



# 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, tens of 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 (the Food Bank) 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 the Food Bank. 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](mailto:solvehunger@brafb.org) and we'll connect you to someone who can help.

Good luck and thank you!



## Food Drive ABCs

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 and add signs to decorate
- The Food Bank has a limited supply of branded food collection containers (boxes and barrels). Consider the following questions before requesting a Food Bank branded container:
  - Are you able to visit a Food Bank location to pick up the branded container yourself, and return the container and food to us after the food drive?
  - Will your food be collected in a location that is visible to “foot traffic,” thereby helping to raise visibility for the Food Bank?
  - If you’re hosting an annual activity, consider historical food collection totals. Did your collection exceed 300 pounds last year?

If the answer to any of these questions is yes, you could benefit from using a Food Bank-branded collection container – a box or a barrel. Please indicate on the online Food Drive Registration form that you would like to use a Food Bank collection container or contact us at [fooddrives@brafb.org](mailto:fooddrives@brafb.org) with any questions.

If you use our barrel or box, you will have to pick them up from the closest Food Bank warehouse. Thanks for understanding – our drivers and trucks must be reserved for food distribution across 25 counties.

Questions or concerns? Please contact us at [fooddrives@brafb.org](mailto:fooddrives@brafb.org).

- 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/](http://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](http://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...

### Your Food Drive is Over, the Food Is Ready – Now What?

The transportation of your collected food to the Food Bank can be considered part of your donation. We certainly appreciate your understanding and help as we focus our staff and fuel on the distribution of food across 25 counties!

- If you've collected less than 500 pounds (less than 2 large trashcans) we ask that you bring all the food you've collected and all collection containers that we provided to the closest Food Bank warehouse. Please call the branch location where you will be dropping off your donation at least 1 business day in advance. (see [page 8](#) for locations).
- Food drive drop-off hours are 9am to 3:30pm Monday through Friday.
- If you have collected more than 500 pounds of food (more than 2 large trashcans), please call us at least 1 business week in advance of the desired pick-up date to schedule a pick-up by a Food Bank driver. Pick-up hours are 9am to 3:30pm Monday through Friday.

### Thank you for your support and passion for this cause!

- We will send you a receipt for the total pounds collected.
- Share/publicize your results among your network. 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](http://www.brafb.org).

## QUESTIONS?

Send an email to [solvehunger@brafb.org](mailto: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

Every \$1 donated helps provide enough food for 4 meals!

Be sure to check out our new giving platform where you can create your own drive:

<https://give.brafb.org/hungerhero>

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:

**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 collection 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 8](#)) OR, if you would prefer to have a check presentation ceremony, contact [solvehunger@brafb.org](mailto: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, local media 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](mailto: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 workload.
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, 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 how staff might be able to help: 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](mailto: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:

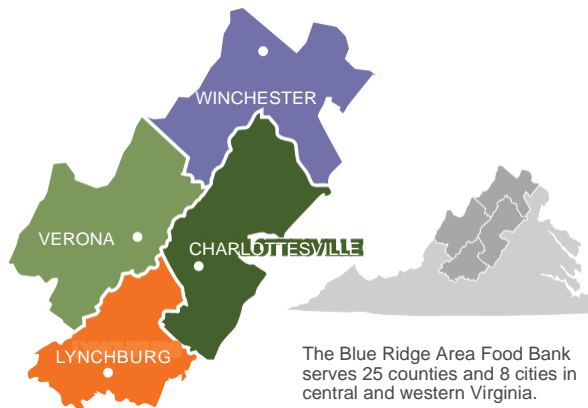
### UNDERSTANDING HUNGER

Hunger has been a big problem for far too long, but the need for food assistance has grown tremendously in the economic downturn triggered by the pandemic. As many tens of thousands in our service area lost their jobs, many of those families found their way to a food pantry for the first time. Even in “good times,” 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 serves an average of 109,500 people each month.
- The Lynchburg area branch (Lynchburg) serves approximately 24,800 people each month. The Lord Fairfax area branch (Winchester) serves approximately 39,700 people each month.
- The Thomas Jefferson area branch (Charlottesville) serves approximately 20,700 people each month.
- The Shenandoah Valley branch (Verona) serves approximately 24,300 people each month.
- The Food Bank provides nearly 21 million meals each year, or almost 25 million pounds of food.
- 1 of 12 individuals in the Food Bank’s service area lives with food insecurity, unsure of how they will get their next meal.
- Every \$1 you give can help provide 4 meals for neighbors experiencing food insecurity



## 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!





## 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.

Phone: (540) 248-3663  
Web: [www.brafb.org](http://www.brafb.org)  
Email: [solvehunger@brafb.org](mailto:solvehunger@brafb.org)

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

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

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

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







Thank you for hosting a fund drive to benefit the Blue Ridge Area Food Bank. If you are interested in setting up a customized Donate page (online) or you have any questions, reach out via email to [solvehunger@brafb.org](mailto:solvehunger@brafb.org).

Here are suggested templates and language to consider as you publicize your drive.

**Welcome email:**

*Suggested subject line:* Join me in the Fight Against Hunger

Dear \_\_\_\_\_:

You have the power to make an impact in someone's life, today. Please join me— together we can raise funds and awareness about hunger in our community, and also benefit the Blue Ridge Area Food Bank.

*[Share why the cause is important to you.]*

Every \$1 raised can help provide enough food for 4 meals. I know that budgets can be tight; even \$5 or \$10 helps me get closer to my goal! Let me know if you have any questions and I'll be happy to answer them.

If you'd like to join me in this cause, you can make your donation by visiting my donate page: *<insert URL address created>*

Once you've made your donation, please share the news of your participation with your network. Together, we can make a huge difference to a lot of our neighbors in need.

The Blue Ridge Area Food Bank serves people in need across 25 counties and 8 cities in central and western Virginia. I've attached a fact sheet if you would like to learn more about the amazing work the Food Bank is doing to make sure that almost 109,500 children, seniors and other individuals have access to enough food each month.

Warm regards/Best/Thank you,  
*[Your name]*



### **Thank you email:**

*Suggested subject line:* Thank you for your support

Hello \_\_\_\_\_,

I just learned that you recently donated to my fundraiser to benefit the Blue Ridge Area Food Bank. Your gift is helping to ensure that everyone has access to enough food. Thank you for your support!

Many thanks,  
[Your Name]

P.S. If you want to learn more about the impact of your gift, check out the Food Bank's website: [www.brafb.org](http://www.brafb.org)

### **Social Post suggestions:**

Tag the Food Bank:  
Facebook - @BlueRidgeAreaFoodBank  
Instagram and Twitter - @BRAFB

Suggested hashtags: #HungerHero #BetterTogether #Drive

- Help me reach my goal of \_\_\_\_\_ meals for families struggling to get enough to eat. No donation is too small! [Link]
- When we stand together, hunger doesn't stand a chance. Join me in supporting the Food Bank – Every \$1 raised helps provide 4 meals. [Link]
- Donate today at [Link] and together we can make sure everyone has access to enough food. \$25 can help provide 100 meals.
- Because of you, I have been able to raise \_\_\_\_\_ towards my goal. Please continue to share my drive to benefit the Food Bank. [Link]

### **Available Photos**

Visit the Food Bank's media library for photos you have permission to use:  
<https://www.brafb.org/media-resources/newsroom/food-bank-images/>



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

*Thank You!*

[www.braffb.org](http://www.braffb.org)



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