

# YOUR IMPACT

SUMMER 2024



**FOOD BANK**  
of **ALASKA**

## LETTER FROM THE CEO

## Nourishing Our Neighbors: Fall into Action

As summer comes to an end and we prepare for the upcoming fall and winter seasons, we're reminded of the growing needs of our neighbors across Alaska. With high grocery prices continuing to strain families and colder weather on the horizon, the challenge of putting food on the table becomes even more daunting. At the Food Bank of Alaska, our mission to fight hunger and nourish our communities has never been more vital.

September marks Hunger Action Month—a time for all of us to unite and make a tangible difference. Throughout the month, we'll be hosting a variety of events to raise awareness and rally support for those facing food insecurity. You can find a full list of these events on the back page of this newsletter. Whether you choose to volunteer, advocate, or donate, your involvement will have a profound impact on our community.

One of the highlights this fall is Anchorage Restaurant Week, taking place from September 23-28. Local restaurants will offer special menus, with a portion of the proceeds supporting our programs. This is a wonderful opportunity to enjoy a meal with your loved ones while contributing to a cause that ensures others can do the same. By dining out, you're directly supporting our efforts to provide nutritious meals to families in need.

Looking ahead, we will once again host our Thanksgiving Blessing event this year, with over 12,000 turkeys going into the Anchorage and Mat-Su communities. Stay tuned to our website for more information on how to get involved in this meaningful tradition.

RIGHT NOW,  
**94,000**  
ALASKANS  
ARE WORRYING  
ABOUT WHERE  
THEIR NEXT MEAL  
WILL COME FROM.



Let's come together to support our neighbors facing hunger. Your continued generosity and participation help us fulfill our mission to ensure that no Alaskan has to worry about where their next meal will come from. Thank you for standing with us in this vital work.

With gratitude,

**Cara Durr**  
Chief Executive Officer

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## 10 Years of Impact

Linda and Dan planting with Alzheimer's Resource of Alaska.

Linda and Dan McMahon are longtime supporters of Food Bank of Alaska, both donating their valuable time in addition to providing financial donations. They decided to donate after a friend who was already a food bank volunteer had passed. Soon after they also started volunteering, and have provided both support in our agency sort room helping sort through thousands of cans and boxes of donated food, along with providing office support for the fundraising team. Their commitment to our mission and programs stems from their family history—Linda's mother, who grew up during the depression, always spoke about how little food they had and described only having potato soup for dinner every day. Dan's father would skip school to go fishing so that they would have fish to eat, as his father was disabled and unable to work. Their hope is that the time they contribute helps provide food to people in need who may someday help others in the same situation.

What keeps them inspired to continue giving after 10 years? "Knowing that Food Bank of Alaska provides food to organizations and food pantries across the state, including providing a significant number of food boxes for seniors. It was surprising to us how many seniors were without food and had so little money to purchase any" said Linda. Linda and Dan understand the realities of food insecurity—many people are just one paycheck away from not being able to put nutritional food on their table. People talk about others as if it couldn't be someone they know who is in need, but that is not the case. All it takes is losing your job or facing a serious and expensive medical condition and anyone can suddenly be without food.

While there are numerous organizations across Alaska that are providing services and support, Dan and Linda believe that if someone doesn't have food, many of those other programs can be hindered. "Food is the first step to living a fulfilling life".

## Celebrating 20 Years of Senior Boxes in Alaska

This year marks the 20th anniversary of Alaska's Commodity Supplemental Food Program (CSFP). For two decades, CSFP has provided nutritious USDA foods to seniors, distributing over 10 million meals. Food Bank of Alaska has been a vital partner, tirelessly supporting seniors. Our annual client survey revealed heartfelt feedback: one participant said the program "helps them make it through the month," another called it "vital to my family," and a third expressed gratitude for the "extra help due to never-ending inflation."

## Meals to You Alaska

This summer, the Meals to You Alaska Summer Food Service Program achieved remarkable success, providing essential nutrition to 5,300 children across 12 school districts in Alaska. Through our dedicated efforts, we were able to deliver 5 breakfast and 5 lunch meals each week, shipped directly to children living in some of our state's most remote areas.



Our deepest thanks go to the Department of Early Education and Development for their unwavering support and collaboration, which has been instrumental in the success of this program. We are also grateful to McLane Hunger Solutions, our valued Meals to You box vendor, for their reliable service and commitment to quality.

