

# Innovating for Impact:



## A Year of Growth & Giving

ANNUAL  
REPORT  
FY2024



**FOOD BANK**  
OF WESTERN MASSACHUSETTS

# *Dear Friends,*

**D**uring uncertain times, people need to be certain they can put food on the table. The Food Bank is certain of our mission, vision and values:

**Mission** — To feed our neighbors in need and lead the community to end hunger.

**Vision** — A Western Massachusetts where no one faces food insecurity and everyone has access to nutritious food

**Core value** — Everyone has a right to healthy food!

This annual report showcases our profound impact: every month, we provide direct food distribution to 122,000 individuals—with thousands more benefiting from our comprehensive, holistic food assistance programs. Beyond immediate relief, we empower individuals and communities by educating and mobilizing them to advocate for state and federal policies, programs, and funding that build lasting solutions to hunger and food insecurity. Ultimately, our vision is clear: to create a future where fewer and fewer people seek food assistance... until we end hunger.

Our impact relies, literally, on thousands of community members who support our 80+ employees: 190+ frontline member food pantries, meal sites, and shelters; our exceptional board of directors, dedicated volunteers, generous food and fund donors, strategic community partners, and committed state and federal legislators.

Like us, our member food pantries are also building community, and many are embracing “whole-person” approaches to food



security by addressing their visitors' physical (food), as well as emotional, and psychological needs through connections with other social service partners. When community members ask us if they should donate to the Food Bank or a food pantry in their community, our response is always emphatically... "both."

During periods of strong political and economic headwinds like the present, community spirit is more palpable than ever. Concerned people and businesses tend to invest more in basic-needs non-profits like the Food Bank closer to home. We hope you will consider investing now in the Food Bank.

We also hope you will take action to support our vision with your community of friends, neighbors, family and faith. The other day, we met with social justice committees at local senior living communities. We were so inspired by their resolve to volunteer at the Food Bank and local food pantries as well as to advocate jointly for food security.

Now, more than ever, your active engagement with us is crucial. Together, we end hunger!

Gratefully,



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Andrew Morehouse".

Andrew Morehouse  
Executive Director, Food Bank of Western Massachusetts



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Charlotte Boney MD".

Charlotte Boney, M.D.  
Board of Directors President



# Our Fiscal Year 2024 in Review...

# Expanding Food Access



**O**ur Food Assistance Navigation (FAN) team of three navigators made great strides in connecting individuals and families with vital resources. Through two key pathways—MassHealth’s Flexible Services program in partnership with area health providers and referrals from the 413Cares.org community platform—we provided food assistance to 1,100 households and linked them to additional wrap-around social services for long-term support.

## Flexible Services

Our contract with MassHealth’s Flexible Services program allowed the FAN team to offer critical resources to patients referred to us that directly addressed their food insecurity and promoted healthier living:

- **Food vouchers:** Over \$350,000 in food vouchers enabled people to purchase nutritious food at grocery stores, providing immediate relief.
- **Prepared meals:** We subcontracted our partners—WestMass Eldercare, Greater Springfield Senior Services, Lifepath, and Highland Valley Eldercare—to prepare and deliver 13,000 meals to individuals living with chronic illnesses and food insecurity.
- **Produce boxes:** To encourage participation in the federal SNAP

*“A referral from Holyoke Health Center led me to help a mother facing food insecurity. Initially, I provided her with a grocery card and connected her to local food resources, including pantries, meal sites, and a healthy eating class. Later, when she needed clothing and supplies for her five children, I used 413 Cares to link her with organizations offering children’s clothing. Having all this information in one place made the process much smoother.”*

– FOOD BANK NAVIGATOR

and Massachusetts Healthy Incentives Program (HIP), we sub-contracted Agric Organics and Just Roots—two area farms—to distribute 440 produce boxes to eligible people.

- **Kitchen essentials:** We invested \$79,000 in essential kitchen items for families to prepare healthier meals at home and foster long-term wellness.

## Building for the Future

Our partnership with Agric Organics continues to grow. We are actively planning the rollout of medically-tailored food boxes. This initiative, set to launch in 2025 as part of the Massachusetts Health-Related Social Needs program, will deliver specialized food boxes twice a month to patients with specific dietary needs.

## The Human Touch

While the numbers highlight the breadth of our reach, they only tell part of the story. Our Food Assistance Navigators are dedicated to providing personalized, empathetic support to individuals and families facing complex life challenges. Each case is unique, requiring creativity, patience, genuine care, and talking in person and over the phone for as long as necessary. The team's commitment ensures that every person they help feels seen, heard, and supported. In turn, a generous multi-year investment from Mass General Brigham has strengthened our Food Assistance Navigation team.

