



Be a Hunger Hero

Tools for your Food Drive, Fund Drive, or Special Event

The work of the Blue Ridge Area Food Bank is often described in numbers that are difficult to comprehend – millions of meals, thousands of families, hundreds of community partners.

We are frequently asked, “How can I make a difference? I’m just one person.” But making a difference all begins with one – one person in need, one neighbor who cares, one hand to lift up another. It starts with you.

Thank you for being a Hunger Hero.

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* Be sure to look for our editable flyer, poster and other resources on our website at <https://www.brafb.org/get-involved/be-a-hunger-hero>



Lend a Hand

All that we accomplish at the Blue Ridge Area Food Bank (BRAFB) starts with a hand – a hand that drops a can of food into a donation barrel; a hand that writes a check to fund our work; hands that sort and package food in boxes and bags before it is passed along to a person in need.

Whether your gift of time and energy is through participation in a special event, food drive, or fund drive, we want to provide support and guidance to make your experience a success. The following pages include helpful tips, promotional materials, and guidelines to walk you through those steps.

First, determine what type of campaign you are planning. The following definitions will guide you to the section of this toolkit you will find most helpful:

A **food drive** ([page 3](#)) has a singular focus: collecting non-perishable food items for the Food Bank. These are typically multi-day or weeks-long undertakings.

A **fund drive** ([page 5](#)) has a singular focus: collecting financial donations for BRAFB. These can be of any length of time and are often in coordination with a food drive or special event. For every \$1 raised the Food Bank can provide 4 meals for your neighbors in need.

A **special event** ([page 7](#)) is a single occurrence in a finite period of time, typically a one-day or evening time frame. These may have both a fund **and** a food drive component but, they are characterized by their time frame and intent.

QUESTIONS?

Send an email to solvehunger@brafb.org and we'll connect you to someone who can help.

Good luck, and thank you!



Food Drive A, B, Cs

Your donations are more vital than ever and hosting a food drive is a fun and simple way to help. Here are a few tips to make your drive a success.

READY...

Establish a team or a committee to organize the food drive. Create a theme, set goals, plan logistics and develop a timeline.

See our wish list ([page 4](#)) to develop your food drive theme. For example:

Meat the Need: canned meats and canned beans

Back to School: granola bars, fruit cups, bite-size crackers

Supper Sides: boxed pastas, rice, soups and macaroni and cheese

Five a Day: canned fruits and vegetables

Peanut Butter: one of the items in highest demand and most versatile

SET...

- Obtain sturdy collection boxes or bins.
- Establish food drop-off locations.
 - If you'd like one of our barrels for your food drive, please consider the following questions before placing your request:
 - Do you expect to collect at least 250 pounds of food (approximately what a barrel will hold)?
 - If you're hosting an annual activity, consider historical food collection totals. Did your collection exceed 250 pounds last year? (We can find out for you, if you don't know)
 - Will your food drive last two weeks or longer?
 - Will your food be collected in a location that is visible to "foot traffic," thereby helping to raise visibility for the Food Bank?
 - If the answer to all of these questions is yes, you could benefit from using one of our barrels. Contact us at fooddrive@brafb.org to reserve your barrel.
 - If the answer is no, we suggest that you prepare a cardboard box or other collection receptacle of your own and utilize our customizable food drive poster (www.brafb.org/get-involved/be-a-hunger-hero/) to market your efforts.
- Contact the Food Bank before the drive ends to discuss delivery of the food ([page 4](#)).
- Promote the food drive through a company newsletter, emails to staff, flyers, posters, or leaflets (www.brafb.org/get-involved/be-a-hunger-hero/) and on social media ([page 8](#)). Be sure to share the Food Bank website – www.brafb.org.
- You can offer incentives such as a prize drawing entry for those who give. To encourage participation, send a bag home for employees to fill with food.
- Organize a group to tour the Food Bank and/or volunteer prior to or after the food drive. It makes a big impression to see our work in action!

GO!

