

Your IMPACT

INSIDE

2019 40th Anniversary Potlatch Newsletter

FOOD BANK
of ALASKA



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YOU

Help Alaskan Children and Communities to Thrive



Photos: Left. Your support helps Kotlik kids feel secure about having lunch during school vacation. Right. Louise Okitkun volunteers to load bags with meals and snacks for Kotlik children to have over the weekend.

What impact does your support have for kids in the village of Kotlik in southwestern Alaska?

"It's immeasurable," says Emily Poole, a teacher at Kotlik School who coordinates programs with Food Bank of Alaska.

Your impact is also visible – a visiting elder noticed that Kotlik children seemed happier and more at ease and asked how he could replicate this in his own village. Says Emily, "The community feels more stable because children are secure that they will have enough to eat – the food will be there tomorrow."

Food Bank of Alaska has sponsored a federal USDA Summer Food Service Program in Kotlik for more than 10 years to replace the lunches children go without during summer vacation. With your support, the program is going full swing again this year.

And there's a new backpack program making it possible for 100 Kotlik kids to take home four meals and two snacks every Friday. "It's amazing what we can do with Food Bank of Alaska as a partner," says Emily. With help from an Enterprise Rent-A-Car Foundation grant through Feeding America, Food Bank of Alaska sends staples such as canned soup, chili, and peanut butter. Village residents jump in to help load the backpacks.

During the school year Food Bank of Alaska, with help from Hunger Is, a Safeway Carrs program, also provides breakfast snacks to Kotlik, so children who come to school without breakfast aren't at a deficit trying to learn. Teachers hand out healthy snacks to students who arrive hungry, so the kids can focus on the lesson right away.

Emily's joy about spending her summer feeding kids is obvious. She is motivated by seeing them happy and healthy and enjoys building relationships with them outside the classroom. She loves the variety that teaching in a small school provides. She has taught many subjects from math and social studies to coding and a class called Educators Rising to encourage young people to become teachers. Next school year she looks forward to teaching robotics.

OUR MISSION

Food Bank of Alaska is dedicated to eliminating hunger in Alaska by obtaining and providing food to partner agencies feeding hungry people and through anti-hunger leadership. We believe that no one deserves to be hungry.

A better way to do things

What did the founding of Food Bank of Alaska in 1979 mean for grocery stores like Carrs?

Reino Bellio, General Manager of Carrs Safeway Alaska, says it streamlined logistics, so stores had a more efficient and dependable way to donate food. They no longer had to wonder who would show up requesting food and when. Food got to people who needed it more quickly, and less food ended up in the landfill.

But there was more to it than that. "As a community grocery store, it's important for us to do our part," says Reino. Fighting hunger is one of the most important ways Carrs Safeway contributes each year – donating surplus food daily and sponsoring the Hunger Bag food drive every holiday season.

Reino also participates as a member of Food Bank of Alaska's Board of Directors. "I volunteer because feeding people in need is very important for the community. The more people who are involved, the more we can make a difference across the state," he says.

Photo: Reino Bellio is General Manager of Carrs Safeway Alaska.



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Why FOOD BANK OF ALASKA?



FISH volunteer Raissa D'Antonio checks out which produce she wants during one of FISH's recent "shopping" appointments at Food Bank of Alaska.

Neighbors came together to help neighbors

What difference does Food Bank of Alaska make for FISH, the all-volunteer emergency food delivery program?

"Without food from you, we'd run out of money pretty quickly," says Raissa D'Antonio, veteran volunteer for FISH. "Being a Food Bank of Alaska partner means we have a more consistent food supply, and FISH is much more stable financially." She

estimates that close to half the food they distribute comes through Food Bank of Alaska, which is also FISH's only source of fresh produce.

FISH was one of the community groups, along with Bean's Cafe and Salvation Army, that helped to start Food Bank of Alaska in August 1979. Raissa believes organizers were motivated because "we can help more people in need when we do it together – neighbors helping neighbors."

Anchorage FISH is one of 150 organizations Food Bank of Alaska partners with statewide. FISH received 3,749 pounds of food from the new food bank in 1979-80 and 87,505 this past year. FISH makes 3,000 home grocery deliveries, helping 14,000 people a year. The organization also receives food donations from the community and uses financial donations to buy food.