### FAN Team

*Back left to right:*  
Sary Torres &  
Damaris Arroyo.

*Front left to right:*  
Johanna Farrell &  
Alan Dallmann.







**W**e continually learn from our community partners, broadening our understanding of what's possible in pursuing food security. At the heart of our work lies the invaluable perspective and vision of individuals who have lived with food insecurity, which shapes our approach to addressing this critical issue.

Food insecurity stems from various factors, including misconceptions and disinformation. By listening to one another and sharing stories, we can dismantle the myths and stigma that often surround this issue.

Our newly formed Community Engagement Team (CET)—a dedicated group of 12 individuals who have lived with food insecurity—has begun shaping its goals with staff support. They will continue to refine their vision and chart a course for impactful change.

*"I was an unhoused youth in my life in Cambridge... I wanted to give back to people that have had hard lives like mine... I have the knowledge now and want to... help as much as possible with my lived experience."*

– CET MEMBER

*"As a new Massachusetts resident, I was unsure about joining a community issues group. Our diverse CET team, including those affected by food insecurity, offers valuable perspectives on food access in Western Mass. This journey has been incredible, bringing people together and deepening my understanding of my new home."*

– MARK OLIVARES, COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT  
COORDINATOR





# Volunteers

We welcomed 654 unique volunteers to the Food Bank. Among them, 449 were first-time volunteers who generously gave their time and energy to support our mission in the sorting room, at events, and on our Cultivating for Community regenerative farming and education initiative at our Food Bank Farm in Hadley. Our volunteers contributed 11,285 hours of hard work—the equivalent of about 1.5 years or a value of \$337,192. We couldn't achieve our goals without their dedication and support.



*I retired in January of last year and... found this when I Googled volunteering in Western Mass. I have been coming here for almost a year now. I like that I feel I am making a difference by giving back to the community with my time.*

— MARY-BETH BALLARD

# Food Bank Farms: Expanding Impact on Education & Hunger



**T**hree organic farmers leased farmland on our two Food Bank Farms in Hadley. In lieu of cash rent, they provided a total of 53,000 lbs. of specific organic vegetables we requested to distribute to member food pantries. Combined, they also donated an additional 172,000 lbs. of organic vegetables from their own farmland. We are grateful to all of them:

- **Gideon Porth**, Atlas Farm, (Food Bank Farmer of the Year for the 5th straight year)
- **Ben and Liz Perrault**, Mountain View Farm CSA
- **Joe Czajkowski**, Lakeside Organic of Hadley (purveyor of Food Bank Farm vegetables to Springfield Public School cafeterias)

Cultivating for Community (CFC) — our regenerative farming and education initiative on the Food Bank Farm in Hadley — experienced significant growth through innovation and collaboration. CFC:

- Harvested and donated 11,500 pounds of organic vegetables to four local food pantries.
- 470 volunteers contributed 1,514 hours of valuable time and effort
- Launched our emerging farmer incubator, welcoming our first apprentice and first farmer to lease land and access vital farm infrastructure support (irrigation, greenhouses, tools and supplies, mentoring)
- Expanded vegetable growing beds an additional half acre to 2.5 acres (about the area of a Manhattan city block) of minimal till



farming designed to protect soil biodiversity and improve harvest quality and yields

- Raised two 100-foot caterpillar tunnels extending the growing season in the late fall and early spring

## Food Bank Farm Advances Education Through School Engagement

CFC also connected with area schools to promote farm-to-school learning thanks to a USDA Farm-to-School grant. Partnering with Springfield and Chicopee Public Schools, teachers have developed an elementary school science curriculum integrating experiential learning on school garden and field trips to the Food Bank Farm. 300 students participated in 10 field trips, learning about minimal-till farming, riding the bicycle blender to make smoothies with kale grown on CFC, and going on nature walks in the farm's protected forest and wetlands.

Through these efforts, the Food Bank Farm continues to champion the power of local agriculture as a tool for food security, farm-to-school education, health, and community building.



