



EST. 2015

FOODSHARE

feeding a need in our community.

IMPACT REPORT

2023

A Program of



**School of Medicine
Columbia**

UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH CAROLINA

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LETTER FROM OUR INTERIM EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR	01
FOODSHARE SC STAFF	02
OUR NEW BUILDING	03
FRESH FOOD BOX	04
VOLUNTEERS	05
SNAP ONLINE	06
NO COOK BOX	07
VEGGIE RX	08
CULINARY MEDICINE	09
STATE-WIDE EXPANSION & GROWTH	10
HUB HIGHLIGHTS	11
RICHLAND COUNTY & NEIGHBORSHARE	12
RICHLAND COUNTY PARTNER SITES	13
ADVOCACY	14
FINANCIAL IMPACT	15
PRESS COVERAGE	16
TESTIMONIALS	17
PROGRAM SPONSORS	18



LETTER FROM OUR INTERIM EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

This past year has been one of transition for FoodShare South Carolina. From a new home to new staff, we've had a busy year, all the while continuing our mission of **increasing access to healthy fresh produce for South Carolinians**. My name is Omme-Salma Rahemtullah and I am the new Interim Executive Director of FoodShare. After years of leading the organization, Beverly Wilson has taken a position at Prisma Health to direct their community partnerships. We thank her for her vision and dedication to the community. I am very excited and energized to be leading FoodShare as we enter a new phase in the organization's history. My vision for this role is to lead from a **community-informed perspective**, that is, via ideas, input, thoughts and accountability from our participants, volunteers, staff, partners, USC, funders and other stakeholders. This comes from an ethic of equity and the deep understanding that food insecurity is a matter of justice and addressing the root causes of poverty and inequality.

There have been a few changes in our staff lineup since last year, and I am very excited to introduce you to our new network outreach coordinator Adrian Gonzalez, and our new Director of Culinary Medicine Kelly Duane. And the newest addition to our team, 201 Columbia Mall Blvd, Suite 109! We've moved in and have been packing our Fresh Food Boxes from our new warehouse, and will relaunch Community Cooking classes in the summer of 2024. **We invite you all to come check out our new space anytime, family is always welcome!**

In 2023 our statewide growth continued, as we welcomed **new hubs** in Berkeley, Chester and Anderson counties, as well as new **VeggieRx** clinics in Lee and Richland counties. We've had some exciting policy wins, including the continued funding of the **Healthy Bucks** program.

In 2024 we look forward to continuing our partnership work towards a more equitable food system with our state and national partners, offering an exciting line-up of community cooking classes, increasing the number of Fresh Food Boxes, increasing the impact of VeggieRx across the state, welcoming more hubs into the network and providing all our hubs with the capacity to grow and thrive. Here's to a bright future and food justice for all!

Omme



FoodShare SC Staff

FoodShare's office in Columbia, SC houses staff that support the state-wide network and those directly responsible for the Richland County hub.



Adrian González
Network Outreach
Coordinator



Annette Duncan
Business Assistant



Gabriel Wilhelm
Network Outreach
Coordinator



Gordon Schell
Director of Marketing
and Digital Strategies



Jessica Burnham
Hub Manager, Richland
County



John Cumper
NeighborShare Program
Coordinator



Kelly Duane
Director of Culinary
Medicine



Kim Hollins
Veggie Rx Program
Manager



Lilly Allen
Hub Manager, Richland
County



Melissa Lewie
Business Director



**Omme-Salma
Rahemtullah**
Interim Executive
Director

Our New Building

A highlight of 2023 was the move to our new facility, located in Northeast Columbia.

Thanks to a generous lease option from **The Meeting Place Church**, we have renovated a former household appliance/electronic store to serve as FoodShare South Carolina's offices, and Richland County's packing and distribution hub.

The crowning jewel of the space, however, is our **Culinary Medicine Teaching Kitchen**. The kitchen will be used to teach Community Cooking classes, in addition to teaching courses to University of South Carolina Columbia School of Medicine students.