"Let's get the food to the people"

When Food Bank of Alaska was founded in 1979, food banking was a new concept. The first annual report explained, **"There are hungry people and there is surplus food – let's get the food to the people."**

**Nourishing
COMMUNITIES
FOR 40 YEARS!**

The idea of a food bank for Alaska was born in 1976 at a statewide conference on world hunger held in Anchorage. The organizers' example was St. Mary's Food Bank in Phoenix, the first in the country.



Food Bank of Alaska's first logo was an Alaskan food cache with the motto Cache and Share – Don't Waste Food. In 1979 Founding Board President Mary Jane Landstrom explained: "The food cache as used by Alaskans recognizes the need to store and care for food in the seasons of plenty to have for those times when food may be in short supply."

At the time churches and nonprofit groups trying to feed their neighbors often did not have enough food for the people needing it. Stores threw away food because they didn't know where to donate. Groups receiving food donations often didn't have enough refrigerator space to keep it from spoiling before they could distribute it.

Food Bank of Alaska was founded to handle these logistics, so that surplus food would be rescued systematically and then distributed, through our partner network, to fill plates for more of their neighbors in need.

Thanks to a committed community, Food Bank of Alaska distributed 47,470 pounds of food through 17 partners during our first full year in 1979-80. Forty years later, we distributed almost 7.5 million pounds of food, enough for 6.2 million meals, through almost 150 partner organizations and programs throughout the state.

Our founders and the community members who supported them knew that hunger holds Alaska back. They believed, as you do, that no Alaskan should go hungry. Thank you for making it possible to cache and share food so Alaska's families and communities can thrive.

1979-80 → 47,470 pounds of food through 17 partners



FOOD BANK of ALASKA → 2019
cache & share since 1979

7.5 million pounds of food (enough for 6.2 million meals) through almost 150 partner organizations and programs

40 years of feeding your neighbor

MILESTONES *of the difference you have made*



August 1979 Food Bank of Alaska is organized

After three years of meetings and a 3-day planning session, the first volunteer Board of Directors filed Articles of Incorporation creating Food Bank of Alaska.

Spring 1980 Food drives boost new organization

The community was as generous then as you are now and donated 1,600 pounds of food during the first food drive, held in schools and churches. The new organization depended heavily on food drives during the early years while building a network of food industry donors.

1980s Young organization grows quickly, thanks to food industry donations

Food Bank of Alaska was challenged by fast growth, struggling to acquire the storage, trucks, and staff needed to collect and distribute salvaged food they began to receive from the food industry. Early donors included Carrs Stores, Safeway stores, J.B. Gottstein's, the Base Commissary, Valley farmers, and others who continue to donate today.



1989 Food Bank of Alaska receives and distributes commodity food

from the US Department of Agriculture's TEFAP program. Shipping food from The Emergency Food Assistance Program is now one of the most important ways we serve rural communities, distributing almost 1.3 million pounds of commodities to 48 sites, including 33 rural communities, last year.



1983 Sealand donates a trailer with 18,000 pounds of corn from the Lower 48

Sealand (which became Horizon Lines and now Matson) was one of our first freight donors, along with TOTE Maritime, Peterkin and others who continue to donate now, making it possible for us to afford food from the Lower 48.

1984 Food Bank of Alaska joins Second Harvest National Food Bank Network

We continue to benefit from technical support and national partnerships as members of the national food bank network, now known as Feeding America.

As the only Feeding America food bank in Alaska, we are charged with serving the whole state.

We can only do this with the partnership of three regional food banks – Fairbanks Community Food Bank, Kenai Peninsula Food Bank, and Southeast Alaska Food Bank.



One rural TEFAP partner.

1979

1980

1989

47,470 pounds of food distributed the first year

More than 1 million pounds of food acquired in one year for the first time

40 years of feeding your neighbor

MILESTONES of the difference you have made

1994

Food Bank of Alaska moves into its current warehouse near Ship Creek in Anchorage

The organization began a \$1.3 million capital campaign, completed in 1999, to add an addition, install a 2,116-square-foot freezer, and retire debt on the building.



