

FEBRUARY 2021

food for thought



Thousands in
line for the
FIRST TIME



 **SECOND
HARVEST
FOOD BANK**
FEEDING SOUTH LOUISIANA

no-hunger.org

A message *from Natalie*

After a year, I'm simply amazed.

Almost a year ago, the impact of the COVID-19 emergency hit South Louisiana like a ton of bricks. Then back-to-back hurricanes devastated Southwest Louisiana and coastal parishes. The need for food has skyrocketed and has become the new normal for far too many people.

As I reflect on 2020, I've been simply amazed at the outpouring of love and support from the community, our partners, and donors like you. Your support has helped Second Harvest nearly double the number of meals we have provided to people in need in the past year. That's more than 50 million meals!

The ongoing COVID-19 pandemic and hurricane recovery means that we will be in this new normal throughout 2021. Operating at this historic level for many more months has very real costs. How is Second Harvest meeting these unprecedented needs?

More food: While we've been fortunate to receive millions of pounds of additional food from the USDA's Coronavirus Food Assistance Program, we don't know how long this will continue. Product donations continue to be unpredictable and food costs have risen dramatically.

More staff: Thanks to donors like you, we were able to hire additional drivers, warehouse specialists, kitchen staff, and other critical personnel needed to help feed many, many more people.

More equipment: To make it possible to move the millions more pounds of food over the last year, we purchased or leased additional trucks, vans, forklifts, computers, and other vital equipment to get the meals out our doors.

More outreach: When many of the pantries supported by Second Harvest closed due to the pandemic, Second Harvest provided millions of extra meals at large distributions across our 23-parish service area. Our team distributes up to 300,000 meals at each of these events attended by thousands of South Louisiana families.

Fighting hunger is a community-wide effort, and simply put, we need you. Every single meal we provide to a family, a child, or a senior is because someone like you opened their heart. Words cannot fully express my gratitude for everyone who has donated food, funds, and volunteer hours during this crisis.

Sincerely,


Natalie Jaykoe
President and CEO



Your support and love have been *beyond amazing.* Thank you.



Mr. Jim Boulet – An inspiring example to us all

Second Harvest and South Louisiana recently lost a close friend, an incredibly generous man who spent his waking hours dedicated to helping others. Mr. Jim Boulet passed recently at the age of 90, after spending nearly a decade growing food to help feed others.

In 2012 at the age of 81, Mr. Boulet decided to plow up 30 acres of his Lafourche Parish crawfish ponds and switch to growing produce for Second Harvest Food Bank. Over the years to follow, he spent several hours nearly every day tending to the land, planting, growing, and harvesting hundreds of thousands of pounds of vegetables to help feed people in need.

"I felt it was something I could do to give back, because I've been so blessed in my life," he told us. "It makes me feel good, and we love the volunteer groups that come help us pick the vegetables."

Second Harvest Food Sourcing Manager Emily Slazer says his contributions went far beyond the countless meals he put on tables. "Mr. Boulet simply lived to help others in his community and across South Louisiana. He was an inspiration to anyone who met him, and worked tirelessly to find more ways to help."

We are saddened at the passing of Mr. Boulet, but are so thankful to have known such a kind, generous soul.



"This food
is a blessing,
a blessing
from above."



Your Gift is Helping Thousands in Line for Food for the First Time

Nearly a year ago, Second Harvest began responding to the alarming increase in food insecurity caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. We have seen a record number of first-time visitors at pantries and food distributions and we expect this to continue in 2021 and until our economy recovers.

Second Harvest receptionist Victoria Cordero is usually the first person people see when they enter our Jefferson Parish facility. "People are apprehensive, and sometimes even a little embarrassed, to ask for help for the first time," she said. "But we tell them, 'No, please come in, everything here was donated to Second Harvest as a gift of love, for people just like you.'"

Seventy-year-old Gerald H. of Bridge City is one of the thousands of South Louisiana residents who came to

emergency food distributions over the last year. He found himself reaching out for help when his part-time jobs dried up. "I'm retired, but I was always able to pick up extra work to help with bills and medicine," Gerald told us. "This food is a blessing, a blessing from above. God won't lay more on his people than they can bear."

At Second Harvest's Lafayette facility, Debra M. waited a long time outside before coming in. "We are basically living out of our car. But we've never had to ask for help, this was so hard, but thank you so much for being here. Everyone made me feel so welcome, I just wanted to cry."

Thanks to your support, Second Harvest staff and volunteers have been able to help these thousands of neighbors in need who never thought they'd have to ask for help with food.

Meet Our Front Line Heroes

Second Harvest staff, along with dozens of National Guard members and thousands of volunteers, have been putting in heroic efforts to meet the unprecedented need this year. We would like to share some words from just a few of the individuals who are putting your donations into action.



Deon Lee, Driver: "I'm humbled and thankful to be able to help so many people right now. It's especially tough to see so many children and seniors in need of food."



Frank, Facilities Coordinator: "This is my 11th year with Second Harvest. I'm always amazed at the work our staff and volunteers make possible."



Anna & Lisa, National Guard Privates First Class: "We love being able to make a difference and have seen the impact in the community over the last year."



Jackie Smith, Volunteer: "My friends in the Community Kitchen make it a joy to serve at Second Harvest. I very much look forward to coming in several times a week."



Mike, Community Kitchen Sous Chef: "I'm blown away by the number of people who have needed help for the first time during this crisis. Thank you to everyone who makes this possible."



Brenda Pourciau, Program Coordinator: "To be able to reach even one extra person who needs food means so much. We see a lot of tears and smiles from people just needing a hand."

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:



contact us

700 Edwards Ave
New Orleans, LA 70123-3121
504.734.1322

215 East Pinhook Road
Lafayette, LA 70501-8533
337.237.7711

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

