

WINTER 2017

Gather. Share. Nurture.

# Kernels

Vermont Foodbank  
www.vtfoodbank.org

MEMBER OF  
**FEEDING  
AMERICA**



## Veggie Prescriptions for Diabetes Prevention

A successful partnership between the Vermont Foodbank and the Greater Burlington YMCA to provide a vegetable prescription program for individuals at risk of developing the diet-related disease of type 2 diabetes is poised to continue in 2017.

Using our VT Fresh model, the program, piloted in Burlington and Springfield over the past two years, was delivered by the Foodbank over the course of 16 weeks as part of the YMCA's Diabetes Prevention Program. Participants in the YMCA program received locally donated produce from the Foodbank's gleaning activities on Vermont farms, along with VT Fresh cooking demonstrations, and education on how to use the produce at home.

*continued on page 3*



John Sayles  
jumping into the  
new year.

## NOTE from the CEO

Gratitude: From the Latin *gratus*, meaning “pleasing or thankful,” and *tudo*, meaning “a state of.” Sometimes you have to dig deep to find a word’s meaning. Not here. It makes me wonder about the ancient and primal physiological response—the lighting up of pleasure centers in the brain—that happens when someone performs an act of kindness toward us or we reach out a hand, and someone reaches back in acceptance. To be so ancient, it must be a survival instinct, and it must continue to benefit humankind today to have stayed with us unchanged over millennia. Gratitude is still needed for survival in today’s world.

We all feel stress and worry at some point in our lives. Science is beginning to measure the impact stress can have on our physical well-being. For example, traumatic experiences in childhood, known as adverse childhood experiences, or ACEs, result in an increased risk of serious physical conditions such as diabetes, heart disease, broken bones, stroke, cancer, and others (learn more at [www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/acestudy](http://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/acestudy)). Experiencing and sharing gratitude can actually repair the damage that stress does to our bodies and brains. And by showing gratitude, we can help heal others. The recent holiday season was a time for many of us to feel and share gratitude, but also a time of additional stress and worry. Supporting your Foodbank allows you the pleasure of giving to help counteract any stress, with an amazing added benefit: building our neighbors’ human potential while reducing the stress of an inadequate diet. It really is a win-win.

Together we’re creating a collective benefit by ensuring that everyone in Vermont has a basic need (food) met and can reach their full human potential. Creating this collective benefit requires a strong foundation and a structure that is built to last. A well-built house that sits on a sturdy foundation and is well maintained and updated will stand for generations. It’s the same with community: A solid foundation and structure for well-being can support children overcoming the impact of ACEs, young adults being treated for the disease of addiction, parents recovering from job losses or physical injuries, and elders who want to stay healthy and at home. In all of these situations, access to quality food is a lifeline, and your Foodbank is a critical part of it.

I have the privilege every day—whether it’s helping out at a food distribution site, writing thank you notes, or meeting with community groups—to experience my brain’s pleasure center light up from gratitude. I am so thankful to represent you in this work. As you look to the year ahead, think about how grateful you are for the many wonderful people and places in your life. Think about how you can provide that same opportunity to your Vermont neighbors across the state by giving to your Vermont Foodbank. Just as your financial donations to the Vermont Foodbank feed our neighbors’ bodies, your gratitude feeds the whole community. Thank you!

