



OZARKS Food Harvest

The Food Bank

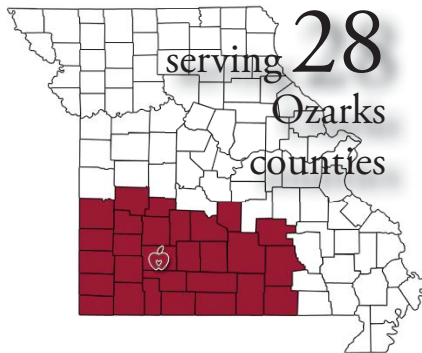
Harvest *time*



A member of

Your Community Food Bank Newsletter
Fall Edition, September 2011




Learn about The Food Bank's Network of 300 charities at ozarksfoodharvest.org



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71,780 southwest Missouri children face hunger 30 percent do not qualify for free/reduced meals or WIC

For 28.2 percent of area children, back-to-school meant more than a return to homework last month. It meant a return to regular meals.

Feeding America's new landmark study, *Map the Meal Gap: Child Food Insecurity 2011*, revealed 71,780 children in the 28 counties served by Ozarks Food Harvest are food insecure. Of those children, the study found that 30 percent do not qualify for free or reduced school meals or WIC, meaning this "meal gap" must rely on charitable food assistance.

“They are at risk of hunger in the most important developmental stage of their lives. And we've got to change that.”

Bart Brown, President/CEO

“The bottom line is this is our most vulnerable population,” OFH President/CEO Bart Brown said. “It is our most at-risk population. They are at risk of hunger in the most important developmental stage of their lives. And we've got to change that.”

During Ozarks Food Harvest's first visit of the school year to an Ozark County elementary school, food bank staff learned of a little boy who failed the fifth grade because he didn't think he would benefit from the *Weekend Backpack Program* in sixth grade. Teachers said he felt the need to fail in order to keep receiving food over the weekends.

Another child who receives a *Weekend Backpack Program* bag was found living in a cemetery, and has since been placed in a home.

But hunger isn't typically so visible across southwest Missouri according to Brown.

“Hunger is an invisible problem. It's all around you, yet you don't see it. It may be your neighbors or they may be sitting next to you at church. They're having problems knowing where their next meal is coming from.”

Ozarks Food Harvest's *Summer Food Program* wrapped up last month, serving more than 21,000 snacks and 49,000 hot meals to at-risk Ozarks children. Seventeen of OFH's *Kids Cafe* sites served as the summer feeding sites. *Kids Cafe* is Ozarks Food Harvest's after-school feeding program for children, implemented at nearly 30 southwest Missouri nonprofit locations.

“Whatever happens with the federal budget may impact the free and reduced lunch program, WIC and more, meaning even more children would fall into the 'meal gap,’” Brown said.

Millions of children across the nation rely on free or reduced-price meals at school, and nearly half of all SNAP participants are children. *Map the Meal Gap* revealed children are struggling with hunger in every county and congressional district in America.

“Advocacy is critical in the fight against hunger. We urge you to contact your elected representatives and play your role in hunger relief in Missouri.”

Child hunger is closer than you think. Tell your Members of Congress! Go to ozarksfoodharvest.org/advocacy.html to write your elected official directly or protect anti-hunger programs at hungeractioncenter.org.



30 Ways in 30 Days: Supporters find daily ways to make a difference Hunger Action Month concludes this month

Thank you Hunger Action Month special event sponsors!

Great Southern Bank
Harvest on Wheels (Greater Springfield Farmers' Market & Sertoma Summer Sizzle)
Price Cutter Bistro Market (Cider Days)
Talbots (Fashion Show for OFH)
Urban Districts Alliance (Cider Days)
Wickman's Garden Village Fall Festival



To see a listing of all Sept. events, including food drives, go to ozarksfoodharvest.org/events.html.

This family created Hope Notes at Cider Days.

Ozarks Food Harvest asked supporters to find daily ways to make a difference throughout September, Hunger Action Month, whether it was advocating and raising awareness, making donations, or giving of time.

Celebrity PSAs helped tell the real story of hunger and web visitors could share the videos with others to help advocate for those in need.

A *30 Ways in 30 Days* calendar can still be accessed online at ozarksfoodharvest.org/HAM11.html for ideas how to help throughout the year, because hunger isn't a seasonal problem.

It's not too early to plan your Hunger Action Month activities for next year. Learn



The newest Great Southern location in Springfield kicked off the Hunger Action Month food drive at its grand opening on Sept. 9. For every pound of food collected through Sept. 23, Great Southern matched \$1. The Bank also pledged \$30,000 to the Weekend Backpack Program.

more about hosting a food drive for Ozarks Food Harvest at ozarksfoodharvest.org/fooddrive.html.

Harvest Soup Cook-off returns for 2nd year

Area restaurants and members of the Greater Springfield Farmers' Market will participate in the second annual *Harvest Soup Cook-off* to benefit Ozarks Food Harvest on October 15 from 9 a.m. to 12 p.m. at the Battlefield Mall parking lot.

