



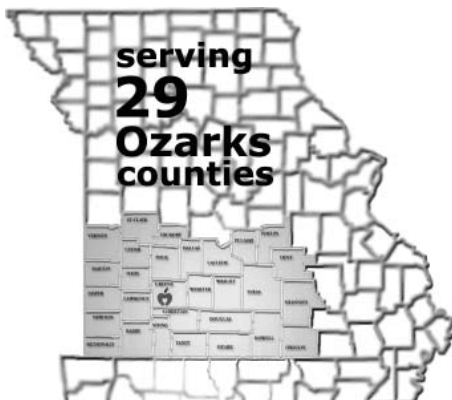
OZARKS
Food Harvest

The Food Bank

Harvest A Member of **FEEDING AMERICA** Time

Celebrating 25 Years in the Ozarks
2009 Winter Edition

For a list of member charities, visit:
ozarksfoodharvet.org



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Food Bank distributes record amounts of food

Proof that tough economic times have made their way into southwest Missouri may be found at Ozarks Food Harvest.

While newspapers and television reporters have chronicled the challenges many Americans are facing, it's sometimes tough to understand the extent of the problems unless you find them in your own backyard.

Well, this past November and December alone, The Food Bank shipped out almost 1.5 million pounds of food. Compare that to the 5 million pounds of food it shipped out all of fiscal year 2007.

"We are only one of a few food banks throughout the entire nation that has seen an increase in food donations over the past six months," says Bart Brown, Executive Director at Ozarks Food Harvest.

That increase can be attributed to new, or improved, partnerships between The Food Bank and Kraft Foods, Walmart, Target, Associated Wholesale Grocers and Kroger-owned stores in the area.

Plus, a \$100,000 grant allowed Ozarks Food Harvest to purchase a new delivery

truck late in 2008.

However, a closer look at the numbers show The Food Bank has been gearing up for this economic crisis for more than just a couple months.

Since July, Ozarks Food Harvest has increased food distribution by 30% compared to the same period a year ago.

This increase has food bank leaders already looking towards the next six months, especially because it appears the economy will only get worse before it gets better.

"We have to prepare to help even more people, because each and every month we see more people looking for help at our agencies," says Denise Gibson, Director of Development with Ozarks Food Harvest.

Gibson says plans are to further utilize the Mobile Food Pantry to help those in the extreme rural communities.

"We have the infrastructure in place to help many more people, but we will need the financial investment of the community to make it happen," Gibson says.

Art of Ending Hunger returning to Patton Alley Pub in April

For the second year in a row, Ozarks Food Harvest is hosting a night full of food, fun and art.

On Saturday, April 18th, The Food Bank will give you the opportunity to take home beautiful artwork from local artists.

Best of all, the proceeds from your dona-

tion go to Ozarks Food Harvest and its mission to end hunger in southwest Missouri.

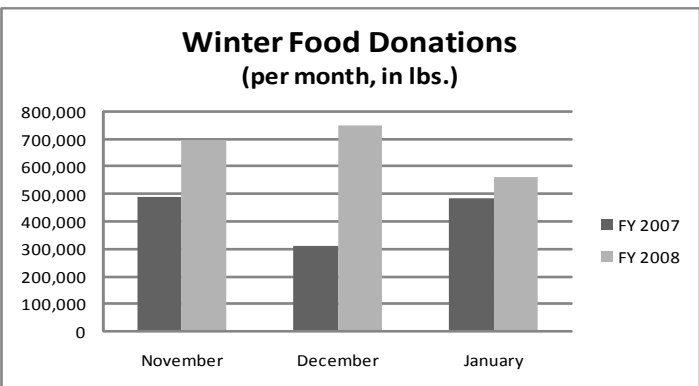
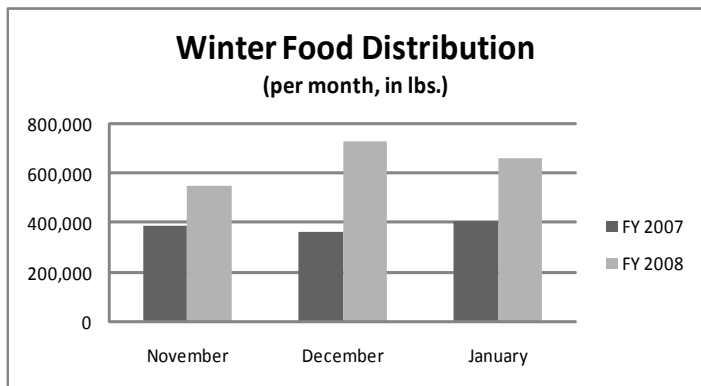
Alice@95.5 FM personality Liz Delaney will MC the event, which again be held at Patton Alley Pub.

