



Solutions That Nourish Campaign

In these uncertain times, one thing is clear – Forgotten Harvest’s mission to provide fresh and nutritious food to families in need, free of charge – is more critical than ever. As Michigan slowed down to prevent the spread of COVID-19, Forgotten Harvest leapt into action to help children, families, and seniors by delivering food in the most effective and safest way possible. In fact, our strong logistical operation enabled us to distribute millions of additional pounds of emergency food since the pandemic impacted southeast Michigan.

The economic impact of this historic public health crisis has drastically increased the number of people facing food insecurity in our community. A strong predictor of food insecurity is the unemployment rate. This April, Michigan’s unemployment rate soared from 4% to 22.9% - surpassing Great Depression levels. As a result, the demand for food assistance is expected to remain high for the foreseeable future. Now, more than ever, it is essential that we move forward with plans for a larger warehouse facility to make possible a superior, innovative food recovery and distribution model to meet the growing needs of our regional community.

The Need

Several hundred thousand of children, families, and seniors across southeast Michigan do not have enough to eat or do not know where their next meal will come from. Many of those most at risk of hunger or food insecurity lack both the access and the financial means to acquire nutritious fresh food essential for promoting good health in adults and healthy growth and development in children.

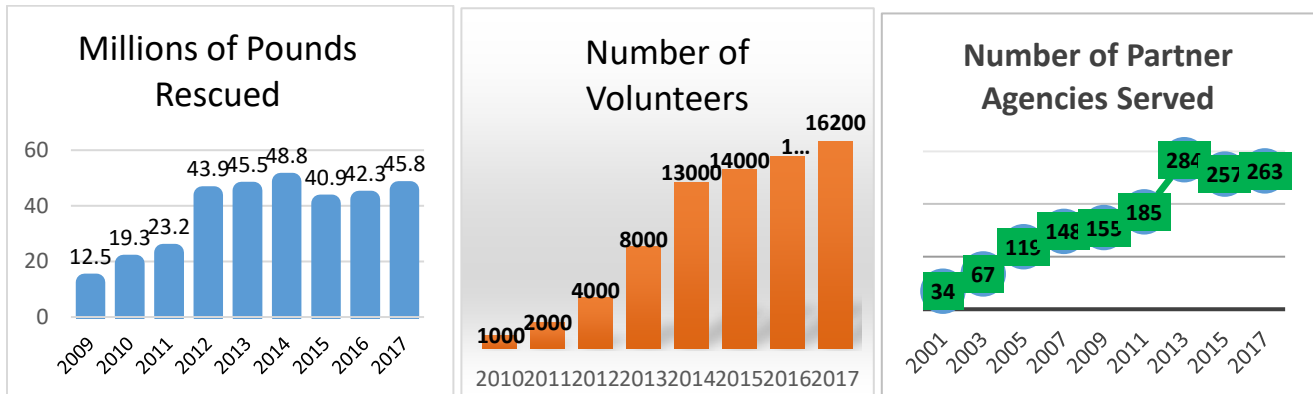
A significant number of those in need are working to support themselves and/or their families but simply do not earn enough to make ends meet. They must make difficult choices: whether to use their limited income to pay for necessities like rent, childcare, and medical bills, or food for their family. Many of these individuals and families turn to Forgotten Harvest in partnership with their local pantry for food. This was all true before the pandemic and now the situation is dire as agency partners are reporting a 50% increase in the number of people seeking food support. Many of these people have never had to seek support before this crisis.

How does Forgotten Harvest know this? Prior to the pandemic, our growth, serving Wayne, Oakland, and Macomb counties, has been exponential. The amount of fresh nutritious food we distribute annually to more than 250 partner soup kitchens, pantries, agencies, and shelters increased from 19 million pounds in 2010 to 45 million pounds in FY2019. Forgotten Harvest volunteers have increased from 1,980 in 2010 to more than 15,000 volunteers last fiscal year. We serve several *hundred thousand* children, families, and seniors.

Our fleet has grown to 35 refrigerated vehicles that serve the 2,000-square-mile tri-county area six days a week, picking up and distributing highly nutritious food. Additionally, we continue to focus on developing our core program as well as special programs such as our Healthy Food - Healthy Kids, Healthy Seniors, Forgotten Harvest Farms, and Volunteer Bulk Food Repack programs.