With gratitude,

  
John Sayles, CEO





# Veggie Prescriptions for Diabetes Prevention

*continued from page 1*

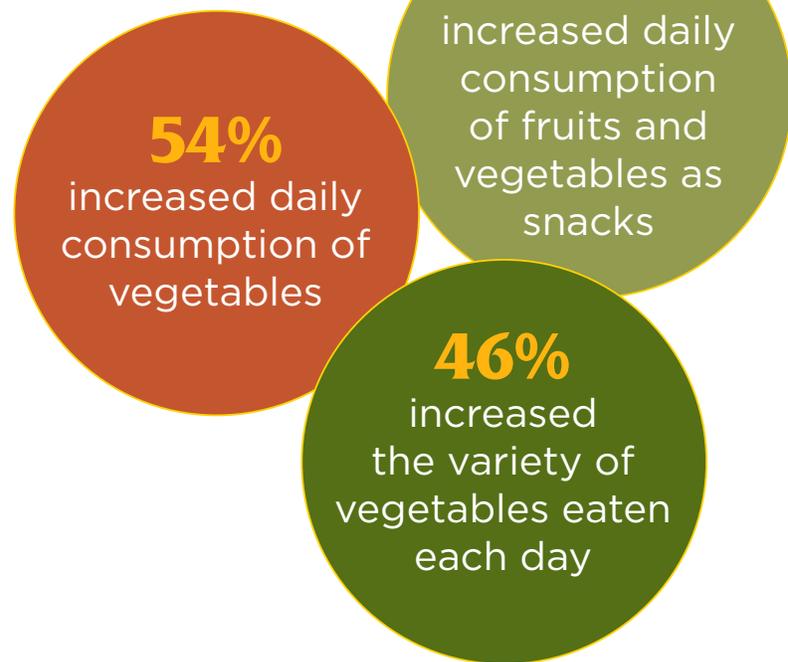
The goal of the partnership is to eliminate barriers to accessing and using healthy food and to determine the health impacts for individuals at risk of developing diabetes. The result of the program partnership has been substantial dietary behavior changes including increased daily consumption of vegetables.

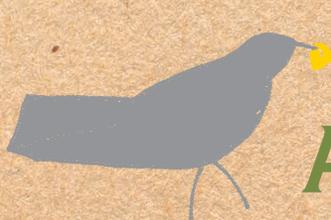
Participants in the program developed goals over the 16-week period that also included dietary changes and weight loss, significant factors in addition to diet that influence someone's likelihood of developing type 2 diabetes. "I benefited greatly from the vegetables and recipes," said a woman in her 40s who was excited about the partnership. "I felt very supported and helped by this program. I think it is exactly the right match with the YMCA to support my weight and health goals."

Through the partnership, VT Fresh has provided 36 cooking demonstrations of 18 types of vegetables along with giving out over 5,000 pounds of produce for 43 participants who were at risk of developing diabetes. The demonstrations promote healthy choices, better lifestyles, and the motivation needed to try different foods. Participants overwhelmingly loved the addition of fresh produce and started eating vegetables that they had never tried before or thought they didn't like. "Your cooking demos and produce are really making me excited about cooking! I have made vegetables I have never cooked before, and they are becoming a larger part of my weekly cooking routines," said one participant. For many others, the food enabled their families, struggling to put food on the table, to eat better.

The program's impact on dietary behavior was measured using the Food Behavior Checklist, an evaluation tool from the University of California Extension Service. This tool has been demonstrated to produce valid, reliable, and statistically significant results in community health promotion interventions.

## The following are results from 24 participants:





# 2016 Annual Report

The mission of the Vermont Foodbank is to gather and share quality food and nurture partnerships so that no one in Vermont will go hungry.

466,323 pounds of fresh Vermont produce

466,323 pounds of fresh Vermont produce were made available to Vermonters in need because of the generous support of nearly 80 Vermont farms.



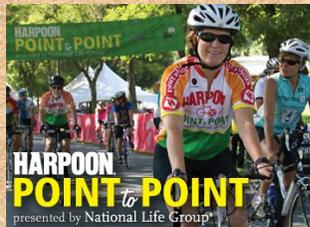
more than 12 million pounds of food

With a dedicated network of 225 food shelves and meal sites, the Vermont Foodbank provided more than 12 million pounds of food to 153,000 Vermonters who struggle with hunger.



9,336 pounds of apples

A total of 18 apple orchards—along with families; community members; and corporate, school, and civic groups—participated in Pick for Your Neighbor (PFYN), which resulted in **9,336 pounds of apples** being gathered and distributed to food shelves and meal sites in the Foodbank's network. Woodchuck Hard Cider provided underwriting support, for the seventh year in a row!