BUILDING HIGHLIGHTS

- **17,134** Total Square Feet
- **6,000** Square Foot Warehouse with Loading Dock
- **6,000** Square Foot Teaching Kitchen with **18** Cooking Stations
- **10** Staff Offices
- **1** Classroom
- **1** Conference Room
- **1** Walk-In Cooler





FOODSHARE fresh food box

it's more than just a box of food.

Many communities in South Carolina do not have access or financial resources to eat healthy on a daily basis. Barriers include where people live, age, income, and whether reliable transportation exists. **Without healthy options, health risks increase.** Research shows the top three chronic diseases can be prevented and managed through changes in nutrition. Bringing fresh produce into our communities is a form of food equity and a primary tenant of our mission.

OUR STATE-WIDE IMPACT IN 2023

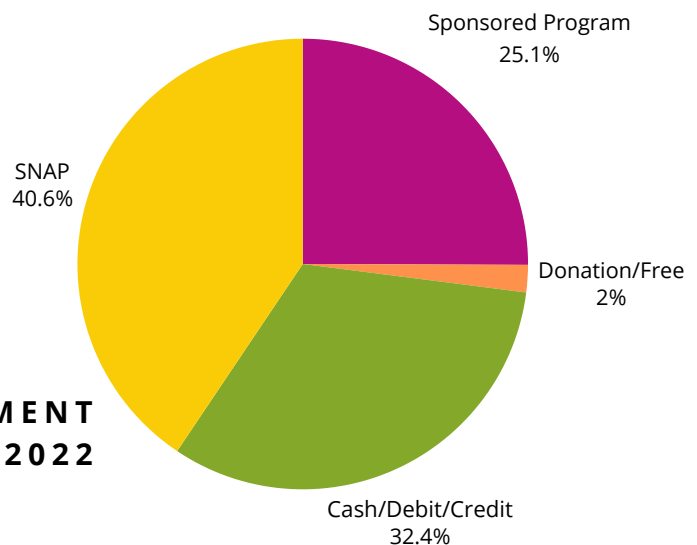
89,003 boxes

11,659 participants



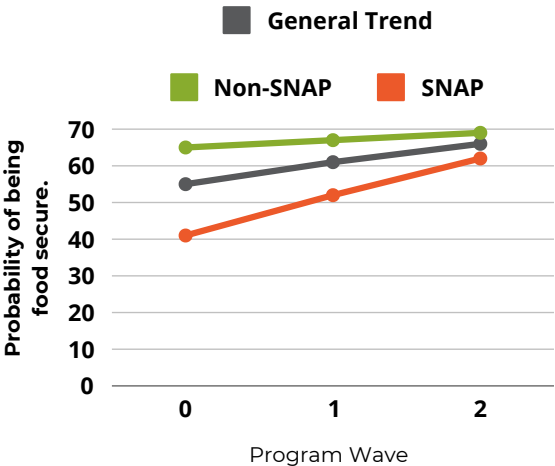
FoodShare's mission is to **improve the well-being of South Carolinians** by **increasing access** to fresh, affordable produce and providing quality cooking skills education. We **connect families** and communities to **fresh fruits and vegetables** through the use of our **Fresh Food Box**.

The Fresh Food Box is filled with 9-11 varieties of **top quality** fruits and vegetables. Unique recipes, tips and nutrition notes are included in every box to provide the encouragement, knowledge and skills to prepare healthy, tasty meals.