Contact Kelly Richard at (417) 865-3411 for ticket information.



Right: One-of-a-kind pieces, like this plate by Stephanie Witt from last year's event, will be up for bid on April 18th, 2009.





Agency Spotlight: “Four Musketeers” lead St. Joseph’s Catholic Church Pantry

Daily, many southwest Missouri families are faced with the decision to pay their bills or feed their children, a decision that one should never need to make.

Luckily, there is help out there for these families. For years, groups of hardworking, caring people have come together to stock the shelves and open the doors of local food pantries.

Located in Billings, Missouri, the St. Joseph’s Catholic Church Pantry is a place where the needy families of the area can go to get the relief they need. The pantry first opened its doors in 1983 and became a member of the Ozarks Food Harvest network in 1986.

The pantry operates out of a custom-built garage featuring a walk in freezer and fridge. This is quite a step up from the three five-foot shelves, and refrigerator they started with in the church’s basement.

But, a bigger pantry is good news because need in the area has more than doubled in the past year. The number of families utilizing the pantry has grown from 35 families a year ago to more than 100 this month.

“We had families waiting here at 9:00 pm the night before,” says Don Baker, one of the pantry’s leaders.

However, what makes

this location truly unique is its leadership. The “Four Musketeers”, as they are known around Ozarks Food Harvest, come in once a week to The Food Bank to pickup what they need. Then Bill Verfurth, Baker, Dale Ball and Art Setinbaugh make their rounds, chatting up everyone they can find.

And, it’s that kind of companionship that keeps the

group going year after year. These men share a bond, both with each other and with the people they serve.

And, the group’s friendly nature has helped translate to trust throughout their church. So much so that the congregation of 300 families provides the group with most of the financial backing they need.

These men have even gained the support of the other churches in their community. One pantry volunteer said, “We’ve got one of the best ecumenical projects around!”


With so much support, it’s no wonder the men continue to serve their community well, allowing those facing tough challenges and decisions to find some easy answers.




The “Musketeers”, now include Dan Jenish, from left, Don Baker, Dale Ball and Bill Verfurth.

Most Needed Food items:

- Cereal
- Canned Meats
- Canned/Dry Soups
- Boxed Side Dishes
- Canned Fruits
- Canned Pastas
- Canned Vegetables
- Peanut Butter & Jelly



Scouting for Food is coming to your neighborhood!
Boy Scouts and Cub Scouts will be stopping by your home in early March,
asking for you to prepare a sack full of canned goods.
You can help Ozarks Food Harvest by having the sack ready when the scouts
return to pick up your donation a week later.



Ozarkers continue to give during the holidays

While the holidays can often pull the pocketbook in many directions, Food Bank donors remembered to keep Ozarks Food Harvest on their gift list.

Hundreds of Ozarks Food Harvest supporters responded to the annual Thanksgiving and Christmas donation appeal.

And, really, it is inspiring to see people help others when we are all experiencing the tough economic challenges.

It's also important to note these donations came while The Food Bank was shipping a record amount of food throughout the Ozarks.

The community's support this holiday season really helped offset the cost of operating The Food Bank.

However, the holiday season can be tough for some donors.