700 riders

The 2016 Harpoon Point to Point raised \$210,505 with the help of more than 700 riders—another record-breaking year.



17,553 hours of donated volunteer support

The Foodbank's work of gathering and sharing quality food was accomplished with the help of 2,367 volunteers who provided 17,553 hours of donated volunteer support. Volunteers helped us glean Vermont produce, sort and deliver food to our neighbors in need, put on events, send thank you letters, and the list goes on!

more than 430,000 servings of food

Community Kitchen Academy (CKA), which prepares under- and unemployed Vermonters for food service careers through an intensive program of culinary skills development, career readiness, and job placement, entered its sixth year. It now operates in partnership with the Chittenden Emergency Food Shelf in Burlington and Capstone Community Action in Barre. CKA has graduated 232 students since 2009—and produced more than 430,000 servings of food for Vermonters in need.



284,310 SNAP meals

The Foodbank continued its SNAP Outreach in 2016, resulting in the completion of 438 applications. According to the Feeding America SNAP calculator, the estimated SNAP benefits generated by those 438 applications is \$830,186; the estimated local economic impact generated for the state of Vermont is \$1,486,033. The number of SNAP meals attributed to this work is 284,310.

291 cooking demos

VT Fresh is the Vermont Foodbank's nutrition education program. It increases access to and improves the availability of fruits and vegetables at food shelves throughout Vermont while encouraging participants to increase their consumption of fresh foods. In 2016, the Vermont Foodbank provided 291 cooking demos at 18 food shelves and engaged more than 3,600 participants. After tasting a particular vegetable, 76 percent of participants reported that they were more willing to try that vegetable again at home.



2 The Foodbank added two new board members: Mitzi Johnson, Speaker of the House, Vermont House of Representatives, and Hillary Orsini, Vermont Energy Investment Corporation (VEIC).



17,000 donors

More than 17,000 individuals, businesses, and organizations provided financial support to the Foodbank in FY 2016.

# 2016 Annual Report

Vermont Foodbank  
www.vtfoodbank.org



## CONDENSED STATEMENT OF ACTIVITIES FY16

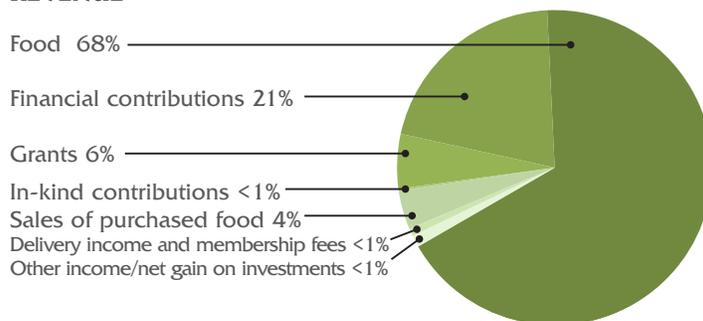
### REVENUE

Contributions:	
Food	\$ 18,790,375
Financial contributions	\$ 5,779,271
Grants	\$ 1,548,741
In-kind contributions	\$ 65,495
Sales of purchased food	\$ 1,099,256
Delivery income and membership fees	\$ 208,819
Other income/net gain on investments	\$ 332,874
<b>TOTAL REVENUE</b>	<b>\$ 27,824,831</b>

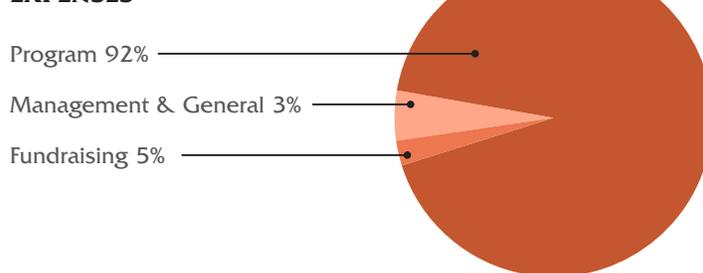
### EXPENSES

Program Services:	
Food	\$ 23,621,466
Management and general	\$ 650,625
Fundraising expenses	\$ 1,302,314
<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>	<b>\$ 25,574,405</b>
Changes in net assets,	\$ 2,250,426
<b>NET ASSETS, beginning of year</b>	<b>\$ 6,330,501</b>
<b>NET ASSETS, end of year</b>	<b>\$ 8,580,927</b>

