



News Release

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SEMO FOOD BANK RECEIVES \$50,000 GRANT FOR SUMMER FEEDING PROGRAM IN FOUR COUNTIES

Sikeston, MO (May 12, 2020) – Southeast Missouri Food Bank was awarded a \$50,000 grant to increase the food provided to children participating in summer feeding programs in Dunklin, Mississippi, New Madrid and Pemiscot counties.

Feeding America awarded the grant, and funds were provided by Enterprise Rent-A-Car Foundation and *The New York Times* Neediest Cases Fund. The food bank is an affiliate of Feeding America, a nationwide network of more than 200 food banks that feed more than 46 million people through food pantries, soup kitchens, shelters, and other community-based agencies.

"This grant and partnership with existing summer feeding programs allow us to reach more struggling children and their families and help them with one of their most basic needs by providing food," said food bank Chief Executive Officer Joey Keys. "These donors are committed to helping our local community and being part of the solution to end childhood hunger, providing meals children and their families may have otherwise missed."

Counties in the program were selected based on USDA's rural criteria and rates of child hunger. One out of every four children in these counties is considered food insecure, meaning they live in homes that don't have access to enough healthy food. The rate of food insecurity among children in these counties is more than 24 percent, significantly higher than the national median of 19.1 percent.

Summer months are one of the most challenging times of the year for families with limited resources. They often struggle to provide the additional meals needed and pay childcare expenses.

Under the grant-funded program, SEMO Food Bank will hold A Better Childhood (ABC) Mobile food distributions in conjunction with the feeding programs at select Summer Food Service Program (SFSP) Sites. While SFSP sites reach children's immediate needs with a meal, ABC mobiles provide nutritious food for children to take home and share with their family. ABC food distributions provide 200 to 300 families with food in a safe and familiar location, such as schools, parks, community centers and churches.

Partners in the grant are Kennett School District, Opportunity Outreach Center in Charleston and Life Changers Ministries in Lilbourn. Each agency operates multiple summer feeding sites in their respective counties.

More information about SEMO Food Bank and its programs can be found online at semofoodbank.org. The USDA provides a list of summer feeding sites on its website at fns.usda.gov/sfsp/summer-food-service-program.

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About Enterprise Rent-A-Car Foundation

Started in 1982, the Enterprise Rent-A-Car Foundation was established to allow the company to give back to the communities where its partners and employees live and work. Thanks to Enterprise's generous \$15 million commitment over six years (2016-2021) as part of their Fill Your Tank program, Feeding America expects to be able to offer various member grant opportunities to help fight hunger among seniors and children. The FY20 rural summer feeding competitive grant is a component of the fourth year of that funding.

About New York Times Neediest Cases Fund

The New York Times Neediest Cases Fund has helped people in need by leveraging nearly \$300 million in generous donations from readers and viewers of *The New York Times*. Through its general endowment, the fund expanded its impact beyond New York for the first time when it established a partnership with Feeding America in 2017. This year, funds have been allocated to individuals and families living in rural communities struggling with hunger by connecting them to healthy food.

About Southeast Missouri Food Bank

Southeast Missouri Food Bank provides food to 140 member agencies including food pantries, soup kitchens, domestic violence and homeless shelters, senior citizen programs, children's programs, and non-profit rehabilitation facilities in Southeast Missouri. 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. The mission of Southeast Missouri Food Bank is to end hunger and leverage the power of food to build a healthy community. 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.