Happy shopping and collecting! Let us know if we can help throughout the drive. When shopping, please keep Our Healthy Food Wish List in mind.



WHEW...

- Once your food drive has concluded, please contact us at fooddrive@brafb.org to discuss drop-off or delivery options. It's important that we dedicate the Food Bank's resources to purchasing more food instead of expensive fuel, so we ask that you commit to collecting a minimum of 250 pounds (approximately one full barrel) if you are requesting a delivery or pickup. If you are hosting a smaller drive, simply schedule a time to visit the Food Bank branch near you to deliver your food (see [page 9](#) for locations).
- We will send you a receipt for the total pounds collected.
- Share/publicize your results among participants and in local media (see sample press release on [page 7](#). We also encourage social media sharing (see Food Bank social handles also on [page 7](#).)
- Celebrate! Review the event and set the date for next year. Thank you for your support!

How else can you help? If you don't want to shop for a food donation, let us buy it for you. We take financial donations; in fact, just \$1 can provide 4 meals! Give online or create an online fund drive at www.brafb.org.

QUESTIONS?

Send an email to solvehunger@brafb.org and we'll connect you to someone who can help.

Our Healthy Food WISH LIST

All food donations should be non-perishable. NO GLASS PLEASE.

Most desirable items include proteins such as canned tuna, salmon or chicken, peanut butter, beans, and canned nuts.

Dairy items such as canned, evaporated, or powdered milk are in high demand.

Fruits and vegetables including 100% juice in boxes and cans, low- or no-sodium canned vegetables, and fruits in light syrup or fruit juice.

Boxed pasta, rice, cereal, canned soups and stews, and macaroni and cheese are some other items that are always appreciated.



Fund Drive 1, 2, 3s

For every \$1 donated, we are able to provide 4 meals! So whether your fund drive is in your neighborhood, your school, your business, or across the state, here are some helpful hints to make it a success:

FIRST: Plan

Establish your target audience and set a goal for your drive. If your goals are lofty, recruit a team or committee to help organize the drive, plan logistics, develop a timeline, and decide how you will promote and encourage participation.

Create a theme or make it a competition – you want it to be fun for you and everyone involved! Theme ideas:

“Off My Plate” Day – while about 1 billion people globally do not have enough to eat, Americans toss out about 40 percent of all U.S.-produced food. Challenge your participants to record the amount of food they throw out in just one week and make a contribution to the food drive in that amount.

Brown Bag for Hunger – ask everyone to bring in their lunch or have a potluck and ask each participant to contribute what they would normally spend on lunch out to your efforts.

Friendly Competition – spread the word to neighboring businesses and groups to gain their participation and track who can raise the most for your drive. Celebrate the winner.

Prize – throw a party for all who participate and award the top donor or the individual who recruited the most donors.

Employer Matching – if your job has a fundraising match program, enlist your employer's help.

SECOND: Promote

Spread the word! Use our poster (<http://www.brafb.org/get-involved/be-a-hunger-hero>) email, word of mouth, and social media. Remember to “Like” our Facebook page and follow us on Twitter and Instagram. Be sure to mention us by name in any posts or tweets so we can help spread the message. See [page 7](#) to connect with us on social media.

Make sure donation collections sites are well documented, secure, easily accessible, and convenient for your participants.

Track your results and provide updates. Everyone wants to know how they are making a difference.

THIRD: Give

Collect all donations and deliver to your local Food Bank branch ([page 9](#)) OR, if you would prefer to have a check presentation ceremony, contact solvehunger@brafb.org to explore the possibilities.

If individual donors request a receipt and/or tax credit, we must receive their contribution as a check made payable to: **Blue Ridge Area Food Bank**. Also, be sure to include the name of your drive or campaign on the memo line so that we can attribute the gifts appropriately.

CELEBRATE

Share/publicize your results among participants and in local media (see sample press release on [page 8](#) and on social media (tag the Food Bank so that we can celebrate with you). Review the event and set the date for next year! Thank you for supporting Blue Ridge Area Food Bank!

QUESTIONS?