At Food Bank of Alaska, we take immense pride in our ability to make a tangible difference in the lives of Alaska's children, ensuring they receive the nourishment they need even in the most isolated communities. Meals to You is helping to close the gap with summer meals in rural Alaska.

# Advocating for Alaska: Strengthening Federal Nutrition Programs

This summer, Food Bank of Alaska’s advocacy team and key state partners attended the National Anti-Hunger Policy Conference in Washington, D.C., hosted by the Food Research and Action Center. We met with our congressional delegation to emphasize the need to protect and strengthen federal nutrition programs in the upcoming Farm Bill, a critical piece of legislation impacting U.S. agriculture and nutrition policies.

The conference offered networking, interactive training, and discussions on topics such as food as medicine, digital advocacy, community-based solutions, and supporting school nutrition programs. Highlights included a day on Capitol Hill with the Alaska Congressional delegation and U.S. Department of Agriculture listening sessions on federal nutrition programs.

### Alaska Food Coalition partners attending the conference included:

- Robbi Mixon and Rachel Lord, Alaska Food Policy Council
- Alison McCollough, Upper Susitna Food Pantry
- Dwayne Patterson, Catholic Social Services
- Kimberly Bishop, Nome Community Center
- Joe and Carey Atchak, Bethel Community Services Foundation
- Scott Lingle, Bean’s Cafe
- Jeanne Holfield, Southcentral Foundation

## Monumental Passage of SNAP Legislation

The 33rd Legislature achieved a significant win for food access in Alaska. The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), which supports over 92,000 Alaskans—roughly 1 in 8—also stimulates the local economy. For every \$1 spent using SNAP benefits, \$1.50 is generated in economic activity, with nearly \$350 million spent in Alaska in 2022.

During the 2024 Alaska Food Coalition’s legislative fly-in, increasing SNAP access was a top priority. Thanks to Representative Genevieve Mina and Senate Majority Leader Cathy Giessel, new legislation passed to implement Broad-Based Categorical Eligibility (BBCE). This will allow more low-income working families to qualify for SNAP by raising the gross income eligibility from 130% to 200% of the federal poverty level. BBCE also simplifies the application process, reduces the state’s workload, and helps prevent future backlogs.

BBCE’s passage is a significant victory for SNAP recipients, local businesses, and all Alaskans. The bill passed in the Senate and House and is now awaiting the Governor’s signature. Special thanks to Representative Mina, Senator Giessel, and all supporters who made this achievement possible.



Food Bank of Alaska Director of Government Affairs Ron Meehan with Representative Genevieve Mina and Chief of Staff Katy Giorgio.



Visiting Senator Lisa Murkowski in her Washington, D.C. office.



The 2024 Alaska Food Coalition Juneau legislative fly-in, with Department of Health Commissioner Heidi Hedberg. Increasing SNAP access was a policy priority this year.

# September is Hunger Action Month.

Join this month-long movement to inspire people to take action and raise awareness about food insecurity.

## September 15

Hunger Action Day

## September 18-19

Anti-Hunger Network Conference

## September 19

Open House Business After Hours  
5-7pm at Food Bank of Alaska

## September 23-28

Anchorage Restaurant Week

JOIN US  
ANCHORAGE  
RESTAURANT  
WEEK  
SEPT 23-28  
DINE OUT  
AGAINST HUNGER

Thank You!

SCAN TO:  
• TO SEE PARTICIPATING RESTAURANTS  
• SAVE THE DATE  
• LEARN ABOUT FOOD BANK OF ALASKA'S DINE OUT AGAINST HUNGER INITIATIVE

PRESENTED BY:  
FOOD BANK OF ALASKA

For event details, visit [foodbankofalaska.org](http://foodbankofalaska.org), or follow us on:

WE BELIEVE NO ONE DESERVES TO BE **HUNGRY**



Pick.  
Click.  
Give.

With each \$50 donation to Food Bank of Alaska, you help provide 150 meals to hungry children, families and seniors across Alaska.



If you haven't made a Pick.Click.Give. contribution, there's still time! Add or change your pledge by Saturday, August 31.



Visit [pfd.alaska.gov](http://pfd.alaska.gov) and click the green button "add or change a donation."



**Thank you** for considering Food Bank of Alaska for your Pick.Click.Give. contribution. Your generosity helps us fight hunger and support our community.

