During these challenging times, your support is more important than ever. As Vermont bands together to meet the increasing and shifting need, you are keeping food on the table for people who need it most.
In this confusing and turbulent time, the Vermont Foodbank is focused on the core mission — making sure that neighbors who are facing hunger have enough nourishing food to eat in order to remain healthy. That’s kids who are no longer in school, parents who have been laid off, and older Vermonters who are trying to keep meals on the table while they stay safe from the coronavirus. The need for food assistance has increased drastically during this time of crisis. We are transforming our business models on the fly, coordinating with emergency responders and our fellow nonprofits, and working hard to feed our neighbors in the safest way possible. Nutritious food is critical to maintaining good health, so it is more important than ever to reach neighbors in need.

Thanks to your support, we are hard at work ensuring that all of your neighbors have access to the food they need in whatever circumstances come our way. You are playing a critical role as we navigate this crisis and put our neighbors facing hunger at the center of our response.

Thank You!

John Sayles
CEO
Tom is a volunteer EMT who is helping with front line response during the coronavirus outbreak. Because his taxi business had to shut down, he has no income and his bills are piling up. Thanks to you, at least there’s food on the table.

“This is really impacting me big time. I had to apply for food stamps so that I could have some way to eat while being on the front lines of the coronavirus.”

Tom is a small business owner and volunteer Emergency Medical Technician (EMT) living in Vergennes, VT. He’s normally able to make ends meet and pay his bills on time, but due to the coronavirus outbreak, his taxi business had to shut down. He now has no income.

For the first time ever, Tom doesn’t know how he’s going to pay his bills and keep food on the table for himself and his kids.

He’s trying to persuade his phone company and auto loan holder to allow him to defer payment on those bills so that he doesn’t lose access to his van, phone, and internet, all of which are especially important for Tom as an EMT at the forefront of the coronavirus response.

“I need to have my van so I can get to the rescue. I need to have my phone to get critical updates from the CDC and from [the hospital],” he shares.

Fortunately, thanks to donors like you, help is there to keep food on Tom’s table while he navigates these challenges. He reached out to the Foodbank and we were able to help him apply for 3SquaresVT, a program that can help him purchase groceries during this hard time. He’ll also visit his local food shelf so his family doesn’t have to go without the food they need during the outbreak. And because of you, the shelves will be stocked.

“It’s really hard right now,” says Tom. “Until this passes, there’s not much else we can do other than surf the wave and not go under.”
Standing together to support neighbors during the coronavirus

As a result of the coronavirus the need for accessible, nourishing food is increasing daily, staff are working long hours, and we're shifting our business model on the fly. But there's a spirit of camaraderie in the air, of dedication, loyalty, and love. Here's what Foodbanker Joshua had to say about the Saturday morning he spent packing food:

“Despite social distancing, I’ve never felt closer to my colleagues than this past week when a group of us spent time sorting and packing food to be sent out to food shelves around the state. In the back of my mind, each 15 to 35 pound box of food that I moved from conveyor belt to scale to pallet became a full belly for a Vermont child, a table laid out with a healthy meal for a family, and a package of staple food items for an older Vermonter living in a corner of our little state.

Over the course of the day, what became clear to me was how much of a difference generosity and compassion for each other can and will make in this challenging time. This caring comes in the form of donated money, donated time, and donated food, and it all comes together on the floor of the warehouse, where it’s sorted, packed, shipped, and delivered to someone who may have gone to bed hungry were it not for the efforts of everyone involved. It’s an all-hands-on-deck time for Vermont right now. People are giving all that they can to make sure all of us come through this healthier and stronger than before.

By the end of my shift, my arms hurt, my back hurt, and my feet hurt. My colleagues, I’m sure, felt the same way. But that’s a small price to pay for what I got out of the experience. Though we were six feet apart while we worked, and while many of you may be miles and miles from the Foodbank, I left my shift knowing that we are all standing shoulder to shoulder, supporting our neighbors, and caring for all of Vermont, and I am grateful for that.

These are challenging times, and there’s a long road ahead. Yet here at the Foodbank, we are witnessing the strength and beauty of the human spirit as our community comes together as never before.

We all play a role in keeping Vermont fed. Thanks for being there.
We are here to help neighbors during the coronavirus, because of you.
When restaurants closed down due to the coronavirus, Megan and her partner found themselves unemployed and wondering how they would make ends meet. But help was there, because of donors like you.

Megan and her partner are food servers at restaurants in Burlington, VT. But since these restaurants have closed due to the coronavirus, they are now both unemployed.

Before the restaurant closed, Megan was afraid for her health. “I was really concerned about coming in,” she said. “[The last night I worked] I just washed my hands like 50 times during the shift.” Then everything changed before her next shift, and she has been unemployed since.

“Because we don’t know when we’ll be able to work again, we’re being really conscientious. Every dollar counts.”
Megan and her partner were planning to move to Michigan in mid-April, but they postponed those plans. Since they had already arranged to move out of their apartment, they are scrambling to find housing, which is extremely challenging right now.

“We just don’t know how long this is going to last. All we know now is that it is going to get worse.”

While struggling through a stressful housing situation and facing the realities of unemployment, they’ve been worried about how to keep food on the table.

To support their former employees, the restaurant where Megan worked gave their staff the food they had left in their inventory. “We went in last week to get some free eggs and stuff like that.” But that won’t last and Megan needs a longer term solution to keep food on the table during this crisis.

“We went to the store a couple of weeks ago with the intention of not going back for as long as we could possibly hold out. So just buying in bulk, and buying cheap food — dried beans, potatoes, pasta — things that will last that are as cheap as possible.”

“Because we don’t know when we’ll be able to work again, we’re being really conscientious. Every dollar counts. Anything to kind of make the money that we have now stretch a little further is helpful.”

Thanks to the generous support of donors like you, Megan has help keeping food on the table. She approached the Vermont Foodbank, and we were able to help her apply for 3SquaresVT, a program that can help her provide groceries for her family.

“I reached out pretty much as soon as we lost our jobs,” said Megan. “It’s been really helpful!”

During times like these it is especially critical that we all work together to take care of each other.
During a time of emergency, the Vermont Foodbank is here to help

Everyone has been impacted by the coronavirus outbreak. So many people have lost jobs, business owners are shutting their doors, parents have become full-time home-schooling teachers, and social distancing is making it hard for people to care for older family members and neighbors.

At the Foodbank, we’re hearing all these stories and more. And we’re working hard so that no one goes hungry during these challenging times.

With help from donors, the Foodbank is providing emergency hunger relief to every county in Vermont. We’ve adapted our practices quickly to ensure we’re helping to stop the spread of the virus while getting people the food they need. For instance, this has meant offering curbside pickup of pre-boxed and bagged fruits, veggies, and pantry staples during fresh food delivery events.

One Vermont resident who attended a fresh food delivery that you support told us, “If it weren’t for these programs, I wouldn’t have fresh produce.”

As the weeks go by, the need in our communities continues to grow. You can make sure the Vermont Foodbank is always there to help.

It costs just $50 to feed a family for a week. Will you make a gift today?

If you’re a sustaining monthly donor, please consider increasing your monthly gift to help with increased need.