

SPRING 2026

# THE INSIDE SCOOP

PARTNER  
FOOD BANK OF  
**FEEDING  
AMERICA**

**SECOND HARVEST**  
**FOODBANK**  
OF SOUTHERN WISCONSIN



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Platinum  
Transparency  
2026

**Candid.**

Charity  
Navigator



FOUR-STAR

**FROM THE PRESIDENT'S DESK**

Last November, the government shutdown exposed a stark reality: too many families are just one crisis away from hunger. With 1 in 4 families in this country living paycheck to paycheck, even one missed paycheck or delay in food assistance can mean empty refrigerators and cupboards and impossible choices between rent, medication, and groceries.

**Hunger in southwestern Wisconsin doesn't begin or end with a government shutdown.** Even in less tumultuous times, despite most families having someone working one or more jobs, nearly 147,000 people—including 40,000 children—live in households that can't always afford enough nourishing food.

Thanks to our supporters, Second Harvest Foodbank, community groups, faith-based organizations, and schools had the resources to respond with more food during the shutdown to fill the gap (see "Community First During The Shutdown" on page 6), but we cannot simply return to "business as usual." The need for strong, consistent support—both from policymakers and from members of the community—remains as urgent as ever.

Each of us has a role. By investing in Second Harvest Foodbank and our network of resource providers and endorsing policies that uphold nutrition assistance and equitable wages, we fortify the broader safety net.

The end of the shutdown is not the end of the story—it's an opportunity to recommit to the work ahead. Hunger doesn't wait for Washington to get its act together, and neither can we. If this crisis has reminded us of anything, it's that the strength of our nation depends on how we care for those who need support the most. **The lights may be back on in government buildings, but the real work—the work of feeding families and building a more secure future—must keep going.**



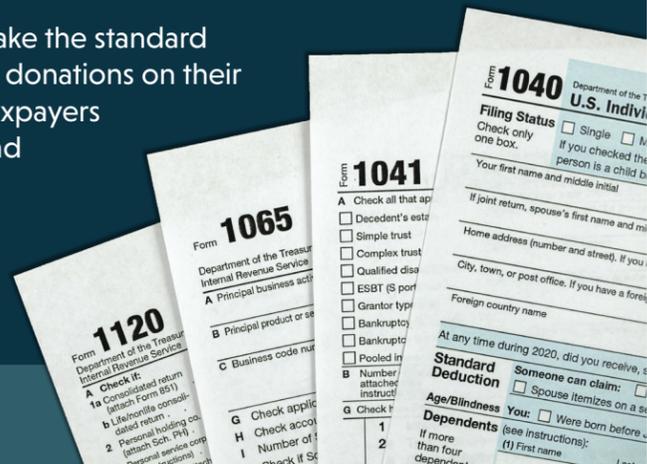
*Michelle*  
Michelle Orge  
President & Executive Director

**MAXIMIZE YOUR 2026 CHARITABLE DEDUCTIONS**

Some of you may not have filed your 2025 taxes yet, but it's never too early to think about how the charitable gifts you make in 2026 can impact your overall tax responsibility next year.

According to TaxFoundation.org, in recent years, taxpayers who take the standard deduction have not typically been able to deduct their charitable donations on their tax returns. Now, thanks to a recent change made by Congress, taxpayers can deduct an additional \$1,000 in charitable donations above and beyond the standard deduction they can take in tax year 2026.

**Talk to your financial advisor about how this and other tax law changes enacted may impact your charitable giving in 2026.**



# ANNUAL REPORT

FISCAL YEAR 2025 | JULY 2024 - JUNE 2025

As I reflect on Fiscal Year 2025, I am filled with deep gratitude and pride—for our team, our partners, our financial supporters, and our community. It was a year marked by continued uncertainty, persistent pressure on household budgets, and an ongoing level of need far higher than anything we experienced just a few years ago.

Through determination, collaboration, and an unwavering commitment to our mission, Second Harvest Foodbank of Southern Wisconsin distributed 26.3 million pounds of food to neighbors across southwestern Wisconsin. But that is more than just a number. It represents families putting dinner on the table, children able to focus at school, and seniors choosing nourishment over impossible tradeoffs.

