

NOTES ON HUNGER



**FEEDING
AMERICA**TM
Kentucky's Heartland



SURGE IN FOOD INSECURITY AFFECTS OVER 176,000 KENTUCKIANS

The latest Map the Meal Gap data from Feeding America National Office reveals a troubling surge in food insecurity across Kentucky's Heartland. In 2022, 176,270 individuals in Feeding America, Kentucky's Heartland's (FAKH) 42 county service area were food insecure, marking an alarming increase of over 35,000 individuals from the previous year.

Food insecurity, as defined by the United States Department of Agriculture, is the lack of consistent access to enough food for an active, healthy life. This issue transcends being a mere statistic, emerging as a

[READ MORE ON BACK PAGE](#)

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

FALL
2024

Food for Thought



Distributing Local Food



Being Part of the Solutions



PADD foodbank opens



Help Create Holiday Memories

176,270
PEOPLE

1 in 6

54,710
CHILDREN

1 in 5

CHARLES DENNIS
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



FOOD FOR *Thought*

The latest numbers on food insecurity in Kentucky's Heartland are daunting. As lines continue to grow at food distributions across our region, some might question whether our vision - a Heartland where everyone has equitable access to nutritious food and no one is hungry - can truly be achieved.

Despite these challenges, our staff, agency partners, donors and volunteers continue to pour their time, passion and talents into this organization because food insecurity is more than a number. It's the reality of a child in our local schools going home to an empty fridge or a senior in our church pews skipping meals to afford their medication. Through our work, we have come to know the faces of hunger, and in-action is not an option.

While the demand for our services has surged, and our team works hard to maximize resources to feed as many of our neighbors as possible, we are also ensuring that the food we provide is healthy. Much like many of us who are stretching our own grocery budgets, we are doing everything we can to help feed our community.

As the holiday season approaches and cold weather sets in, utility bills rise, stacking yet another challenge onto our neighbors. As we plan for cherished moments with loved ones around the dinner table, our neighbors could be facing the anxiety of impossible choices. I hope that you will join us this holiday season in ensuring everyone in our community can experience the warmth and comfort of a good meal. Together, we can make our vision a reality.

Farms to Food Banks season is in full swing, and don't those cucumbers look delicious?



In 2024, the Kentucky legislature increased funding (up 42% in 2025 and 67% in 2026) to expand the Farms to Food Banks Programs and its tremendous impact on the lives of our fellow Kentuckians.

The 1.8 million dollar investment by the legislature will allow Kentucky food banks, like FAKH to create relationships with livestock farmers who can provide local sources of protein to our neighbors, in addition to strengthening existing relationships with produce farmers across the state.

This Farms to Food Banks season, FAKH and our network of agency partners have distributed:

550,188 POUNDS
OF KENTUCKY PRODUCE

*Our thanks to the Kentucky legislature
for helping us to feed our neighbors.*



PADD FOOD BANK OPENED AFTER TORNADO DESTRUCTION



In December of 2021, our partner, the Purchase Area Development District's (PADD) Food Bank was completely destroyed when a major tornado hit Mayfield, Kentucky.

PADD's warehouse is integral in our joint work in Western Kentucky, distributing food to 37 local pantries. Though displaced by the destruction, PADD's efforts continued from a temporary location in Paducah.

From July 2023 through June 2024, PADD distributed nearly 4.6 million pounds of food - nearly half of which was provided by FAKH.

FAKH staff were excited to visit PADD for the ribbon cutting of their new Food Bank in June. Together with PADD, we will continue to serve our Western Kentucky neighbors as they put their lives back together following the disastrous tornadoes.



**DEBBIE
CHILDRESS**

Being Part of the Solutions

The Grayson County Alliance (GCA), in partnership with FAKH, plays a vital role in feeding, teaching, and empowering their local neighbors.

Since 2014, Debbie Childress has served as the Executive Director of GCA. Under her leadership, GCA has risen to meet the needs of over 1,200 neighbors each month; helping many to overcome hunger and find stability.

Debbie's passion and dedication to Grayson County are evident in her tireless work. She believes that any problem in Grayson County is her problem and she is committed to being part of the solutions.

***"That's what the Alliance is,"
Debbie puts, "part of the solutions."***

TO HEAR MORE FROM DEBBIE ABOUT THE
GRAYSON COUNTY ALLIANCE, SCAN THE QR CODE



Help Create Holiday Memories for our Neighbors

As the holiday season approaches, we find ourselves reflecting on cherished memories made around the dinner table. The laughter, the warmth, and the shared stories over a delicious meal are the heartbeats of these special moments. Your support in the coming months can ensure that every Kentuckian has a full plate.




By donating, you can help us provide holiday meals that bring smiles to our neighbors' faces and warmth to their homes. Imagine the joy of a family as they come together, not just for a meal, but for an experience that fosters wonderful memories and love.

Donate today and be a part of something truly special. Help your fellow Kentuckians celebrate with full hearts and full plates.



CONTINUED FROM COVER

IN THE FAKH SERVICE AREA:

-  Food insecurity ranges from 12.3% in Nelson County to 20.6% in Wayne County.
-  Warren County and Hardin County are among the top five counties in Kentucky for the highest number of food insecure individuals.
-  Childhood food insecurity ranges from 15.7% in Nelson County to a staggering 34.5% in Fulton County. Warren, Hardin and Christian Counties are notably affected, ranking among the top ten counties in the state for the highest number of food insecure children

critical public health concern with extensive social and health ramifications.

“This report guides our initiatives and helps us to allocate resources where they are needed most to combat food insecurity effectively,” said Charles Dennis, Executive Director of FAKH. By understanding these numbers, FAKH can better strategize and implement solutions to mitigate this pressing issue.

As food insecurity continues to rise, it is crucial for the community, local governments, and organizations to come together to address this growing problem. Support from volunteers, donations, and policy changes are essential in creating a sustainable solution to food insecurity in Kentucky’s Heartland.