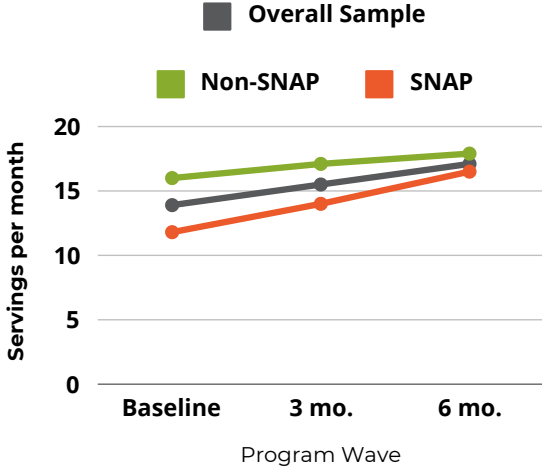


FRESH FOOD BOX PAYMENT METHODS IN 2022

Fresh Food Box Impact From SNAP-Ed Research



SNAP participants reported an almost 20% increase in their food security rates via their Fresh Food Box use



SNAP participants increased monthly servings of green vegetables from ~12 to 17.

Volunteers

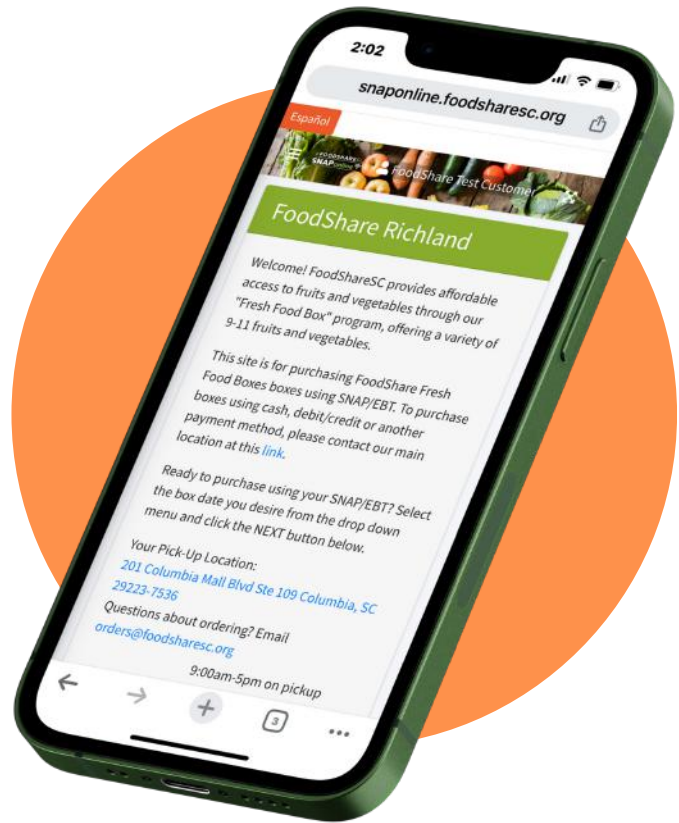
In 2023, across our twenty county-based hubs, FoodShare South Carolina packed and distributed **over 89,000 Fresh Food Boxes** to community members facing food insecurity. The only way we are able to get this job done is to rely on the generous support of a **strong volunteer force**. In 2023, volunteers contributed **2000 hours** to FoodShare across the state. We thank each one of them for supporting their communities.



SNAPonline: Increasing Access

2023 brought us a great step forward to increasing access to fresh fruits and vegetables for residents of South Carolina.

In July, the USDA approved our application to be an Internet Retailer for our Fresh Food Box program. After several months of online platform development and testing we launched **SNAPonline** on Dec. 1 at our Richland/Lexington County Hub. This has provided a great opportunity for us to better serve working families and those with limited transportation. We ended 2023 with several additional county hub partners in different stages of the approval process and we look forward to launching SNAPonline in all FoodShare counties in 2024.



FOODSHARESC

SNAPonline 

Fresh Food Boxes
with your SNAP/EBT.  



We constantly evaluate our programs and seek additional ways to address the challenges our various communities face. In 2022 the **Columbia Food Policy Committee** applied for and received a grant from the **Sisters of Charity Foundation of South Carolina** to pilot the FoodShare No Cook Box to address college student food insecurity. The No Cook Box includes produce that does not require any cooking before eating and provides for an easy healthy snack or meal.

