

MAY 2022

food for thought



Making a
Difference for
Tornado Survivors

A Time
for Hope



SECOND
HARVEST
FOOD BANK
FEEDING SOUTH LOUISIANA

A MINISTRY OF
ARCHDIOCESE OF
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AMERICA



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A Message From Natalie | 40 Years of Fighting Hunger



In 1982, Archbishop Philip Hannan, Bishop Roger Morin, and other leaders founded Second Harvest to address the great need they saw in our community. Now, as 2022 marks our fourth decade of service, the

footprint and impact of those humble beginnings have grown tremendously, thanks to generous donors like you.

Second Harvest got its start in a small, borrowed Jefferson Parish warehouse, and everything was loaned or donated: the telephone system, the furniture, one van, one truck, a fax machine, and a used forklift. We had no cooler or freezer, and in those early days could only distribute non-perishable foods. But within four years, Second Harvest was distributing more than 10,000 pounds of food a month to dozens of partners like food pantries and shelters.

Today, Second Harvest has two large facilities in Jefferson and Lafayette Parishes, and we now distribute more than 50 million pounds of food annually through 500+ partner organizations across 23 parishes. Every day, our fleet of more than 25 trucks and vans delivers food to every community in our service area. Staff and volunteers produce thousands of hot meals daily for children and

seniors in the 6,500 square foot Community Kitchen in New Orleans, and we're currently growing our commercial kitchen capacity in Lafayette and Lake Charles. And from those simple beginnings of canned goods, our team now handles millions of pounds of fresh produce yearly, thanks to 50,000 square feet of cold storage.

Your generous support is what makes all of this possible.

Second Harvest's growth is far from complete. Major renovations are nearing completion in our facilities to add much-needed space for operations, offices, and volunteer work areas. To reach our goal of 70 million meals a year, we are constantly looking for better ways to feed more people and to stretch every dollar further.

Our birthday wish for our 40th year is to provide nutritious meals to every person in need in South Louisiana, and we need your help to do it. Thanks to supporters like you, we are well on our way to that goal.

Natalie Jayroe
President & CEO

A Devastating Tornado Impacts Our Neighbors

As an F3 tornado bore down on St. Bernard Parish on March 22, Arabi resident Pamela S. said her family heard the warnings on their phones first, then seconds later the lights started flickering. "Suddenly, things just started flying everywhere, it went dark, and it was just so terrifying." Fortunately, Pamela and her family escaped with only a few scratches.

Shortly after the tornado lifted back into the sky, the Second Harvest disaster response team began coordinating with local emergency management officials about what could be done to help those in need. "The offers of support and well-wishes from around the state and the nation lifted spirits as the extent of the damage became apparent," said Second Harvest Food Sourcing Manager Emily Slazer.

"Thanks to the year-round support of so many people we're able to have disaster-relief supplies on hand to start distributing immediately," Slazer said. "In the first week after the tornado we delivered prepared meals and truckloads of water, food, and cleaning supplies to help families begin the process of clearing debris and starting over."

Second Harvest also partnered with the New Orleans Saints and Pelicans and WDSU to collect truckloads of cleaning supplies to help Arabi families. "When you lose everything you own, it's hard to know where to start. We're just glad we can take care of some of the initial expenses to help people get back on their feet."

Thank you for making our year-round disaster readiness possible so we can quickly respond to hurricanes, tornadoes, floods, freezes, and other emergencies.



Rural Hunger is Sometimes Hard to See in *South Louisiana*

Every week, dozens of families visit the Bogalusa Help Center, a community pantry located in rural Washington Parish near the Mississippi state line. Director Daniel Potter says it can be hard to get nutrition to people who need it most.

"They're very proud people, they don't want to seem like they're getting a handout. Once we can talk to them, we can make them understand that's a hand up instead."

The community around Bogalusa has seen their local economy decline over the last thirty years, with hundreds of high-paying jobs at the paper mill gradually being replaced by automation. "You used to be able to walk out of high school and have a great job to raise a family," Potter told us. "Those days are gone."

Potter says he's also seen a decline in the numbers of family farms dotting the landscape in Washington Parish. "It's very tough for people who spent their lives providing food for other people now getting help to get by. It's very expensive to try to run a farm and compete with the big boys, everything is so corporate now."

Despite the challenges, Potter says residents stay positive. "We are a very faithful people here in Washington Parish, God tells us to look out for each other. I see everyone here as my brother and sister, even if I've never met them and they live five miles from anyone else."



