

SUMMER 2025



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AMERICA**

HARVEST NEWS

See how you've helped to relieve hunger and rescue surplus food in Metro Detroit for the last 35 years!



HEALTHY FOOD HEALTHY KIDS: SUMMER LUNCH

Children are some of the most at risk when it comes to food insecurity. Inconsistent access to the nutrients they need can significantly hinder their growth and development, causing long-term health problems, academic challenges in school, and low energy levels that make it difficult to participate in play.

At Forgotten Harvest, we are committed to nourishing all our neighbors, especially our most vulnerable. Each year, families who rely on daily free and reduced school meals for their children struggle to cover the difference in their grocery bills

when summer vacation starts. Forgotten Harvest's Summer Lunch Program is a direct response to this gap.

From late June to late August, our Food Programming and Distribution Center teams kick into high gear to get 100,000 free lunches into our community. Each meal includes four things: a sandwich, a fruit or vegetable, a snack, and a drink. An additional 30,000 sandwiches provide free lunch for the Michigan Youth Appreciation Foundation's Metro Detroit Youth Day on Belle Isle in July.

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LETTER FROM OUR CEO

Dear Friends,

Forgotten Harvest is a well-oiled machine of activity in all seasons, but it always seems like there is extra energy in the air during the summer months. This year is feeling even more heightened with rapid policy changes coming from Washington D.C. As we face government changes, funding cuts, and new operational challenges, Forgotten Harvest remains focused on caring for our neighbors.

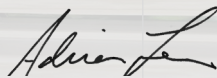
On top of our usual food distributions, our Food Programming and Distribution Center teams are adding in Summer Lunch meals for the families in our communities who come to need our assistance when school-provided meals pause during the summer break.

Our Forgotten Harvest Farms team has been working hard with hundreds of volunteers in the fields and greenhouse to ensure our neighbors experiencing food insecurity can enjoy fresh seasonal produce. From zucchini, green beans, and fresh herbs to cabbage, collards, and potatoes, our farm team and volunteers are busy growing and harvesting a wide variety of nutrient-dense food items for Metro Detroiters in need.

Our two Community Choice Mobile Markets are now active to serve high-need populations in Dearborn Heights and Detroit and taking appointments at our 8 Mile campus throughout the week.

In short, we're doing everything we can to get as much food as possible out to our community. We thank you for doing this work with us, because it takes all of us, especially right now.

In partnership,



Adrian Lewis



DONOR HIGHLIGHT



Jim has been giving to Forgotten Harvest for over 15 years. When the opportunity came to help build our campus, he decided to contribute to a brick program and honor two special women: his wife, Barbara who died in 2016, and his loving companion, Leslie. This May, the bricks were placed in a patio at our facility. Jim and Leslie volunteered at our former facility by sorting and packaging potatoes from our farm into family-sized bags. Jim said it was a very humbling day, especially knowing how many pounds they bagged and how much more there was to do.

After coming to our new campus, Jim and Leslie were **“blown away by the scope of what Forgotten Harvest does.”** When they visited the Client Choice Mobile Market that is next to our warehouse, they

commented on how it was heartwarming to see that it has no cashier but provides a place where people can “shop” and choose items they need free of charge.

As a retiree, Jim feels very fortunate that he has the means to donate to such a worthy cause. While touring the warehouse, he remarked that in his early days, he even drove a truck! **“It’s hard work,” said Jim,** and he is right! Our trucks are on the road six days per week and drive over 40,000 miles every month to rescue and deliver nutritious, surplus food. All that food is given to those we serve free of charge but getting that food to the community is not. Thanks to caring people like Jim, we have the ability to keep our trucks fueled and in good repair. **We are so grateful!**

UPDATES FROM THE FARM

Forgotten Harvest Farms has been hosting volunteers all summer to turn seeds and seedlings into nutritious produce for our Metro Detroit community. We've now set our sights on the harvest, and thanks to our new deer-deterrent fence, we're anticipating quite the bounty!