## Food

**17.1 Million lbs. =  
14.3 Million meals**

**49%** Non-perishables

**24%** Fresh fruit & vegetables

**14%** Meat

**7%** Dairy

**6%** Other perishables



## Volunteers

**654**

Unique  
volunteers

**449**

First-time food  
sorting, event, and  
our Cultivating for  
Community farm  
volunteers



**11,285**

Total volunteer hours  
– a **\$337,192** value

### Nutrition Education

**152**  
events  
**4,745**  
participants



### SNAP Outreach & Enrollment

**152**  
outreach events  
**908**  
applications filed



## Western Ma Impact

Since 1982, the Food B  
to end hunger and cre

*Fiscal year: Oct. 1, 2*

## Individuals Ser



**Over 20 Local  
Farms donate  
to the Food  
Bank**

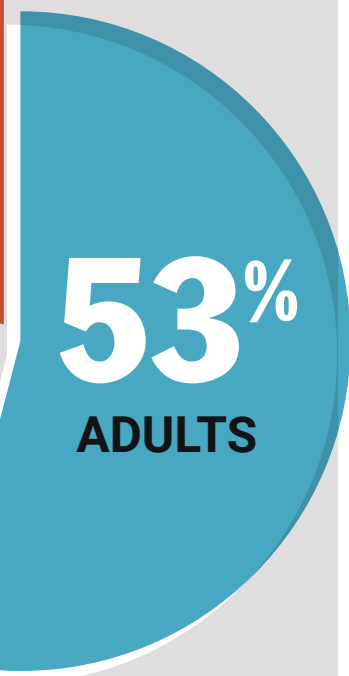


## Massachusetts t Data

Bank has been working  
ate food equity for all.

2023 - Sept. 30, 2024

## erved per Month

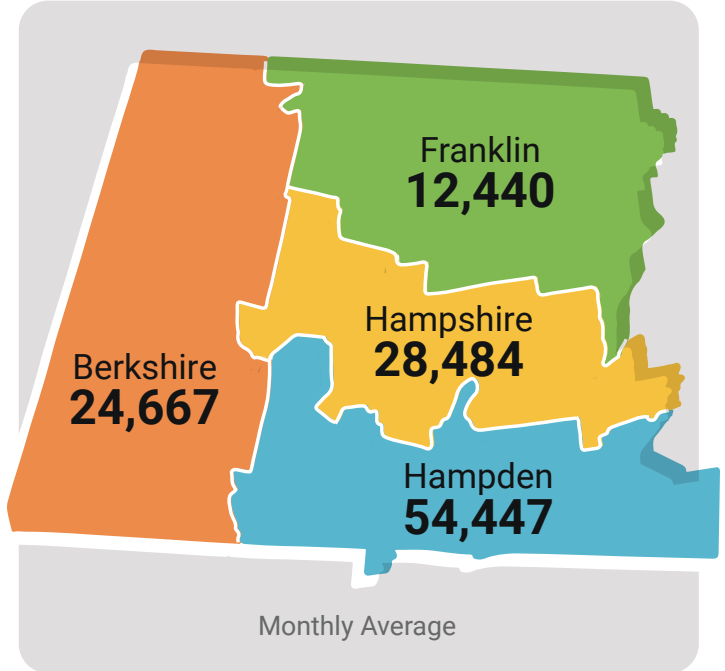


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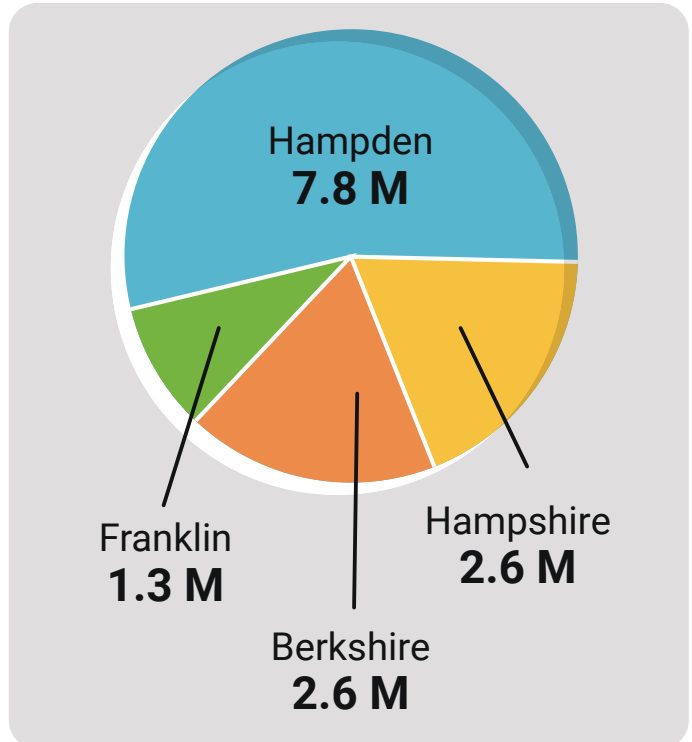
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## Individuals Served By County



