



HUNGER CONNECTION

Expanding Summer Food Access

Connecting Neighbors to Healthy Meals and Fresh Produce with Trusted Community Support



Partnering to Bring Summer Meals to Kids Across Milwaukee County



Supporting Meal Program Partners in Feeding More Families



Helping Older Adults Stretch Food Budgets & Access Fresh Produce



Letter from the CEO

Summer is the peak time for childhood hunger in Wisconsin. During summer break, many families are stretching their household budgets to provide breakfast and lunch to their children who rely on school meals during the academic year.

In Milwaukee specifically, one in four children live in poverty and risk experiencing hunger. The Hunger Task Force **Summer Meals Collaborative** is a longstanding and nationally recognized collaborative model that addresses childhood hunger. This network of more than 130 community sites is predicted to serve more than 450,000 free meals to local kids this summer.



Our work doesn't stop in Milwaukee County. We're increasing access to summer meals for children across Wisconsin by expanding summer meals models to rural communities. In just two years, we've increased the number of rural summer meal sites from 28 to 115. Last summer, 1,164,000 meals were served across the state

in this expanded format. This 'non-congregate' model provides flexible, grab-and-go options for children from geographically isolated areas where transportation is a barrier to accessing healthy food daily.



Additionally, through our **Connecting Farms to Families** program, Hunger Task Force is working statewide to put fresh and healthy food from Wisconsin growers and producers on the shelves of dozens of emergency food organizations across the state. Since the program's launch earlier this year, Hunger Task Force has provided grants and technical support to over 130 organizations across 44 counties, allowing them to purchase locally sourced produce, proteins and dairy from nearly 100 small- and mid-size producers. Funding for this program comes from the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection and is supplemented by private funding from our 100% community supported Farm to Food Bank Fund. Donations to this fund fuel our

"Since the [Connecting Farms to Families] program's launch earlier this year, Hunger Task Force has provided grants and technical support to over **130 organizations** across **44 counties**, allowing them to purchase locally sourced produce, proteins and dairy from nearly **100 small- and mid-size producers.**"

- Matt King, CEO



local economy through the purchase of healthy, quality foods from Wisconsin businesses. They also support the Hunger Task Force Farm, which is full steam ahead growing fruits and vegetables for our local network.

As you read this Summer Edition, you will learn about a variety of ways we make living a healthy lifestyle more attainable for children, families and older adults across Wisconsin, and how you can be a part of our lasting impact. I thank you for your continued partnership in feeding our neighbors in need and invite you to deepen your dedication to the wellbeing of our community by making a donation, joining our citizen advocacy group Voices Against Hunger or volunteering with us.

Together, we can ensure healthy food with dignity for all.

With sincere gratitude,

Matt King

CEO, Hunger Task Force



WILL You Plan Today to Give Tomorrow?

August is National Make-A-Will Month, the perfect time to create or update your will to ensure you leave the legacy you want! By including Hunger Task Force in your will or trust, you make a lasting impact on our mission to end hunger. A planned gift – no matter the size – helps ensure that our Free & Local commitment lives on, in your name or anonymously, for generations to come. By documenting your estate intentions with Hunger Task Force, you ensure your philanthropic goals are met and provide Hunger Task Force with the opportunity to celebrate your commitment.



HUNGER TASK FORCE
LEGACY SOCIETY

1. CONNECT WITH US

Reach out to learn more about planned giving options.

2. TALK TO YOUR ADVISOR

We encourage you to consult your financial or legal advisor.

3. INCLUDE THIS SENTENCE IN YOUR WILL

"I, [name], of [city, state, zip], give, devise, and bequeath to Hunger Task Force, Inc. [written amount, percentage, or description of property] for its unrestricted use and purpose."

4. LET US KNOW!

Submit our Letter of Intent so we can say thank you.

Your legacy will feed future generations. Let us plan today for a hunger-free tomorrow. For information on legacy gifts, contact Kim Muench, Development Director, at kim.muench@hungertaskforce.org or 414.988.6510 or visit our Planned Giving webpage at: **www.HungerTaskForce.org/planned-giving**.

