



# News Release

**For Immediate Release**

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## **FOOD BANK DISTRIBUTES 15.08 MILLION POUNDS OF FOOD IN FACE OF RISING FOOD, TRANSPORTATION COSTS**

Sikeston, MO (March 3, 2022) – Southeast Missouri Food Bank distributed 15.08 million pounds of food in 2021 while serving an average of 70,000 individuals each month.

Although serving fewer people than in 2020 during the peak of the COVID-19 pandemic, the food bank spent \$1.47 million dollars purchasing food, a 60 percent increase over 2020.

“One of the things we saw last year was more people needing help when faced with rising food and gas prices,” said Joey Keys, chief executive officer of the food bank. “The food bank was not immune to those costs, either. But with the support of our donors, we were able to continue providing food to people facing hunger in southeast Missouri.”

The food bank serves 16 counties in southeast Missouri, distributing food through a network of 140 partner agencies, mobile distributions and other programs such as Backpacks for Friday and senior commodity boxes.

Other highlights from 2021 include:

- Providing monthly boxes of food to 5,350 senior citizens
- Partnering with 31 school districts to provide weekend backpacks of food to 1,200 students during the 36-week school year.
- Distributing 2.89 million pounds of fresh produce donated in part by local farmers and growers.
- Holding 372 mobile food distributions, each providing 200 families with nutritious food
- Completing 984 SNAP applications to link people to an important resource to obtain food on a regular basis. Every \$1 of benefits provided in the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program generates \$1.70 in economic impact.

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**About Southeast Missouri Food Bank**

Southeast Missouri Food Bank provides food to 140 food pantries, soup kitchens, and shelters in 16 southeast Missouri counties. They include Bollinger, Butler, Cape Girardeau, Carter, Dunklin, Madison, Mississippi, New Madrid, Pemiscot, Perry, Reynolds, Ripley, Scott, Ste. Genevieve, Stoddard, and Wayne counties. The food bank also provides mobile food distributions, monthly boxes of food to eligible seniors and weekend backpacks of food to 1,200 in 31 school districts. The mission of Southeast Missouri Food Bank is to end hunger and leverage the power of food to build a healthy community. The food bank is affiliated with Feeding America, the nation's largest food bank network, and has received the highest possible rating from Charity Navigator, attesting to its adherence to best practices. Those interested in helping can do so by making a tax-deductible contribution, donating food, or volunteering. Visit [SemoFoodBank.org](http://SemoFoodBank.org) for more information.