## Meals Provided By County



## Our 280+ Western Mass Partners



- Food pantries
- Meal programs
- Non-emergency shelters
- Mobile Food Banks
- Brown Bag sites



# Adapting to Growth and Meeting Challenges: Reflections on Our New Center

**S**ince moving into our new food warehouse, resource, education, and advocacy center, warehouse operations have undergone significant transformation. Shirley DelRio, Director of Food Operations, noted, “With expanded space, we’ve experienced rapid growth, allowing us to increase the volume of food we receive and provide to our member food pantries, meal sites, and shelters.”

Growth comes with its challenges. One of the most pressing is keeping up with the increased demand from members of our region’s food assistance network. To address this, said DelRio, “We’ve been working to scale our staffing and food volume to match the needs of the communities we serve.”

Rising food and transportation costs have compounded the issue, making it harder to stretch purchasing dollars. Despite an increased MEFAP purchasing budget, the Food Bank now receives less food,





underscoring the importance of finding innovative short- and long-term solutions to ensure people who need nutritious food get it when and where they need it.

With the community's continued support, the Food Bank continues to adapt to changing circumstances to carry out our mission.



Above: Shirley DelRio, Director of Food Operations. *Right:* Claire Babineaux-Fontenot, CEO, Feeding America talking with staff during visit to see new facility.





## Expanding Our Reach

**T**hirty new members—many located in underserved areas of Berkshire County—were recruited, bringing our total membership to 190. The Food Bank awarded members nearly \$350,000 in start-up and capacity-building grants to purchase coolers, freezers, and more.

The Nutrition team, funded through a USDA grant, hosted 95 nutrition classes for 513 participants. Additionally, they reached 9,586 more individuals through 57 food samplings, recipe distributions, and newsletters, ensuring broader access to practical nutritional education across the region.

The SNAP team completed 908 SNAP applications and assisted 308 existing SNAP recipients to increase their benefits due to

*“I tried the salmon patty recipe from my Brown Bag Beat newsletter using the canned salmon I received, and it was absolutely delicious! I really find the recipes in the articles so helpful.”*

— BROWN BAG RECIPIENT





# Flipping the Switch on Solar



**L**ast December, the Food Bank “flipped the switch” to solar energy at our Chicopee center. With 1,269 solar panels installed by PV Squared on the rooftop and parking lot canopy, the system is designed to meet most of our energy needs—equivalent to powering 685 homes.

The project was made possible through a congressionally directed Community Funding Project grant from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, thanks to the support of Senators Elizabeth Warren and Edward Markey.

*“I never ate or liked chickpeas before your class, but now I’ve even bought a can just to try recreating your roasted chickpea recipe!”*

— NUTRITION CLASS PARTICIPANT

increased medical expenses. The Massachusetts Dept. of Transitional Assistance approved 62% of these applications, resulting in 552 households receiving combined monthly benefits of \$167,000 with a total annual economic impact of \$1.73 million.



Above: Abby Killian, Nutrition Coordinator.  
Left: Katie Langlois, Nutrition Coordinator

# Policy Initiatives



Our advocacy team raises awareness about hunger issues and collaborates with legislators to develop long-term policy solutions.

## Cliff Effect Pilot STATE

This statewide program offers financial and career coaching while compensating participants for benefit losses due to the “cliff effect” when they suddenly lose all benefits because their income increases. We successfully secured \$100,000 in state funding to administer the program, and will continue to support this critical initiative to help families achieve financial stability.

## Farm Bill FEDERAL

We advocated for more federal funding for SNAP benefits and USDA food to offset rising food costs that are increasing food insecurity across our region (and the country). We remain committed to protecting these programs to meet our community’s needs under the Trump Administration.

## Hunger-Free Campus Initiative STATE

In partnership with the Hunger-Free Campus Coalition, we secured \$500,000 in the state budget to support college students facing hunger. This funding provides grants to colleges for SNAP enrollment, food pantries, and student hunger surveys.

## Healthy Incentive Program STATE

We secured \$15M to reimburse SNAP recipients for fresh vegetables they purchased directly from local farmers. To address a funding shortfall in the Healthy Incentives Program (HIP), we are advocating for a \$10M supplemental budget to restore benefits for families and to support local farmers.

