



FEDERATION OF  
VIRGINIA FOOD BANKS

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IMPACT REPORT

2022

# A note from the Executive Director

Your support is critical to our mission of improving nutrition security and empowering strong, healthy communities. Through our statewide programs and collaborative efforts, we are achieving greater, more sustainable change across Virginia.

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Our work at the Federation starts with ensuring that our neighbors have access to the resources they need to grow and thrive.

In 2022, we forged new frontiers in health equity through the implementation of our 'Boundless Collaboration' strategic plan and the design of our statewide *Healthy Pantry Initiative*. We also diversified our sources of nutritious foods by partnering with local growers and producers through our *Farms to Food Banks* program. Building on our pandemic response, we have grown our capacity to meet sustained high levels of need while working to become more responsive to the communities we serve.

Moving into Spring 2023, we are expecting more Virginians to experience food insecurity as they continue to fight inflation at the grocery store, and pandemic-era assistance programs come to an end. We stand ready to meet our neighbors where they are and will work with them to achieve a nutrition secure future for the Commonwealth.

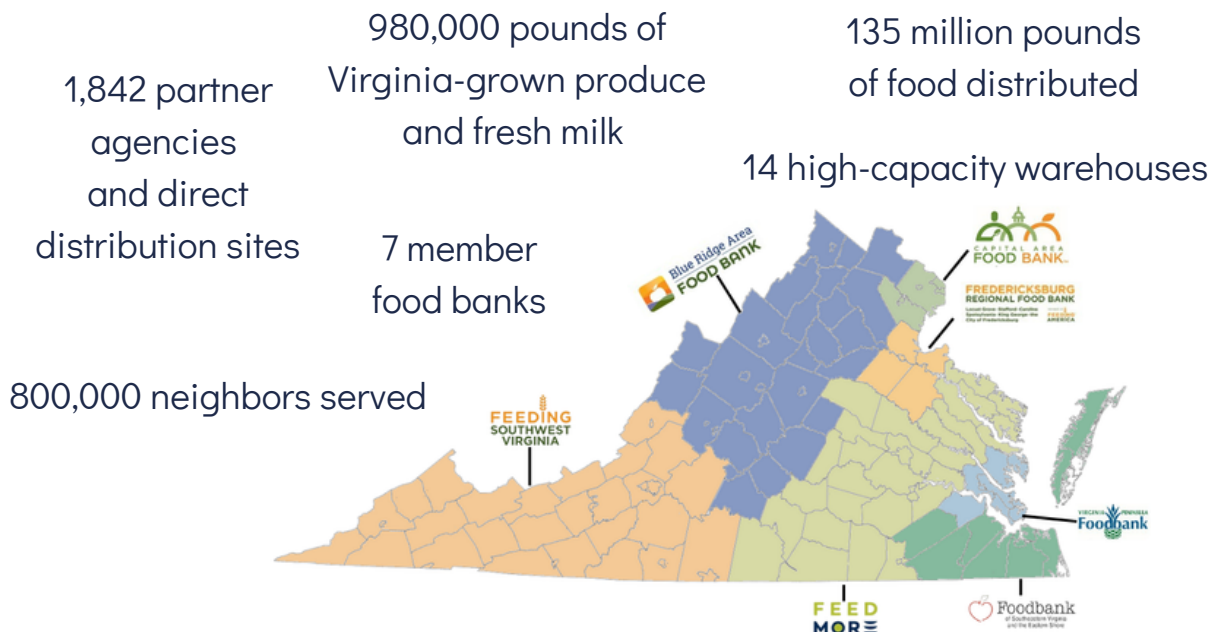


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-Eddie Oliver

# By the Numbers

The Federation of Virginia Food Banks is working to improve nutrition security and empower strong, healthy communities.



## The Need Remains High



While some aspects of the economy have recovered from the pandemic, many families are still struggling. Meet Maria and her three children who have had to turn to food banks because their income simply is not going as far as it used to. Maria shared with us, "These days, \$100 doesn't buy much, but thanks to this distribution, I only need to go to the grocery store to pick up a few things here and there instead of doing all of my shopping there. It's been a huge help."

Maria's story is all too common as Virginia families struggle to make ends meet

The cost of groceries has risen 12%

450,000 households utilizing SNAP are losing at least \$95 per month in benefits this year

47% of households with children experience very low food security\*

# Farms to Food Banks

We are connecting the dots between Virginia farmers and hungry neighbors.