Send an email to solvehunger@brafb.org and we'll connect you to someone who can help.



What Makes an Event Special?

A special event is a wonderful way to support the work of the Food Bank. Not only does an event generate much-needed funding, but it can bring awareness to a new, larger audience.

Thank you for helping to share our story and raise awareness of our programs and the necessary funding to support them. Let us know when your plans are in place so we can add your event to our calendar.

PLANNING A SUCCESSFUL FUNDRAISER

1. Choose a planning team – Involve enough volunteers to share the work load.
2. Set a goal and develop a budget – Work with the end result in mind. Identify all possible sources of revenue and anticipated expenses.
3. Choose the right event – Be sure that your event complements Blue Ridge Area Food Bank’s mission to end hunger in central and western Virginia. Is the event unique to your community?
4. Who’s your audience? – Plan a date and time that is appropriate and convenient for those you want to attend.
5. Promote /publicize your event – Use all appropriate tools to spread the word about your event. Consider sending a press release ([page 9](#)) to local media. Make good use of social media! Share/publicize your event with others! Use posters (www.brafb.org/toolkit), email, word of

mouth, and social media. Remember to “Like” our Facebook page and follow us on social media. Tag us when you post about your event so that our fans and followers can see all the good things you’re up to! See [page 7](#) to connect with us on social media.

6. Make your donation – Please turn in all proceeds to the Food Bank within 30 days of your event. All checks should be made payable to: **Blue Ridge Area Food Bank** unless otherwise noted.
7. Say THANK YOU! – Acknowledge everyone who participated in or supported your event.

SETTING IT IN MOTION

Consider the following questions:

Date and Time – Does the event conflict with any other significant events planned for that time? Is this an after-hours event?

Potential Audience – What is the target number of attendees to make it successful? Will the event be held if your target number is not reached?

Potential Revenue – Is the potential revenue in balance with the expected expenses? Is any portion of the revenue going elsewhere? How will the money/donations be collected?

Staff Requirements – Our resources are limited, but we’d like to help you if we can! Examples of BRAFB assistance: food collection (barrels), fund collection, promotion, attendance.

Stewardship – How will the participants be thanked for their participation?

QUESTIONS?

Send an email to solvehunger@brafb.org and we’ll connect you to someone who can help.



Promoting Your Effort

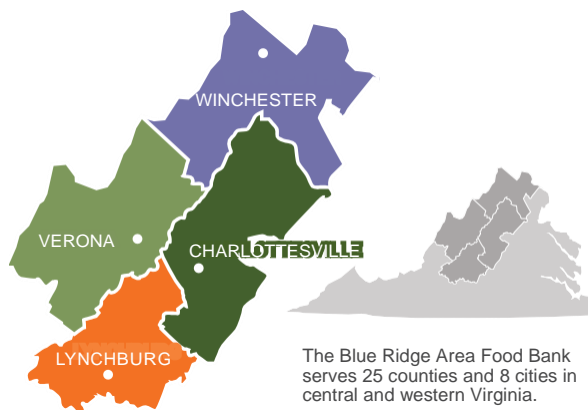
Here are a few helpful hints to promote your Hunger Hero effort:

UNDERSTANDING HUNGER

Hunger is still a big problem, even when the economy feels better to many of us. Many of the people waiting in line for food assistance are employed and working hard to make ends meet, but their jobs aren't adequate to support them and their families. Those who depend on the Blue Ridge Area Food Bank are often the most vulnerable – seniors struggling to meet basic needs on a fixed income, and children who need to be well-nourished during their formative years in order to thrive.

Use the following hunger facts to cheer on and encourage your team, and to educate your community about the need:

- The Blue Ridge Area Food Bank (BRAFB) serves an average of 103,500 people each month.
- The Lynchburg area branch (Lynchburg) serves approximately 18,648 people each month.
- The Lord Fairfax area branch (Winchester) serves approximately 32,924 people each month.
- The Thomas Jefferson area branch (Charlottesville) serves approximately 22,189 people each month.
- The Shenandoah Valley branch (Verona) serves approximately 30,274 people each month.
- BRAFB provides nearly 22 million meals each year, or more than 26.4 million pounds of food.
- 1 of every 8 children in the BRAFB service area lives with food insecurity, unsure of where their next meal will come from.
- Seniors are the fastest growing group of people depending with increasing frequency on charitable food assistance.
- For every \$1 you give, we can provide 4 meals to our neighbors in need.



