*This issue is all about **Innovation**. As you’ll see in the coming pages, we’re full of fresh ideas—starting with our **Farm to Food Bank Program**, which is bringing millions of pounds of fruits and vegetables to children in need.*

▼ FoodWorks is just one of the ways we get farm-fresh fruits and vegetables out to families in need.



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SPRING 2013

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We are... **Breaking New Ground**

Programs are expanding and our network growing stronger thanks to capacity-building projects.



Freezing Hunger

The recent influx of fresh and frozen foods has made things tough for our resident freezer specialist, Anthony Dickinson (left). Over the past year, he's had to squeeze more and more food into our walk-in, which has a daytime temperature of -10 degrees. With storage space limited, he spends up to an hour every morning and evening, unloading and shifting items to get to what he needs.

Fortunately, he'll get some relief later this year when we expand our refrigerator/freezer by 8,000 square feet. The new portion will be attached to the FoodWorks annex that was added a few years ago, and will provide much-needed storage space for produce and proteins that will be incorporated into FoodWorks-produced meals. We'll also be able to store completed meals in the new freezer, freeing room in the current unit for retail meats and large batches of frozen product.

School Pantry: Westward, Ho!

School pantries hit the Eastern Shore a year ago and now they're spreading to Western Maryland, too. Earlier this year, the Maryland Food Bank – Western Branch launched six pilot pantries at schools in Washington County. The School Pantry Program will supplement Micah's Backpack, a partnership initiative between many local churches and social service organizations which distributes 535 backpacks full of food every Friday afternoon to students at all 27 elementary schools in Washington County.

School pantries will get even more food into the hands of families in need. Backpacks distributed to children can only weigh 10–12 pounds, while school pantries can distribute several bags of groceries weighing 30 pounds or more to a family. School pantries will also be able to provide perishable foods like fresh fruits and vegetables. The schools currently participating in the program include Antietam Academy, Bester Elementary School, Cascade Elementary School, E. Russell Hicks Middle School, Hancock Middle-Senior High School, and Springfield Middle School.



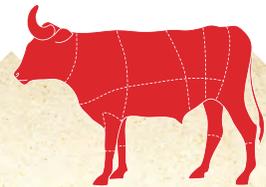
▲ *The planned 8,000-square-foot freezer, illustrated above, will run alongside the Bauer Community Kitchen and provide more storage space for FoodWorks-produced meals.*

Pantries have been launched at six schools in Washington County since January. More are expected to open in the 2013–2014 school year.

Building a Stronger, Better, Faster Network

Micro-grants are a big strategy in international development. Investing just a few thousand dollars with a family in a third world country provides chickens that offer a sustainable food source—eggs—which can be eaten or sold at market. Or it could purchase a loom to make rugs and blankets for sale, or seeds for crops.

We're bringing that same model to our work, awarding grants of up to \$5,000 to network partners for basic capital equipment. With an average grant of \$2,600, agencies have been able to purchase chest freezers, shelving, and computers that increase storage capacity, make operations more efficient and ultimately help many more families in need. On average, agencies that received grant dollars increased food distribution by 41 percent—a difference of 277,000 more pounds reaching communities in need!



Getting to the Meat of the Problem

Where's the beef? Turns out it's here at the Maryland Food Bank! Thanks to some very philanthropic retailers, we're receiving more than 22,000 pounds of high-quality retail meats every week. The donations are part of a broad initiative called Retail Rescue, which we launched in 2008 in partnership with **Food Lion**. U.S.D.A. guidelines indicate that if frozen on the sell-by date, meat products can be used safely for an additional six months. Food Lion saw the opportunity to reduce waste, while safely feeding more people and offered to let us to pick up excess beef, poultry, pork, lunchmeat and various shelf-stable items from its stores several times each week.

We've since launched similar programs with **Acme, BJ's, Giant Food's Peapod Delivery Unit, Redner's Markets, Safeway, Sam's Club, Sheetz, Shoppers Food & Pharmacy, Shoprite, Target, Walmart and Weis Markets**, bringing the total number of stores we pick up from on a regular basis to 223! The scope of the program is left up to each retailer, so while some follow in Food Lion's footsteps and provide a wide variety of products, including meat, others concentrate solely on bakery items and non-perishable goods.