Oct. 15



The event is sponsored by Harvest on Wheels, a volunteer group that delivers fresh produce and other donations to OFH every Saturday after the Farmers' Market at Battlefield Mall.

There is no cost to sample the soups and stews, but attendees are asked to bring donations of canned soups, other non-perishable food items, paper products, fresh produce or cash.

Bistro Market (restaurant category) and Flintrock Bison Ranch (farmers' category) received first place last year. Go to ozarksfoodharvest.org to learn more.

McDonald's Cans for Coffee offers donors free coffee

Free coffee at McDonald's returns next month when you donate a canned food item for Ozarks Food Harvest!

Oct. 31- Nov. 13

Bring your donation to any of the region's McDonald's and receive one small McCafe® coffee of your choice, or hot chocolate, at no cost.



This is the fourth McDonald's *i'm lovin' it* Cans for Coffee food drive, collecting more than 50,000 pounds since 2008, not including corporate donations from Tyson Foods, Inc. who typically donates to the drive.



Last year, Tyson supported McDonald's Cans for Coffee by donating 32,000 pounds of chicken to The Food Bank.

Special thanks to Earp Distribution for donating the transportation to this annual campaign.

Check-out Hunger at your local grocer

Right here in southwest Missouri, nearly 200,000 people struggle with the daily disaster of hunger.

Nov. 15- Dec. 31

You can help "put hunger to rest" when you check-out hunger at your local grocer Nov. 15 through Dec. 31.

Look for signage at your supermarket during the upcoming holiday season and simply add a \$1 donation to your grocery bill. For every \$1 donated, \$10 worth of food distribution is provided to those in need.

Watch for PSAs on KY3 or listen to Clear Channel Radio to learn who's participating.



Students challenged to a "Food Fight"



Ozarks Food Harvest is challenging local elementary, middle and high schools to a Food Fight, October 17–21.

For one week, area schools will compete to collect the most pounds of food per student and the winning school will receive the traveling Food Fight trophy!

Is the school nearest you accepting the challenge? Participating schools will receive a Food Fight kit. Teachers can register by calling Tina at (417) 865-3411.



Park Board's Splash 'n Sizzle collects more than 12,000 lbs.

The Springfield–Greene County Park Board's annual Splash 'n Sizzle event collected 12,422 lbs. of food! Splash 'n Sizzle weekends began Memorial Weekend & went through Labor Day Weekend, offering pool admission for a canned food item, ending just in time—during Hunger Action Month. Thanks Park Board & summer swimmers for one of the largest drives at OFH!

United Way Day of Caring supports Ozarks Food Harvest

On Aug. 18, the City of Springfield employees on the 4th floor of Busch Municipal Building and local Commerce Bank employees volunteered at The Food Bank, sorting and repacking food donations.

The groups also created Hope Notes for the Weekend Backpack Program. Thank you Day of Caring 2011 volunteers!

Child food insecurity rates highest in rural counties served by OFH

Ozarks Food Harvest services 28 southwest Missouri counties—nearly 20,000 square miles—and 60 percent of our service area is rural.

Nearly 15 percent of our nation's rural households are food insecure, and it's ironic that so many are forced to access food pantries in the very same communities where our country's food is raised.

The new child food insecurity study featured on the cover of this newsletter found that 28.2 percent of children (71,780) in southwest Missouri face hunger, but in Shannon County—one of the most rural we serve—38.6 percent of children are food insecure.

Nearly 36 percent of Wright County children struggle with the issue of hunger, and Dallas and Laclede Counties are next in line with more than 31 percent.

Challenges facing rural areas differ from metro or urban areas in several significant ways. Unemployment and underemployment are greater; work-

support services—such as flexible and affordable child care or public transportation—are less available; education levels are often lower; the rural marketplace offers less access to communication and transportation networks and more.

One in four Ozarks children are at risk of hunger. With your help, we can supply more food to the children who are suffering in these rural counties. Simply designate your gift today for our children's feeding programs, and you can help make the upcoming holiday season more joyful for our area's children.

Giving online is fast and secure. Go to ozarksfoodharvest.org/money.html.

Denise Gibson
Development Director



Thank you food drive hosts & supporters

Special thanks to the following generous partners who collected more than 300 lbs. of food items & supplies since July.

- Dillon Stores (558 lbs & \$756.67)
- Graceway Baptist Church (343 lbs)
- Greater Sgf Board of Realtors (355 lbs & \$166.52)
- Guaranty Bank (338 lbs)
- Harvest on Wheels (7,122 lbs—ongoing)
- Hawaiian Sun Tanning Co. (1,913 lbs)
- Jack Henry & Associates (1,209 lbs)
- Kraft employees (3,809 lbs)
- Lucas Oil Speedway & KTTS (5,950 lbs)
- Northside Christian Church (511 lbs—ongoing)
- Olin Brass Corp. (376 lbs)
- Orchard Crest Baptist Church (687 lbs)
- Park Board's Splash 'n Sizzle (12,422 lbs)
- Sac River Cowboy Church (402 lbs)
- Timbercreek Cinema (1,802 lbs)
- Walmart #179 (1,502 lbs)
- Walmart #2221 (382 lbs)
- Wooten Company (1,862 lbs—ongoing)

Play a role in hunger relief & host a community food drive. Learn more, download the toolkit & register your event at ozarksfoodharvest.org/fooddrive.html.

