



Perry County Food Bank

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"I went to bed hungry many nights as a child. It was a Dream that dressed me up when I was ragged, and it was a Dream that filled me up when I was hungry. Now it's my Dream to see that no child in this world ever goes hungry, certainly not here in America, the most bountiful country in the world. We can do better...we must!" — Dolly Parton

September is Hunger Action Month – a month where people all over America stand together with Feeding America and the nationwide network of food banks to fight hunger. It's a month to take action on the hunger crisis, and dedicate ourselves to a solution.

The Society of St. Andrew is a grassroots, faith-based, hunger relief nonprofit working with all denominations to bridge the hunger gap between 133 billion pounds of food wasted every year in the United States and the nearly 40 million Americans who live in poverty. According to them, "more than 40 million people in the United States today are hungry or food insecure. Yet in this country, we will throw away over 133 billion pounds of good food this year. As people of faith, it is time for us to take action—to say that this situation is unacceptable and to do something about it."

The Perry County Food Bank functions as the last link in a chain that gets food from various sources around the country and locally, including St. Andrew, into the hands of people in Perry County who need it. For years good nutritious food from supermarkets, convenience stores, restaurants, and farm markets was routinely thrown into dumpsters or onto compost piles because it was reaching its sell by date or it was surplus. Organizations like St. Andrew and food banks around the country have been drawing attention to this fact and educating companies and organizations about this wasteful practice and now that situation is changing.

We thought that you would be interested in knowing that in Perry County that has changed. Since the two of us have been at the Food Bank, Weis and Giant have donated all of their day-old bakery items to Bread of Life Outreach and ourselves. Giant has been pulling all of their meat from their cases in all of their stores at code (sell by date), putting it into banana boxes and freezing it and then shipping it to the Central Pennsylvania Food Bank where we are able to purchase it for a small handling fee, making it available to our clients.

The Market Place in Shermans Dale has now been donating their bakery items as well. Karns donates their bakery items to the senior center in New Bloomfield. Stacy Butcher at Butcher's Farm Market donates produce and bakery items and Spiral Path Farms donates their excess produce. For the last year Sheetz has been donating their left-over sandwiches and discontinued items and now Rutters, which just opened up close to Sheetz on 322, is doing the same thing. More and more companies are seeing the wisdom in keeping perfectly good and nutritious food out of the landfills and getting it into the hands of the hungry in this country. It's a win-win situation for everyone.

In the month of August, our numbers were 1,088 households with 189 considered new and 2,565 individuals with 487 being new. In July we served 1,002 households with 759 of them being new and 2,350 individuals with 1,841 being new.

September has arrived, and with it, the start of a new school year. Our BackPack program will be sending their first weekend food home with students in need on Friday, September 21. Thanks to everyone who feels strongly about getting food to kids and who actively support this program as well as the work here at the Food Bank.

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