Retail rescue meats are one of our most valuable and versatile commodities. They contain key nutrients that hungry families need and can be distributed as-is or incorporated into delicious FoodWorks dishes.



ENDING HUNGER FROM THE *Ground Up*

Thanks to generous, community-minded farmers, the **Farm to Food Bank Program** has become a true grassroots movement to end hunger.

Sowing & Growing

When we launched the Farm to Food Bank Network in 2010, we had no idea how quickly it would take root. We had just two farm partners at the time—First Fruit Farms and the Mid-Atlantic Gleaning Network (MAGNET)—which were donating roughly 200,000 pounds of produce per year. Just two years later, we've made a lot of new friends, welcoming an astounding 51 farms into the Farm to Food Bank Network! Last year, farm partners provided more than 4 million pounds of fresh green beans, sweet potatoes, corn, watermelon and more.

Relationships & Resources

The growth is due in large part to our expert food solicitor, Amy Cawley. As the granddaughter of Wayne Cawley, Jr., Secretary of the Maryland Department of Agriculture from 1979–1991, and daughter of Charlie Cawley, also of the Maryland Department of Agriculture and a retired grain farmer, Amy has worked around fresh, locally-grown food her entire life. She followed in her family's footsteps, working at a retail produce stand for 20 summers, learning the ins and outs of the farm industry on the Eastern Shore. When she came to the food bank in 2010, it was with a wealth of knowledge and relationships. But she was never content to rely solely on personal connections. Amy has tirelessly criss-crossed the state giving presentations at farms, Agronomy Day events where farmers gather to

learn new techniques, and vegetable grower meetings. As each new farm signs on, they tell others in their community and the movement swells.

Amy's a great saleswoman, but a farm—like any other business—needs to protect its bottom line. Fortunately, we've been able to leverage support, so Amy can offer resources that minimize the burden for local farms to donate. Generous corporate and foundation support has allowed us to provide bins and boxes for farmers, to fill at their leisure, calling us for a pick-up when they're full. For large partners like Farming 4 Hunger, a massive grower in Southern Maryland that is projected to donate 1.5 million pounds to the Maryland Food Bank this year, we've been able to leave a trailer on-site to be filled as their schedule permits. This eliminates transportation costs for them and reduces them for us, since we only have to pick up when there's a full load.

“We have the ability to grow food right here—when there's so many people struggling and farmers themselves are struggling.”

—BERNIE FOWLER, JR., *Farming 4 Hunger*

Labor costs have also been addressed through an innovative partnership with the Maryland State Department of Corrections. Last growing season, non-violent, near-release offenders harvested 279,000 pounds of produce that might otherwise have gone to waste. Thanks to the foresight and leadership of Secretary of Public Safety & Correctional Services Gary Maynard, the Department of Corrections is often able to provide labor with as little as 24 hours notice.

Finally, with grants from the U.S.D.A. and Kaiser Permanente, we are able to contract with farmers to grow crops that cost more and are rarely donated to the food bank in-kind.

NEW!

You can be part of the **Farm to Food Bank Network**, too! Most produce is donated to us, but we also pay farmers to grow the types of food we need most and purchase some from other states during the winter months. Visit www.mdfoodbank.org/farm-to-food-bank to buy a share of fresh produce and keep a steady stream of fruits and vegetables flowing through our doors.





“The biggest asset to me has been working at a retail produce stand for 20 summers. I never thought this experience would come in handy—I just worked there because I loved it.”— AMY CAWLEY, Food Solicitor

Harvest Time

Four million pounds of highly perishable food could have been a serious challenge, but luckily for us, we always think ahead. Knowing that produce donations could increase dramatically, we invested in programs and projects that could get perishable food out quickly. In 2009, we hired a full-time mobile food programs manager to expand Pantry On the Go and Produce Giveaways, which deliver bulk loads of food to central locations in low-income communities. Since the food is distributed immediately upon delivery, it’s a great outlet for fresh produce. With a program manager on-board and several additional trucks in our fleet, mobile food programs have grown immensely, going from roughly 1 million pounds distributed in 2009 to 4.2 million pounds last year. Projections for this year are upwards of 6 million pounds!