Since the launch of the No Cook Box, with guidance and support from the **College Food Insecurity Subcommittee** of the **Columbia Food Policy Committee** we have implemented the program offering at **Allen University, Benedict College, Columbia College, and the University of South Carolina Columbia** campuses.

As the program unfolded, we found that many others in our community sought out this option. Whether it be seniors with limited ability to cook for themselves or others who were looking for healthier “snack” options, the No Cook Box has found a place in households and college living quarters in substantial numbers.

2023 NO COOK BOX DISTRIBUTION

3034 Boxes Distributed
35,650 Pounds of Produce





VeggieRx is a **fruit and vegetable prescription program** designed to increase the intake of fresh produce for patients with diet-related diseases to improve health outcomes (reducing A1C, blood pressure and weight). Participating physicians prescribe patients fresh fruits and vegetables that they receive from FoodShare’s Fresh Food Box Program. The long-term goals are to **reduce food insecurity, increase positive health outcomes** and **decrease health care costs**.

Clinics

The VeggieRx program has ongoing partnerships with the **Good Shepherd Free Clinic-Laurens County, Family Health Center-Orangeburg County, Clemson Rural Health Walhalla-Oconee County** and **Affinity Health Center-York County**. In 2023, we added new clinic partnerships with the **Free Medical Clinic-Richland County** and **CareSouth Carolina-Lee County**.

Program Expansion

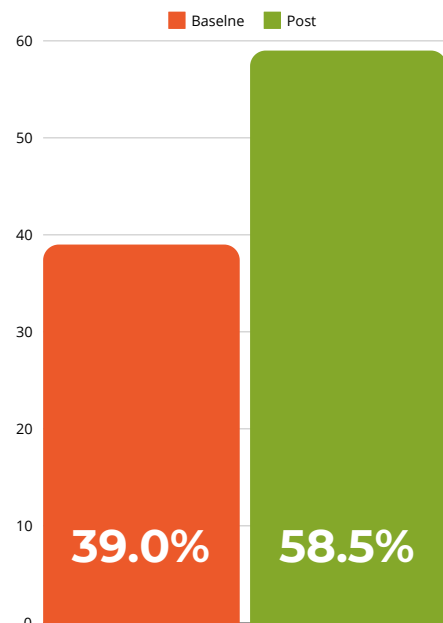
The goals in 2024 are to double the number of patients referred and add clinic partnerships in **Bamberg** and **Berkeley** Counties.

IN 2023:

6 clinics
481 patient referrals
4,163 boxes

*“The **VeggieRX** program has benefitted us in many ways. We were introduced to vegetables and fruits that we never knew of before [and it] gave us recipes that were amazing. And the most amazing part of the program was meeting Kim [Hollins, VeggieRx Program Manager], a truly blessed individual.”*

- Veggie Rx Program Participants



Veggie Rx Participants reported an increase in their self-reported good health after 6 months of the program.

From SNAP-Ed Research



Simple modifications to what we eat and how we live can make a significant impact on improving health outcomes.

The emerging field of culinary medicine creates a bridge between medical recommendations and culinary applications at home. At FoodShare, we address both the participants and the practitioners with our culinary medicine education program.

FoodShare's Culinary Medicine program offers an elective course to graduating medical students at the University of South Carolina's School of Medicine. We also offer Community Cooking classes and demonstrations to our participants and community partners.

CULINARY MEDICINE HIGHLIGHTS

January

Culinary Medicine class for Physician Assistant Program students

January-March

Culinary Medicine classes for fourth year medical students

August

First year medical student orientation & social determinants of health presentation

Presentation to South Carolina Department on Aging

October-November

Virtual classes for fourth year medical students



State-Wide Expansion

Our hub expansion continued in 2023, and we welcomed two new hubs to the FoodShare Network, bringing us to 20 hubs across the state.



FoodShare Berkeley, powered by **TriCounty United Way**, began with a soft launch in late-May and an official launch on June 28. Within a few months of their launch they received a 3-year commitment from **Nucor Corporation** for a total investment of \$225,000 to support the Fresh Food Box program and their efforts to address food access in Berkeley County.



