

Nourishing self-sufficiency

A recent report from the Greater Boston Food Bank revealed that nearly 50% of Hampshire County residents faced food insecurity last year. Even more concerning is why many people aren't seeking help.

The report highlighted three big hurdles:

- **Fear of judgment**
- **Worrying that others "need it more"**
- **Feelings of having to be self-reliant**

We understand why people might have those worries, but the reality is that coming to the pantry isn't a sign of failure; it's a **smart way to maintain self-sufficiency** by putting food on the table.

Why this matters

We all know that times are tough, and hardships appear to be worsening for many. But you can play a role in helping people get the food they need!

We envision a community where everyone knows about the Northampton Survival Center and what we do: folks offer their neighbors rides to pick up groceries and friends spread the word that there is plenty of food for everyone—no judgment, just a warm welcome.

In this issue you'll see what that community looks like in action. This awareness will help you be **an ambassador of positivity**, making sure everyone knows they are always welcome here.

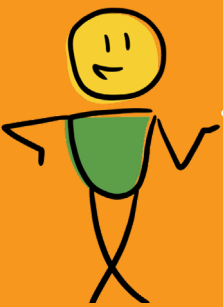


Keeping kids fueled all summer long

It's time for our Kids' Summer Food Program (KSFP)! Each summer, we distribute extra food to families with school-aged children to make up for the lack of free breakfasts and lunches kids get during the academic year.

We know that hunger doesn't take a vacation, so we stock up on kid-friendly foods like mandarin oranges, strawberries, peanut butter and jelly, macaroni and cheese, and other items kids can make at home. Each week, KSFP groceries are accompanied by punny stickers, kid-classic recipes like homemade popsicles and "ants on a log," and fun facts about whatever special produce kids are taking home that week.





More than just a label

Have you noticed how often we use the word “you” in this newsletter? If you’re a donor or a volunteer, you might wonder why it sounds like things are directed at clients.

But there’s an important reason for our wording. When we break down the labels that divide us, we create a sense of belonging that makes it easier for people to reach out for help.

Everyone is welcome

The truth is, our community doesn’t fit into neat little boxes. If you’re trying to guess who is a client, a volunteer, a donor, or a staffer, you’re in for a surprise. On any given day, you will find

- single dads
- college students
- people with disabilities
- immigrants
- gardeners
- healthcare workers
- folks new to the area
- artists
- senior citizens

In fact, for every identity listed above, we’ve had at least one client, one volunteer, one donor, and one staff member who fit the description. We don’t just serve the community; we *are* the community. Help us spread the word that everyone is welcome here, regardless of circumstance.

We like you just the way you are!

There is PLENTY for everyone.

Smart shopping starts here

Think of the Northampton Survival Center as a genius life-hack: just like you’d double-check your flashlight batteries and stock up on food before a big storm, using the Center is a savvy way to stay ahead of whatever life throws your way.

We encourage our clients to make the Center their first stop for fresh produce, milk, bread, and staples like pasta, tuna, and peanut butter. Starting with us means it’s suddenly much easier to stretch a limited budget at the grocery store for specific ingredients or household essentials. It’s all about working smarter, not harder, to feed your family.

When you don’t have to worry about where your next meal is coming from, you’re free to focus on being the best version of yourself. Whether you’re a parent, student, caregiver, or friend, proper nutrition helps you direct your energy to the people and goals that matter most. Being well-nourished is not only good for your own well-being, it’s good for the whole community!



You’ll find community here, not judgment

No English? No problem! Our clients love working with volunteers who speak their language! But even when we don’t have someone on staff fluent in a visitor’s language, we have tools at the ready to try our best, including menus printed in most major languages and translating devices that work in real-time. Some joyful exchanges between volunteers and clients have included sharing phrases in different languages, like how to say “good morning” in Arabic (*sabah al-khayr*) or sign a playful “I really love you!” in ASL.



Stories of delivering community care & connection

Volunteers enjoy visiting a delivery client who regularly sings to them during their weekly visits. But one particular morning, the client announced, “There’s one day a year I don’t sing to others—my birthday!” In response, the volunteers and staff circled around him and sang a lively rendition of “Happy Birthday,” much to his delight.

