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# New strategies help food bank meet needs

A mobile pantry, work in schools, health care expand efforts to feed.

By Rick McCrabb  
Staff Writer

BUTLER COUNTY – While a Butler County-based food bank has seen an increase in the total number of people served this year compared to the same time last year, officials said the rise is partly due to a variety of strategies deployed to reach more people in poverty.

Shared Harvest Foodbank, which serves food pantries in five southwest counties, has seen a 12% hike in its clients so far in 2019, according to Executive Director Terry Perdue. He said the agency is reaching people who don't normally turn to the network of food pantries, soup kitchens, and shelters.

Founded in 1983, Shared Harvest Foodbank collects, warehouses, transports and distributes contributions of wholesome surplus food and other grocery style products to food pantries, soup kitchens, shelters and similar nonprofits in Butler, Warren, Preble, Darke and Miami counties which provide either hot meals or bags of groceries to people in need.

In March, Perdue said, Shared Harvest began distributing food through a mobile pantry that enables it to reach people in communities who weren't necessarily receiving help before. Additionally, it's partnering with non-traditional organizations such as healthcare facilities and schools to provide food to their patient and student populations.

"We know that through our network, we only serve a fragment of the people who are food insecure and eligible for our services," Perdue said.

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Shared Harvest Foodbank in Fairfield is seeing a 12% increase in the number of clients it's serving this year, compared to the same time last year. FILE PHOTO

## COMMUNITY FOOD RELIEF HISTORY: TOTAL DONATIONS

2004: \$14,634	2010: \$23,515	2016: \$12,729
2005: \$11,102	2011: \$20,238	2017: \$14,235
2006: \$18,763	2012: \$18,855	2018: \$10,922
2007: \$16,276	2013: \$16,654	
2008: \$21,936	2014: \$15,131	
2009: \$28,242	2015: \$13,580	

### HOW TO DONATE:

- Go to [www.journal-news.com/foodrelief](http://www.journal-news.com/foodrelief) to give online
- Send a check to Community Food Relief, 5901 Dixie Drive, Fairfield, OH 45014
- Look for the envelopes inserted in the Journal-News on Dec. 15, and Dec. 22.

## Food bank

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During the holiday season, local families experience “financial pressures” through higher heating costs, children being out of school that creates increased child-care and food costs and the desire to purchase Christmas gifts for their children that they can’t necessarily afford.

Thankfully, this also is the

time of year when people are in the “giving mood,” he said.

Once again, The Journal-News is working with the Foodbank through its Community Food Relief. Last year, nearly \$11,000 was raised to help Shared Harvest Foodbank feed hungry families and 88,000 meals were provided.

Since 2004, more than \$256,000 has been donated to the food relief, according

to Shared Harvest Foodbank financial records.

All contributions are distributed through a network of community and faith-based food pantries, shelters and community kitchens.

For every \$1 given, eight meals are provided for people living in the Shared Harvest Foodbank coverage area.

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