Photos: Top. Warehouse manager Rusty DuMont organizes commodity food in the freezer. Left. A Galena resident distributes frozen salmon sent by Food Bank of Alaska after a disastrous flood there in 2013. It was a partnership effort: SeaShare, a Washington state non-profit supported by the seafood industry, donated the fish; FEMA handled transportation; and the Salvation Army distributed in Galena.

A child in Dillingham appreciates having lunch during summer vacation when school is closed.

2001

Food Bank of Alaska becomes the sponsor for the Alaska Food Coalition

AFC is a statewide organization open to all with a stake in creating food security for Alaskans. The coalition is now a comprehensive, statewide advocacy and technical assistance organization with 120 members and a strong collective voice for hungry Alaskans.

2002

Food Bank of Alaska applies for new summer meal program for children

In 2019, with your help, we are sponsoring 46 summer meal sites for children, almost all in rural Alaska, providing 100,000 meals, through the US Department of Agriculture Summer Food Service Program. Your support, along with grants, also helps to fund customized programs to feed children, so communities can meet their unique needs – from backpack programs to breakfast food and school pantries.



1996

130,000 pounds of food help families displaced by the Miller's Reach Fire

Food Bank of Alaska responded to the devastating Miller's Reach fire near Big Lake and continues to respond when emergencies threaten community food supplies – poor salmon runs in the Yukon-Kuskokwim and Chignik areas, flooding in Galena, failure of walrus harvests in Savoonga, and more.



The senior box program depends on almost 100 volunteers every month to open pallets and fill boxes assembly-line style. We couldn't do it without you!

2003

New food box program helps seniors stay healthy and active

The senior food box program has grown, thanks to you. Now we distribute 32-pound boxes of food meant as a nutritional supplement to 2,200 seniors every month through the US Department of Agriculture Commodity Supplemental Food Program.

1994

15 millionth pound of food was distributed our 15th year

1999

3 million pounds of food distributed in one year

2003

40 millionth pound of food since founding in 1979

40 years of feeding your neighbor

MILESTONES *of the difference you have made*

2004

Waste Not, Want Not initiative provides choice to families

In its 25th Anniversary year, Food Bank of Alaska launched a program with food pantry partners to give clients the opportunity to choose the food they prefer rather than distributing a pre-packed selection. This approach prevents food waste and allows families the dignity of choice based on their family and cultural preferences.

The same year, Food Bank of Alaska helped churches and non-profits coordinate their holiday food basket efforts into **Anchorage Thanksgiving Blessing**, providing groceries to 1,700 families the first year. **Valley Blessing** began in 2010. In 2018 this remarkable collaborative, community-wide event – made possible by your donations and 1,000 volunteers – distributed groceries for a holiday meal to more than 9,000 families at 11 locations.



Volunteers prepare to hand out a turkey to each family at Mt. View Thanksgiving Blessing.



Anchorage East Rotarians volunteer for their 100th Mobile Food Pantry at the Fairview Recreation Center in October 2014. The club helped FBA start the program.

2006

New Mobile Food Pantry takes fresh food to people in need

The new program addressed two challenges at once – distributing donated healthy, fresh food quickly while it is still fresh and making it easier for families in need by taking food to Anchorage neighborhoods where they live. Now Food Bank of Alaska's Mobile Food Pantry meets volunteers at nine locations every month and distributes 1.4 million pounds annually, amounting to almost 1.2 million meals.

2008

Partnership with Alaska Native Tribal Health Consortium means more food for villages

Food Bank of Alaska knows logistics, and the Alaska Native Tribal Health Consortium knows Alaska's rural and remote communities. Together we now distribute staple foods to villages in lieu of SNAP (food stamps) through the federal Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations. In the first year, we shipped food to 13 villages – Akiak, Alakanuk, Chitina, Kotlik, Hydaburg, Kongignak, Nenana, Nightmute, Nunam Iqua, Old Harbor, Platinum, Seldovia, and Stebbins.

2010

FBA starts Food Stamp Outreach

This program, now known as SNAP Outreach, helps hungry Alaskans apply for SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program) and meet their food needs. In FY19 we helped 997 clients apply, generating an estimated 607,440 meals and pumping \$3,740,374 into the local economy. About 4,000 Alaskan veterans and 7,000 seniors receive SNAP, and 71% of participants are families with children.