In 2023, our partner operating FoodShare in Lancaster County notified us that they would be suspending the program. **Fort Lawn Community Center**, in Chester County, was a Partner Site for this hub and they were determined to keep FoodShare running for their community. They launched a hub in 2023 to serve Chester and to continue serving Lancaster. We are so grateful for their dedication.



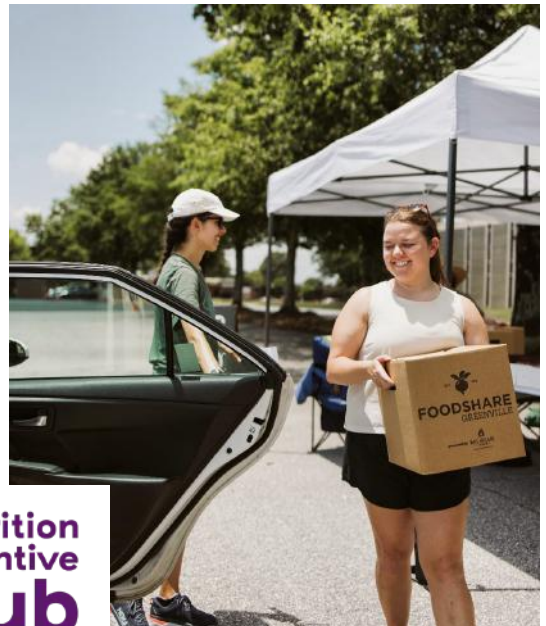
Hub Highlights



In June 2023, **CMD's Pantry**, the operator of FoodShare Williamsburg, was awarded a 3-year grant by the Hootie and the Blowfish Foundation totaling \$30,000. This was the second time a FoodShare hub received these funds, the first being FoodShare Bamberg in 2021.



In February 2023, **LiveWell Greenville** partnered with **Prisma Health** and FoodShare Greenville on a new produce prescription program funded by the USDA's National Institute for Food and Agriculture's Gus Schumacher Nutrition Incentive Program (GusNIP). Between 2023 and 2025, the FoodShare Rx program will provide approximately 400 families in Greenville County with up to 12 months of bi-weekly Fresh Food Boxes.



CREATED BY GUSNIP NTAE CENTER

FoodShare Richland County

In 2023, FoodShare Richland County distributed over **20,000 Fresh Food Boxes** to over **3,500 customers** in Richland and Lexington Counties. That's almost 400,000 pounds of affordable, fresh produce into households, helping our community eat more healthily. In addition to individuals purchasing boxes using SNAP, other sponsored programs are serving vulnerable individuals by providing boxes at no cost to the recipient. These programs include VeggieRx, grants, donations, and giveaways. Combining these various programs together, **67% of boxes are reaching our primary goal of serving marginalized communities.**



The **NeighborShare** program at the FoodShare Richland County Hub is a **community initiative** that aims to ensure access to fresh, affordable food for those who face difficulties in making it to one of our pickup locations. The program serves individuals in the greater Columbia area who need assistance in ordering their Fresh Food Boxes or having boxes delivered to them by volunteers who pick them up from the FoodShare Hub.

NeighborShare is a vital program that is a part of FoodShare's mission to make it easier for families in South Carolina to enjoy fresh fruits and vegetables on a regular basis.

NEIGHBORSHARE 2023 STATS

103 participants
22 volunteers
1,795 boxes
85% SNAP/EBT



Richland County Partner Sites

With requests for Fresh Food Boxes always increasing, having volunteers that will serve as official Partner Sites is crucial for expanding access to our program! Partner Sites can be businesses, non-profit organizations, or individuals. Partner sites pick up ordered boxes from the FoodShare Richland Hub and bring them back to their location for participants to pick up, increasing access points across Richland and Lexington Counties.