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Established in 1990 to fight hunger, food insecurity and waste, Forgotten Harvest was born of the vision of Dr. Nancy Fishman, a leader deeply concerned about the amount of surplus nutritious food being thrown away while so many of our citizens were going hungry. A national model for fresh food rescue, innovation, and logistics, Forgotten Harvest is now one of the largest and most effective food rescue organizations in the United States. At the same time, our internal cost of 19 cents per pound to rescue and distribute food remains one of the lowest and most cost effective of any food rescue organization in the nation.

Assessing Our Future Vision

Forgotten Harvest is quite proud of our nationally recognized, exemplary food recovery and distribution program, and leadership as an innovative, progressive, efficient, and effective regional non-profit. At the same time, with such dramatic growth we recognized the need for a comprehensive strategic planning and self-assessment process that would ask a few simple questions:

- **Are we serving the community in the best way? Can we do it better?**
- **Are we maximizing our impact to reduce food insecurity through innovation while advancing nutrition in southeast Michigan?**

What Forgotten Harvest learned is that we can better serve our community by improving upon a few fundamental areas affecting hunger and food-insecurity – **ACCESS & SUPPLY of Food, and FOOD EQUITY** – so that every child, family, and senior can regularly receive a diverse, nutritious mix and appropriate volume of food.

To address these areas, Forgotten Harvest utilized a planning grant from The Kresge Foundation to undertake: 1) a comprehensive mapping of metro Detroit’s core food system to reevaluate current access and supply for food-insecure residents; and 2) an extensive review of our logistics, warehousing, and distribution services to be sure we are making operational course corrections needed to align operations with our new scale of distribution. We also recently launched a visionary new client data collection tool [Link2Feed] at our partner agencies to better measure number of households served, assess health-related and other socio-economic factors, and client need to better determine food volumes and nutritional mix. The goal is to ensure the best service to our recipient agencies and the optimal mix of nutritious food for our community’s food-insecure residents.



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Food Access & Supply: To maximize the alleviation of food-insecurity for metro Detroit residents, we developed a new food-insecurity index using poverty and access barrier criteria such as lack of transportation that relates to our region's vulnerable population. We re-evaluated points of access and supply through a street-by-street mapping of food availability and access points against food-insecurity data. This evaluation included Forgotten Harvest's service area as well as that of Gleaners Community Food Bank. This enabled us to re-assess current food distribution patterns to ensure delivery of nutritious food to areas with high need and poor access. We have discovered several underserved communities in southeastern Michigan that require new food pantry outreach and collaboration. We partnered with Data Driven Detroit (D3) and Loveland Technologies to develop and implement the food access and supply mapping data and interactive software applications for this analysis.

Food Equity/Nutrition – Working with Ghafari and Associates, we conducted a comprehensive review of Forgotten Harvest's operational structure, supply chain, logistics, and facility needs to ensure our food rescue and distribution model is achieving maximum impact serving metro Detroit's food-insecure residents. This analysis showed:

- Wide variances in our food distribution mix through two distinct supply chains -- retail rescue routes vs. bulk donations received at our warehouse;
- Inconsistencies in product mix resulting in less nutritious meals;
- Insufficient warehouse and dock capacity;
- Insufficient capacity for office, parking, and grounds;
- A significantly underutilized truck fleet;
- Limited ability to utilize volume or demographic data.

Working out of a 30,000 square-foot facility, Forgotten Harvest currently utilizes two separate food recovery and distribution supply chains:

- 1) **Retail Routes** - Trucks that go out empty, collect surplus donated food from 12-15 retail food donor partners, and then immediately distribute same afternoon to 3-4 food pantries and shelters. The annual volume of this type of food recovery is 15 million pounds or approximately 1/3 of the food we recover.
- 2) **Bulk Load / Warehouse** - an increasing portion of food is acquired from sources outside our region – surplus from U.S. and Canadian large farming and greenhouse operations, manufacturers, and distributors. These trucks bring full semi-trailer loads of food directly to our warehouse, where volunteers sort and repack food into family-size proportions. The food is stored safely for a few days until it can be loaded on our trucks and delivered daily to some 70 mobile / farmers' market-type pantries. This food amounts to some 30 million pounds annually, or 2/3 of the food we recover.

