



The Montana Food Bank Network (MFBN) is Montana's **only** statewide food bank. We work with the national hunger-fighting organization, Feeding America, and have developed several programs specifically to address the unique challenges of accessing food in Montana. We partner with over 140 other hunger-fighting organizations throughout the state to improve food access and share information to address hunger and its root causes.

Mission: Our mission is to end hunger in Montana through food acquisition and distribution, education and advocacy. MFBN has been feeding Montana since 1983. Our vision is a Montana free from hunger where everyone has equal access to nutritious food.

Impact: Every \$1 provides enough food for 3 meals. Through partnerships with local and national food manufacturers, agriculturists, and other food manufacturers we are able to secure large amounts of food through generous donations, grants, or wholesale. Then, through a team of volunteers, we are able to break down the large scale food into manageable family size portions so our partner agencies are then able to easily store and distribute these to those individuals in our state that are struggling to make ends meet.

Need - Hunger in Montana

- 1 in 7 Montanans live in households that struggle with hunger. 1 in 5 are children living in households that struggle with hunger.
- Poverty rate: 14.6% and Child poverty rate: 19.4%
- Causes include:
 - Economic insecurity (unemployment, underemployment, cost of housing, health care, etc.)
 - Underutilization of public food programs (people may not know they are eligible or are reluctant to participate in public programs)
 - Challenges accessing food (distance to supermarkets, higher cost of healthy food, especially in rural areas)
 - Montana is the third most rural state in the nation, averaging just 7 people per square mile

Programs

- **MFBN distributed 10.3 million pounds of food to more than 140 Partner Agencies in 39 counties across Montana in 2016.**
 - Our partner agencies include more than 140 community-based organizations across Montana such as soup kitchens, homeless shelters, community programs, food pantries and senior centers.
 - These partner agencies provide direct service to individuals and families in need by distributing food and grocery products to clients in their service areas.
 - MFBN also provides food safety training, introductions to potential partners and grantors, and connections to Feeding America resources for all partner agencies
 - In 2016, MFBN awarded \$21,211.28 in grants to partner agencies.
 - Award types included; Grocery Rescue capacity building grants, Montana Hunger Relief Forum scholarships, school pantry starter kits, and Servsafe food safety training.
- **BackPack Program distributed 233,379 pounds of food to 98 schools in school year 2015 - 2016.**
 - The mission of the BackPack Program is to meet the needs of children living in food insecure homes by providing them with nutritious and easy-to-prepare food to take home on weekends and school vacations when other resources such as school breakfast and lunch programs are not available.
 - MFBN involves additional resources and partners in order to assure sustainability of the program.
 - MFBN is currently providing BackPack meals at 106 sites in 46 communities throughout Montana for the 2017 - 2018 school year
 - Since the program started in 2008, the BackPack Program has distributed 1,893,562 pounds of food.

- **School Pantry Program has implemented 20 school pantries since 2014.**
 - The mission of the School Pantry Program is to supply food and community assistance to students and families who are in need at school.
 - 9 pantries are on or adjacent to Native American Indian Reservations.
 - In addition to being a food resource, students and families can also access toiletries, school supplies, recipes, and other items they may need at School Pantries.
- **Grocery Rescue Program saved 5,834,669 pounds of food from being thrown away in 2016.**
 - MFBN works with local and national grocery stores to develop food rescue programs that provide food donations directly to local partner agencies.
 - This is perishable food that is close to expiration date but still fully edible and safe to eat.
 - 40,478,566 million pounds of food has been donated to our partner agencies in Montana since the program started in 2006.
- **Hunters Against Hunger distributed over 42,000 pounds of Montana game meat in 2015.**
 - Through Montana Legislation, in conjunction with Montana Fish, Wildlife, and Parks, hunters can donate funds to a pool used to process game animals for MFBN Partner Agencies.
 - In the past 3 hunting seasons, over 100,000 pounds have been donated through the program and received by 28 Partner Agencies.
- **Mail-A-Meal distributed 45,750 pounds of food directly to rural Montana households in 2016.**
 - The Mail-A-Meal program is designed to serve households living in rural areas in Montana that are referred to as food deserts. Households receive a 50 pound box of shelf stable food. These boxes are shipped directly to their door.
 - Since the program began in 2014, 1,790 boxes have been distributed to 14 counties throughout Montana.
- **Mobile Food Pantry Program distributed 47,614 pounds of food in 2016.**
 - The purpose of a Mobile Food Pantry is to provide emergency food assistance and services to food insecure individuals in rural areas of Montana that may be underserved or lacking in local food pantries and full service grocery stores.
 - Montana Food Bank Network works with local community volunteers to establish a regular schedule at a centralized location and supplies complete food box to pre-qualified households.
- **Outreach and Advocacy for Public Food Programs**
 - Conducted research on the status of hunger in Montana and the impact of programs throughout the state – find reports at www.mfbn.org/research
 - Through the SNAP Outreach Program 10 agencies were trained to complete SNAP applications, SNAP materials were distributed to 40 agencies, and MFBN and our trained agencies helped complete 75 client applications.
 - Provided outreach to 131 schools in 70 districts to promote adopting or expanding their School Breakfast Program.
 - Promoted the Summer Food Service Program statewide and provided direct, technical support to 4 communities. Helped start new programs in 2 previously unserved communities. Advocated for the passage of a strong Child Nutrition Reauthorization. Worked to build awareness of the need for policies to increase access to Summer Food, while protecting and investing in all child programs.
 - Advocated for funding and support for the Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP), which provides approximately 15% of the food distributed by MFBN, and the Senior Nutrition Programs.
- **1,036 volunteers have dedicated 2,785 hours to further the MFBN mission in 2016.**

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