2023 Partner Sites

Ascension Lutheran Church
 Brookland-Cayce Medical Practice
 Carolina Apartments
 Christ Church of Columbia
 Christopher Towers
 Columbia College
 Eau Claire Internal Medicine
 Fellowship Baptist Church
 Finlay House
 FoodShareSC Richland County HUB
 Free Medical Clinic
 I. DeQuincey Newman United Methodist Church
 Inspire By Liberty Sandhill
 Jerusalem Baptist Church
 Jones Memorial AME Zion Church
 Lakeside Apartments
 Lexington Medical Center-Swansea
 Living Water Foundation
 Meadowlake Park
 Midlands Tech
 MoMs in Control | Joint MFM-Endocrine Clinic
 Mt. Zion Baptist Church - CAYCE
 Mt. Zion Baptist Church - Chapin
 MUSC Health Primary Care
 NorthStar Center of Hope
 PALSS
 PASOs
 PASOs Sumter
 Reid Chapel AME Church
 Richland County First Steps
 Ridgewood Missionary Baptist Church

Right Direction Church
 Sharing God's Love
 Sterling Sharpe Pediatric Center
 The Salvation Army
 USC College of Social Work
 USC Gamecock CommUnity Shop
 USC School of Law
 Waverly Womens Health Batesburg
 Waverly Womens Health Center
 Westminster Presbyterian Church
 WICO (Women in Control) Sumter Clinic
 Wiley Kennedy Family Life Center
 Woods Edge Apartments



Advocacy



FoodShare South Carolina’s Advocacy and Policy program aims to foreground food security and access with the understanding that they are a result of poverty and systemic inequality. We do this via public education and collaboration with participants, service providers, advocacy groups, anti-hunger and anti-poverty coalitions, and local/state/federal administrators and elected officials.

2023 Advocacy Highlights

The South Carolina Food Policy Committee advocated for DSS to change the rules on which vendors could be part of the Healthy Bucks program. Prior to the change, vendors included FoodShare hubs (under the FNS category of non-profit food buying coop), farmers stands and farmers markets. DSS conducted research and feasibility into including more vendor categories and in July changed the rules to include, amongst other vendor categories, small grocery stores, and convenience stores that meet certain produce availability requirements. This is a huge win for produce access across the state!

The FY23-24 State Budget included \$5 million in funding to continue the Healthy Bucks program! This is a big win for produce access, increasing the accessibility of fruits and vegetables for SNAP recipients across the state.

South Carolina was one of 15 states who unfortunately opted to not create the new Summer EBT program to replace P-EBT that provided school children with SNAP benefits for missed meals during the summer. In 2024 food nutrition advocates will continue to work to increase SNAP access in the summer, as well as for college students in the state. We will also be working on Farm Bill priorities that will help further strengthen the SNAP and GusNIP programs.

Financial Impact

Through our various programs, FoodShare South Carolina **makes a big impact on our local economy**, from supporting our local farmers, to the packaging and transportation industry, to grocery stores and local community organizations.

In 2023, FoodShare spent over \$1.5 million in the local economy:

- Produce: \$1,251,798
- Cardboard Boxes: \$140,253
- Transportation/Delivery, Printing, Office Expenses: \$136,737

That's a huge boost to our local economy!

At FoodShare South Carolina, **41% of our Fresh Food Boxes are purchased using SNAP**. These sales take advantage of Healthy Bucks, a South Carolina SNAP incentive program and anti-poverty initiative that triples the purchasing power of SNAP dollars when used to purchase fresh fruit and vegetables.

SNAP's primary goal is to reduce food insecurity, but the program is one of the fastest and most effective forms of economic stimulation, something we need now more than ever. SNAP quickly injects money into the economy because low-income individuals generally spend all their income on daily needs such as housing and transportation. Additionally, every new SNAP dollar spent increases the GDP by almost \$1.50 during a weak economy.*



Even more encouraging is the multiplier effect of Healthy Bucks in the local economy. A 2021 study of SNAP incentives across the country, like Healthy Bucks, found that the national average multiplier is 2.3, that means for every \$1 of Healthy Bucks spent, \$2.30 circulates in the local economy.*



*Sources:

<https://www.cbpp.org/research/food-assistance/the-case-for-boosting-snap-benefits-in-next-major-economic-response>

<https://www.spur.org/publications/research/2021-02-04/economic-contributions-expanding-healthy-food-incentives>

Press

As our program has grown and expanded, we have been fortunate to leverage coverage from various media outlets.