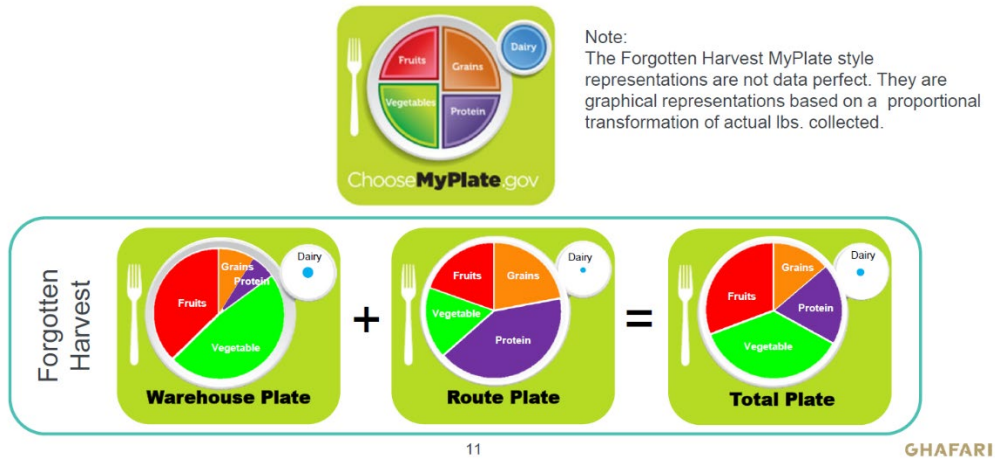
On an annualized basis, the surplus food we recover and distribute to the community is very nutritious and almost equates to the recommended daily amount from the USDA's five food groups. However, the illustration below highlights the significant nutritional differences between warehouse-acquired food and that from retail routes.



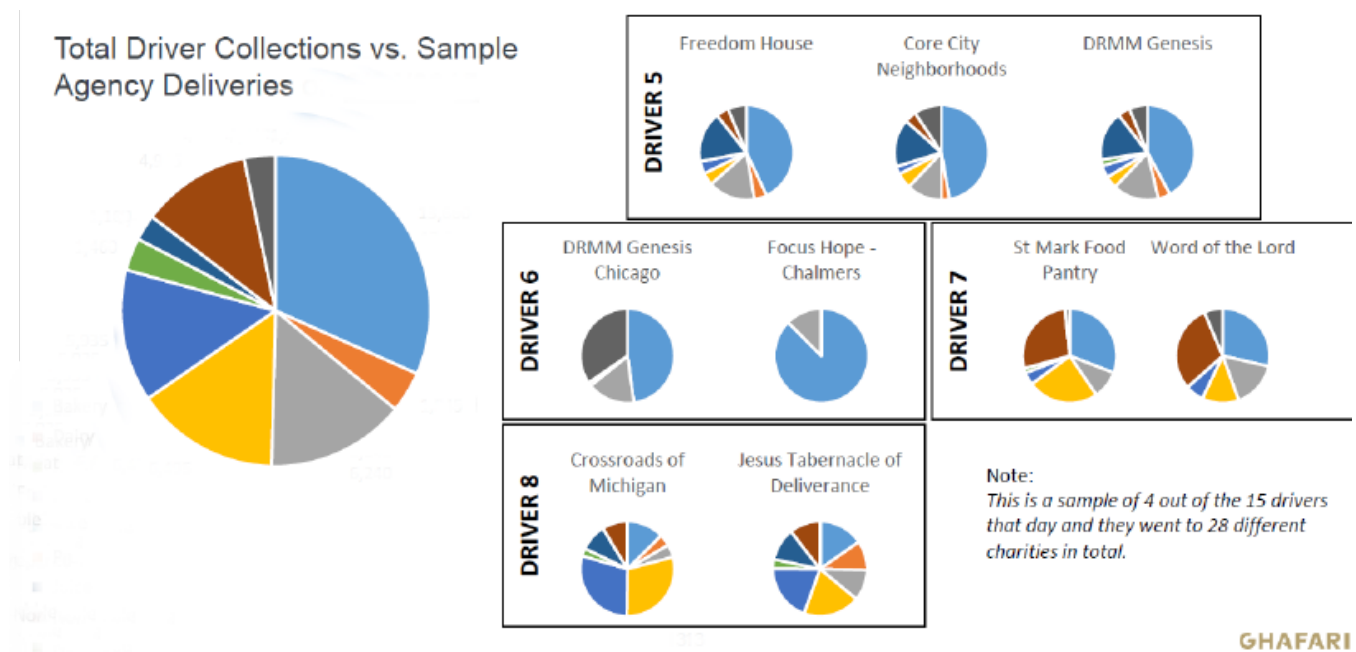
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Forgotten Harvest: Food Distribution Model Facility Analysis

Forgotten Harvest 2015 Collection Mix:



Additionally, the weekly nutritional mix of the retail route supply chains is varied by independent driver truck route. Our trucks pick up from retailers the surplus they have that day; some days it is bread and vegetables, the next day it might be proteins and meats and dairy. These truckloads are often nutritionally unbalanced in what they provide to recipient agencies on a given day. The illustration on the next page shows the variability between routes.