The Blue Ridge Area Food Bank serves 25 counties and 8 cities in central and western Virginia.

Follow Us

- Facebook [@BlueRidgeAreaFoodBank](https://www.facebook.com/BlueRidgeAreaFoodBank)
- Twitter [@BRAFB](https://twitter.com/BRAFB)
- Instagram [@BRAFB](https://www.instagram.com/BRAFB)

Remember to “Like” our Facebook page and follow us on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram. Tag us when you post about your event so that our fans and followers can see all the good things you’re up to!





Press Release Example

For ease of use, you can select and copy this format and paste it into your organization's letterhead and personalize.

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
[YOUR ORGANIZATION'S
LOGO]

Contact: [NAME]
[PHONE]
[E-MAIL]
[WEB ADDRESS]

[HEADLINE]
[SUBHEAD]

[(CITY, STATE - DATE)] –

1. Begin with a paragraph stating exactly what is happening, including time, date and location (in that order).
2. Second paragraph should detail the attractions of the event.
3. Third paragraph should explain why it's important for the community to become involved.
4. Final paragraph should include additional ways to get more information: (Web site/e-mail/phone, etc...)
5. A good press release does not exceed one page. It is straightforward, easy to read and relatively brief.

[YOUR ORGANIZATION'S BOILERPLATE – OPTIONAL] (See below for Food Bank's boilerplate as an example.)

About the Blue Ridge Area Food Bank
Founded in 1981, the Blue Ridge Area Food Bank is the largest organization alleviating hunger in western and central Virginia. Headquartered in Verona, VA, the Food Bank serves 25 counties and 8 cities through distribution centers in Charlottesville, Lynchburg, Winchester and Verona. The Blue Ridge Area Food Bank distributes nearly 26.4 million pounds of food annually to 103,500 people each month through a network of 200 community partners – food pantries, soup kitchens, shelters, schools, churches and other non-profit groups. The Food Bank is a member of Feeding America, a national food bank association that supports 200 food banks across the United States. For more information, visit www.brafb.org.

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Blue Ridge Area
FOOD BANK
Everyone should have enough to eat.

Most Needed Items

No glass please!

- Canned soups, stews and chili - *low sodium*
- Canned veggies - *low sodium*
- Cereal - *low sugar, whole grain*
- Peanut or almond butter - *low sugar*
- Spaghetti sauce - *low sugar*
- Boxed mac & cheese
- Pasta and rice - *whole grain*
- Canned tuna and chicken
- Paper products
- Baby food, formula, and diapers
- Soap and feminine products
- Toothbrushes



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Thank You!

www.brafb.org

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www.brafb.org

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Blue Ridge Area Food Bank Branch Locations

Thank you for being a Hunger Hero. Your generous support and participation in the fight against hunger enables us to feed our hungry neighbors, daily.

Phone: (540) 248-3663
Web: www.brafb.org
Email: solvehunger@brafb.org

Shenandoah Valley Area Branch
and Headquarters
PO Box 937
96 Laurel Hill Road
Verona, VA 24482
Hours of operation: Monday-Friday, 8:30am to 5:00pm

Thomas Jefferson Area Branch
1207 Harris Street
Charlottesville, VA 22903-5319
Hours of operation: Monday-Friday, 8:00am to 4:30pm

Lynchburg Area Branch
501 12th Street, Suite B
Lynchburg, VA 24504-2527
Hours of operation: Monday-Friday, 8:00am to 4:30pm

Lord Fairfax Area Branch
1802 Roberts Street
Winchester, VA 22601-6312
Hours of operation: Monday-Friday, 8:00am to 4:30pm