

AROUND THE TABLE

News and Notes on Solving Hunger in South Dakota

FEEDING
SOUTH DAKOTA



A Season for Giving:

How Your Generosity Reaches the Front Lines of Hunger

On the Saturday before Thanksgiving last year, wet snow was forecasted for Sioux Falls. Jeff decided to be one of the first in line for Feeding South Dakota's annual Thanksgiving food distribution at the W.H. Lyons Fairgrounds, arriving a little after midnight for the 8:00 a.m. distribution.

Jeff wanted to make sure he wouldn't miss out on bringing home the groceries needed to prepare a traditional Thanksgiving meal. For him, being first wasn't about beating the crowd to get through the distribution — it was about knowing his family would be able to gather together around a holiday meal.

"I live on disability, so I only get a limited amount of money," Jeff said. "My rent goes up next month, my EBT goes down ... a person can't get ahead." Jeff also shared that he was dealing with the unexpected burden of a significant car repair after his vehicle was rear-ended a month earlier. "This helps me stretch things a little farther."

Jeff's story is a reminder that hunger can affect anyone. Donors to Feeding South Dakota help make sure that when hardships come our neighbor's way we will be there, together, with close-to-home access to healthy food, stability, and hope. *Especially during the holidays.*

Please help us fill more Thanksgiving tables this season! Give online at feedingsouthdakota.org/donate. Or, to put your gift to work even faster, donate online right now by scanning the code on page 3.



"A person can't get ahead ... This helps me stretch things a little farther."

— Jeff



Sioux Falls, SD



AROUND THE TABLE

WITH LORI DYKSTRA, CEO

A Message From The CEO

Dear Friend,

As the holiday season approaches, many of us begin thinking about gathering around the table with family and friends. For far too many of our neighbors, however, the question isn't what's for dinner — it's whether there will be dinner at all.

This year's *Map the Meal Gap* study is a reminder that our mission is more important than ever. Today, 1 in 7 South Dakotans — **130,340 of our neighbors — are experiencing food insecurity, an increase of 16,590 people.** As everyday expenses continue to rise, more households are finding it difficult to keep up. For seniors living on fixed incomes, families with growing children, veterans, and working adults alike, higher grocery, housing, and utility costs are leaving less room in the budget for food. As a result, **1 in 5 children** in our state faces hunger, and more than **8,300 seniors** experience food insecurity.

As the largest hunger-relief organization in the state, we see this impact firsthand, and this newsletter will introduce you to a few of our neighbors who have shared their stories with us. You'll meet Jeff, who arrived more than seven hours before our Thanksgiving Meal Giveaway last fall because he couldn't risk missing the opportunity to provide a holiday meal. You'll also hear from a Navy veteran and retired teacher whose fixed income is stretched between rising heating costs and helping care for his growing grandchildren. Their experiences remind us

that hunger doesn't always look the way people expect — and that circumstances can change for anyone.

As you'll read, it's clear that our mission is about more than providing food. It means easing the burden for our neighbors who simply need a helping hand during a difficult season. It brings comfort, stability, and hope to tables in every county.

This is why even as costs continue to rise, we remain focused on what has always mattered most: delivering food efficiently and responsibly to communities across the state. It's a commitment reflected in the fact that **90% of every dollar donated is invested directly in our hunger-relief programs.**

The numbers tell us hunger is growing, but they don't tell the whole story. Behind every statistic is a working family, a child, a veteran, or a grandparent who simply needs to know someone cares. Your generosity makes that possible. I'm grateful that together we can help make this holiday season a little brighter for families across our state. Thank you for sharing hope and helping traditions continue.

With gratitude,

Lori Dykstra
CEO, Feeding South Dakota

A Different Stop in Wall

Grandkids and Gratitude Keep This Neighbor Going

Randall served in the Navy for 26 years before he began teaching in Wall, South Dakota. He has a heart for his country and his community. Since retiring six years ago, Randall enjoys woodworking and being a full-time grandpa. He needs to stay healthy for the precious little ones he's helping support.

On occasion, Randall attends Feeding South Dakota's mobile food distribution held monthly at the First Lutheran Church in Wall. "We would really be struggling if we didn't have this," he says. "After cancer, I just don't really have the energy to start another career ... This helps."

Randall feels the strain of rising prices, especially during the winter. "Our home is all electric, and the bill is horrendous, just astronomical." It's all he can do to keep the house heated.

Knowing how important nutrition is for the kids, Randall expresses his gratitude for the variety of food available through Feeding South Dakota. "The meat, the fruit, the vegetables — of course, the protein — a lot of canned goods. We love it when they give us milk. We go through a lot of milk."

Randall has faced adversity, yet he is grateful and continues to bring joy to those around him. His story is a reminder that when we help nourish our neighbors, we strengthen families, build stronger communities, and create opportunities for everyone to thrive.

*"After cancer,
I just don't really
have the energy to
start another career ...
This helps."*

- Randall



Wall, SD

Hope for the Holidays **DONATE NOW!**

Your gift will help us provide nearly one million nourishing meals to kids, families, and seniors experiencing food insecurity during one of the year's most meaningful seasons. Thank you for helping us deliver healthy food — and hope — all season long.



Scan the code to
DONATE NOW!



Bringing More Resources to the Table

When the WIC office in Belle Fourche closed, families with young children suddenly had fewer opportunities to access the nutrition support they rely on. Rather than letting that become another barrier, the Rapid City WIC Office reached out to Feeding South Dakota with a creative solution.

The Department's Wellness on Wheels van joined our team on site during a mobile distribution. As neighbors picked up food, they also had the opportunity to connect with WIC staff to enroll in the program or update their benefits. Together, our teams helped families access healthy food and important nutrition resources in one convenient stop.

At Feeding South Dakota, we know it takes more than food to help our neighbors thrive — it takes strong community partnerships to meet people where they are and remove barriers. By opening our Mobile Food Distribution as a place where families can connect with additional services, we're making each visit even more valuable, helping parents spend less time searching for resources and more time building healthier futures.

Now, \$1 = 2 Meals Feeding Hope, Because of You

Inflation affects everyone. Rising prices, along with fewer food donations, have meant an increase in the cost of every meal provided by Feeding South Dakota. Today, a \$10 donation provides 20 meals to nourish a neighbor facing hunger. With 90% of every dollar allocated directly to our programs and a 100% score* on our financial health and accountability, you can trust that Feeding South Dakota will make the most of your gift to support neighbors in every county across our state. Thank you!

**As rated by Charity Navigator, one of the country's largest nonprofit evaluators.*

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