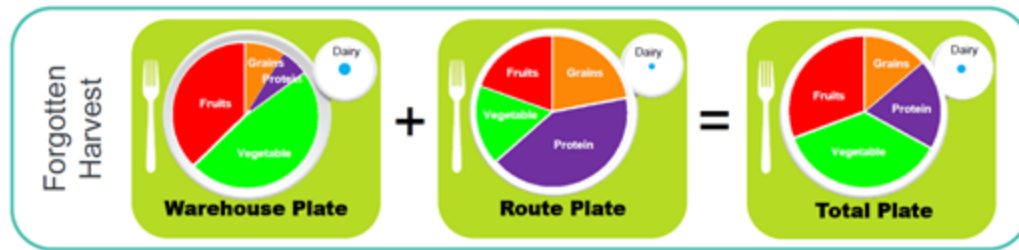


Our 30,000-square-foot warehouse facility on Greenfield Road is further constraining service since it is often over capacity, forcing us to store food in our refrigerated trucks, and has only two truck dock bays for loading and unloading, which creates logistical challenges for warehousing processes. It also has limited parking for our growing number of volunteers and staff. Because we have outgrown our current building configuration, our finance, human resources, and development departments are now housed in off-site office space.



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A New Facility for an Innovative Equitable Food Rescue Model “Right Food, Right Place, Right Quantity, and Right Time



Forgotten Harvest is committed to ensuring that the appropriate quantity and nutritional mix – especially proteins, fruits, and vegetables – are reaching each agency, thereby achieving a more equitable food distribution based upon the number of households and families, seniors, and children in need.

To achieve our goal of increasing access to fresh food, volume of food, and nutritional mix for food-insecure metro Detroit residents, Forgotten Harvest needs:

- A larger warehouse so that we can bring all rescued food back for sorting before distribution;
- Expanded dock and parking capacity to increase food throughput;
- Warehouse layout that allows for two sorting lines to expand food sorting and distribution;
- A reusable/stackable container system for food that would increase fleet utilization.

This new Forgotten Harvest warehouse and distribution facility will be comprised of approximately 77,000 square feet on ten acres with 15 truck bays, refrigerated and freezer food storage, food processing and repack areas, administrative offices, ample parking for a fleet of 36 large trucks (including several tractors w/ 53’ trailers) and approximately 200 parking spaces for volunteers and staff. To achieve our goal of a new facility, board and staff have begun the process of site acquisition. A campaign feasibility study was successfully conducted with key donors and stakeholders to engage the community in a multi-million-dollar capacity campaign. We believe the development of this facility will be achieved through a combination of philanthropic investment and construction financing.

The successful completion of this facility will significantly improve Forgotten Harvest’s operational capacity and fiscal responsibility by:

- Improving fleet utilization, food handling, and distribution;
- Maximizing donor dollars by rescuing more food (69 million pounds) while maintaining a 19-20 cent per pound cost;
- Better utilizing demographic data to improve food insecurity in our community;
- Improving volunteer utilization and capacity.

