

# 2024 IMPACT REPORT



**FEEDING**  
SOUTHWEST  
VIRGINIA



Blue Ridge  
AREA  
**FOOD  
BANK**



CAPITAL AREA  
**FOOD BANK**

**FREDERICKSBURG**  
REGIONAL FOOD BANK

VIRGINIA PENINSULA  
**Foodbank**

**FEED  
MORE**



**Foodbank**  
of Southeastern Virginia  
and the Eastern Shore



# Together, We're Improving Food Security for Virginia


All people need nutritious food to thrive. While Virginians work hard to provide for themselves and their families, approximately 964,000 people—that's one in 9 Virginians—are still facing hunger. As food prices and other household expenses remain high, the Federation of Virginia Food Banks led the collaborative effort to end hunger in the Commonwealth.


**175 million pounds**  
of food distributed to neighbors



**20%**   
increase in neighbors' visits to pantries

**64 million pounds**   
of fruits & vegetables distributed to neighbors

**\$7+** million in grants   
enabled for food banks

**Nearly 2 million pounds**  
sourced from 65 local agricultural partners through Farms to Food Banks initiative 

**2,000+ food pantries**  
and distribution sites like schools and clinics 



## Supporting Families Through the Food Pharmacy

*Feeding Southwest Virginia (Salem, VA)*

At Mount Rogers Community Services in Southwest Virginia, a dedicated clinician cares for an elderly grandparent raising their teenage grandchild. Living in a remote area on a fixed retirement income, food insecurity is a constant challenge.

Through the Food Pharmacy program with Feeding Southwest Virginia, the clinic provides 110 medically tailored food boxes each month, ensuring families like theirs have access to nutritious meals. “The healthy food boxes have been a lifeline for this family,” the clinician shared. “They help stretch their budget when unexpected expenses, like a broken water heater, arise. Without them, they’d have no other options.”

Beyond providing food, the program has empowered the teen to learn how to cook, turning essential ingredients into homemade meals. “Learning to prepare meals has given the teen a sense of pride and a valuable life skill,” the clinician explained. With support from the Food Pharmacy, this family has found stability, health, and hope for a brighter future ahead.

# More Than Hunger: Building Partnerships to Improve Health Equity



A food pharmacy guest brings healthy food home. (Blue Ridge Area Food Bank, Verona)

## Food Pharmacy

Food Pharmacies provide healthy groceries to food-insecure patients in a clinical setting.

Our **84 food pharmacies** served about 3,500 patients monthly, a **45% increase** from 2023.

42,000 Patients

## Healthy Pantry Initiative (HPI)

HPI supports expansion of 20 best practices through assessment, training, and grants.

This we year, we created **14 training courses** for the Virginia Learning Center, piloted with **23 pantries**, and awarded **\$120,000 in grants**.

520 Pantries

## The Power of Food As Medicine

As our statewide health equity strategy enters its fourth year, 'Food Is Medicine' initiatives continue to reach more neighbors living with chronic disease. We prioritize interventions with tailored options to meet neighbors where they are, from home delivery to culturally-preferred foods to direct connection with other service providers.

## SNAP (Food Stamp) Outreach

*The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) provides monthly benefits make groceries more affordable, improving food security and health.*

Our network **increased SNAP applications by 10%** this year. We advocate for policy changes like **telephonic signatures** and **increased minimum benefit for older adults**, which ease participation for homebound, rural, and senior households.

2,149 Applications

## Referrals & Case Management

*Food banks, healthcare, and other nonprofit and public services use the Unite Us platform to connect neighbors with essential services in one place.*

Now all seven food banks have joined Unite Us and **more than doubled** completed referrals.

2,764 Referrals

## 2024 Highlight: Virginia Food is Medicine Summit

Hosted by the Federation in March 2024, leaders from across Virginia gathered in Richmond to advance the Food is Medicine movement. Advocates, providers, and public health professionals collaborated to develop solutions for nutrition insecurity. Over the two-day event, 200+ participants joined us to pursue a healthier, food-secure Virginia with topics like:

- Partnerships to Reach Underserved Populations
- Connecting Health and Social Care - A Path Toward Health Equity
- The Intersection of Food is Medicine, Food Justice, and Food Systems



from left: Rickeya Feggans, Feeding America; Meaghan Butler, Federation of Virginia Food Banks; Kofi Essel, Elevance Health; Eddie Oliver, Federation of Virginia Food Banks

# Advocating for a Hunger-Free Virginia



Food access advocates at the Virginia Food for Virginia Families Reception

The Federation advanced food access policy through advocacy and partnerships, securing a seat on the newly-formed **Virginia Commission to End Hunger**. As leaders of the cross-sector **Virginia Food Access Coalition**, we work with more than 100 advocates to build support for legislation that will:

- increase the minimum SNAP benefit for adults age 60+ from \$23 to \$50 per month
- expand Medicaid nutrition services
- support college food pantries
- improve access to federal nutrition programs

This year, we will continue to engage Virginia’s Congressional delegation to protect SNAP benefits and strengthen the federal commodity programs in the Farm Bill.



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## We are grateful to our many partners for their support this year!



Join the movement with Virginia’s food banks at [vafoodbanks.org](http://vafoodbanks.org)



## Dear Friends and Supporters,

2024 has been a year of two stories: one of tremendous progress for our network, but also one of adversity for the communities we serve. After years of high inflation and recent cuts to government assistance programs, families are spending more and more of their limited budgets at the grocery store. Food prices are 25% more than they were five years ago. This has contributed to the highest sustained levels of demand ever seen by our food banks. To fill the gaps, we are collectively spending three times more money on food than we did in 2019.

More than ever, it is clear that the deck is stacked against low-income and working people. While more than 900,000 Virginians struggle with food insecurity, even more are one missed paycheck or emergency expense away from hardship. The Federation will continue to stand with our neighbors and partners, working toward a future where all communities have access to enough nutritious food at all times. It’s ambitious, but I know it’s achievable if we all play our part.

With gratitude,

**Eddie Oliver**  
Executive Director