Thanks to you and other generous donors, families and seniors in rural communities across South Louisiana are getting the meals they need.

Miss Beverly Says Thank You!

Your Gifts Are Helping Seniors and Families Facing Hunger



True Vine Ministries in Lafayette is one of the hundreds of community partners supported with food and supplies from Second Harvest Food Bank. Program Coordinator Judy Francis says her organization has been a part of the Second Harvest network for seven years.

"It's been a wonderful relationship," she told us. **"Our church has helped people with food and clothing for a very long time, but it's gotten so much better since we joined with Second Harvest."**

Mrs. Francis says the majority of the people they help are over 60. "So many of them don't get food stamps, or if they do, it might just be twenty or thirty dollars. It's so hard for people on a fixed check to deal with prices right now. What little money they have buys less and less."

She also sees a lot of older folks raising grandkids and great-grandkids. "We had one lady who adopted a great-nephew,

and she's in her 70s. So, she's doing what she needs to do to make sure her family doesn't fall through the cracks, but it puts a burden on her. She loves that little boy and she puts everything into raising him."

One of True Vine's volunteers is 77-year-old Beverly Dugas, who also receives food from the church pantry. "This helps so much because after paying insurance and house bills there's just not much at the end of the month. Especially with food prices right now. And I'm slow, but I can still get around, so I like to help out here. It gets me out of the house," she told us with a smile.

"You'll find grandparents watching the kids while the parents are working, so the grandparents sometimes need the diapers and things like that too. Second Harvest helps us get a lot of items like that from the Walmart, Target, and places like that. Everyone at Second Harvest has been so wonderful to us," she said.

As the population ages, the number of seniors Second Harvest supports continues to grow. Thank you for making it possible to help provide food and groceries to our senior neighbors struggling with hunger.



Second Harvest Earns 4-Star Rating From Charity Navigator for 5th Consecutive Year

We have exciting news to share! Second Harvest was awarded our fifth consecutive 4-star rating by Charity Navigator, an independent auditor that ranks nonprofits in areas of financial transparency, stewardship of donations, and organizational stability. This is their highest possible score, showing we are accountable, transparent, and financially healthy.

Only 17% of the charities evaluated by Charity Navigator have received at least 5 consecutive 4-star ratings, meaning that Second Harvest Food Bank outperforms most other charities in America.

We could not have achieved this exceptional rating without you! Thank you for your financial support, volunteer time, and food donations. Your trust in Second Harvest means so much to the children, families, and seniors we serve every day.



Tomorrow's Harvest Society

Tomorrow's Harvest Society celebrates supporters who are committed to leading the fight against hunger in South Louisiana. When you join the Tomorrow's Harvest Society, you impact the future of Second Harvest by including us in your legacy giving plans. By thoughtfully arranging your gift now, you are ensuring a tomorrow that sees fewer neighbors with food insecurity.

Interested in making a planned gift to Second Harvest or learning more about your options? Contact Heather Sweeney at **504-729-2839** or **hsweeney@secondharvest.org**.

Feeling the Pinch: Inflation Impacts Second Harvest and the Families We Serve

Inflation and rising fuel and food prices are having a major impact on not just those we serve, but on Second Harvest as well. Your monetary donations are key to help fill these gaps.

For South Louisiana families on limited incomes, the rising cost of food leads to tough choices and they are turning to food pantries more often to make ends meet.

At Second Harvest, inflation is having the same impact. Most of the food we distribute is donated, but we do purchase food when we need specific items. To meet the increased needs, we're having to purchase more food than we ever have, and it's at a more expensive price. And that hits Second Harvest in the pocketbook just like it's doing to families.

Second Harvest Chief Operating Officer Elisha Darcey says it's been getting worse in the last two years, with no end in sight.

"Because of the supply-chain problems, we often face shortages and higher prices for everything it takes to keep our operations running across 23 parishes," Darcey said. "For instance, we have to wait weeks for truck repairs, meaning that fewer trucks are on the road at one time, which in turn means much more overtime for our drivers to get to everyone," she said.

Rising costs and supply chain disruptions will continue to have an impact for the foreseeable future. **Your financial support is helping to ease these burdens, both for our neighbors facing hunger and for Second Harvest.**



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To learn more or to make a donation to Second Harvest Food Bank visit no-hunger.org

