

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

SPRING 2026

A NEW HOME FOR THE FOOD PANTRY

Over the past five years, The FOOD Pantry has experienced tremendous growth as more families across Waukesha County turn to us for support amid rising costs and ongoing economic uncertainty.

In 2021, The FOOD Pantry served 1,968 households, representing 4,282 individuals, through 45,131 pantry visits. By 2025, those numbers had grown to 3,568 households, 9,399 individuals, and 111,733 pantry visits–an increase of 81% in households served, 120% in individuals served, and 148% in pantry visits.

While we are grateful to meet this growing need, our current leased facility can no longer adequately support our operations. Limited parking, insufficient storage and service space, the lack of a functional loading dock, and inadequate indoor waiting areas have created increasing challenges for clients, staff, and volunteers.

In response, Karen and Dick Vaughn made a transformational $3.5 million gift in 2025 to help secure The FOOD Pantry's future, including $1 million to establish an endowment and $2.5 million toward a larger facility.

In December 2025, The FOOD Pantry purchased a new building at 1705 S. Prairie Avenue to better serve current and future needs. The facility includes:

- More than three acres of land for expanded parking
- Two loading docks for safe semi-truck deliveries
- An additional 7,000 square feet of building space for storage and improved service flow
- Space for expanded refrigeration and freezer capacity
- A significantly larger indoor client service area

While purchasing the building was a major milestone, the next phase of the project requires an additional $4.5 million to complete renovations, expand parking, install refrigeration equipment, and strengthen the endowment that will sustain operations into the future. Thanks to several generous major gifts already secured, the remaining fundraising need is now approximately $3.1 million.

As we prepare to launch the community phase of our capital campaign, we are asking our volunteers, supporters, and neighbors to help make this once-in-a-generation opportunity possible. As a friend of The FOOD Pantry, we invite you to consider a generous charitable commitment and to help share this vision with others. Introduce us to individuals, families, or businesses who may want to be part of this transformational effort.

Together, we can ensure no neighbor in Waukesha County goes hungry.
Visit www.waukeshafoodpantry.org/no_neighbor_hungry to learn more.





A Publication of The FOOD Pantry Serving Waukesha County

The FOOD Pantry
SERVING WAUKESHA COUNTY

MORE THAN A MEAL FUNDRAISER RAISES OVER $150,000!

This year's More Than a Meal fundraiser, held on Saturday, April 18, at the Golden Mast in Okauchee, celebrated not only the meals provided through The FOOD Pantry Serving Waukesha County, but also the compassion, dignity, and hope that come with supporting our neighbors in need.

With more than 230 guests in attendance, the event brought together community members, volunteers, partners, and advocates who share a commitment to helping families across Waukesha County. Guests enjoyed more than 70 auction baskets, two raffle items, and 100 fork pulls, all of which helped raise critical funds to support The FOOD Pantry's mission. The energy and generosity throughout the event reflected the strong community support behind The Pantry's work and the growing need for food assistance services in our area.

During the event, we were proud to recognize Sasha Lepsch and Jim Ziegler with the Judy Cesarec Volunteer of the Year Award for their outstanding service, generosity, and dedication to The Pantry and the families we serve. We also honored Meijer with the Dr. R. David Helling Founder's Award in recognition of their valued partnership and ongoing commitment to helping address food insecurity in our community. Since 2016, through the Meijer Simply Give program, they have donated $317,700 in food only gift cards in support of The FOOD Pantry.

A particularly meaningful moment during the event was the opportunity to publicly thank Karen Vaughn for the extraordinary generosity she and her husband, Dick Vaughn, have shown in support of The Pantry's future. Their transformational $3.5 million gift will have a lasting impact on our organization and the community we serve. This investment represents a major step forward in helping The Pantry expand its capacity, better serve families in need, and continue meeting the growing demand for services across Waukesha County.

We extend our sincere thanks to our Champion Sponsors, Eaton and ProHealth Care, and our Advocate Sponsors, James Imaging Systems and Unity Lutheran Church, whose generosity helped make the event possible.

Thanks to the incredible support of our guests, donors, sponsors, volunteers, and community partners, this year's fundraiser raised more than $150,000 to support The FOOD Pantry Serving Waukesha County.

We are deeply grateful to everyone who helped make the day such a success and look forward to gathering again next year.











STAMP OUT HUNGER FOOD DRIVE WAS A TREMENDOUS SUCCESS

The FOOD Pantry was proud to once again participate in the annual Stamp Out Hunger Food Drive held on Saturday, May 9. Thanks to the incredible generosity of our community, the event was a tremendous success.