### REVENUE



### EXPENSES



## CONDENSED STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION FY16

### ASSETS

Cash and marketable securities	\$ 3,661,471
Receivables	\$ 308,860
Prepaid expenses	\$ 121,206
Inventory	\$ 2,265,522
Property, plant and equipment	\$ 2,655,310
<b>TOTAL ASSETS</b>	<b>\$ 9,012,369</b>

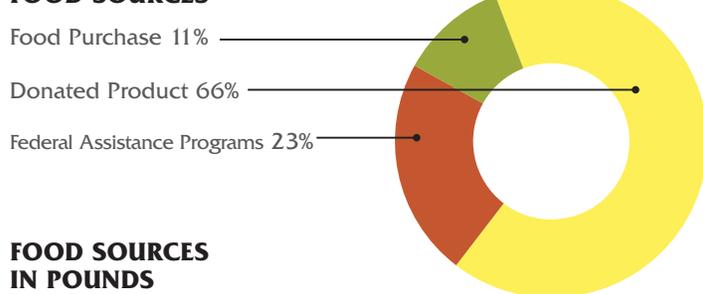
### LIABILITIES

Accounts payable	\$ 231,107
Accrued expenses	\$ 135,335
Notes payable	\$ 65,000
<b>TOTAL LIABILITIES</b>	<b>\$ 431,442</b>

### NET ASSETS

Unrestricted - undesignated	\$ 4,284,666
Unrestricted - property and equipment	\$ 2,655,310
Unrestricted - board designated	\$ 300,000
<b>TOTAL UNRESTRICTED NET ASSETS</b>	<b>\$ 7,239,976</b>
Temporarily restricted	\$ 1,340,951
<b>TOTAL NET ASSETS</b>	<b>\$ 8,580,927</b>
<b>TOTAL LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS</b>	<b>\$ 9,012,369</b>

### FOOD SOURCES



### FOOD SOURCES IN POUNDS

Donated Product	8,017,057
Federal Assistance Programs	2,740,775
Food Purchase	1,343,606
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>12,101,438</b>

### FOODBANK BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Doug Lantagne, Chair	George Schenk
Susan Bassett	Jan Scites
Jason Doiron	Peter McH. Stamm
David Epstein	Margie Stern
Mitzi Johnson	Ben Theriault
Senator Jane Kitchel	Martha Trombley Oakes
Stephen Magowan	Donna Watts
Hillary Orsini	Joe Zuario, DDS
Beth Rusnock	

Gather. Share. Nurture.

# Program Update A Dietetic Student's Taste Test of VT Fresh

*This a blog post from Anna Huffman, a UVM dietetics Intern who spent a week working with the VT Fresh program.*



As a UVM dietetics graduate student, I've spent over six months interning at various clinical and community nutrition sites around the state. I chose to do my one-week exploratory rotation with the Vermont Foodbank because I'm passionate about increasing Vermonters' access to and awareness of affordable options for eating healthy in their local communities.

During my rotation, I had the opportunity to shadow a taste test provided by the Foodbank's VT Fresh program at the Northeast Kingdom Community Action (NEKCA) community food shelf in St. Johnsbury. The VT Fresh program "aims to increase access and improve availability of fruits and vegetables at community food shelves." It uses several strategies to reach this goal, including improving the visibility and aesthetics of produce displays, expanding the variety and storage space for produce, using signage, and providing taste tests of available produce.

VT Fresh works with nearly 30 community food shelves across the state of Vermont to provide best practices and other information on how to implement these changes. Vermont Foodbank staff and volunteers of the program also regularly visit these food shelves to deliver produce and provide the taste tests. The featured produce is displayed in an attractive manner to encourage participation and create a homelike atmosphere. Participants are asked to fill out a survey that asks if their preference for the promoted produce changed after tasting the recipe. Recipe cards are also provided.