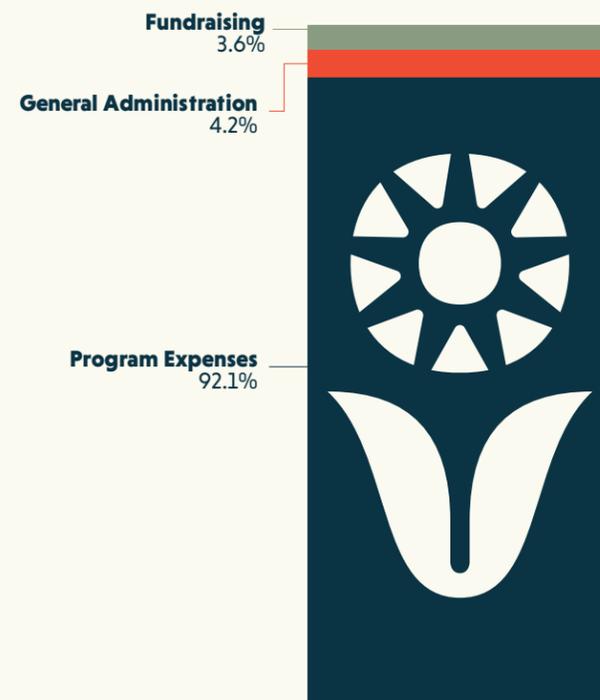
Meeting this level of demand was not easy. Rising food and transportation costs, along with growing gaps in safety net programs, required us to adapt quickly and often. But together, we worked tirelessly

to ensure that no challenge became a barrier to supporting our neighbors.

What FY25 reinforced is that effective food banking depends not only on logistics and scale, but on listening. Asking for, receiving, and using community voice has become central to how we make decisions. Through multiple guest surveys and meetings with local community leaders, we learned more about who we are supporting, how they would like to be supported, the types of food we should look to source, and strengthened our collaborations with other resource providers in the community.

Your trust and support make this work possible. Together, we are strengthening our network, sourcing nutritious food, and ensuring that community voices guide our path forward. Thank you for standing with us as we continue working toward a future where everyone in southwestern Wisconsin has the food they need to thrive.

**TOTAL EXPENSES**  
\$55,097,750\*



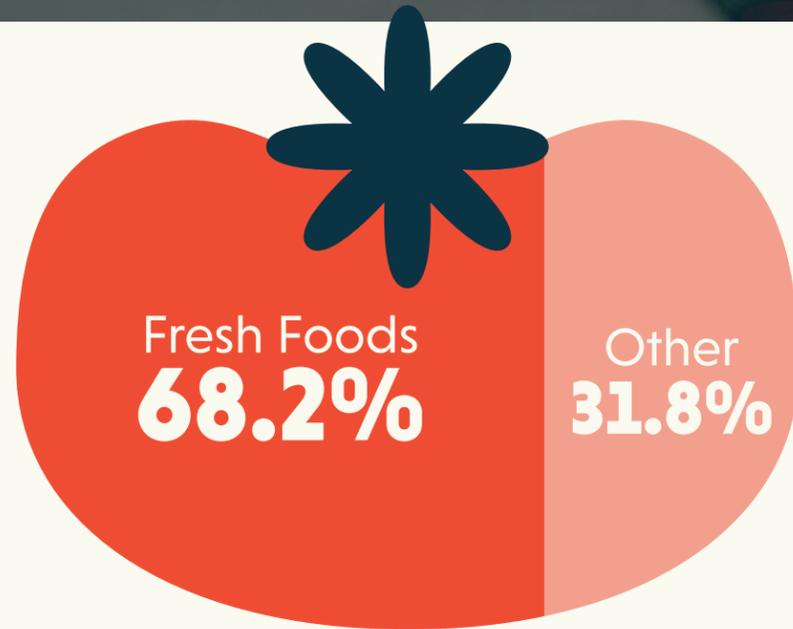
**TOTAL REVENUE**  
\$55,851,726\*‡



\*Based on Adjusted Financials ending June 30, 2025.

