



News Release

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Southeast Missouri Food Bank Joins Feeding America's Hunger Action Month Campaign to Ensure Food Isn't an Impossible Choice for People Facing Hunger

*Hunger Action Month Campaign Aims to Inspire the Public to Get Involved
and Raise Awareness of Hunger in America*

SIKESTON, MO (Sept. 7, 2021) – For Hunger Action Month® this September, Southeast Missouri Food Bank will join Feeding America and other network member food banks to inspire people to take action and raise awareness of people facing hunger.

“Hunger is an everyday reality for too many people in southeast Missouri,” said Joey Keys, chief executive officer of Southeast Missouri Food Bank. “Imagine having to decide between putting food on the table or paying your electric bill. Unfortunately, people in our communities are faced with that and other tough choices every month. For Hunger Action Month, we encourage people to act – whether that’s by making a donation, wearing orange, volunteering or speaking out – to help make those choices easier for our neighbors facing hunger.”

Southeast Missouri Food Bank has planned several events to during Hunger Action Monday. They include:

- Encouraging area businesses to have their employees wear orange, the color of hunger awareness, on Sept. 17, which is Hunger Action Day. Take a photo of your staff wearing orange and post it on social media with the hashtags #semofoodbank and #hungeractionmonth. The food bank will select one group to receive a prize. A special 2021 Hunger Action Month frame also is available to add to a Facebook profile picture.
- A special virtual food drive to be held the entire month of September. Select what food you want to donate at <https://semofoodbank.fenly.org/drive/semo-food-bank-ham-vfd/>. Businesses or individuals can also create their own virtual food drive.
- Open volunteer days scheduled from 1 to 4 p.m. Sept. 16 and 9 a.m. to noon Sept. 22 at the food bank. Call Mary Thatch at 573-471-1818 or email mthatch@semofoodbank.org to preregister.
- A mobile food pantry distribution at 1 p.m. Sept. 17 at the food bank for families who need extra help.

SEMO Food Bank serves 70,000 individuals each month through a network of 140 partner agencies and other programs. The food bank’s 16-county service area has some of the highest rates of hunger in the state, with 1 in 5 families and 1 in 6 children not having enough to eat.

September marks the 14th year Feeding America, the nation's largest domestic hunger-relief organization with a nationwide network of 200 food banks, including SEMO Food Bank, and 60,000 partner food pantries and meal programs, has organized the annual call to action.

“For many, a daily meal is a simple choice of what to eat,” said Claire Babineaux-Fontenot, CEO of Feeding America. “For people facing hunger, a daily meal poses a very different type of choice. It's often an impossible decision between food or other crucial needs, such as electricity, childcare, or medicine. Nobody should be forced to make a choice to go hungry. With the public's support, we can come together to help people achieve long-term food security, so they no longer have to make such tough decisions.”

Hunger Action Month is a time to mobilize to end hunger. You can choose to donate or advocate. You can choose to volunteer or raise awareness. You can choose to help end hunger. Learn more about how you can take action by visiting www.semofoodbank.org/hunger-action-month/.

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About Feeding America

Feeding America® is the largest hunger-relief organization in the United States. Through a network of 200 food banks and 60,000 food pantries and meal programs, we provide meals to more than 40 million people each year. Feeding America also supports programs that prevent food waste and improve food security among the people we serve; educates the public about the problem of hunger; and advocates for legislation that protects people from going hungry. Visit www.feedingamerica.org, find us on [Facebook](#) or follow us on [Twitter](#).

About Southeast Missouri Food Bank

The mission of Southeast Missouri Food Bank is to end hunger and leverage the power of food to build healthy communities. The food bank provides food to 142 charitable and disaster relief programs in Southeast Missouri. These member agencies include food pantries, soup kitchens, domestic violence and homeless shelters. Southeast Missouri Food Bank also holds regular mobile food distributions and provides monthly boxes of food to 5,350 senior citizens and weekend backpacks of food during the school year to nearly 1,150 students in 32 school districts. The food bank's 16-county coverage area includes Bollinger, Butler, Cape Girardeau, Carter, Dunklin, Madison, Mississippi, New Madrid, Pemiscot, Perry, Reynolds, Ripley, Scott, Ste. Genevieve, Stoddard, and Wayne counties. Those interested in helping can do so by making a tax-deductible contribution, donating food, or scheduling a time to volunteer. Visit semofoodbank.org for more information.