As I found out, the community food shelf at NEKCA has done an excellent job adopting the practices set forth by the VT Fresh program. The produce we brought from the Foodbank was immediately put on display by the volunteers right at the entryway to the food shelf. The produce display was surrounded by signage highlighting fun facts and vegetable-based humor, as well as information on serving sizes and creating a balanced meal. The display was attractive and inviting, and all produce was free to anyone who needed it.

The taste test was a salad made from lettuce that had been gleaned by Vermont Foodbank volunteers. We combined that with for an easy-to-make mustard dressing. Those who tried it liked it, and were surprised at how good the salad was, remarking, "Wow! That's actually really good!" and, "The dressing is really good. What kind is it again?" Many of those who tried the salad took the salad dressing recipe home with them.

The VT Fresh program is one of many programs the Vermont Foodbank offers to increase the accessibility and availability of fruits and vegetables for people in need while building taste preference for foods that are available from local farms. By using behavioral theory and evidence-based programming, the VT Fresh program decreases food insecurity and enhances the nutrition of the populations served. The result is a positive impact on the food environment and personal food preferences in Vermont.





**CRISPY  
PARSNIP  
CHIPS**  
4 - 6 Servings

INGREDIENTS

- 6 large parsnips
- 3 Tbsp oil
- 1 tsp salt
- 1 tsp garlic powder

Optional:

- 1 tsp cumin powder
- 1/4 tsp cayenne pepper
- 1 Tbsp parmesan or nutritional yeast

DIRECTIONS

1. Heat oven to 400°F.
2. Line a sheet pan with parchment paper, wax paper, or foil and spray generously with cooking spray.
3. Wash and slice parsnips as thinly as you can.
4. In a large bowl, toss parsnips with oil and spices.
5. Lay parsnip chips flat on parchment paper in a single layer.
6. Bake for 15 minutes, flip parsnip chips over and bake for an additional 5-10 minutes until brown and crispy.

**Eat a Rainbow!**  
Make half your plate  
fruits and vegetables.



Fresh food tastes delicious and is easy to prepare.

## VT Fresh Program Highlights:



**29**  
food shelf partners



**31**  
types of veggies demoed



**589**  
cooking demos



**11,278**  
cooking demo participants

**200%** 

increase in produce distributed since the beginning of program in 2014 (that's an increase from 300,085 to 880,709 pounds by food shelf partners)

# Around the Nation

## Food Pantries Try Nutritional Nudging to Encourage Good Food Choices

Aired November 7, 2016, on National Public Radio's *All Things Considered*. Reprinted here with permission.

You see “nudging” all of the time at the grocery store, but you probably don’t realize it. Think 12-packs of soda stacked in a pyramid near the register, or tortilla chips and salsa placed side-by-side at the end of an aisle.

“Nudging”—a sales tactic that tries to make food look more appealing and easy to reach—encourages people to buy something. And as several food banks around the country have been learning, the tactic works well.

Sharing Life Community Outreach in Mesquite, Texas, looks more like a small grocery store than a food pantry. Its two aisles offer more than canned goods and dried beans. The shelves are loaded with chicken, greens, cauliflower, and fresh berries.

“Cilantro, I want some cilantro,” says Shelecia Morris, as she bypasses the bread, cookies and potatoes. She’s also loading up on eggs, poultry and fruit.

Morris has been to Sharing Life many times and says she eats better because of it: “I look at the different brands that they have, like the organic. I found out that it’s very good, so I try to eat as healthy as I can with what I can get.”

One swap she recently made? Whole wheat pasta instead of regular.

“It just looked good, so ... why not?” she says.

Whole wheat pasta just happens to be one of the foods Sharing Life is “nudging.” It has a prominent spot on the shelf, where it’s easy to see and grab. Signs touting its health benefits hang nearby, explaining how whole grains may improve cholesterol and lower the risk of diabetes.