Our other major investment was the Bauer Community Kitchen, a commercial-grade space where we could package produce into manageable quantities and incorporate some into healthy frozen meals. Because of the addition of the kitchen, we were able to launch FoodWorks, a culinary training program for low-income

individuals interested in pursuing careers in food service. By the time we received our first farm-fresh shipments in 2010, the kitchen was fully operational, ready to churn out salsa, summer corn salad, mashed sweet potatoes, vegetable stew and many other delicious, healthy dishes. FoodWorks students relish the chance to work with so many different types of food.

Most FoodWorks-produced meals are distributed through our network of pantries and shelters, but this past fall we also began producing meals for our youth feeding programs, too. Previously, these meals were prepared and delivered by third-party USDA-approved vendors. Thanks to the influx of good, healthy food, we’ve been able to produce half of the meals in-house this year. A new packing room, freezer expansion (see page 3 for more details) and delivery vans will allow us to produce all of the meals in-house by the end of Fiscal Year 2014.

▲ *Above: Food Solicitor Amy Cawley loads fresh strawberries from Cornerstone Farm in Hurlock, MD. Sweet corn is loaded onto a food bank truck at Lowery’s Produce in Chester, MD.*

We are... Sorting it Out

What is Salvage?

Good question! “Salvage” is what we in the food banking industry call mixed non-perishable donations from big-box retailers and supermarkets. The term encompasses everything from alphabet soup to air fresheners to Zest to ziti—any item that was taken off the shelf for any number of reasons. Some were discontinued by the manufacturer. Some were near their sell-by date. Some were the victim of an overeager stockperson, their labels sliced when he or she swiped his box knife too deep. Some were seasonal, like Valentine’s Day or Easter candy.

Whatever the reason, when a store has a product that’s useable, but can’t be sold, they send it to us. The key word is “useable.” Retailers do a phenomenal job of sorting out the items that have been recalled to health concerns or are unsafe. But, alternately, there are a lot of products that the average shopper might bypass—a dented can here; a messy label there—that are perfectly good!

Salvage often arrives in banana boxes, average-sized, easy-to-handle boxes that originally held—you guessed it—bananas. Each load of salvage can total up to 60,000 pounds, meaning hundreds of boxes that all have to be unpacked and sorted through. That’s where our nifty conveyor belt comes in. When salvage arrives, it’s loaded onto the conveyor belt that on a good day is staffed by 25–35 volunteers. Each volunteer is assigned to a specific category of item and as the products roll by, they must grab the ones in their category and pack them into a box



that’s sitting on a scale at their station. When the scale hits 10–12 pounds, the volunteer tapes up the box, writes the category name on the outside and starts a new box. As the volunteers pack, food bank salvage coordinator, Jim Crimmins (pictured right), comes behind them to grab full boxes and get them into inventory.

Salvage is a fitting term for this mixed assortment of goods in more ways than one. Yes, these products have been salvaged by a retailer, packed onto a food bank-bound truck instead of going to waste. But they are also the salvation of the Maryland Food Bank, our network and those we serve. When Thanksgiving and Christmas are over and food and fund donations decrease, salvage remains steady. Whatever the mix may be, we can count on salvage to keep our shelves stocked and our doors open.

Weis Markets For the Win: \$50,000 in Gift Cards!

Weis Markets presented us with \$50,000 in gift cards at the grand opening of their new store in Towson on March 2, 2013. The cards will be used to purchase much-needed items like canned fruits, vegetables and pasta. Shopping spree!





“The Maryland Food Bank is built on volunteers. We couldn’t do even half of what we do without them.”

