

HARVEST NEWS

See how together we help relieve hunger and prevent food waste in metro Detroit



Behind the Scenes: Forgotten Harvest Farms



Volunteers hard at work

It's 9:00 AM and the devoted volunteers gather near the barn to collect their work gloves and wait to hear what the day has in store for them at Forgotten Harvest's Farm near Fenton, MI. Lori Setera, farm volunteer coordinator, starts each 4-hour opportunity with a brief orientation to go over the farm's back story, farm safety, and food safety. Farm manager, Mike Yancho, acquaints each volunteer group with some background information about the crops and their nutrients. After the volunteers receive their roles for the day, they head out to the field to get hands-on training. This is when the fun begins! Volunteers will set out to work; planting, weeding, harvesting, sorting, and loading trucks. By 1:00 PM they are tired, sweaty, and dirty, but happy, proud, and satisfied. They gather back where they started to hear what a difference one day of volunteering has accomplished. **Their impact is massive**, and we could not do it without them!

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LETTER FROM ADRIAN

Dear Friend,

As I celebrate the five-month mark in my role as leader of Forgotten Harvest, I am extremely humbled by the level of food insecurity and hunger affecting so many metro Detroit individuals and families.

I am also amazed by the wonderful support provided by the engaged donors and volunteers who help make our work effective and impactful. I have visited many of our partner agencies and feel such gratitude for the hard work, passion, partnership, and trust that our community partners, volunteers, and staff contribute toward our fight against hunger and food insecurity.

We remain committed to the vision of creating a better food-security network with a more nutritional mix of food and greater equity and dignity in the distribution of the food we distribute free of charge to our neighbors. As part of our vision, Forgotten Harvest will continue to invest in our 200 agency partners through our agency capacity grant program to strengthen their capacity to nourish our community.

People are at the center of all we do. Unfortunately, the need for emergency food

assistance continues. Increased costs of essentials such as gas, food, and utilities, along with decreased public sector support, continue to negatively impact tens of thousands of our neighbors.

We are working hard to provide our highly nutritious food to the many children, families, Veterans, and seniors who need our help. Today, Forgotten Harvest needs more volunteers and donors to support its increased capacity.

We anticipate the higher demand for emergency food will continue into the fall and this winter. Your continued support of Forgotten Harvest gives hope to those in need.

THANK YOU!



Adrian Lewis, CEO



Thank you to our boards past and present.

Please join us in giving a very warm welcome to Kurt Kissling, Cinnamon Polka, and Reanne Yuk Mui Lani Young, our 2023 NEW Board of Directors. We also want to give our deepest most heartfelt thank you to our board members that have completed their board service. Many thanks to Doug Busch, John Carter, Rick DiBartolomeo, Eric Dietz, Mark Ellis, Jason Lee, Hannan Lis, Hugh Mahler, Melinda Mernovage, Jason Paulateer, Julie Smith, Dian Wolfenden, and Jon Woods. It takes many amazing people to feed the metro Detroit community. We are so thankful to all that help to makes this possible!

NEIGHBOR HELPING NEIGHBOR



Summer is a challenging time for all families but can be even more difficult for parents who are trying to balance their monthly budget and make sure that their children have enough to eat. At many of the pantries that receive food from Forgotten Harvest, the lines are getting longer, and the need is growing. Forgotten Harvest has a summer lunch program to help provide nutritious food for children who need it.



Several donors provide funding for this program, including Debra who honors her daughter's memory by including her words on the bags for one of the distributions. Another donor wanted to involve her children in the work of Forgotten Harvest. 'Tova and her children were able to apply the special stickers to the bags which were then filled with lunches by other volunteers.' These bags were then distributed at our Oak Park Mobile Pantry.

What a wonderful way to help our neighbors!



Forgotten Harvest is piloting a brand-new program that could increase the amount of fresh food distributed throughout the community while still combating food waste! Cultivating new ways to increase access to nutritious food is of the utmost importance to us.

This summer, we have teamed up with nine private gardens planted by community members, houses of worship, and businesses to share the nutrition of homegrown food. These gardens have committed to donating their excess produce to Forgotten Harvest. Once the crop is harvested, the excess is then picked up by one of our volunteer Harvest Heroes and taken directly to an agency partner.