‡ Excludes \$3,750,906 in revenue for future capital expenditure

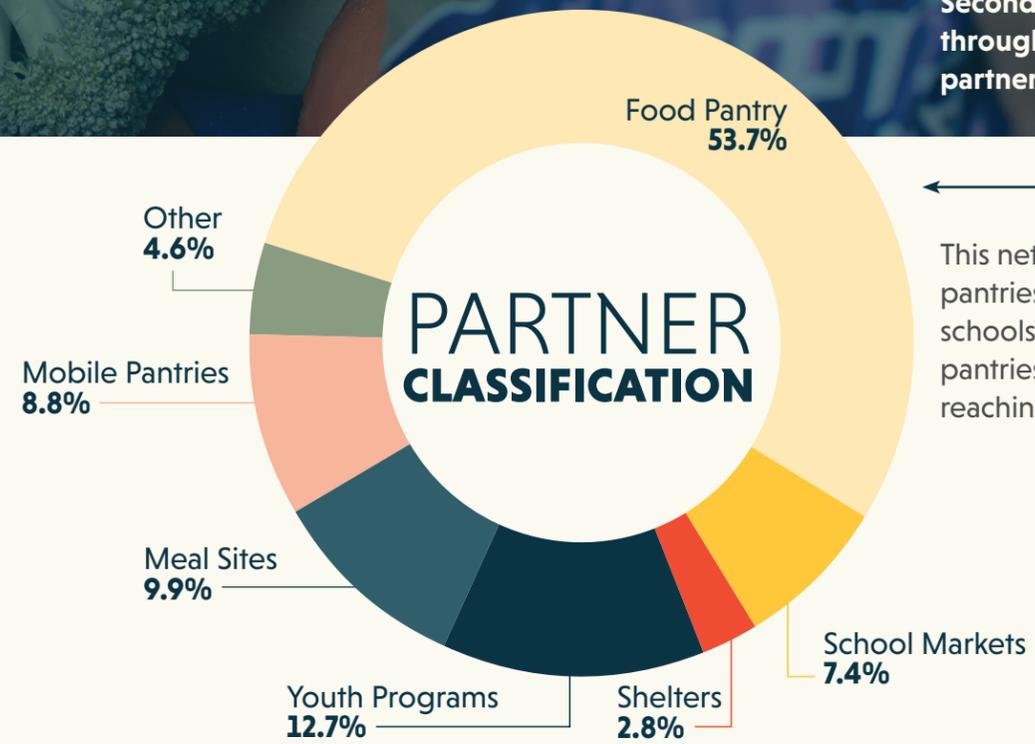
Efficiency, partnership, and purpose drive our food distribution efforts. Second Harvest sources and distributes millions of pounds of food annually through a system designed to maximize impact and minimize waste. **The highlights that follow showcase how this work translates into real support for thousands of neighbors facing hunger across southwestern Wisconsin.**



**Of the millions of pounds of food we received...**

**68.2% were the essential ingredients of nourishing meals**—fresh produce, protein, dairy, and grains.

These foods form the foundation of healthy eating, helping neighbors prepare meals that fuel their bodies and support long-term well-being.



**Second Harvest's work is made possible through a diverse network of nearly 300 partners and programs.**

This network includes 152 food pantries, along with meal sites, shelters, schools, youth programs, and mobile pantries—each playing a vital role in reaching neighbors where they are.