Food Bank of Alaska SNAP Outreach Specialist Mel Buhr helps someone complete an application for SNAP (food stamp) benefits.



2006

5 million pounds of food distributed in one year, 50 millionth since 1979

40 years of feeding your neighbor

MILESTONES of the difference you have made

2014

Hunger in America – Alaska Report reveals the needs of our neighbors

The Aha! finding from this report, based on a sample of more than 600 food recipients statewide, was that 66% of families turning to Food Bank of Alaska's network of food pantries and meal programs for help expected to continue on a regular basis in the future in order to make ends meet. Lack of enough food for a healthy life is now a chronic problem for an estimated 34,000 Alaskan families. More than half of families must choose between buying groceries or paying for other essentials – rent, medicine, heat, or transportation.

Sixty percent of people needing food worked in the previous 12 months. Children were 32% of those receiving food, and 13% were seniors.



Volunteers from around the state meet with Lt. Governor Kevin Meyer about food policy issues at the 2019 Alaska Food Coalition Legislative Fly-In in Juneau.

2014

Feeding America recognizes Food Bank of Alaska in its Advocacy Hall of Fame

This accolade goes to Feeding America food banks that exceed specific advocacy benchmarks. We have maintained our status every year since.

2016

Food Bank of Alaska creates Public Engagement Department

By creating a new department the organization recognized the increasingly important role of advocacy, community engagement, and partnerships to feed Alaskans and reduce hunger. Acknowledging Food Bank of Alaska's commitment, Feeding America selects FBA to join its national Policy Engagement and Advocacy Advisory Committee.

2017

Strategic plan sets the course

Food Bank of Alaska Board of Directors and staff re-committed to our core belief that no one should go hungry and to these bold goals:

- Meet the food need statewide with more and healthier food
- Reduce hunger, working together with the whole community

2018

What comes next? A project to Nourish Alaska's Future

Food Bank of Alaska's Board of Directors and Building Committee determined that our current facility inhibits our ability to reach our goals. FBA began plans for the Nourish Alaska's Future project to close the meal gap for Alaska's children and grandchildren until everyone has access to enough for themselves and their families. You'll be hearing more about this project in 2020.



Volunteers help to keep tons of food out of the landfill by separating good produce from bad.

2019

Produce is now 1/3 of the donated food we distribute

The food we distribute is healthier, and we are making a big dent in food waste. In 2019, we reduced by half the amount of food that is no longer safe to distribute. We share this with Valley farmers for animal feed or compost. Less than 1% of all the food collected goes into the trash.

2015

100 millionth
pound of food
distributed

2017

Distributed more than
7 million pounds in
one year

2019

130 millionth pound
distributed, enough for 108
million meals



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Hunger Action Month

Help fight hunger & celebrate 40 years of support to feed Alaskans

Sept 6

1st Friday at the Anchorage Museum

Visit Food Bank of Alaska's exhibit and other interactive displays about ending hunger as well as the museum's *What Why How We Eat* exhibit.

Sept 7

Feeding Our Neighbors Food Drive

11:00 am – 2:00 pm
Drop off food at Arctic Chapel,
700 W. 46th Ave.,
or donate if
volunteers canvass
your neighborhood.

Sept 12

40th Anniversary open house hosted by the Anchorage Chamber of Commerce

4:30 – 6:30 pm
Food Bank of Alaska
RSVP if you plan to
attend, 222-3114,
jhurd@foodbankofalaska.org
Take a self-guided tour
through our warehouse.

Sept 13

United Way Day of Caring Food Drive

10:00 am - 4:00 pm
Organize a food drive at
your business, and drop
off food or financial
donations at Food Bank
of Alaska, on the 13th,
www.liveunitedanc.org/events.

Sept 23-28

Dine Out Against Hunger

Dine at participating restaurants and a portion of your bill goes to fight hunger in Alaska. Check foodbankofalaska.org in September for the restaurant list.



**FOOD BANK
of ALASKA**

cache & share
since 1979

Sept 27

Hunger in Alaska Anchorage Museum

6:00 – 8:00 pm
Join Food Bank of Alaska and community partners in a panel discussion of the experience of hunger from different perspectives: children, seniors, and individuals experiencing homelessness. Learn how you can address hunger in Alaska.

*Check foodbankofalaska.org August 20
for details and more events.*