Our website contains links to the press coverage and is continually updated.

<https://foodsharesc.org/news>

Richland County
March 7, 2023

On Tuesday, Councilmembers Yvonne McBride, Paul Livingston, Jason Branham, Chakisse Newton and Cheryl English presented a proclamation recognizing FoodShare South Carolina and declaring March as National Nutrition Month to FoodShare staff.

Councilwoman McBride also presented a proclamation recognizing Richland County Clerk of Court Administrator James Dale Truitt upon his retirement after 42 years with the County.

Council also recognized Human Resources Director Dwight Hanna upon his retirement with a resolution honoring his 24 years of service with the County.



The Post and Courier
COLUMBIA

FoodShare recovers from COVID-19 pandemic, looks to expand programs

By Skylar Laird slaird@postandcourier.com
Sep 11, 2023
Volunteers for FoodShare South Carolina pack fresh fruit and vegetable boxes. File/Daniel Hans/Staff

FOX News Live Latest Videos Weather Traffic 2024 Eclipse Investigations Elections

Upstate non-profits and Prisma Health launch new foodshare program, feeding 440 families

Provided by Mill Village Ministries

NEW DETAILS
NEW FOOD SHARE PROGRAM

New food initiative hopes to fill gaps in access to food

The News
"Making a difference one meal at a time"

Pantry feeds hungry in Williamsburg County

BY MICHAEL GREENBERG GREENBERG@THENEWS.COM
JUL 6, 2023

Upstate FoodShare hubs, agencies to receive \$180K from Duke Energy

Staff | November 2, 2023

2022 Yam Jam in Greenville. Photo provided by Duke Energy

People are talking about us!



Braelyn Hanenkrott
Local Guide · 17 reviews · 1 photo
★★★★★ 3 weeks ago
Amazing staff! Friendly and caring individuals. Fruits and veggies are fresh and delicious.

Alex W
Local Guide · 76 reviews · 204 photos
★★★★★ 2 months ago
If you haven't experienced Foodshare yet, it's time you do it this year. For anyone who has SNAP benefits, and want to eat healthy. This is definitely the place you need to visit.



Denise Harrington
Local Guide · 48 reviews · 649 photos
★★★★★ 11 months ago
I love that they provide healthy foods at reasonable prices to help fight hunger. It allows me to feed my family in a healthy way. This service is awesome. I hope all can utilize it that need it. They even can deliver in a certain area. My family has enjoyed the wide variety of fruits and veggies we get each time.



"FoodShare has been a lifesaver for me as a participant with diabetes, allowing me to access affordable fruits and vegetables that have helped me better control my condition."

Olivette Ford, NeighborShare program participant

facebook

Tony & Shawna "Marriage On A Mission"
May 3, 2023 · 🌐
We're already enjoying Columbia, SC and got right to work! Foodshare South Carolina provides healthy fruits and vegetables to low income families and seniors. We loaded food boxes into cars and got to know the amazing Foodshare team. We'll be able to help here a few times this month. Such a fun day! 🥰💜
#godislove #godisgood #godsplan #rvliving #rvlife #travel #volunteer #helpsomeone #helpothers #marriagegoals #foodsharesc



We are so thankful!

2023 was filled with rewards and we could not have impacted the number of lives we did without the help and support of our partners. Thank you for believing in our mission.





FOODSHARE

feeding a need in our community.



@foodsharesc

A Program of



**School of Medicine
Columbia**

UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH CAROLINA

201 Columbia Mall Blvd., Suite 109
Columbia, SC 29223
803-851-4461
www.foodsharesc.org
info@foodsharesc.org