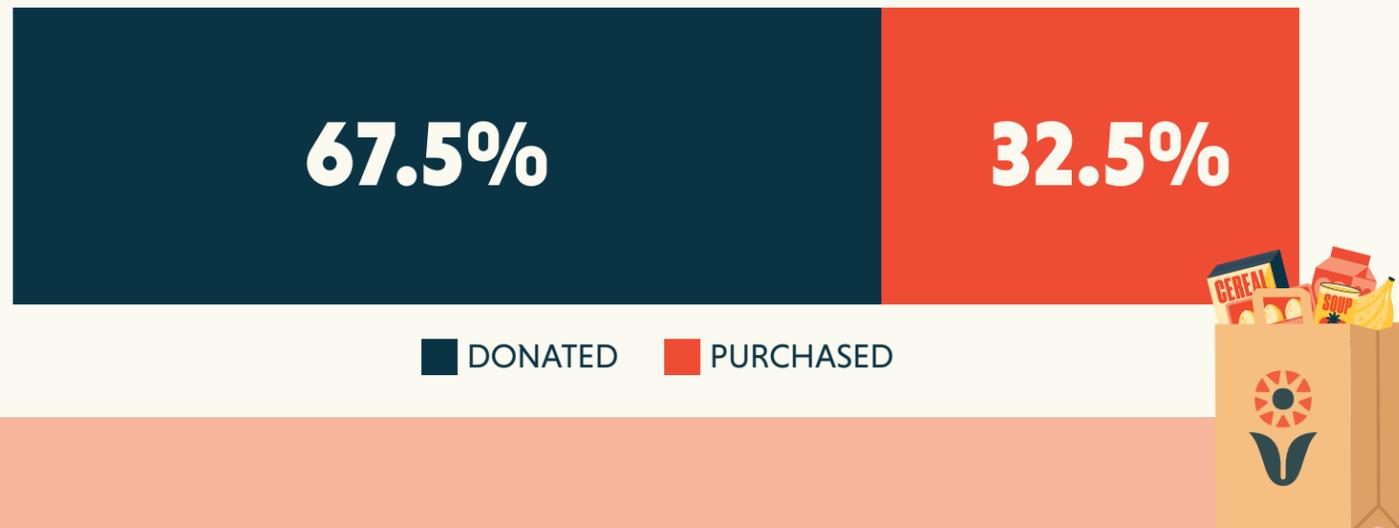
**Together, these partners help ensure food is accessible, welcoming, and responsive to the unique needs of the communities they serve.**

**POUNDS DONATED & DISTRIBUTED**

Of the 26.3 million pounds we distributed this fiscal year, donations made up the majority of our food supply—**more than 18.4 million pounds.**

When donated food alone could not fully meet demand, Second Harvest strategically purchased food to ensure families had reliable access to the nutritious staples they needed. **This approach helps maximize impact while using resources responsibly.**