Local Partnerships Bring Free Summer Meals to Kids Across Milwaukee County

To learn more about the program or find locations and mealtimes, visit: www.HungerTaskForce.org/summer-meals.

Summer is the peak season for childhood hunger as kids lose access to school meals they rely on during the academic year. Over 20 years ago, Hunger Task Force established the Summer Meals Collaborative, nationally recognized as the “Milwaukee Model,” and continues to coordinate hundreds of meal sites across Milwaukee County every summer to ensure kids have access to healthy meals after the school year ends. This critical work depends on trusted community partners.

One of the largest and longest-serving Summer Meals partners is Centers for Independence (CFI), which has worked with Hunger Task Force since 2000. “As food insecurity rises and food deserts expand across our region, the need for programs like ours has never been more urgent,” said Heidi Chada, President & CEO of CFI.



What began with just 10 meal sites 26 years ago has grown into one of Milwaukee County’s largest summer meal operations. Last year, the Summer Meals Collaborative served up 478,000 meals at 190 sites, including parks, recreation centers, community youth organizations, schools and early learning centers. CFI is projected to prepare nearly 60% of all meals served through the Milwaukee Model this summer.

As the Summer Meals program has expanded, so has its ability to connect children with fresh, healthy foods. Kids visiting Summer Meals sites across Milwaukee County, including those operated by CFI, often receive fresh fruits and vegetables that include produce grown at the Hunger Task Force Farm. These fresh additions are a welcome complement to the nutritious meals already being served to children at each location.

As summer meal participation continues growing across Milwaukee, partnerships between organizations like Hunger Task Force and CFI remain essential to ensure children have reliable access to healthy meals while school is out.





Network Partner Highlight:

The Gathering Community Meal Program

“We’ve already welcomed an uptick in children to our meal sites during Spring Break and we anticipate even more children will come for healthy meals throughout the summer.”

– Lyn Hildebrand, Executive Director of The Gathering

With four locations across Milwaukee County, The Gathering provides delicious and nutritious hot meals to people in need for breakfast, lunch and dinner. For more than 25 years, Hunger Task Force and The Gathering have worked together to ensure the meal program can meet community demand so anyone in need receives a free and healthy meal in their community on the day they need it.



“I would say about 70 percent of our food comes from Hunger Task Force,” says Lyn Hildebrand, Executive Director of The Gathering. “Thanks to strong support from Hunger Task Force, we were able to serve 127,000 meals last year.”

During the summer months, The Gathering sees an increase in the number of kids and women visiting the

meal program – especially for breakfast. Throughout the school year, many children receive free school breakfast and lunch to keep them fueled throughout the day. When summer break starts, kids lose access to these meals and many families need to turn to a meal site or food pantry to fill in the gap.

“There are so many kids in the neighborhood on 13th

and Fond du Lac that need something to eat,” adds Lyn. “This year has been different for us with the increase in costs of living. We’ve already welcomed an uptick in children to our meal sites during Spring Break and we anticipate even more children will come for healthy meals throughout the summer.”

The population The Gathering feeds has changed since the global pandemic. Prior, clients were predominately unhoused men living in Milwaukee. Now, the organization is serving an increasing number of working-class families who cannot make ends meet with the rising costs in rent, utilities, food and medicine.

“It makes me so sad that someone who is working full-time has to turn to a meal site to feed their family because they cannot afford all of life’s costs,” adds Lyn. “We take pride in being a welcoming community resource to take some stress off families.”





“The [Senior Farmers Market Nutrition] program helps me enormously as I rely on it, FoodShare and Social Security for my food. Please continue to provide these vouchers to help people like me eat healthy.”

- Kevin, older adult living in Milwaukee County

Hunger Task Force Helps Older Adults Stretch Food Budgets and Access Fresh Food

Kevin, an older adult living in Milwaukee County, relies on federal programs to purchase healthy food every month. He combines funds he receives from FoodShare and Social Security to purchase his groceries every month. Living on a fixed income and experiencing the rising costs of groceries, housing, transportation and more, Kevin, like many older adults in our community, is struggling to cover all his monthly expenses.