— JIM CRIMMINGS, Salvage Coordinator

◀ *Jim and Jill need your help to get food sorted, packed and out the door!*

We Want You... To Sort & Pack Salvage!

Some of our best product comes from salvage, but it’s been challenging to keep up with the recent 400 percent increase in donations—a result of more retailers coming to the region. Our volunteer program manager, Jill Kusner (above, right), is in charge of keeping the conveyor belt staffed and food flying onto the shelves.

Q. It seems like you need more volunteers now than in the past. Why is that?

A. We definitely need more help than ever before. The biggest change is that this past year we started receiving salvage from all of the Wegmans stores in the area. In the past, their food was taken back to their headquarters in Rochester, NY and went to the food bank there. Once they opened more stores in this area, that didn’t make sense anymore. They’re a family company and they want to support the communities in which their stores are based.

Q. How has the volunteer program adapted to the increased volume of salvage?

A. We’ve had to focus much more on recruiting groups instead of individuals. As the old saying goes, “many hands make light work.” When we’re receiving 60,000 pounds of salvage or more at a time, we need a lot of hands!

We’ve also extended our hours. In the past, we had two shifts every weekday, plus one Wednesday evening and one Saturday morning shift per month. About a year ago we started opening every Wednesday evening and every Saturday morning. Then, a few weeks ago we added an afternoon shift every Saturday. We understand that not everyone has a company that allows them to volunteer during the workday, so we’re hoping by offering these additional evening and weekend opportunities we’ll be able to recruit more people.

Q. How can people get involved?

A. Email me at jkusner@mdfoodbank.org. Keep in mind, I schedule people on a first-come, first-served basis and those weekend and evening shifts fill up quickly.

Volunteer Wish List

- Groups of 15 or more
- Age 18 or older (Due to safety concerns, children under age 18 are not allowed to work on the conveyor belt).
- Available Monday–Friday, 9 a.m.–12 p.m. and/or 1–4 p.m.

We are... Thanking our Donors



◀ Left: Giant President Anthony Hucker poses with the Maryland Food Bank's Deborah Flateman after a press conference to announce the grant. Above: Local schoolchildren welcomed the crowd with a song.

One Giant Leap Forward

Thousands of kids will have healthy meals in school, after school and out of school thanks to a **three-year \$900,000 grant** recently awarded by the Our Family Foundation, charitable giving arm of Giant Food. The grant is one of five that were made to Feeding America food banks in the Mid-Atlantic region, altogether totaling \$2.8 million. Funds will be used to strengthen our Initiative to End Youth Hunger—which includes the School Pantry Program, At-Risk Supper Clubs and Summer Food Service Program—in Anne Arundel, Baltimore, Harford and Howard counties. More than 67,000 children are food insecure in these counties. Unlike urban communities, where food insecurity is highly concentrated and visible, hunger in these suburban counties is spread out and families take great pains to hide their struggles. Even when they do seek food assistance, it is much more difficult to obtain than in cities. There are less social service organizations, minimal public transportation options and few efforts to expand assistance since the need is low compared to urban areas.

Over the next three years, Giant's grant will help establish 100 more school pantries, 30 more supper clubs and 30 more summer feeding sites. Much of the funding will be used to purchase food, but a significant portion will also support kitchen equipment and vehicles to deliver youth feeding program meals produced in the Bauer Community Kitchen where FoodWorks is housed. We're currently providing FoodWorks-produced meals to 20 youth feeding sites, meaning more than 10,000 meals made with fresh, local ingredients are reaching kids

in need each month. The remaining sites receive meals prepared by a third party, U.S.D.A.-approved vendor, but thanks to a pending freezer expansion and this generous grant from Giant, we expect all sites to be receiving FoodWorks-made meals by the end of Fiscal Year 2014.

Healthy, locally-sourced meals will go hand-in-hand with nutrition education also supported by the grant. The Maryland Food Bank will work closely with Maryland Out of School Time (MOST) to develop fun nutrition workshops at At-Risk Supper Clubs and Summer Food Service Program sites across the state. Nutrition education is absolutely critical to any child hunger relief effort, since many children live in food deserts and must rely solely on fast food or corner stores. This often leads to malnourishment, which can result in obesity, diabetes and many other serious health issues.