**FY25 POUNDS DISTRIBUTED**



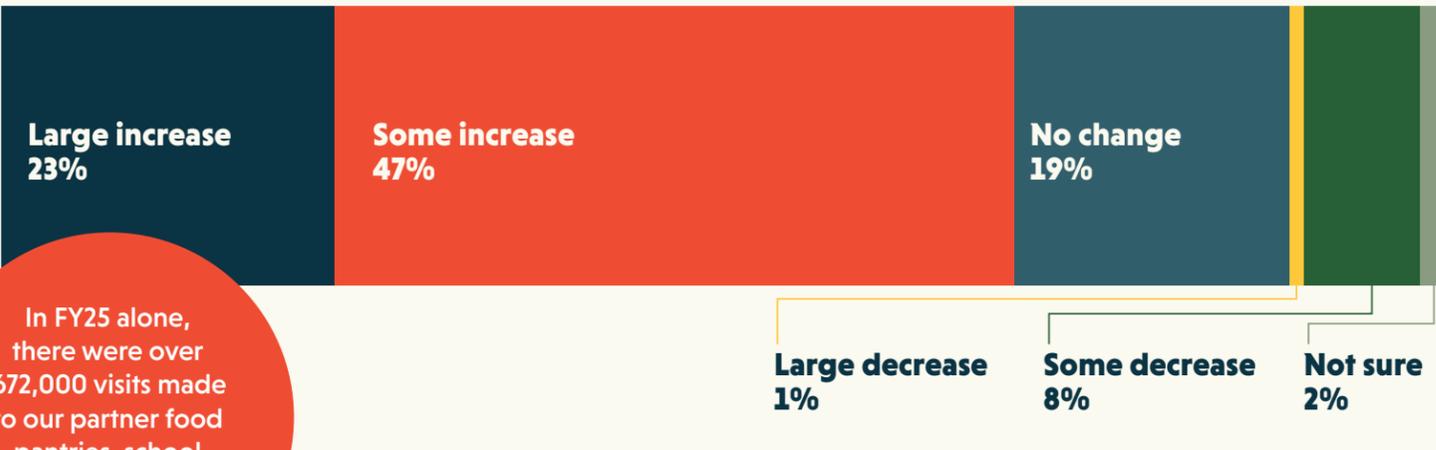
**SECOND HARVEST IN THE COMMUNITY**

- **Our Community Voice team received over 3,300 guest surveys** and gained valuable insights about who our guests are, where they come from, the other food resources they access, their food preferences, and more. These insights inform our work so we can provide the right support for each community.
- Second Harvest staff connected community members facing hunger with **nearly \$2.6 million in FoodShare benefits**, which provided nearly \$4 million in economic activity to communities throughout our 16-county service area. FoodShare—Wisconsin's name for the federal SNAP program—provides an invaluable resource for our community.



## INCREASES IN PEOPLE SEEKING FOOD RESOURCES

In the 12 months preceding our April 2025 survey, **70% of our partners reported an increase in guests, underscoring the growing need for food assistance across southwestern Wisconsin.** This trend highlights the critical role Second Harvest and our network of partners play in ensuring families and individuals have consistent access to nourishing food.



In FY25 alone, there were over 672,000 visits made to our partner food pantries, school markets, and mobile pantries.



## COMMUNITY FIRST DURING THE SHUTDOWN

When the extended federal government shutdown delayed November SNAP payments by seven days and furloughed thousands of federal workers, many of our neighbors suddenly faced urgent gaps in access to food. Second Harvest Foodbank of Southern Wisconsin launched an immediate crisis response—drawing on the same agility and whole-organization coordination that carried us through the COVID-19 pandemic.

### A RAPID OPERATIONAL RESPONSE

To stabilize food access across our 16-county service area, our Operations team moved quickly to increase the volume of food flowing to local communities. We doubled weekly produce shipments to partners, ensuring everyone from our largest food pantries to our smallest rural partners had access to nutrient-rich fresh food. We also significantly expanded orders of core nonperishables to maintain consistent inventory in the weeks ahead. **Mobile pantry allocations were adjusted upward by as much as 15% to meet rising need.**

### CONSTANT CONTACT WITH COMMUNITY

Throughout the shutdown, communication with our partner network was critical. We hosted two update calls to share real-time federal and state policy changes, joined by Feeding Wisconsin's Jackie Anderson, and to outline Second Harvest's expanded food distributions. Within days, we updated our Find Food website with additional information about resources so families could more easily locate help. We also coordinated closely with community collaborators, including the City of Madison, to align efforts.

### AN OUTPOURING OF COMMUNITY SUPPORT

During just two weeks, our team fielded dozens, if not hundreds, of calls and emails from neighbors eager to help. Many wanted to volunteer, while others asked how to donate food or funds. Our Volunteer Services team streamlined responses, enabling people to self-schedule volunteer shifts, and created a last-minute volunteer contact list to support rapid deployment. We also encouraged volunteers to engage civically through donating, voting, and advocacy.

### RECORD-BREAKING DONOR ENGAGEMENT

Our Development and Communications teams mobilized quickly as well. Within 48 hours, we launched a digital fundraising campaign that generated more than \$100,000 from both existing and new supporters. Many long-time donors increased their ongoing gifts, inspired by our decision to double the amount of produce distributed during the crisis.

### PLANNING FOR FUTURE SOLUTIONS

Finally, our Strategy team advanced planning for Harvest Wallet, a digital coupon program designed to provide another resource for families to access food of their choice from local retailers at a time that's convenient for them. Thanks to the Alliant Energy Foundation and the Madison Community Foundation, Harvest Wallet has since entered its pilot stage, assisting 350 families with school-aged children through partnerships with the Madison-based Community Action Coalition (CAC) and the Mauston and Ithaca school systems.