We can't blame the deer for wanting to sample from our fields, but enclosing nearly 70 acres of Forgotten Harvest Farms' largest plots will have a major positive impact on both productivity and sustainability. Our Farm Team breaks down how:

- **Protection of Crops and Increased Yield:** Deer are responsible for substantial crop loss every season. Protecting 70 acres means thousands more meals can be provided to food-insecure families across Metro Detroit.
- **Financial Efficiency:** Reduced crop loss means less replanting, less waste, and lower overall costs. The fence is a one-time investment with long-term benefits, improving the farm's ability to scale and innovate.
- **Volunteer Empowerment:** It's deeply motivating when people know that what they planted for people in need is not being eaten by deer before harvest day.
- **Environmental Stewardship:** With fewer losses, there's less need for excessive planting, tilling, or chemical deterrents. Protecting the crops naturally helps maintain soil health and aligns with the farm's sustainable practices.

The fruits, vegetables, and herbs we grow on Forgotten Harvest Farms directly support those in our community who struggle to access enough food for themselves and their families. We even employ our greenhouse during the winter months, making the need for volunteers extend throughout the year, so if you're able to make it out to the fields, please join us anytime!

Want to support our farm's work but can't make it out to Fenton?
Consider joining Seed to Feed!

Seed to Feed is an all-digital monthly giving program created to support the day-to-day operations of Forgotten Harvest Farms. Maintaining the farm has its costs, and your contribution each month will help our team tend to equipment, seeds and seedlings, fertilizer, and crop protection. In return, you'll receive monthly communication with behind-the-scenes updates from the farm, volunteer and tour opportunities, and a Seed to Feed sticker to show your support!

To sign up or learn more about Seed to Feed, please visit www.forgottenharvest.org/seedtofeed or contact Kim Kalmar at kkalmar@forgottenharvest.org or 248-864-7525.



I started volunteering with Forgotten Harvest a number of years ago at the farm in Fenton. Because Mike Yancho [Farm Manager] and Lori Setera [Farm Volunteer Coordinator] do such a great job running the volunteer program at the farm, I continue to return year after year. The volunteer work is challenging, but the rewards of knowing how many vegetables we harvest make it all worthwhile.

– Greg Petrosky





OUR TEAM'S FORMER TEACHERS EXPLAIN HUNGER'S IMPACTS ON SCHOOLCHILDREN

We take great care and pride in feeding the littlest of our neighbors, our children. Here at Forgotten Harvest, we're extremely fortunate to have two former teachers on our team, Angela Jordan and Dawn Sketch. They both work in Client Services and are invaluable additions to our organization. They bring their deep love for children and community, and utilize their talents to serve Metro Detroiters. As educators, they know the importance of feeding children.

Simply put, hungry children cannot learn. **"If kids aren't eating...they're not happy and their needs aren't being met. They can't focus on learning. Food insecurity in Detroit, and everywhere, it's just so real. Our lines are full, but there are still so many kids who aren't getting what they need," said Angela.** This is why the work at Forgotten Harvest continues and why we strive to feed as many people as possible.

"When we at Forgotten Harvest go out into the community, we're not just feeding people, we're feeding their souls. We're not giving people a handout, we're giving people a hand up. It's not about charity; it's about making sure that all of us are okay," Angela finished.

As teachers, both Angela and Dawn worked in schools that had free and reduced meals for children. They recognized that without proper nutrition, children in their classroom would be falling asleep, disconnected, and unable to concentrate. When parents or caregivers don't have enough food to feed their children, they are left feeling anxious and full of despair. Unfortunately, this is a reality that many in our community know too well. But there's enough surplus food in this country to change that, and that's why Forgotten Harvest's rescue work is so vital.

Dawn said, "I've heard from people that it's so hard because you feel humbled to have to ask for help. Parents will feed their kids before they feed themselves. It can be hard to ask for help. It's hard for a lot of people."

Many families are just one emergency, unexpected car repair, or medical bill away from needing help from Forgotten Harvest. These things can happen to anyone, and Forgotten Harvest is here to help when it does.

We are so thankful to all our donors, food partners, pantry partners, and volunteers who make this work possible. Because even if it might sound a bit cheesy, it truly takes a community to feed a community, and you're making that possible.

Thank you!



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“Forgotten Harvest’s impact is far-reaching and deeply appreciated,” said Carla Blakely, Supportive Services Coordinator for Communities First, Inc., a nonprofit community development corporation and Forgotten Harvest Summer Lunch partner. In Detroit, they own 34 residential units that house many kids and families.

“Some don’t have consistent food, and know if they come here, they’ll get food from us. Some kids ask for extra or ask if they can take some for their brother or sister,” Carla said. The Forgotten Harvest Summer Lunch Program is a vital part of Communities First, Inc.’s ability to offer this extra help when needed.