"Giving back is a cornerstone of our company. We're very proud of our legacy, and are committed to being a better neighbor each and every day."

— ANTHONY HUCKER, President, Giant Food

We look forward to providing many updates on the programs supported by this generous grant over the next three years. Giant Food's overwhelming commitment of \$2.8 million for child hunger programs throughout Maryland, Delaware, Washington D.C. and Virginia is taking us one giant leap closer to ending childhood hunger!

Loyal Leaders

All of the gains we've made against hunger have been with the leadership of loyal, long-time donors. Their support has enabled us to increase distribution by 187 percent in just five years, helping many more children, seniors and families in need.

"We made a habit of giving a little each month, but had no idea our gifts mounted up so significantly!"

—Mr. & Mrs. Robert M. Latane, who have made **128 donations** since becoming a food bank donor.

492

donors gave ten or more gifts last year!



of all donors gave two or more gifts last year

Six donors have given

125

or more gifts since first becoming a donor.



Planning Ahead

A well-planned will or estate plan creates opportunity to care for loved ones while leaving a lasting legacy of helping others.

If you are interested in learning how a properly drawn will serves as the cornerstone of effective estate planning, please contact **Gregg Mitchell, Senior Vice President of Philanthropy**, at **443-297-5162** or by email at **gmitchell@mdfoodbank.org**.

He will be happy to discuss your options and offer the free booklet, *Planning Your Will For All It's Worth*. This easy-to-understand booklet offers valuable information to help you meet your obligations to others and achieve your philanthropic goals.



We are...

Maryland Food Bank

It takes more than just food and funds to operate the Maryland Food Bank. We simply could not have distributed 22 million meals last year without the dedication and commitment of many thousands of Marylanders.

Let's do the numbers...
105 staff, three branch locations with a combined 125,000 square feet of inventory, 600 partner agencies, 9,000 volunteers, a dedicated board of directors and more than 30,000 donors and supporters, just like you.

Thank you being part of the MFB community!

Join us online.



www.mdfoodbank.org

Awards & Accolades

Mobile Food Programs Manager **Katie Beltz** was featured among 10 to Watch Under 30 in *b*, *The Baltimore Sun's* free paper.

For the second consecutive year, **President & CEO Deborah Flateman** has been named an Influential Marylander in the arena of Philanthropy by *The Daily Record*. She's in good company—other honorees included Ray Lewis of the Baltimore Ravens; Buck Showalter, General Manager of the Baltimore Orioles; Tony Foreman & Cindy Wolf, the restaurateurs behind Charleston and many other local restaurants; and Kevin Plank, CEO of Under Armour.



Katie Beltz: One to Watch

Our mobile food programs manager, Katie Beltz (top row, far right), was featured alongside a Johns Hopkins cancer researcher, the curator of contemporary art space Gallery CA and the new star pitcher of the Baltimore Orioles among others.

Photo: *Baltimore Sun* Staff Photographer Amy Davis.

Supporter of the Quarter: Feeding America

Feeding America is the nation's largest hunger-relief charity, serving a network of 200 food banks that distribute more than 3 billion pounds of food each year.

We're proud to be the only Feeding America affiliate in Maryland, with access to training, philanthropic support and vast amounts of food that only Feeding America can provide. Through Feeding America, we can order most-needed items like canned tuna and peanut butter at reduced rates from manufacturers and wholesalers nationwide. We can also partner with other Feeding America affiliates to share foods not available locally. In the past year alone, Feeding America has facilitated grants to the Maryland Food Bank from Target, Unilever, Walmart and many others, totaling more than \$200,000!

Leaders from Feeding America visited us in March for a biannual audit to ensure that we are meeting their high standards of accountability. Good news: we passed with flying colors! Thank you, Feeding America, for keeping us on our toes—always reaching for the next level of excellence, until hunger ends!