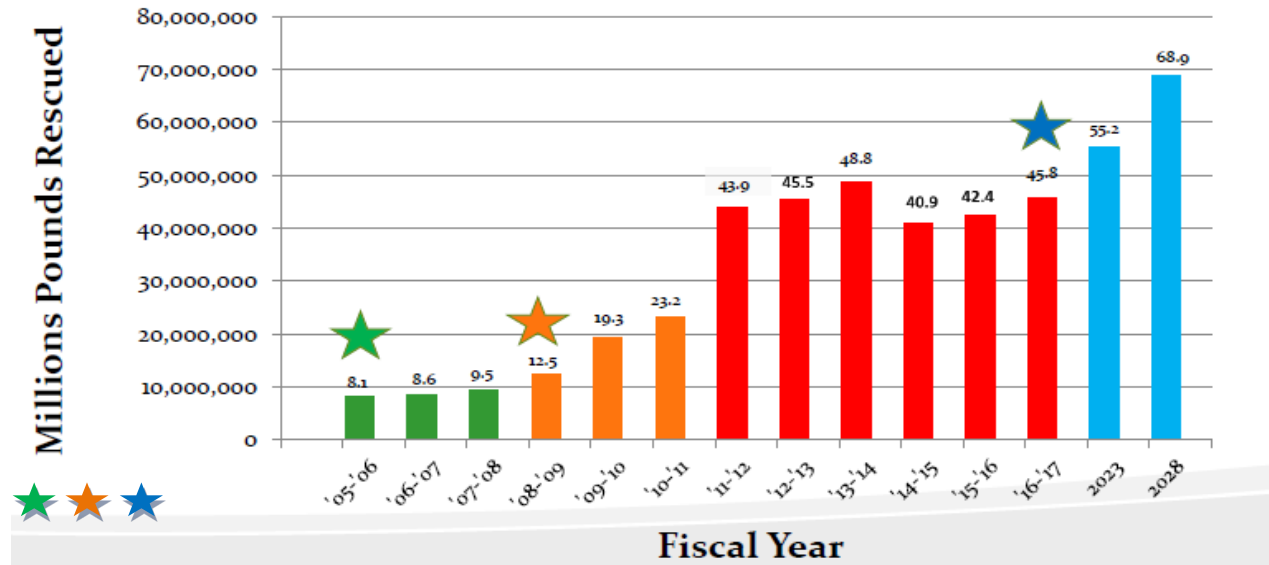
Most importantly, improved operational capacity will result in significant long-term impacts for the Metro Detroit community, including:

- Healthier, more nutritious mix of food for food-insecure families and seniors;
- Create access and increased distribution to new designated underserved communities
- Enhanced volunteer experience;
- Improved service, quality, and reliability to partner agencies;
- More equitable distribution to food-insecure residents in our community.



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Leading to...



The stars located on the chart above indicate the past successful capacity campaigns (\$3.7M '05-07 and \$8.5M '08-13) and the positive impact they can have on Forgotten Harvest's ability to better serve our community. Blue Star is new capacity campaign.

With the re-mapping of our food access and supply routes in SE Michigan, and significant improvements made to our warehousing and logistics systems, **Forgotten Harvest's goal over the next several years is to significantly reduce food insecurity in the City of Detroit and throughout Wayne, Oakland, and Macomb Counties.** Any family and/or senior will be able to access affordable nutritious food within walking distance or reliable public transportation. Our vision is to establish a food security network involving all food and nutrition partners working together.

A Campaign for Innovation, Food Equity, and Access

Our board of directors is very supportive of our role as an agent for positive change and innovation and understands our important role as a community leader and major food provider for a very large population in need in metro Detroit. Our organization's vision statement is the following: We envision communities that work together to end hunger...creating individual, neighborhood, economic and environmental health.

Based upon a thorough assessment of our mission, vision, current impact, and future opportunity, Forgotten Harvest's board of directors recently approved engaging community leadership support for a **\$17 million capacity campaign.** This 3-year campaign will provide for the following capacity enhancements over a three-year period:

- \$16,000,000 for a new Forgotten Harvest food logistics and warehouse distribution facility that will handle all food recovery, processing, repack, distribution, warehouse operations, programs, and administration.
- \$1,000,000 for an innovation and sustainability fund to support the first five years of the new model of facility warehouse operations and related logistics.



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Right Food, Right Place, Right Quantity, Right Time

With sufficient resources and capacity, Forgotten Harvest will continue its growth and service to the hungry. The USDA estimates that each year in the United States more than 70 billion pounds of food are thrown away—nearly 25% of food produced. It has now become fact: With so much perfectly good nutritious surplus food going to waste, surplus food rescue has become the innovative solution to ending hunger and reducing food insecurity for children, families, and seniors in our communities.

In these unprecedented times, Forgotten Harvest has now reached another critical moment in its history. With so many children, families, and seniors in the tri-county area relying on Forgotten Harvest and its partner agencies for access to nutritious food, and the real potential to significantly impact hunger and reduce food insecurity in southeast Michigan in the next decade, **we hope that you will participate in this promising endeavor.**