

SEPTEMBER 2020

food for thought



Second
Harvest is in
it for the
LONG HAUL



 **SECOND
HARVEST
FOOD BANK**
FEEDING SOUTH LOUISIANA

no-hunger.org

A message from Natalie

Fifteen years later, another test of our resilience.

In 2005, the Gulf Coast was slammed twice in one month. Katrina's flood waters inundated the New Orleans and brought widespread destruction. Then, just weeks later, Rita roared ashore in Southwest Louisiana.

Today, we face a very different disaster. Unlike a natural disaster, no one knows when this crisis will end. But, some things are very much the same, like the support of one another for each other.

Many times when South Louisiana has faced a "normal" disaster, we have benefited from the outpouring of support from around the country. Today, every American community is in the same boat, and the response by food banks like ours relies even more on local supporters like you.

From the beginning of this emergency in mid-March, the outpouring of support by our local community has been tremendous. From children holding lemonade sales to incredible donations by people like Drew and Brittany Brees, every dollar has been vital to be able to respond to this unprecedented crisis impacting Louisiana. And given the resurgence of cases, we know that we will be responding for months to come, until our community and economy are whole again.

For nearly four decades, preparing for the next disaster has been part of our core mission. Responding to epidemics

and pandemics is part of our year-to-year disaster plan, and for us a single child going hungry or an entire community affected by a pandemic is a disaster we will respond to to the best of our ability. So many times, through hurricanes, tornados, oil spills, recessions, downturns in the oil and gas industry, we have heard: "A year ago, I could not imagine that I would ever need the services of a food bank."



Louisiana residents are tough, and we will bounce back. We persevere and rebuild because we know what is truly not replaceable: the companionship, the relaxed good times, good humor and love we have in South Louisiana.

We will continue to do what we do because of what we hear so often: With your help, we will continue to work for the best community that fulfills the promise of all its people, while preparing for the worst, whether it is the next hurricane, a pandemic, or the everyday disaster of hunger in South Louisiana.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Natalie J".

Natalie Jayroe
President and CEO



A Community Kitchen for Acadiana

Getting prepared meals to Acadiana just got a little easier. Working with Catholic Charities of Acadiana and St. Joseph Diner, we now have a new kitchen to provide meals to people in need in Lafayette, Lake Charles, and the surrounding areas.

St. Joseph Diner has long been a partner of Second Harvest, providing meals to individuals and families experiencing homelessness and poverty in Acadiana. Thanks to the generous support of Drew and Brittany Brees, Second Harvest has made major upgrades to the kitchen, providing new equipment and staff to greatly expand the potential of this community asset.

Because of the COVID-19 pandemic, Second Harvest reached the capacity of the Community Kitchen in New Orleans, responding to an extraordinary need among children, families, and seniors. A kitchen in Lafayette will help us serve southwest Louisiana more effectively.

Second Harvest Director of Community Outreach Crystal Harris said, "Until now, we needed to bring in frozen prepared meals from New Orleans. Now, we will be able to provide thousands of hot meals each week to children, seniors, families, and the homeless."

Second Harvest, an affiliated ministry of the Archdiocese of New Orleans, worked closely with Catholic Charities of Acadiana in planning the new kitchen, according to Lafayette Bishop J. Douglas Deshotel. "Meeting the needs of our neighbors who are hungry, homeless, or lack proper clothing reflects the love that God has for each of us. Our acts of charity show others the face of God."

Archbishop Gregory Aymond echoed the importance of this new facility. "This project, particularly in the midst of the pandemic, is a sign of hope. Feeding the hungry is rooted in the Jewish Scriptures and in the command of Jesus, 'When I was hungry you gave me something to eat.' We are grateful for the generosity of Drew and Brittany Brees and others that will allow Second Harvest to partner with our sisters and brothers in the Diocese of Lafayette to care for those who hunger for food and for the care of others."



Second Harvest is in it for the Long Haul

Six months ago, Second Harvest mobilized to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic emergency. At the time, no one knew how long this crisis would last, but we now expect it to continue for many more months. Skyrocketing unemployment, shuttered businesses, school closures, and social distancing have caused an unprecedented need for meals and groceries, not just in our community, but across the country. Today, our staff and volunteers are still working hard to help the children, seniors, and families most impacted by the pandemic.

You have helped Second Harvest distribute twice the amount of food compared to the same period last year. Since March, Second Harvest has provided more than 26 million pounds of produce, meat, dairy, and non-perishable items to residents across our 23-parish service area. Thousands of our neighbors are asking for help from a food pantry for the first time, with record unemployment leaving families choosing between bills and food.

At Second Harvest, we are working harder than ever because of what we hear so often: "A year ago, I could not imagine that I would ever need the services of a food bank."

To put it simply, your monetary donations have made this possible. We are incredibly grateful for your support, and we are honored and humbled to be in a position to help our community during this historic time of need. We will ensure that your donations are used as efficiently and effectively to deliver food to as many people possible.

Louisiana is still being hit hard by the COVID-19 emergency. Our tourism, hospitality, and music industries will be slow to recover, and the unemployment rate is expected to be higher than normal through 2021. We are preparing to respond to an extraordinary level of need for many more months.

Your support is vital to helping so many of our neighbors in South Louisiana during this crisis. Every single donation will ensure our trucks continue to roll and deliver food to those who need it most. Every \$1 donation helps provide another 4 meals to someone in need. Thank you for your kindness and compassion for our neighbors in need. We could not serve our community without you.

The Many Faces of Hunger



The COVID-19 pandemic has impacted hundreds of thousands of our neighbors in Louisiana. Seniors and people with pre-existing conditions have been isolated in their homes. Unemployment has skyrocketed with little relief in sight. And when families and seniors are struggling, grocery budgets are often cut first.

We would like to share with you a few stories from just a few of the many thousands of people your donations are helping. Thank you for your generosity — it means so much to the people we are serving every day.



The pandemic has impacted seniors perhaps the most. For people like **Darryl**, who visited one of our distributions, times are especially hard. "I'm here because there ain't no jobs out there. I'll be 70 years old this month. This food is a blessing from above."



Mary is one of thousands of local residents who has received assistance from Second Harvest thanks to your support. "We're just trying to stay inside, living day by day. Nobody in the household is working, and there's four adults that are out of work. God bless you for this gift."



Theresa & her granddaughter recently received food assistance at one of our pop-up emergency distributions. She passes along her thanks to everyone who makes our response possible. "I have never had to ask for help in my life. Thank you, thank you to everyone who makes this help possible."



Edward is a disabled Vietnam Vet, one of hundreds who got food assistance in Algiers today. "My wife has lost half her hours and in-laws moved in after they were laid off. This food is very helpful."

Tomorrow's Harvest: Help Fight Hunger For Years To Come

While we need your support today more than ever, planned gifts will ensure Second Harvest is here for decades to come. You can make a lasting impact by naming Second Harvest as a beneficiary of a will, trust, life insurance policy, or retirement or savings account.

If you have already included us in your estate plans, please let us know so we can thank you and include you in our legacy society, "Tomorrow's Harvest."

For more information, please contact Director of Development Heather Sweeney at hsweeney@secondharvest.org or 504-729-2839.



Second Harvest works in partnership with:



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