This ensures agencies can distribute this produce at its peak freshness. Among these garden partners is Phoenix Innovate, a marketing agency in Troy, that created a community garden at their location just for us! With the help of their garden committee, last year they planted and cultivated 345 lbs. of vegetables, fruits, and herbs. Phoenix Innovate says with the fast growth of this year's crops, they are sure this year will come with another successful donation, "all in the name of helping others put food on the table."

We are very excited to see where this program can take us. With the help of these fantastic gardeners, we will be able to increase access to fresh and nutritious food and make the community stronger.



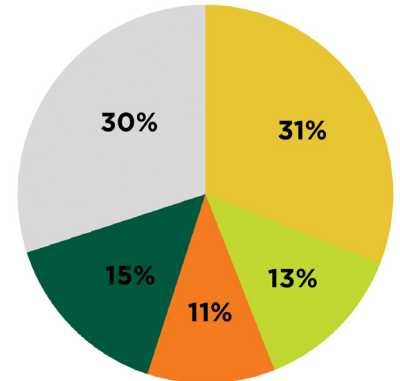
UPDATE: We have officially reached one year of operations in our new building! Although in distance, we only moved our facility one mile south, the possibilities for our new space are substantial. Our biggest goal is to merge our distribution models. Until moving into our new building, we operated two models to distribute food to the community: a rescue model and a warehouse bulk model. On an annual basis, both models were nutritionally diverse and balanced, but on a daily basis, the mix was skewed if it was meat pick-up day at Kroger, for example, or the warehouse received a heavy shipment of produce. Because no one shops on an annual basis, we made it our goal to bring back the items collected from our grocery donors and combine them with the items delivered to our warehouse. We want everyone who goes to an emergency pantry served by Forgiven Harvest to have a diverse mix of items with which to feed themselves and their loved ones, allowing them to create **a nutritionally balanced meal, rather than individual items.**

Because we work primarily with perishable items, it is imperative that the food we collect is distributed as quickly as possible. This is challenging, logistically, but very important. We are bringing the number of trucks back from grocery pick-up in stages, with a weekly goal of 10 inbound rescue

routes, five inbound bulk routes, eight mobile pantry distribution routes, and 20-25 outbound brick-and-mortar pantry distribution routes. **This change to our model will require an increase in our volunteer support** to fully staff three different activities to improve community distributions:

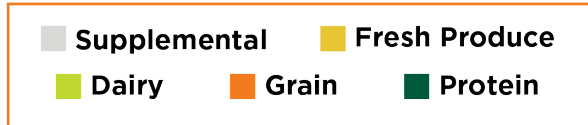
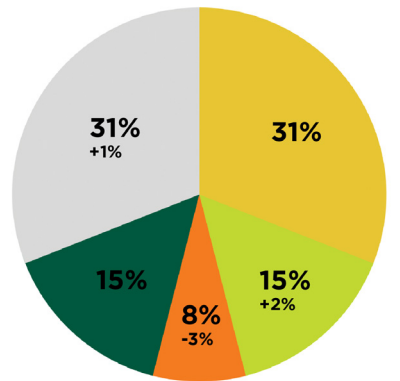
grocery rescue sort, bulk repack and glean, and nonperishable box making. We will continue to operate two volunteer opportunities per day, six days per week, and **with the additional responsibilities, we will need up to 700 people per week.**

BALANCED PLATE GOAL



Forgotten Harvest has always been FOR the community and BY the community. We are very fortunate to have the support of so many volunteers! We are on our way to an optimal nutritional mix. With your help, we can get there.

INTERIM BALANCED PLATE PERFORMANCE



FORGOTTEN HARVEST
Women's
HARVEST LUNCH
Presented by Kroger Co. of Michigan

Join Forgiven Harvest at the Royal Oak Farmers Market for our annual Women's Harvest Lunch presented by Kroger Co. of Michigan on Thursday, October 19, 2023!

This event brings together women, businesses, and community leaders who are committed to alleviating hunger and reducing food waste in metro Detroit. Guests will have the opportunity to network, enjoy a plated lunch with a

focus on farm-fresh ingredients, participate in our silent auction, and learn from a powerful event program led by local women discussing how they have strengthened our community and the importance of combating food insecurity.