Through donations collected by postal carriers, The FOOD Pantry received 14,936 pounds of food from the City of Brookfield community and 28,279 pounds of food from the City of Waukesha community, which was shared with the Waukesha Salvation Army Food Pantry.

We are deeply grateful to the postal carriers whose hard work made this collection possible, the many volunteers who helped unload donations the day of the event, and the residents of Waukesha County for their overwhelming generosity and support. Events like Stamp Out Hunger demonstrate the power of our community coming together to help neighbors facing food insecurity.

Thank you to everyone who helped make this year's food drive such a meaningful success.

WILDE SUBARU'S SHARE THE LOVE CAMPAIGN RAISES MORE THAN $42,300 FOR PANTRY

From November 20 through January 2, Wilde Subaru partnered with The FOOD Pantry as part of the annual Share the Love campaign, making a significant impact for local families facing food insecurity.

During the campaign, Wilde Subaru designated The FOOD Pantry as its hometown charity. For every new Subaru purchased or leased during the promotion, $250 was donated directly to The Pantry. In addition, The FOOD Pantry received $5 from preventative maintenance services completed on vehicles during the campaign period.

Thanks to the incredible support of customers and the community, Wilde Subaru presented The FOOD Pantry with a generous donation of $42,348.



This contribution continues a longstanding partnership between the organizations. Since 2015, Subaru has donated more than $450,000 in support of The FOOD Pantry and its mission to provide food, hope, and dignity to neighbors in need throughout the community.

We are deeply grateful to Wilde Subaru, Subaru customers, and everyone who helped make this campaign such a success. Your generosity is helping provide hope and nourishment to local families.

MISSION: The FOOD Pantry Serving Waukesha County provides food, hope and dignity to county residents in need, and advocates to increase awareness of hunger through community partnerships.

VISION: We envision a future without hunger in Waukesha County.

NON-PROFIT STATUS: The FOOD Pantry Serving Waukesha County is a non-profit community organization, maintaining 501(c)3 status, and all donations are tax deductible where allowable by law.

The FOOD Pantry Serving Waukesha County is an equal opportunity provider and employer. In accordance with Federal law and US Department of Agriculture policy, this institution is prohibited from discriminating on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age, or disability.

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In Wisconsin's 2025-2027 Biennial Budget, $10 million was invested into local food production and local hunger relief organizations statewide. Through the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection, Hunger Task Force launched the "Connecting Farms to Families" grant program to help food pantries purchase Wisconsin-grown foods.

As one of over 100 members of the statewide Hunger Relief Federation, The FOOD Pantry Serving Waukesha County applied for funds and was awarded $75,000 for 2026 to purchase locally produced foods, including potatoes, beef, chicken, butter, cheese, eggs, milk, apples, yogurt and more.

The program partners with the Wisconsin Food Hub Cooperative, a farmer-owned cooperative that coordinates sourcing, ordering, and delivery across the state–supporting both Wisconsin farmers and local families facing food insecurity.

CONNECTING FARMS TO FAMILIES

HUNGER RELIEF FEDERATION OF WISCONSIN MEMBER

This funding comes at a critical time. Over the past two years, The FOOD Pantry has seen a 20% increase in individual pantry visits, while fresh food available through federal programs has declined significantly. From 2024 to 2025, fresh food distributed through The Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP) decreased by 40%, representing a loss of more than $571,000 in food support, alongside the end of the USDA's Local Food Purchasing Assistance (LFPA) program.

YOU CAN SUPPORT YOUR NEIGHBORS WITH FRESH FOODS

Your ongoing support of The Pantry's mission helps ensure families have regular access to the staple foods they need. You can make a monetary donation for the purchase of refrigerated and frozen foods. In addition to the Connecting Farms to Families Grant, The Pantry plans to purchase $225,000 worth of refrigerated and frozen foods for distribution this year.



You can also donate garden produce. The FOOD Pantry accepts donations of fresh produce from local gardeners. Your garden donations can be dropped off at 1301 Sentry Drive, Waukesha, from 8:30 AM to 4:30 PM Monday through Friday and 9:30 AM to 11:30 AM on Saturday.

For best distribution, gently rinse and separate vegetables by type before donating. Drop off at door #5 in our warehouse.

1301 Sentry Drive, Waukesha, WI 53186 | 262.542.5300

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The FOOD Pantry SERVING WAUKESHA COUNTY