

SUMMER 2024



Hunger Herald

Creating Equitable Access to Food for Healthier Communities



Left: Longtime volunteers Terry and Barb McDougall helped distribute produce at a recent pop-up pantry event in Eau Claire.

Fresh Solutions for Summer Hunger

Rural Pop-Up Pantries and Fresh Food Programs are Bridging Service Gaps

Now that summer is here, many families are facing increased food insecurity with the absence of school meal programs. However, one of the most exciting developments is the impact our Farm to Food Bank initiative is making on Feed My People's summer hunger programming. Because of our expanding partnerships with local farmers and distributors, we can source items like melons and potatoes harvested in our area. Produce is essential, but it can be unattainable to purchase from the store due to its generally higher cost. It is regularly received with enthusiasm from our guests.

"I am living on one income in a household of seven," shared Val at a recent pop-up in Eau Claire. "Getting the fruit and veggies is so great. The kids love it."

Addressing Service Gaps in Rural Communities

This spring, we began providing pop-up pantries in Granton, Weyerhauser, and Radisson, which are located in Clark, Rusk, and Sawyer counties. These rural communities have an exceptionally high number of low-income households but lack enough essential resources like grocery stores. High food prices

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Produce from the Central Wisconsin Produce Auction in Withee, Wisconsin, is sourced for distribution to local communities through our network of hunger relief partners.



The FMP truck was at the Growers Produce Auction in the parking lot this spring, alongside some local transportation used by Amish farmers.

...continued from front.

and significant transportation costs further compound this issue. By bringing food directly to these underserved areas, we are helping to alleviate some of the most pressing challenges these families face. We also continue to offer pop-ups in Arcadia, Cadott, Fall Creek, Humbird, Independence, and Spooner, as well as regular distributions out of our food bank in Eau Claire.

Special Initiatives: Mobile Produce Hub

Another key component of our strategy this summer is piloting a mobile produce hub, which will deliver fresh produce to a designated dropoff spot in the northeastern corner of our service area. Partners can pick up produce directly from our truck, which will be stocked with items harvested just one to two days prior and obtained from the Central Wisconsin Produce Auction. This initiative will ensure that the healthiest and most nutritious options are available to even the more remote corners of our service area.

Strengthening Local Food Systems with LFPA

We are also proud to announce our partnership with the Wisconsin Local Food Purchase Assistance (LFPA) Program, which aims to strengthen local food systems and support Wisconsin farmers. One of its latest developments has connected us with local Hmong farmers to provide fresh food, such as bok choy and mushrooms, directly to one of our key partners, the Eau Claire Area Hmong Mutual Assistance Association. This partnership ensures that any Hmong neighbors struggling with food insecurity can receive food meeting their cultural and dietary needs.

Join Us in the Fight Against Hunger This Summer

Please visit our website for more information about our pop-up pantry schedule and how you can get involved. Look for the volunteer pack-a-thon on July 16 during Operation Picnic to help pack as much food as possible for the summer. Together, we can combat summer hunger and build a healthier, stronger community.

Serving Fresh Food



Our new partnership with Whirlpool's Feel Good Fridge program provides refurbished refrigerators and freezers to nonprofits distributing food. The first fridge delivery in Wisconsin took place right here in Chippewa Falls! Unique contributions like this give our hunger relief partners more options to offer fresh, healthy items like produce and dairy to those in need.

"We were thrilled to be the first to receive two new refrigerators for our food pantry at the CDC Outreach Office. Having these larger refrigerators will help us assist our community with any food insecurity they may be facing," shared Karri Pitsavas, Homeless Services Coordinator.

THANK YOU FOR FUNDING THESE ESSENTIAL PROGRAMS

Farm to Food Bank
M3 Foundation
Mayo Clinic Health System
Hometown Health Grant
Pablo Foundation

Project FEED
Chick-fil-A
Dunkin' Joy in Childhood
Foundation



Because food is something that brings us all together, we're gathering stories from around our community about what brings us all to the messy kitchen sink after a good meal for the real conversation. In one of our latest episodes, UW-Eau Claire chancellor Jim Schmidt discusses the Campus Harvest pantry and highlights the need for food assistance among college students. Find new episodes on Eau Claire Hometown Media, Spotify, or iHeart.