For additional information and tickets visit: www.forgottenharvest.org/womensharvestlunch2023



Forgotten Harvest Farm utilizes more than **95 acres of land** and is all the more impressive when you realize that the farm has just four staff members.

With the help of **3000** individual volunteers and large volunteer groups from corporations, schools, and other organizations, the farm at Forgotten Harvest ensures that metro Detroit families will consistently benefit from fresh, healthy foods that are often unavailable or unaffordable to them. The goal is to make every acre as productive as possible to help feed as many people as possible.

Just how big of an impact does the Forgotten Harvest Farm bring to the community? The list is endless. Our goal for the farm to pantry

program is to **provide a yield of 774,600 lbs. of fresh, healthy produce**, helps to fill in the gaps for fresh and nutritious food that may not be available during the summer season. This year's crop plan includes beans, cabbage, collards, eggplant, potatoes, sweet corn, watermelon, zucchini, and habenero, jalepeno, and poblano peppers.

Join the over 3000 volunteers this summer that make farming season possible. Help us provide fresh, nutritious, and locally grown produce to our community! Are you up for the challenge?

Reach out to **Lori Setera** at **lsetera@forgottenharvest.org** to be a part of another amazing harvest season this fall.

HUNGER ACTION MONTH™



Important Reminder! Hunger Action Day is September 23rd! **All through the month of September, Forgotten Harvest brings awareness to the problem of hunger in our community and what actions you can take in the fight to end hunger.** Be on the lookout for ways to get involved by donating, volunteering, or spreading the word on social media. Stay connected with us for special giveaways and opportunities to have your donation matched! Your actions and commitment will help make sure nobody has to make the impossible choice between food and other necessities like childcare, medicine, or utilities.

While you prepare, here are two ways you can take action during the month of September: create a "meal jar" to collect money throughout the month to be donated to Forgotten Harvest to allow meals for others, or host your birthday party at Forgotten Harvest--spend some time volunteering and share the cake with friends after!

#HungerActionMonth #EndHunger

DONOR HIGHLIGHT

Mark has been donating to Forgotten Harvest for three years now, but his relationship and appreciation of Forgotten Harvest goes back further. Fifteen years ago, Mark was working at Walmart as the manager of the meat department. Mark's responsibilities included overseeing the butcher and deli counter and inspecting product quality, but Mark was also in charge of collecting and organizing surplus meat to be picked up by Forgotten Harvest. "I felt a kinship to Forgotten Harvest and admired what you did," Mark said.

In the years since, Mark has been with us, he was able to retire happily. When it came time to choose a charity to support, he remembered Forgotten Harvest. In 2020, Mark started giving regularly throughout the year. Familiarity with the food rescue from his Walmart days and with

"I felt a kinship to Forgotten Harvest and admired what you did."



Forgotten Harvest's organizational efficiency compelled him to donate. "I found out 95% of funding was going to directly support services." Mark said.

This spring, Mark generously provided a larger gift. This gift moved Mark from giving at a mid-level to **joining Harvest Circle** - our major giving **society of donors who contribute \$1,000 or more each year**. When asked why he decided to increase his giving, Mark said, "In the Michigan area, the need is greater than the supply of resources.

Forgotten Harvest does a better job dollars and sense wise than any of the other efforts I've seen." Mark will continue to stay engaged with Forgotten Harvest and will be taking a tour of Forgotten Harvest Farms later this summer.

Thank you, Mark, and all of our donors, we are grateful for your support!



Other Ways to Give:

Are you wondering how **YOU** can help to make an even greater impact for your neighbors in metro Detroit?

Become a monthly Harvest Sustainer You can give directly to support the community each and every month, ensuring children, families, Veterans and seniors have an emergency place to go for healthy and nutritious food. Monthly giving is also one of the most effective ways to give because it helps us to budget. When times become unsure, we know that we can rely on your generous support through automatic monthly payments from your credit card or checking account!

IRA Giving If you are 72 or older with a traditional IRA, you are eligible to donate directly to Forgotten Harvest from your required minimum distribution (up to \$100,000) without having to pay income tax on the distribution! For those who are thinking of creating a legacy in their estate, naming Forgotten Harvest as a beneficiary of the IRA could provide tax benefits for your heirs as well.

For more information on recurring donations, please email us at: donations@forgottenharvest.org.