At the Fresh Van, a client shared that he needed to follow a strict organic diet for medical reasons. After choosing the organic produce he could use, he left without looking at the meat selection. But Xio, our Delivery & Care Coordinator, discovered a package of organic sausages and brought them to the client’s door—a welcome surprise!



Some of our best ideas come from the people we serve! Our Client Advocacy and Program Committees bring clients and volunteers together, and their shared insights shape our services and help us meet the needs of everyone using the pantry.



THIS IS CRAIG. He knows your name when you drive up to get groceries, speaks fluent Spanish, remembers you prefer everything bagels, and even brings Fido a treat to enjoy in the car while you wait.

We believe in abundance, not scarcity

If you need food, it’s our job to make sure there’s enough for everyone, so ask for what you need and rest assured that you’re never taking food away from someone else! Our shelves are stocked for every client who comes for groceries and we’re eager to send you home with what you need.



Become a monthly Bread & Butter donor and send our postcards to spread the word

Every year our monthly donors receive a set of postcards designed specifically for the Center by local artists. We share the postcards with donors not only as a way to express our gratitude for their support, but also because each time someone sends a card to a friend or neighbor, they’re helping spread the word about the Northampton Survival Center and our efforts to feed the community.



Community is the secret ingredient.

The more people engage with us, the more the Center becomes a comfortable place for everyone.

You can help us reduce the feeling of stigma by:

- ☐ Picking up a “Proud Supporter” window cling at the Center and displaying it on your car or in your office
- ☐ Sharing our posts on social media
- ☐ Asking a neighbor if they need a ride to pick up groceries
- ☐ Telling people why you support the Center and what resources they can find here



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Northampton Survival Center is an
Equal Opportunity provider.



We're a Local Hero!
When sourcing
food for clients, we
buy fresh produce
from local providers
whenever possible.



United Way of the Franklin
& Hampshire Region

Northampton Survival Center

265 Prospect Street
Northampton, MA 01060
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northamptonssurvival.org

Make a splash!

Dive into action this summer and volunteer with us

More than 150 volunteers help us each week with everything from restocking shelves to delivering groceries. Want to join us this summer?

We're especially looking for:

- **Teachers, college students, and others who are free for the summer** and looking for a fulfilling volunteer gig. Though most of our volunteers work a weekly shift year-round, we appreciate having a roster of people ready to sub in if a regular volunteer is out of town.
- **Delivery volunteers.** Join us at the Fresh Van every week for a festive farmers' market atmosphere, or help us deliver groceries directly to folks who can't get to the Center.
- **People who speak Spanish, Arabic, and other languages.** Some days, we hear Polish, Mandarin, and Haitian Creole in the pantry, so we can always use more bilingual volunteers.



Welcoming fresh faces

We asked our four newest team members for one of their **go-to weeknight recipes** using the kind of ingredients you can find here at the pantry.



Julia Lemieux, Hilltown Pantry Manager

I make an omelet with greens—chard, spinach, or collards will work. Sauté them with butter, onions, and peppers, and warm spices like cumin and chili. Pour the egg into a separate pan, add cooked greens and cheese, and fold it over. You can top it with herbs and serve it with potatoes or toast. Breakfast for dinner!



Andy de la Torre Santoyo, Pantry Manager

I make a lot of rice and beans. I prefer cooking dried beans from scratch, but I use canned beans if I'm in a hurry. Sometimes I add carrots or peas to the rice or use tortillas to make tacos. It's easy to change it up to use ingredients I have on hand.



Xio Aponte, Delivery & Care Coordinator

I bake sweet potatoes in an oven with olive oil and sea salt until they're caramelized. Then, on the stovetop, I add garlic and onion powders and adobo to season some ground beef. Plate the sweet potatoes, then the meat, and top with shredded cheese. Yummy!



Danielle Rossoni, Volunteer Manager

My go-to weeknight meal is a rice bowl—usually with canned tuna as protein, some leafy greens, and seasonal produce. I like to roast sliced cabbage and onions in the oven for crunchy, caramelized goodness. I often make enough for multiple meals and trade out different ingredients to mix it up throughout the week.