So, if you're interested in helping Ozarks Food Harvest over the next few months, please take a look at the list of events The Food Bank has coming up and we hope you'll find something that is of interest to you.

In March, local Boy Scouts will stop by your house asking for canned good donations with the annual food drive, Scouting for Food.

Then, in early April, The Food Bank will team up with local sponsors and artists to bring you the second annual Art of Ending Hunger event, where you can bid on different pieces of one-of-a-kind art.

All the proceeds from this event go to

Ozarks Food Harvest.

And, of course the 11th annual celebration that is HUNGERTHON is just around the corner, coming up in June.

This is our annual on-air event where we educate the community about childhood hunger in the Ozarks and raise money to combat this expanding problem.

But, if you can't participate in any of these events, there are numerous ways you can help Transform Hunger into Hope™.

Maybe you're interested in helping the kids in need at your child's elementary school. A donation to The Food Bank's Weekend Backpack Program™ will help feed a hungry child.

Or, if your heart goes out to the struggling families scattered throughout the Ozarks in small communities, simply make a donation to the Mobile Food Pantry™ program and you'll ensure these people will have the food they need.

So, take a look at all the programs Ozarks Food Harvest offers. Chances are you'll find something you're interested in helping with.

Please remember Ozarks Food Harvest throughout 2009 and, every donation, no matter what size, makes a difference.



Denise Gibson
Development
Director

Agency leaders to meet with state legislators

With some help from Food Bank staff members, more than 75 network agency leaders will have a chance to meet their state legislators in Jefferson City this April.

This opportunity will take place during the annual Hunger Advocacy Day, which for the second year in a row is being organized by the Agency Relations staff at Ozarks Food Harvest.

Hunger Advocacy Day is designed to give food bank leaders, and members of their networks, a chance to gather together in Jefferson City.

This way, hunger advocacy leaders can discuss future options for fighting hunger with the legislators that represent their part of the state.

"This has been very beneficial to the agency leaders," says Jan Tucker, Agency Relations Director at Ozarks Food Harvest. "Many have never been to the state capital before, and most leave with a better understanding of how much their legislators care about their constituents."

Because Hunger Advocacy Day has grown over the past few years, Ozarks Food Harvest has already reserved the rotunda of the state capital for the day.

Tucker believes close to 100 hunger advocates will be in attendance during the day, with at least one representative from each of the six food banks in Missouri.

In addition, at least each of the 29 counties in The Food Bank's service area will be represented.

Transforming Hunger into Hope™



Another year meant another sizable donation from longtime Food Bank supporter, Smart Chicken.

This year, the MBA poultry brand upped their support with a donation of 8,000 pounds of chicken products.

This was the sixth year Smart Chicken donated one pound of product to Ozarks Food Harvest for every 10 pounds of chicken purchased at local grocery stores.

Check Out Hunger™

Everyone throughout the Ozarks Food Harvest's service area again stepped up to the challenge during another season of Check Out Hunger.

The Food Bank also owes a lot to the companies who helped this year: *Akin's, Dillon's, Harter House, Murfin's Markets, Ramey-Price Cutter, Smilie's, Summer Fresh, Woods, Cody's Convenience Stores, KYTV, Clear Channel Communications, Community Publishers and McCann Printing.*



COMMUNITY FOUNDATION
OF THE OZARKS

With some help from the Community Foundation of the Ozarks, the Louis & Dorothy Coover Foundation presented Ozarks Food Harvest with a \$33,000 grant in February.

The grant will be used to further fund The Food Bank's Weekend Backpack Program™ in rural communities throughout the Ozarks.

With this one grant, four of The Food Bank's rural schools taking part in the Weekend Backpack Program will have funding for a year.

Food Bank asks the Ozarks to meet the economic challenge at hand

When you dig deep, the fact that Ozarks Food Harvest has been forced to grow is a troubling consequence.

It means more and more people are struggling to make ends meet. It means families can't put food on the table. It means your neighbors are going hungry.

