



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

A member of
**FEEDING
AMERICA**



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Media Contact:
Les Sinclair
lsinclair@brafb.org
434-962-5403

Blue Ridge Area Food Bank Seeks Food Donations, Volunteers to Support Stamp Out Hunger Food Drive Saturday, May 13

The food drive, hosted by the National Association of Letter Carriers, is the nation's largest one-day food collection effort.

VERONA, Va. (May 3, 2023) - The Blue Ridge Area Food Bank is encouraging community members to participate in the annual Stamp Out Hunger (SOH) food drive on Saturday, May 13, by donating food and volunteering at a local collection site.

SOH is the nation's largest one-day food collection effort, hosted by the National Association of Letter Carriers. Last year's drive collected 114,196 pounds of food across the Food Bank's service area – enough to provide more than 95,163 meals to people experiencing hunger.

The Food Bank is also looking for volunteers to assist with collecting and sorting food donations at post offices in Harrisonburg, Lynchburg, Staunton, Waynesboro, and Charlottesville. Volunteer shifts will run between 1 p.m. and 8:30 p.m., depending on the location.

Those wishing to donate can leave non-perishable food items at their mailbox (early) for their postal carrier to pick up on Saturday, May 13. The most needed food donations include canned fruits, meats, and vegetables low in sodium and sugar. Giving paper products, diapers, and personal care items is also encouraged. **Please avoid any glass items or those requiring refrigeration.**

“Seeing community members come together to volunteer, donate food, and help people living with hunger is a wonderful reminder of the collaboration that goes into ensuring everyone has enough food to eat,” said Michael McKee, CEO of the Blue Ridge Area Food Bank. “This year's event comes at a critical time. Rising food costs, the recent end of emergency SNAP benefits, and the decline in overall donations to the Food Bank are contributing to the need to refill our shelves for the upcoming summer months when school-based nutrition resources won't be available.

The number of guests Food Bank partner and program sites are serving increased by about 14% in the second half of 2022, year-over-year. Additionally, inflation increased by 11.4% in 2022 and is projected to climb another 7.5% in 2023.

Since the Food Bank started collecting totals from SOH, the letter carriers have collected 2,366,411 pounds of food, helping provide almost 2 million meals to people in the area who experience food insecurity.

A full list of needed food items and volunteer opportunities can be found at brafb.org/event/stamp-out-hunger.

About the Blue Ridge Area Food Bank

Founded in 1981 and headquartered in Verona, Virginia, the Blue Ridge Area Food Bank is the largest organization alleviating hunger in western and central Virginia. The Food Bank serves an average of 109,500 people per month across 25 counties and eight cities through distribution centers in Charlottesville, Lynchburg, Winchester, and Verona. We're serving record numbers of Virginians during a prolonged pandemic and its associated economic impacts through our network of more than 400 community partners, which includes food pantries, soup kitchens, shelters, schools, libraries, health care clinics, community centers, and more. We pledge to continue innovating and adapting to secure, store, and distribute more food to more individuals, families, children, and seniors experiencing hunger. The Food Bank is a member of Feeding America®, a national food bank association supporting more than 200 food banks across the United States, helping provide 5.2 billion meals to tens of millions of people through 60,000 agency partners. For more information, visit www.brafb.org.

About the National Association of Letter Carriers

The 294,000-member National Association of Letter Carriers represents letter carriers across the country employed by the U.S. Postal Service, along with retired letter carriers. Founded by Civil War veterans in 1889, the NALC is among the country's oldest labor unions.

###