Partner Highlight



At the Listen & Learn in Price County

FMP's Partnership Team has been busy coordinating Listen & Learn Roundtables across our 14-county service area. These informal gatherings with our food pantry, backpack, and meal programs help us to understand how we can better walk side-by-side with our partners to support them in the critical work they do every day. We also hope to promote increased connection for idea generation and resource sharing. Thank you to these amazing folks who are making a difference in the lives of children, seniors, and families who struggle with food insecurity.

Meet Our Team

We are excited to introduce two newer **Feed My People** staff members, **Scott and Haley**. With her development background, Haley strengthens our connections with donors. Scott brings a wealth of experience in connecting people and resources, ensuring a great variety of food gets to where it's needed. Together, they are committed to our mission of fighting hunger and positively impacting our community.



Haley Stowell Mid-Level Gift Specialist

I am a native of Eau Claire and have spent most of my life in the Chippewa Valley. I also share my home with three adorable cats named Bitty, Hammy, and Peach, who add a lot of amusement, and a bit of chaos, to my life.



Scott Sacrey Food Resource Manager

My wife and I have been married for 19 years; we have 3 children, an adopted border collie named Milo, and live in Bloomer. We love going to the "big city" of Eau Claire, attending events, and serving in our local church.

What's your favorite part about being on the Feed My People team?

Haley: I am constantly amazed at the innovative work we are doing at FMP and the hardworking and creative people driving that progress. **Scott:** I love that everyone on the team brings something different, yet it develops into a well-operated mission of helping our service area with quality food.

What's one goal or dream you have for your time with Feed My People?

Haley: I am passionate about involving young people with FMP! Whether through volunteering, philanthropy, or educational outreach about community issues, I believe engaging youth can amplify our impact and help build a more compassionate and informed future. **Scott:** A dream would be to find ways to source local products continually year-round and work around unique weather challenges.

What are your go-to summer activities?

Haley: My favorite summer activity is gardening - I've got a whole slew of vegetables that started coming up this week, and I am so excited! **Scott:** Camping with my family and golfing with my friends.

Contact Haley to take your donation to the next level.

haley@fmpfoodbank.org | (715) 708-2422

Contact Scott to learn about ways you can contribute to our food supply.

scott@fmpfoodbank.org | (715) 708-2416

A Note From the Director

This is just the second summer of Feed My People's Farm to Food Bank initiative, and the staff and board at Feed My People (FMP) are filled with optimism. Over the past year, we have created many win-win relationships with area growers and food suppliers to improve and diversify our food supply while supporting our farmers and our community. It's working! We are seeing more fruits and vegetables come through the warehouse, loaded onto trucks to partners, and to the tables of families who struggle with food insecurity. This year alone, we have distributed over 60,000 pounds of potatoes received through a relationship with Nuto Farms in Rice Lake. Whether you like them mashed, baked, or fried, that's a lot of wonderful potatoes.

Having fresher, healthier food available comes at a time when children are out of school for the summer, and parents have increased challenges with ensuring their families have the nutrition they need. As a community, we are filling the gap for them. If you see a farmer, give them a wave. They are our neighbors and an integral part of the food supply chain for all of us.

In gratitude,

Suzanne Becker

Suzanne Becker, Feed My People's
Executive Director





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[give.fmpfoodbank.org/
OperationPicnic](http://give.fmpfoodbank.org/OperationPicnic)



Let's get \$25,000 matched this July!

You can make twice the difference for families facing hunger with this limited-time matching opportunity July 8-19. The Operation Picnic campaign is doubling every gift to Feed My People, up to \$25,000.

**Thank You
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