Through the newly-established Virginia Agriculture Assistance Program, we were able to rescue 892,689 pounds of Virginia-grown produce.



We distributed:

- 354,564 pounds of apples from Batesville
- 296,500 pounds of cabbage from Hillsville
- 24,024 pounds of lettuce from Stevensburg
- 217,601 pounds of mixed produce from the Northern Neck



## Milk For Good

Milk is the most requested, yet least donated, food item in our network. With your help, we purchased more than 166,000 servings of fresh, locally processed milk for Virginia families in 2022.

We partnered with the Virginia Tech Dairy Club to sell Milk(shakes) For Good at the State Fair of Virginia. In just one weekend, we raised enough money to purchase almost 3,300 half gallons of milk!



# Food Is Medicine

Virginia's food banks and our partner agencies are working to do more than just end hunger; we are promoting health. To reflect this shared commitment, we worked with pantry partners, neighbors facing hunger, and health partners to create a statewide Health Equity Plan.

## THE FEDERATION OF VIRGINIA FOOD BANKS AND ITS MEMBERS ARE COMMITTED TO ...

**Listening to Neighbors** listening to and learning from their neighbors to direct their collective efforts.

**Embedding Health Equity** embedding health equity values, initiatives, and measurements into their strategic plans.

**Strengthening Health Partnerships** being reliable, competent and trusted partners to support health equity.

**Growing Network Capacity** developing organizational and network capacity to ensure equitable access to healthy food across Virginia.



We are just about halfway through our first full year of this multi-million dollar project! Below are some of the key project milestones we've attained in such a short time:

- All seven food banks hired or dedicated at least one full-time staff member to health equity.
- Together with neighbors facing hunger, pantry partners, and health and community partners, we co-created the *Healthy Pantry Initiative*, a health-focused, neighbor-centered transformation of Virginia's pantry network.
- We commissioned the *Health Equity Community Assessment* to better understand how we can positively impact underserved populations and communities throughout Virginia.

# Food Is Medicine

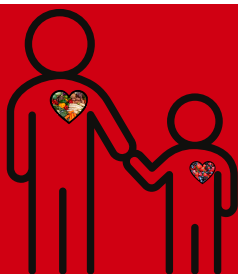
In the months ahead, we will...

Adopt the Healthy Eating Research nutrition guidelines, and fund the expansion of *Nourish*, a nutrition ranking tool that monitors and tracks the nutritional quality of foods being sourced and distributed.



Join the *Unite Virginia* network to strengthen collaboration with Virginia's health care organizations and improve population health and care coordination.

Pilot the *Healthy Pantry Initiative* and fund the work of food pantries to implement new practices that better support the health and nutrition of neighbors facing hunger.



Launch our *Health Equity Impact Fund*, a collaborative fundraising campaign to ensure we are able to build and sustain a healthier Virginia.

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Together, we are promoting health equity by prioritizing access to nutritious and culturally responsive food, building cross-sector partnerships, and creating a culture that supports a more equitable and just society.

# Connecting Neighbors to the Resources They Need

We are working to make SNAP and other Federal nutrition programs more accessible for our neighbors in need.

Approximately one in four eligible Virginians are not participating in SNAP. We are working to close the SNAP gap through outreach and education with our state partners.



We are diversifying our outreach strategy to remove barriers and conduct targeted outreach to eligible population groups, including outreach to Medicaid patients in partnership with Sentara.

We've appointed a Nutrition Benefits Access Coordinator to deepen our SNAP outreach partnerships, develop shared messaging and marketing materials and build awareness around SNAP through statewide trainings.



We conducted a Virginia SNAP Outreach Survey to understand current outreach efforts and address populations and regions where eligibility is high, but participation is low.

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Government programs like the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) are the first line of defense for individuals facing nutrition insecurity. In fact, for every **one** meal that Feeding America food banks provide nationwide, SNAP provides **nine**. However, many families do not participate because of misinformation around eligibility and application requirements.

## Thank You to Our Partners

The Federation of Virginia Food Banks is grateful to our many partners for their support this year, including:



We thank you for your partnership in creating a nutrition secure Virginia.

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The Federation is a Partner State Association of Feeding America, working on Behalf of:

Blue Ridge Area Food Bank  
Capital Area Food Bank  
Feed More  
Feeding Southwest Virginia  
Fredericksburg Regional Food Bank  
Foodbank of Southeastern Virginia and the Eastern Shore  
Virginia Peninsula Foodbank