“Our goal is to try to educate people and not just shove a package of whole wheat spaghetti in their car and say, ‘try to deal with this,’” says Teresa Jackson, executive director of Sharing Life. “We know it tastes different. We want them to understand why we want them to take this product.”

Sharing Life and a dozen other food pantries in Texas, New Jersey and

Colorado participated in a study conducted by Cornell University and Feeding America, where Christine Rivera is a registered dietitian.

Rivera describes “nudges” as “cues that help us make decisions, especially in our food environment.”

Sometimes a nudge is as simple as putting food like brown rice in two different spots, and leaving the white rice on a single shelf.

For the study, a short list of “foods to encourage” was compiled: whole wheat bread, oatmeal, onions, cabbage, oranges and carrots.

Cabbage bins were elevated, so people wouldn’t have to stoop. Glossy photos of oranges were hung in food pantry waiting areas. Boxes of oatmeal were stacked next to a sign that said “Fills you longer,” in both English and Spanish.

The end result? “Nudging” led to a 46 percent increase in people taking home at least one of the featured foods.

It’s not a highly technical tactic, but Sharing Life has research that proves it’s working.

“At the beginning of the project, we only had about 14 percent of our clients willingly taking the brown rice and the brown pasta,” Jackson says. “But after we created these nudges, it went from 14 to 44. As they’ve tried new things, that makes them more willing to try new things in the future.”

Morris is proud to count herself as one of the converts.

“I really appreciate just being able to come in to get food, because sometimes you don’t know where you’re going to get it from,” she says.

People living in poverty don’t always have a lot of choices when it comes to putting food on the table, but the study suggests that “nudging” may not only help change mealtime but overall wellness.



Save  
the  
Date

## Upcoming Events

### Magic Hat Mardi Gras Burlington, Vermont March 11, 2017

Mark your calendar for the weekend of March 11. This year's Mardi Gras is not to be missed! Magic Hat is back with an exciting new lineup of events and performances culminating in a truly epic Mardi Gras parade—all to benefit the Vermont Foodbank. Last year's event raised over \$17,000 for our neighbors struggling with hunger.



Join us to make this year even better by signing up to volunteer, running in the Fun Run, or celebrating at one of the many great events around town. Visit our website soon for more information: [www.vtfoodbank.org/event/mardi-gras](http://www.vtfoodbank.org/event/mardi-gras).

### Hunger Action Conference

#### Killington, Vermont Friday, May 5, 2017

On **Friday, May 5**, the Vermont Foodbank is hosting its annual **Hunger Action Conference** at the Killington Grand Resort Hotel and Conference Center in Killington, Vermont.

Join us for a daylong conference to learn, share, and network so that we can better ensure that all of our neighbors have the food they need to thrive. This is an excellent opportunity for us to unite, share our successes and challenges, and learn from the experts. It takes all of us in the community to end hunger in Vermont—nonprofits, community and business leaders, volunteers, advocates, elected officials, and individuals are all encouraged to join.



Mark your calendar for May 5, and check our website in the coming months for more information: [www.vtfoodbank.org](http://www.vtfoodbank.org).

## Event Update Share the Love—Twin City Subaru

Thanks to the incredible efforts of Twin City Subaru during this year's Share the Love Event, Subaru of America will donate an estimated \$25,000 to the Vermont Foodbank. For every new Subaru sold or leased during Share the Love event, Subaru donated \$250 to a charity of the customer's choice.

For the fourth consecutive year, Twin City Subaru spent its holiday season making sure they raised the most possible funds to feed our neighbors. They worked tirelessly

to raise awareness about the issue of hunger in our state and encouraged their customers to choose the Foodbank for their charity. Because of their efforts in the past four years, Subaru of America has donated more than \$100,000.

We are so grateful to Twin City Subaru, Subaru of America, and everyone who purchased a new Subaru during this year's Share the Love Event. They helped make this a joyful holiday season for all of our neighbors.



For all the latest information, visit our website at [www.vtfoodbank.org](http://www.vtfoodbank.org)

We're very social! Join us on:



Gather. Share. Nurture.

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