



News Release

Heather Collier, 573-475-7573
hcollier@semofoodbank.org

Southeast Missouri Food Bank Part of Multi-State Group Receiving 'Living Our Values' Award from Feeding America

*Recognition Presented to Disaster-Ready Midwest Region Cohort
for Preparedness and Collaboration*

SIKESTON, Mo. (June 8, 2023) – Southeast Missouri Food Bank, a member of the Feeding America nationwide-network of food banks, pantries and meal programs, has received a “Living Our Values” award from the national organization.

The award was presented by Claire Babineaux-Fontenot, Feeding America’s CEO, at the Feeding America annual conference to 23 food banks and state associations that comprise the Disaster-Ready Midwest Region cohort for their efforts to better prepare food banks to respond to the needs of people and communities impacted by disasters.

“You are the ones who make sure we are ready when we’re called, and we sincerely appreciate every single one of you,” Babineaux-Fontenot said.

Each organization received a one-of-a-kind textile artwork symbolizing the strength of collaboration.

The Disaster-Ready Midwest Region cohort spans six states – Arkansas, Kansas, Iowa, Missouri, Nebraska and Oklahoma – and plans to expand to surrounding states over the next few years. The cohort was recognized as a model for collaboration and for demonstrating the importance of preparedness. As the cohort tests and learns from its disaster response efforts, Feeding America anticipates that other food banks and regions will implement similar models in their areas.

“It’s an honor to be recognized for our work and collaboration with other food banks,” said Joey Keys, chief executive officer of SEMO Food Bank. “Our staff recognizes the importance of disaster preparedness and is ready to respond when and where we are needed in southeast Missouri. Disaster preparedness was one of the driving factors in expanding with a second location last year.”

SEMO Food Bank is a first responder for food and water emergencies in its 16-county service area, providing everything from bottled water to communities under boil-water orders to emergency food distributions following a natural disaster.

Members of the Disaster-Ready Midwest Region cohort are:

- Arkansas Food Bank (Little Rock, AR)
- Food Bank of Northeast Arkansas (Jonesboro, AR)
- Northwest Arkansas Food Bank (Bethel Heights, AR)

- Harvest Regional Food Bank (Texarkana, AR)
- River Valley Regional Food Bank (Fort Smith, AR)
- Food Bank of Iowa (Des Moines, IA)
- HACAP Food Reservoir (Hiawatha, IA)
- Northeast Iowa Food Bank (Waterloo, IA)
- River Bend Food Bank (Davenport, IA)
- Food Bank of Eastern Oklahoma (Tulsa, OK)
- Regional Food Bank of Oklahoma (Oklahoma City, OK)
- Food Bank for the Heartland (Omaha, NE)
- Food Bank of Lincoln (Lincoln, NE)
- Kansas Food Bank (Wichita, KS)
- The Food Bank for Central and Northwest Missouri (Columbia, MO)
- Harvesters-The Community Food Network (Kansas City, MO)
- Ozarks Food Harvest (Springfield, MO)
- Second Harvest Community Food Bank (St. Joseph, MO)
- Southeast Missouri Food Bank (Sikeston, MO)
- St. Louis Area Food Bank (Bridgeton, MO)
- Arkansas Hunger Relief Alliance
- Feeding Missouri
- Iowa Food Bank Association

For more information about SEMO Food Bank's disaster relief efforts, visit semofoodbank.org.

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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 140 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 5,500 senior citizens and weekend backpacks of food during the school year to nearly 1,200 students in 30 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.

About Feeding America

Feeding America® is the largest hunger-relief organization in the United States. As a network of more than 200 food banks, 21 statewide food bank associations, and over 60,000 agency partners, including food pantries and meal programs, we helped provide 5.2 billion meals to tens of millions of people in need last year. Feeding America also supports programs that prevent food waste and improve food security among the people we serve; brings attention to the social and systemic barriers that contribute to food insecurity in our nation; and advocates for legislation that protects people from going hungry. Visit www.feedingamerica.org, find us on [Facebook](#) or follow us on [Twitter](#).