## Transportation Advocacy STATE

We’re advancing transportation initiatives through the Western Massachusetts Transportation Advocacy Network (WMTAN), including fare-free bus systems. With two new grants totaling \$170,000, we’re planning the third annual WMTAN Forum in April 2025 to discuss solutions.





## Voter Registration

From April through October, we engaged in voter registration efforts at Northampton Survival Center, The Care Center, CHP Berkshires, Loaves and Fishes Community Kitchen, and Amherst Survival Center. Our outreach included:



- Connecting with 100+ community members
- Hosting 22 registration events with the help of 10 volunteers
- Sharing voter information on registration, ballot questions, and deadlines

## FY2025 Policy Priorities

### FEDERAL

- **SNAP** — Increase access to the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program and protect it from funding cuts and other changes.
- **TEFAP** — Protect and increase funding for this vital source of food.
- **Farm Bill Reauthorization** — Protect all nutrition programs from funding cuts and harmful changes.

### STATE

- **MEFAP** — Funded at \$41.5M in FY25. Advocating for \$55.5M in FY26.
- **Hunger-Free Campus Initiative** — Funded at \$500,000 in FY25. Advocating for \$2M in FY26.
- **HIP** — Funded at \$15M in FY25. Advocating for an additional \$10M in FY25 and \$25M in FY26.
- **Transportation** — Regional Transit Authorities received \$204M in FY25. Advocating for \$263M in FY26.
- **Bridge to Prosperity Cliff Effect Pilot** — Funded at \$100,000 in FY25. Advocating for \$100,000 in FY26 (Governor zeroed out this line item).
- Support the establishment of a commission to study the strengths and sustainability of the state's food assistance network.

# FY2024 Financials

Fiscal Year: October 1, 2023  
- September 30, 2024

## Income

Food	\$23,775,167	71%
Individuals & Corporate Donations	\$3,832,263	11%
Private Grants	\$2,575,633	8%
Government Grants	\$1,653,688	5%
Member Programs	\$268,251	1%
Other	\$1,321,465	4%
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$33,426,467</b>	<b>100%</b>

## Expenses

Programs	\$30,559,933	88%
Development	\$2,136,485	6%
Administration*	\$1,847,483	5%
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$34,543,901</b>	<b>100%</b>

\* Includes depreciation = \$836,961 (non-cash expense)

## Statement of Financial Position

Current Assets	\$9,892,494
Fixed Assets (net)	\$27,183,428
Other Assets	\$22,521,508
<b>Total Assets</b>	<b>\$59,597,430</b>

Accounts Payable	\$233,247
Other Current Liabilities	\$835,405
Long-Term Liabilities	\$20,186,639
<b>Total Liabilities</b>	<b>\$21,255,291</b>

<b>Net Assets</b>	<b>\$38,342,139</b>
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<b>Total Liabilities and Net Assets</b>	<b>\$59,597,430</b>
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# Board of Directors

## Executive Committee

President: **Charlotte Boney, M.D.** | Baystate Health

1st Vice President: **Willette Johnson** | Springfield Public Schools (retired), Coalition of Experienced Black Educators

2nd Vice President: **Omar Irizarry** | Massachusetts Department of Mental Health

Treasurer: **William Harju** | USA Hauling & Recycling

Clerk: **Shannon Wilson** | Way Finders

## Board Members

**Olivia Aguilar** | Mount Holyoke College

**Ann Barker** | Quonquont Farm

**Suzanne Beck** | Northampton Chamber of Commerce (*retired*)

**Mary Feuer** | Community Health Programs

**Maureen James** | Skoler, Abbott & Presser, P.C.

**Joesiah González** | Home City Development, Inc.

**Xiaolei Hua** | PeoplesBank

**Andrea Leibson** | Franklin County Community Meals Program (*retired*)

**Johanna Maldonado** | Stop & Shop Supermarket

**Mary McGovern** | Country Bank

**George Newman** | Big Y World Class Market (*retired*)

**Amy Rome** | Planned Giving Consultant

**Bishop Bruce Shaw** | New Hope Pentecostal Church

**Stephen Speelman** | Price Chopper/Market32

**Willie Spradley, Jr.** | MassMutual (*retired*), Manage Your Health and Wealth, LLC

**Beth Young** | Big Y World Class Market



# VIEW OUR DONOR LIST ONLINE

*Thank you to all our  
donors who continue to  
support our mission.*



To ensure that we are efficiently investing resources, we've published our list of individual, corporate, and institutional donors on our website. Please visit

[foodbankwma.org/AR24](https://foodbankwma.org/AR24)



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