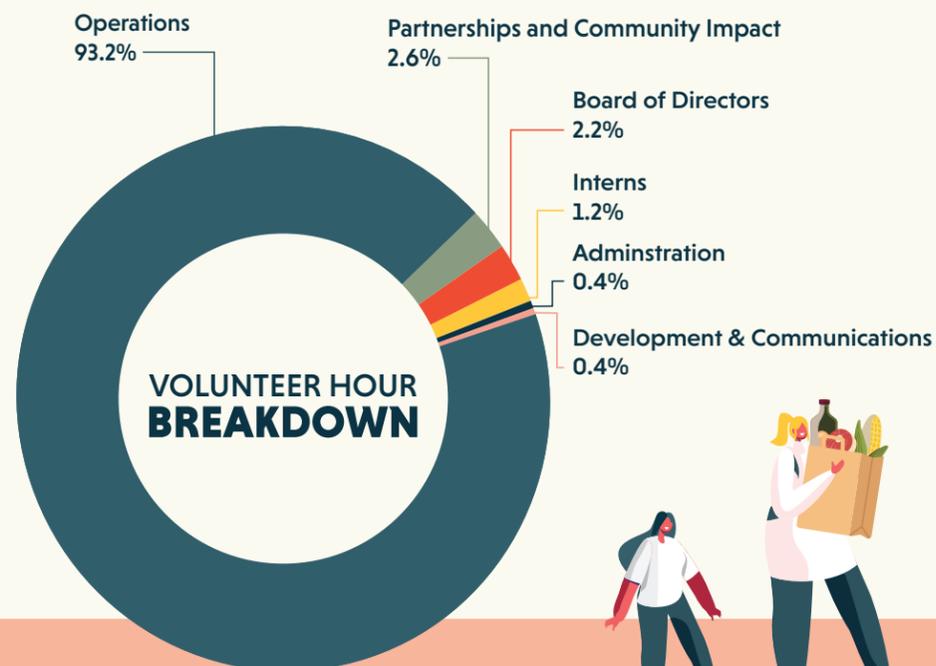
**Thanks to your generosity, Second Harvest was able to act quickly, communicate clearly, and deliver more support when our community needed it most.**

## VOLUNTEERS IN ACTION

Second Harvest's impact is fueled by thousands of volunteers who give their time and energy to support our mission.

**In FY25, volunteers donated 37,332 hours of service, representing a value of more than \$1.2 million.**

This remarkable commitment reflects the power of community and the critical role volunteers play in ensuring food reaches neighbors facing hunger.



## MESSIAH LUTHERAN BRINGS JOY THROUGH SERVICE

Every other Monday, a group from Messiah Lutheran Church volunteers at Second Harvest's distribution center to help sort, pack, and prepare food for our community. For many of them, it started as "just trying it once or twice," but the team spirit and mission quickly took root.

"The camaraderie and the purpose of what we're doing kind of grew on me," one volunteer said. **"Now it's to the point where you see the good that you're doing."**

From sorting produce to taking their break, fondly called "recess and a treat at 2:00," this group reminds us that joy, service, and community go hand in hand.

As one volunteer shared, "Every time I've been here, it's been a wonderful blend of fun, and you're not just having fun, you're doing something good at the same time."

Several reflect on how important access to food is, something they see firsthand. "Food insecurity just gets worse year after year," one volunteer said. "It's amazing how each of us can do something and contribute to help make it better."

They're part of a much bigger story, one where community members come together to make sure everyone has access to nourishing foods. "My primary purpose is to do something where I can help feed people," one volunteer shared.

**Did you know that Second Harvest relies on the work of 50 volunteers six days a week?** If you'd like to help, whether you join us once or find your own "every other Monday," there's a place for you here. Join our volunteer community and learn more at [secondharvestsw.org/volunteer](https://secondharvestsw.org/volunteer).

Messiah Lutheran was a 2025 WMTV Share Your Holidays Be Like Mike Award winner!