Back-to-school volunteers make a big impact

Thank you area students for volunteering to sort & repack food for distribution this fall!



Drury University
25 freshmen volunteered Aug. 22, Drury's "Splash into Service Day"

Evangel University
Individual volunteers have given time weekly since the new school year

Missouri State University
25 students volunteered at a morning session and 15 at an afternoon session on Sept. 17, MSU's "Into the Streets" day

Ozarks Technical Community College
Several students have volunteered time so far

Group volunteer sessions are a fun way to earn community service hours for classes! Sign up to join the volunteer team at ozarksfoodharvest.org/volunteer.html.

Thank you for making Ozarks Food Harvest the best!

As many of you know, Ozarks Food Harvest was recently awarded the 2011 W. Curtis Strube Small Business of the Year Award by the Springfield Area Chamber of Commerce. In addition to recognizing the importance small businesses play in our local economy, the award is an important milestone for the nonprofit community. Your food bank is the first nonprofit to be awarded this honor, and this is significant because it recognizes that nonprofits must operate



exceptional businesses to inspire trust and confidence from supporters.

We simply could not achieve this level of excellence without your support. This honor celebrates our community's legacy of generosity and dedication to helping those in need. We are proud to share this award with everyone who has donated one dollar, one can of food or one hour of volunteer time to help us provide food—and hope—to the hungry.

Because of your support, we are exceeding the goals outlined in our *Feeding Hope* strategic initiatives. You've helped us increase food distribution by 70 percent over FY 2008, quadruple our senior feeding programs and reach 2,500 children each week through our *Feeding Children* initiative programs alone.

On top of that, you've allowed us to provide unprecedented

disaster relief to the people of Joplin. As of today, more than 100 semi truckloads—2.5 million pounds of product valued at \$4.1 million—have been dispatched to the Joplin community.

I'm not saying that this hasn't been a stretch for us—it has. But now we are going to need to stretch further.

Corporate food donations are flat, as companies strive to be ever more efficient in our sluggish economy. Lingering unemployment and long-term disaster relief are driving demand for our food to record numbers. More middle class families are being forced to turn to our member food pantries with each passing month. All of these forces create a "perfect storm" for us to navigate.

So we're asking you to stretch with us, and we know you will. You can be confident that your donations are stewarded by a charity with exceptional business practices that enable 96 cents of every dollar donated to go directly to food distribution and hunger relief programs—with only four cents used for administration expenses—earning us the highest possible rating from the leading charity rating organization in the country, Charity Navigator.

These are tough times, but we are blessed to have a tough family of partners and supporters. Thank you for stretching with us as we step up to meet the increasing need. You've made us the best by being the best.

Bart Brown
President/CEO



NAP tax credits can benefit your bottom line

Ozarks Food Harvest is the recipient of Neighborhood Assistance Program (NAP) tax credits from the State of Missouri, which are available to any individual, firm or corporation with business income in Missouri, that has also made a charitable donation to The Food Bank.



The amount of the credit equals 50 percent of the value of the contribution and represents payment that donors may then redeem when filing their state tax return. The actual "after tax" cost of a contribution qualifying for NAP credits can be just a few cents for each dollar donated. A donation of \$1,000 can actually cost a donor just \$250 once the state and federal tax credits have been applied. Learn more about NAP tax credits at ozarksfoodharvest.org/NAP.html.

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Don Browning, Transportation Associate
Adam Crawford, Volunteer Specialist
Chris Kahre, Warehouse Associate
Mike Doubledee, Warehouse Quality Control
Alexis Harford, Lead Volunteer Specialist
Eddie Hicks, Warehouse Associate
Steve Irwin, Transportation Associate
John Lopez, Warehouse Scheduler
Rebecca Pillote, Volunteer Specialist
Nicholas Rabon, Warehouse Associate
Roger Skelton, Warehouse Associate
Linda Smith, Inventory Coordinator
Adam Stoddard, Volunteer Specialist
Brian Wilson, Warehouse Associate
Steve Zahn, Volunteer Specialist

Thank You for your Donation

YES, I would like to help Ozarks Food Harvest Transform Hunger into Hope™

FullName(s) _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

E-mail _____

Phone number(s) _____

I would like my gift of:

\$25 \$35 \$50 \$100 Other \$ _____

to support:

- Feeding Children Purchased Food Program
- Feeding Families Joplin Long-term Relief
- Feeding Seniors Unrestricted

To give by credit card please provide:

Mastercard Visa Discover

Account# _____ Sec. Code _____ Exp. _____

Signature _____

Use this form to make your tax-deductible gift, or simply provide your information directly on the enclosed envelope and send to the P.O. Box listed below.

To donate even faster, scan the QR code at right with your smartphone & give securely online.



Transform Hunger into Hope™ at ozarksfoodharvest.org

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