Last year, Kevin received information about the Senior Farmers Market Nutrition Program from a Hunger Task Force mailing. He quickly called to learn more. He applied and later received his \$25 in vouchers in the mail. Finding the program helpful, Kevin visited Wilson Park Senior Center to apply for and receive his vouchers in person in June. Like he did last year, Kevin plans to use his vouchers at the West Allis Farmers Market. Because Kevin receives FoodShare, he can convert his EBT into tokens to amplify the benefits he has available to purchase fresh fruits and vegetables at the market.

“The [Senior Farmers Market Nutrition] program helps me enormously as I rely on it, FoodShare and Social Security for my food,” shares Kevin. “Please continue to provide these vouchers to help people like me eat healthy. We all deserve your kindness in this!”

To help stretch food budgets, Hunger Task Force operates the Mobile Market, which is a grocery store on wheels that travels throughout Milwaukee County to visit neighborhoods and communities that have limited access to fresh and healthy foods.

The Mobile Market makes community stops every weekday. Along with other staples, local grocer Piggly Wiggly stocks the Mobile Market with a selection of vegetables, fruit, milk (dairy and nondairy options), chicken, beef, pork, deli meat, cheese, yogurt and more. All groceries are 25% off in-store prices and the market accepts debit cards, credit cards and Quest EBT (FoodShare benefits) to make purchasing groceries more accessible for everyone.

Highlights & Memorable Moments Community Nutrition Education

At Hunger Task Force, we don't just feed our community. We advocate for and educate our students, older adults and families about making healthy choices. Our Community Nutrition Education team has been busy teaching students, parents and older adults about healthy eating, culturally responsive foods, cooking, gardening and more!



1) Through Garden to Plate, Hunger Task Force's nutrition education program for fourth and fifth grade classrooms, hundreds of students from Milwaukee Public Schools visited the Hunger Task Force Farm to learn how fresh food is grown. Students helped manage the School Garden, which grows more than 25 varieties of fresh produce, and enjoyed preparing and tasting salt and pepper, spicy and sweet chickpeas and a beet smoothie.

2) Budget-friendly cooking classes were held this spring in the McCarty Education Kitchen, located at our Hunger Task Force headquarters. Families and older adults living on fixed incomes enjoyed hands-on instruction as they prepared a variety of healthy dishes including Dan Dan Noodles, apricot pancakes, Chickpea Curry, pizza skewers and cucumber sandwiches.

3) The Community Nutrition Education team held its first Community Herb Class, in partnership with the Southwest Suburban Health Department, for older adults. Participants learned why fresh herbs are a healthy ingredient to add flavor to a dish and how to season meals with them. Every adult planted their own herbs to take home and learned how cost effective and simple it is to grow them.

4) For those receiving food from our network of emergency food providers, the Community Nutrition Education team launched a digital toolkit that contains healthy, budget-friendly recipes featuring the ingredients they receive from Hunger Task Force at no charge to them.



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Hunger Task Force believes that every person has a right to healthy food obtained with dignity. We work to prevent hunger and malnutrition by providing food to people in need today and by promoting social policies to achieve a hunger free community tomorrow.

OUR CORE VALUES

DIGNITY | JUSTICE | EQUITY
COMPASSION | STEWARDSHIP

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Connecting Farms to Families



As the growing season hits its peak in Wisconsin, Hunger Task Force's *Connecting Farms to Families* program is making a huge impact on statewide hunger relief and Wisconsin agriculture. Supported by a \$2.5 million grant from the Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection, this unique program invests 100% of funding on the purchase of Wisconsin foods from small to mid-size farmers, producers and ranchers. All foods are delivered free of charge to local and statewide emergency food programs. So far, over 130 organizations have received healthy Wisconsin foods from over 100 producers!

Connecting Farms to Families is also backed by generous support from the local community, with gifts from foundations, corporations and individuals amplifying food purchases.

Scan the QR code to make your gift to feed local families while supporting Wisconsin farmers.

