



Perry County Food Bank

300A South Carlisle Street

New Bloomfield, PA 17068

Phone: 717-582-9978 • Fax: 717-582-9979

E-mail: pcfoodbank@perryco.org

Website: www.perrycountyfoodbank.org

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“Working at the Food Bank with my kids is an eye-opener. The face of hunger isn’t the bum on the street drinking Sterno; it’s the working poor. They don’t look any different, they don’t behave any differently, they’re not really any less educated. They are incredibly less privileged, and that’s it.” Mario Batali

For March, we served 1,229 households and 2,980 individuals and in April we served 1,256 households and 3,062 individuals. In March we had 35 new households and 82 new individuals who signed up to use our services. In April, the numbers were 59 new households and 152 new individuals. This is about a 60% rise in new people and households signing up since March. This sudden jump in new people signing up is unusual at this time of year and we are concerned with what may be happening in the economy that would be driving this.

If you have been following us on FaceBook you have noticed a lot more activity there than in the past. That’s because we welcome Stacey Burton-Alcocer as a volunteer who specializes in social media and has a passion for feeding those in need in rural America. She is especially concerned with poor nutrition that is frequently present in lower income families. You will notice that her posts on FaceBook touch on those very issues where she shares great ideas to make more nutritious meals with the foods available from the food bank.

We have just received notice that the Perry County Community Foundation has approved a grant application, which will allow us to upgrade our outdated computers and computer network. It will also allow us to upgrade software, which is no longer supported by Microsoft. This grant is a godsend to us and we are so grateful to the Foundation for their consideration and generosity.

It is spring and it is time to get planting in our gardens. Burpee Seeds graciously donated seeds for our clients again this year and they were offered during the last month-and-a-half. Those are now gone and as May arrives we will be offering pepper and tomato plants for our customers as well. Those plants are courtesy of New Blooms in Duncannon as well as Butchers Farm Market in Newport. We encourage our customers to grow some of their own food to save money; have a ready supply of fresh produce; and to also help them to become a little more self-sufficient.

Along with our customer’s gardens, our demonstration garden is also taking shape under the guidance of Terry Fisher, Bruce Woolever, and the Perry County Master Gardeners. They have been helped on Wednesday afternoons by some of the cadets from Carson Long Military Academy. The Master Gardeners will be running a demonstration and program in the garden next to the food bank on Saturday morning, May 14th from 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon. Everyone is invited and encouraged to come and join them for “Family Garden Day” with hands-on activities for youth and families.

April saw us recognizing and celebrating Volunteer Appreciation Week and our great group of volunteers who give so much of their time to keep things running smoothly here in New Bloomfield. It was also Administrative Assistant’s Day on April 27th and both of us found ourselves living out Ephesians 5:20 and “...always giving thanks to God the Father for everything, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ” as we gratefully acknowledged the work that Wanda Nearhood and Linda Kiner do for us on a daily basis. All of our volunteers make our work so much easier and enjoyable. We are truly humbled to be in the positions where we have been placed.

Linda Bates & John Kiner
Co-directors, Perry County Food Bank