But, it also shows you care.

Right now, The Food Bank is reaching out to more people than ever before because of your generosity.

The number of agencies in our network has increased by more than 30 because of your dedication.

And, in the past few months, we've benefitted from record donations and a record number of food drives because of your thoughtfulness.

Remembering Ozarks Food Harvest during these tough times really shows the amount of trust you have in our mission. For that, we thank you.

The amount of food coming into our warehouse is an unprecedented response to unprecedented need. We've never seen so much food come into The Food Bank in our 25 year history.

And, when you answered the call during our Thanksgiving and Holiday fund drives, you did so at a record pace.

However, when I look ahead to the coming months, I realize the war is far from over.

Many of you probably realize there are rough waters still to come. The economy is not yet a steady ship.

Typically, the late winter months after the New Year are the slowest in terms of food and monetary donations.

This dip cannot happen this year. We simply cannot allow our neighbors to suffer. We cannot allow donations to slow as much as usual. There is simply too much need.

But, I'm confident southwest Missouri will answer the call. I believe you understand that these record donations represent only a small victory in a much larger battle.

It will truly take all of us, working together, to *Transform Hunger into Hope™*.

You've shown in the past few months you understand the need.

You've shown you see your neighbors struggling to make ends meet, struggling to simply provide a warm meal at the end of the day.

So, look inside yourself. Step up to the challenge. Dig even deeper to see if you can come up with a solution to the problem at hand.

And, maybe, we can put an end to the world's troubling consequences.



Bart Brown
Executive Director

Ways to Give...

If you're looking to really make a difference with your donation, now's the time.

Throughout March and April, any money you give to The Food Bank will count almost two-fold.

For the 12th year, The Feinstein Foundation in Rhode Island is holding its annual challenge.

Every gift you make to Ozarks Food Harvest will ensure The Food Bank a larger piece of the \$1 million challenge pot.

For more information, visit www.feinsteinfoundation.org.

As Spring draws near, many of us will begin to plan their yearly home gardens.



This year, see if you can make a little extra room for a row you can donate to Ozarks Food Harvest.

Gardeners are more than welcome to drop off fresh fruits and vegetables at The Food Bank's warehouse.

Ozarks Food Harvest's Staff

Bart Brown, Executive Director	Matt Petcoff, Communications Coordinator
Denise Gibson, Development Director	Kelly Richard, Public Relations Coordinator
James Thompson, Operations Director	Jacque Neill, Resource Coordinator
Jan Tucker, Agency Relations Director	Russell Phillips, Transportation
Jodi Alcon, Community Nutrition Coordinator	Stephen Roberts, Transportation
Cindy Boggs, Office Administrator	Linda Smith, Inventory Coordinator
Scott Boggs, Warehouse Facility Supervisor	Jane Terry, Creative Information Specialist
Mike Doubledee, Warehouse Associate	Linda Tinson, Member Services Supervisor
Lucy Indyushkin, Front Desk Receptionist	



DONATION FORM

YES—I would like to help Ozarks Food Harvest
Transform Hunger into Hope™!

Full Name(s) _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

E-mail address _____

I would like my gift of:

\$25 \$35 \$50 \$100 \$Other _____

to support:

New Building Fund Backpack Program

Kids Cafe®/Club Fun™ Food Distribution

Mobile Food Pantry™ Beef Up Your Budget™

To give by credit card please provide:

Mastercard Visa Discover

Account# _____ Exp. Date _____

Signature _____

Phone number(s) _____

Please enclose this form along with your tax-deductible gift in the envelope provided and send to Ozarks Food Harvest, 615 N. Glenstone, Springfield, MO 65802-2115. THANK YOU!

Harvest Time is created by the Ozarks Food Harvest's Development and Communications Department:
Denise Gibson, Director • Matt Petcoff, Communications Coordinator • Kelly Richard, Public Relations Coordinator
We welcome your input... If you have any questions or comments, please call us at (417) 865-3411.