Carla told us, **“Food certainly makes everyone feel better when it’s good and consistent.”**

Summer Lunch is part of our larger Healthy Food Healthy Kids program that couldn’t exist as it does without the help of our incredible sponsors. Forgotten Harvest is grateful to Rick Young Insurance Grateful Giving Foundation and Lear Corporation for their generous partnership that helps us feed Metro Detroit’s children.

FEDERAL FUNDING SHIFTS

We are living through a unique period in which the number and rate of policy and funding changes being implemented by President Trump and his Administration have been difficult to track. A number of Forgotten Harvest’s donors and volunteers have contacted us to ask how these changes are impacting our mission.

We can share that approximately 10% of Forgotten Harvest’s annual budget is dependent on federal or state funding. At the time of writing this, the federal government has cancelled about \$740,000 in our funding, resulting in the loss of 390,000 pounds of food. The cuts came as a surprise, mid-year, without prior notice and, while we regret the lost potential of being able to serve as many of our neighbors as originally planned, Forgotten Harvest can withstand this loss of funding with your help.

The full scope of future shifts in funding is still unknown. The most immediate threat is to our neighbors. Significant cuts to the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) and Medicaid are being considered as part of budget reconciliation legislation moving through Congress. We know that when family budgets get tight and healthcare expenses add up, people sacrifice their food first. Any cuts to SNAP and Medicaid will force our neighbors into even tougher spending decisions, and there will be a higher demand for Forgotten Harvest’s services.

Every day and to the best of our ability, Forgotten Harvest is committed to caring for the hundreds of thousands of people who rely on us and ensuring they have access to the food they need. As we anticipate having to provide more services with less federal funding, we are determined to tap into the Motor City GRIT to meet the increased need.

If you’re able, please consider making a donation at www.forgottenharvest.org/donate or by contacting Kim Kalmar at kkalmar@forgottenharvest.org or 248-864-7525 to help us cover new gaps in funding and sustain our neighbors who bear the brunt of negative impacts from these federal funding changes.



September is Hunger Action Month



September is Hunger Action Month, a national movement to raise awareness about hunger throughout America and the actions we can take to help those struggling with it. Here are a few ways to join Forgotten Harvest in action this Hunger Action Month that you can share with your friends and family:

VOLUNTEER: Forgotten Harvest has year-round volunteer opportunities that appeal to a range of interests and abilities. Join us at our Distribution Center, Mobile Markets, Harvest Heroes, Forgotten Harvest Farms, or a number of specialty volunteer events throughout the year!

DONATE: Every \$1 donated to Forgotten Harvest turns into 3 meals for the community. You can make a direct donation on our website forgottenharvest.org/donate, join a recurring giving program like Harvest Sustainers or Seed to Feed, give gifts of stock, and more!

DIY FUNDRAISE: Host a fundraiser for Forgotten Harvest! Yard sales, holiday parties, chili cook-offs, trivia nights, Facebook Fundraisers, collecting change—anything goes!

INVITE A REPRESENTATIVE: We'd love to present Forgotten Harvest to your workplace, civic or faith-based group, or school to discuss our organization and how you can fit into it.

ADVOCATE: Tell your friends, family, coworkers, and neighbors that you're supporting Forgotten Harvest! The more people who know about the widespread problem of food insecurity, the more people we have in the fight against it.

CONTACT US:

Mary Moore-Butler at
mmoorebutler@forgottenharvest.org or
248-268-7510 for more information about our volunteer opportunities.

Kim Kalmar at
kkalmar@forgottenharvest.org or
248-864-7525 for more information about the right donation method for you.

Sydney Johnson at
sjohnson@forgottenharvest.org or
248-268-7538 for more information about DIY fundraisers and Forgotten Harvest Representative visits.

WOMEN'S HARVEST LUNCH 2025

FORGOTTEN HARVEST

Women's
HARVEST LUNCH

10.23.25

Save the Date! Women's Harvest Lunch is back on Thursday, October 23, at the Royal Oak Farmer's Market. This is one of our favorite events of the year, and we can't wait to enjoy an afternoon of connection and a shared meal while we fight food insecurity in our community. Keep an eye out for ticket sales and sponsorship opportunities! We look forward to seeing you there!

15000 W. Eight Mile Rd. | Oak Park, MI 48237 | (248)967-1500 | www.forgottenharvest.org

We're very social! Join us on:

