



STOCK THE SHELVES

SUMMER 2026



NORTHEAST IOWA
FOOD BANK

From the Director



Summer is one of the busiest times for the Food Bank. As demand for food assistance grows, donations often decline. With recent changes to SNAP benefits, many organizations providing food support are looking to us, and to our generous donor community, to help keep shelves stocked and families fed.

This summer, we are also navigating construction related to our Capacity Campaign, which has temporarily taken our cooler and freezer offline and limited our ability to accept and store perishable foods. We are grateful to Crystal Distribution and our rented refrigerated trailers for helping us meet this challenge in the short term. Please know we are looking at every way we can help meet the needs of people who are food insecure.

Despite these obstacles, our mission remains the same: providing food to those who need it. Your food and financial donations help us continue serving our community today while supporting improvements that will allow us to serve even more people in the future. There are so many people and organizations and donors working to make a difference, and for that we are grateful. It takes all of us to ensure food is available where it is needed.

It takes all of us working together to make a difference. Thank you for your patience, support, and partnership as we overcome these challenges and continue serving our community.

On behalf of those we serve, thank you.



Our Board

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IN CASE YOU MISSED IT



STAMP OUT HUNGER

Thank you to everyone who donated to this year's National Association of Letter Carriers' Stamp Out Hunger Food Drive. Donations collected on Saturday, May 9, throughout our 16-county service area provided more than 18,000 pounds of food that will help support children, families, and seniors across northeast Iowa. Thank you to the incredible letter carriers who collected donations throughout the day, helping make this the largest one-day food drive in the nation.

TEAM NEIFB

One of our initiatives at the Northeast Iowa Food Bank is Team NEIFB, our monthly giving program. Because we serve 16 counties across northeast Iowa, we invite community members to give \$16 each month to provide steady, ongoing support for people facing hunger. \$16 a month helps provide up to 40 meals. Join today and learn more at neifb.org.



HALFWAY TO OUR GOAL!

We are officially halfway to our goal of \$14 million for our Capacity Campaign! Thank you to everyone who has made a donation to expand and renovate the Northeast Iowa Food Bank to better serve our community. To stay up to date on our monthly Capacity Campaign update videos, follow us on social media and visit neifb.org/capacity to learn more!

COMING UP

PERSONAL CARE DRIVE

Mark your calendars for NEIFB's annual Personal Care Drive taking place from July 1 until August 2, 2026. This drive helps provide northeast Iowans with basic personal care items such as soap, conditioner, deodorant, feminine hygiene products, toothpaste, toothbrushes, etc. Learn more at neifb.org.



HUNGER ACTION MONTH

Hunger Action Month is quickly approaching! September is the official month dedicated to the fight against hunger with many events, fundraisers, and initiatives. Be on the lookout for key events such as Fall Sack Lunch, Checker's Stone Soul Picnic, and more. Don't forget to wear orange on September 29 for Hunger Action Day!

STAY UP TO DATE ON ALL
THINGS NEIFB!



GROWING GENEROSITY: THE SUCCESS OF GROW A ROW



At the Northeast Iowa Food Bank, our mission is to provide healthy, nutritious food to northeast Iowans every day, and that includes fresh produce. One source of that produce is NEIFB's on-site Community Garden, which harvested more than 9,400 pounds of produce in 2025 that was distributed to clients.

The Community Garden is only one piece of the story. Thanks to generous support from farmers, USDA programs, retail partners, and community members, the Food Bank received nearly 2 million pounds of fresh produce in 2025. More than 465,000 pounds of that produce came directly from local growers.

When construction began on our Capacity Campaign expansion and renovation project in the summer of 2025, our Community Garden was reduced by nearly 30%. While the loss of growing space presented a challenge, our community stepped up in an amazing way.

To help fill the gap, we launched Grow a Row, encouraging community members to dedicate an extra row, or even a single pot, to growing fresh produce for donation. The response exceeded all expectations.

Since Grow a Row launched in 2025, fresh produce donations to the Northeast Iowa Food Bank have increased by more than 150,000 pounds. What began as a simple idea became a powerful example of community members coming together to support one another.

With such incredible success, we are excited to bring Grow a Row back for 2026.

Getting involved is easy: plant an extra row, grow your produce as usual, harvest your crops, and donate them to the Northeast Iowa Food Bank. No matter the size of your garden, every contribution makes a difference.

Together, we can turn personal gardening into an act of giving and help ensure northeast Iowans have access to healthy, nutritious food.

A special thank you to our Master Gardeners for the countless hours they dedicate to caring for our Community Garden each season.

GROW  ROW

A LASTING LEGACY: LON KAMMEYER'S FINAL EMPTY BOWLS EVENT



Every year, Empty Bowls brings dedicated supporters who give generously to help fight hunger in their community, and this year was no exception. Empty Bowls 2026 marked the most successful year yet, raising more than \$44,000 through silent and live auctions and welcoming more than 420 attendees. Guests enjoyed a soup buffet while hearing from young leaders in the community and learning about the impact of their work.

The roots of Empty Bowls in the Cedar Valley date back to 2005, when members of the Black Hawk County Union Council, including UAW 838, attended an Empty Bowls event in Sioux City. Inspired by what they experienced, they returned home with the idea of creating a similar event in the Cedar Valley, starting in 2006. After organizing and growing the event for several years, leadership was eventually transitioned to the Northeast Iowa Food Bank.

A key part of Empty Bowls' success from the very beginning has been Lon Kammeyer. After serving on the Empty Bowls Committee for many years, Lon recently completed his final event with the organization. His dedication, leadership, and commitment have helped shape Empty Bowls into the impactful community tradition it is today.

Barbara Prather, Executive Director of the Northeast Iowa Food Bank, expressed her gratitude for Lon's years of service:

"Lon's commitment to Empty Bowls has been extraordinary. For over two decades, he has generously given his time, energy, and leadership to help make this event a success year after year. His passion for serving our community and northeast Iowans facing hunger has left a lasting impact on the Northeast Iowa Food Bank and the thousands of people who have benefited from the funds raised through Empty Bowls. We are so grateful for all he has done and wish him the very best as he retires from the committee. Lon has also volunteered at various other events, like the Letter Carrier Food Drive. All these make a difference in the lives of those who need help."

NOURISHING KIDS BEYOND THE CLASSROOM

NEIFB'S SUMMER FEEDING PROGRAM

When the school year ends, many children lose access to the free or reduced-price meals they rely on each day. That is where the Northeast Iowa Food Bank's Summer Feeding Program steps in.

One of the Food Bank's eight key programs, the Summer Feeding Program operates in partnership with the Iowa Department of Education through SUN Programs: USDA's Summer Nutrition Programs for Kids. The program helps ensure children throughout northeast Iowa continue to have access to healthy, nutritious meals while school is out for the summer.

During the summer of 2025, the Northeast Iowa Food Bank provided more than 50,000 meals to over 30,000 children across northeast Iowa. This summer, the program is operating at 16 sites across six counties within the Food Bank's service area.

Healthy, well-balanced meals play a critical role in a child's growth, development, and overall well-being. During the school year, children may receive support through the Northeast Iowa Food Bank's Kids Café, Backpack Program, and School Market Program. During the summer months, the Summer Feeding Program helps bridge that gap.

One site making a difference is in Arlington, where meals are distributed through the local library. Arlington Summer Feeding Site Supervisor, Amanda Burgin has been involved with the program for the past three years and sees firsthand how it supports local families.

"It is important to our community given the fact that we have to travel roughly half an hour to any grocery store," Burgin said.

Each day, children and their parents can pick up meals that include both breakfast and lunch. Beyond providing nourishment, the library serves as a hub for learning and connection. Throughout the summer, the library hosts a variety of programs and activities that encourage interaction, creativity, and hands-on learning for children.

The Arlington site served more than 1,904 meals to children in the community last summer, demonstrating the important role the program plays in addressing summer hunger in rural areas.

Burgin added, "Knowing we have several families in our community that utilize the lunch pickup will keep me volunteering."

As summer begins, the Northeast Iowa Food Bank remains committed to ensuring every child has access to nutritious meals, whether school is in session or not.

Families interested in finding a Summer Feeding Program location are encouraged to contact their local school district or the Northeast Iowa Food Bank for more information.



Honorariums & Memorials

Honorariums

Jack & Cletus Calder

By Ruth Calder

SSS George A Saul U.S.

Army

By Raymond & Kathleen
Needham

Shravanee & Soumya

Bhaltadak

By Nitin Bhaltadak

Memorials

Jim Waterbury

By High Field
By Elizabeth & Mark Mathis
By Ramesh & Madula Shah
By Jean Trainor
By Dana Deines
By Holly & Jeffrey Crandall
By Brooke Olson
By Barbara & James
Prather
By Everett & Vicki Rowland
By Thomas & Kathleen
Ferguson
By Dr. John & Bernadette
McCoy
By John & Margaret McCoy
By Ronald & Candace
Steele
By Richard & Nancy Seidler
By Kyle & Jennifer
Christiason
By Stacey Bentley
By Darren & Kelly Gauck
By Craig Blakeley

Kathy Braun

By Mary Ann Burk

Christi Jensen

By Larry & Carol Duffel
By Bruce & Jessie Sorensen
By Eugene Holmes
By Mark & Michelle Albert
By Charles L & Christi A
By R. Hanna
By Julie Book
By Bruce Jensen
By Brenda Fisher
By Randy & Debra Hickok
By Debra Glenn
By Audrey Petersen
By Stan Poe
By Standard Distribution Co.
By Linda Thode
By Justin Jensen
By Debra Landau
By Angela Ackerman
By Kay Shafer
By Suzanne Wolff

Glenn & Meredith Willig

By Denise Willig

Marsha Newton

By Mary Lou Hunt
By Kathy & Robb Bevis

Dave Andreasen

By David & Sue Feltman

Ron Dengler

By M.D. & Judith Scarbrough

Linda Koloc

By Lisa & Michael Koloc

Jeffery Glaw

By Norman & Janet Glaw

Anne G. Nass

By Lavonne Nass

Adeline Langland

By Cynthia DorrHarthan

Grace Johnson

By Roma & Larry Dietrichs

Kathleen Wernimont

By Patrick & Martha
Colwell
By Barbara & James
Prather
By Arlene & Gregg
Humble
By Barry & Kaye Haskins
By Thomas & Kathleen
Ferguson
By Sharon Zbornik
By Tucker & Kelly Young
By Elizabeth Ferguson

Marlys Hughes

By Barbara & James
Prather
By Dennis & Judy
Hughes

Diana Grover

By Ruth Calder

Marilyn Johnson

By Marilee Monroe

A. Langland

By Rita Hurd

James (Jim) Pyle

By James & Sandra
Borseth
By Norman Felland

Thomas Weissenfluh

By Dorothy & Wesley
Weissenfluh

Renabel Trainor

By Joyce Tebbe

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By Barry Timmerman

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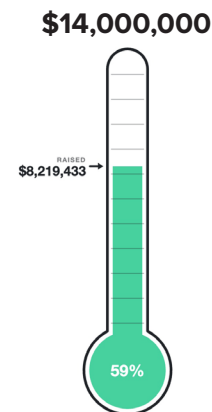
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