



MEMBER OF
**FEEDING
AMERICA**

OFF THE SHELF

Summer 2019 Newsletter

**Making Healthy
Choices Easy p.3**





Pam Molitoris
Executive Director

Summer is here and that means it's time to move our son back home from college for the next few months. Many other children will also be out of school for the summer. When children are out of school, they lose access to nutritious meals provided through the free and reduced lunch program. This puts an additional strain on families who are already facing hunger. To help ensure that children have access to nutritious meals all summer, the Foodbank will partner with multiple community sites to offer free meals through the Summer Food Service Program.

Another way the Foodbank is working to provide access to nutritious food this summer is through our Healthy Foods Distributions. Now that the weather is finally warm, this program is in full swing. Over 35 distributions have been scheduled in many of the counties we serve. Some of these distributions will feature our mobile kitchen cart where trained dietitians or nutritionists will demonstrate how to prepare and cook items that are available that day. Empowering families to cook nutritious foods helps make the most out of the 2.4 million pounds of fresh produce we plan to distribute this year. This program continues to grow from the generous support of our donors, partners and grant funding.

As we look ahead to fall, plans for Hunger Action Month™ in September are already underway. This year, we are joining forces with University of Illinois – Springfield on Hunger Action Day® (September 12th) to raise awareness about hunger in our communities, including insights on college hunger. We invite students and the community to visit us that day on campus to learn more about the Foodbank, UIS Cares (an on-campus food pantry) and nutritious foods. You can visit our website for ideas on how you can get involved this September.

Pam Molitoris

UPCOMING EVENTS

Letter Carriers' Stamp Out Hunger

May 11
Springfield-area mailboxes

217 Restaurant Week

June 3 - 9
Local area restaurants

Healthy Foods Distribution

July 13
Shelby Co.

Healthy Foods Distribution

May 21
Macoupin Co.

Healthy Foods Distribution

June 22
Adams Co.

Hunger Action Day

September 12
University of Illinois - Springfield

Red Nose Day

May 23

Healthy Foods Distribution

June 27
Morgan Co.

Harvest Celebration

September 12
University of Illinois - Springfield

Front cover: Heather Austwick (left) from the Foodbank delivers new display items for implementing nudge strategies to Gerlinda Johnson, Jerry Johnson and Amy Hagen from the Taylorville Food Pantry.

STAFF

Pam Molitoris • Executive Director
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Kevin Mackiney • Operations Director
Heather Austwick • Compliance Manager
Bob Bartolazzi • Retail Store Coordinator
Ashley Earnest • Public Relations Manager
Darren Farley • Sort Room Supervisor
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centralilfoodbank.org

Our mission: To provide food, and develop awareness of and creative solutions for food insecurity.



Ailee Taylor (left) and Lori Semanik (right) from Staunton Helping Hands Center and Virginia Ferguson (center) from the Foodbank fill one of the new basket displays which was purchased through the Pathways to Health Promotion grant.

Making healthy choices the easy choice

Looking for creative solutions to food insecurity is part of the Foodbank's mission. The Foodbank was recently awarded a \$10,000 Pathways to Health Promotion grant from Cargill to test different strategies to encourage healthier food choices, called nudges, at a few partner agencies. Nudges are small, low-cost changes that increase the chance that people will choose healthier foods, which helps ensure consistent access to nutritious food.

The four agencies that participated in this pilot were Murrayville/Woodson Food Pantry, Taylorville Food Pantry, Kumler Outreach Ministries and Staunton Helping Hands Center. The grant funds allowed the Foodbank to purchase items for the agencies that would help them promote the availability of fresh produce and encourage people to choose it. The agencies received produce baskets, wire shelving and clear front refrigerators. Each agency also received signage highlighting different produce items and their nutritional benefits. These agencies tested the following nudge strategies.

Placement and Presentation

- Updating a display
- Placing items in easy to find and reach places
- Having a full display

Leveraging information to inform decision-making

- Using signs that include nutritional information
- Displaying items in multiple locations to increase the likelihood of selection

"We understand the value that merchandising has on the choices that we make," said Ailee Taylor, coordinator of Staunton Helping Hands Center. "Being able to access equipment through this grant helps us have the presentation that's appealing to people to help them make those wise choices because they're drawn to the display."

Ensuring access to nutritious foods is one of the Foodbank's top priorities. Data gathered from this pilot will be used to develop strategies the Foodbank and our partner agencies can implement to increase selection of Foods to Encourage (F2E). There are five main F2E categories - fruits, vegetables, protein, dairy and whole grains. In FY18, the Foodbank's F2E percentage was 67%*. Feeding America has set a goal for all member food banks to achieve 75% by 2025.

"This grant is so important to us because we recognize the importance of having healthy, nutritious food as an option. A lot of our patrons have major health issues," said Amy Hagen, co-coordinator of Taylorville Food Pantry. "We want to be on the front lines helping people make wise choices."

*Network Activity Data Center. Feeding America.



The Challenge Begins!

Corporate Food Fight Challenge is a fun, innovative food & fund drive competition between businesses in our community to benefit the Foodbank!

Last year's competition helped provide over 185,000 meals to our neighbors through the food and funds raised.

Does your business have what it takes to compete in this year's challenge?

Contact Ashley Earnest for more details.
aearnest@centralilfoodbank.org or 217.522.4022 x210

Elaina Albrecht (right) presents Bob Mizeur and Jan Schramm from Hickory Point Bank the award for the 2018 Corporate Food Fight Challenge.



Spotlight on Hunger



Debra and her husband have a full household. While their own children are grown, they spend their days watching their 13 grandchildren.

"We're busy with kids," Debra said.

Having access to fresh fruits and vegetables is important for everyone in the family, especially growing children. When Debra and her husband stopped by Central Counties Health Centers to pick up some fresh produce, there was a variety to choose from - potatoes, spring mix and cabbage.

In addition to providing health services, Central Counties Health Services and SIU Center for Family Medicine also serve as healthy foods distributions sites where the Foodbank delivers fresh produce weekly.

Debra enjoys incorporating fresh produce into her cooking and her grandchildren love to help. One time, pineapple was available and she made pineapple upside-down cake for her grandchildren.

"They love the fruit and different food, especially the apples," she said. "You name it, they love it."

Sharing her cooking skills with her grandchildren is important. She's taught them a variety of cooking techniques, including how to make their own pasta noodles. Her grandchildren enjoy cooking and tasting different foods.

Debra's house will be even busier this summer when all of her grandchildren are out of school. She appreciates



Debra picks up some fresh spring mix that she and her grandchildren can use to make salads.

being able to access fresh fruits and vegetables for her grandchildren, especially during the summer.

"It helps out a lot because families are not getting enough. Bills and gas are too expensive. Anything helps."

