Fighting Hunger, Feeding Hope
2018 marks the 35th anniversary of the Harry Chapin Food Bank. What a year we have had! We’ve come a long way from our humble beginnings as the Lee County Food Cooperative in 1983.

It seems a long time ago as I write this, but we were visited by Hurricane Irma in September 2017. I am so proud of our staff, volunteers, supporters, agencies, and community partners for the work they did in the months following the storm. The numbers are staggering: We distributed more than 3.9 million pounds of food, water and supplies in the weeks immediately following the storm through our partner agencies and in 72 public mass distributions. Irma challenged us to step up, and we did so. We are now clearly the largest emergency food supplier in Southwest Florida, outside of the Red Cross and FEMA, and the only one that is on the ground here all the time.

Our programs continue to grow. We are supporting more agencies than ever, along with a growing network of school pantries, senior programs, and mobile pantries. Our impact on the lives of people in need across Southwest Florida continues to expand. With about one in seven local residents experiencing hunger each year, our challenges are significant. But we are energetic, determined, and persistent, and we won’t stop until no one in Southwest Florida has to experience hunger any more.

We are looking forward to a successful year in fiscal year 2018-19. We’re as committed as ever to leading our community in the fight to end hunger. With our huge network of food donors and client service agencies, we’ve got a lot of hungry people to feed and lives to change. Without your support, none of that would be possible. Thank you.
Our impact

Thanks to YOU, our generous donors, the Harry Chapin Food Bank distributed 24 million pounds of food to more than 150 partner agencies in Lee, Collier, Charlotte, Glades and Hendry counties in fiscal year 2017-2018. That is the equivalent of 20 million meals, with a value of $41.5 million. We couldn’t do this without you.

Food Insecurity Map by County

Map the Meal Gap 2018; Feeding America (Data compiled from 2016)

Moving Forward

The food bank celebrated its 35th anniversary in 2018. We began as a small grassroots food cooperative in Lee County in 1983. Now we are the largest hunger-relief agency serving Lee, Collier, Charlotte, Glades and Hendry counties. We are proud, happy, committed and looking forward to the next 35 years!

Dave Ditter, warehouse staff member, unloads a truckload of food that will help feed our neighbors in need.
LORETTA

Loretta was walking through the aisles of the Gladiolus Food Pantry, a food bank partner agency in Fort Myers, with her son James. She had sweet mini peppers, zucchini, potatoes and fresh eggs in her shopping cart. James, 4, eagerly helped her pick out five carrots. Loretta said she also has another son, age 8. “Right now, I’m working part time,” she said. Loretta has not been receiving steady child support for the boys, and the bills add up, she said.

Many of the families we serve are faced with difficult choices.

- 80% Had to choose between food and utilities
- 73% Had to choose between food and transportation
- 75% Had to choose between food and healthcare

Hunger in America Study 2014, Feeding America
Why we are needed

One in seven of our neighbors doesn’t have reliable access to enough food for a healthy life. That means working-poor families go without food because they trade it off to pay bills. It means kids go without enough food to grow, develop, learn and excel. Seniors go without enough food to stay vigorous, contribute to their communities and stay well.

About 154,740 people in Southwest Florida are food insecure, which means they may not know where their next meal is coming from, according to Map the Meal Gap 2018, an annual study by Feeding America, Harry Chapin Food Bank’s national affiliate and the largest food bank network in the country. Of that number, about 47,320 are children.

What we do

The Harry Chapin Food Bank leads the largest hunger-relief network in Southwest Florida.

We rescue food that would otherwise go to waste and provide it to our partner agencies, which operate pantries, soup kitchens and programs for children, seniors and veterans, among other initiatives. We also serve clients directly through our mobile pantry program, called Fulfill, and our Care & Share: Senior Feeding Campaign. Our fleet of 18 refrigerated trucks travels over a quarter million miles a year, (the equivalent of more than 10 trips around the earth), to distribute food to our neighbors in need.

Whom we serve

The Harry Chapin Food Bank and its partner agencies feed about 28,000 people per week. Often, hunger results from trying to make ends meet, in the face of life emergencies. Our clients may have just lost a job or may be underemployed. They may have had an accident. They may be battling illness, struggling on a fixed income or dealing with the death of a loved one.
REGINA

Regina is in her early 70s. She picks up food for herself and a neighbor, who is partially blind, at one of the food bank’s partner agencies in Fort Myers. “I come here out of necessity,” she said. “I’ve worked all my life. This is the first time I’m in this situation.” Regina said she lost her pension when the hospital she was working for in another state was sold. She gets $14 per month in food stamps. Her family lives up north, and she doesn’t want them to know. “I thank God for Harry Chapin. Just think – without them, what would we do?” she asked.
Where our food comes from

Most of our food is donated by retailers, growers, food drives, Feeding America and Feeding Florida, a state association of food banks.

The government also supplies food through the Emergency Food and Shelter Program (EFSP), The Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP) and the Commodity Supplemental Food Program (CSFP).

We also purchase some food.

The Harry Chapin Food Bank is accredited by the American Institute of Baking (AIB), the gold standard for food safety.

MARBEL

Marbel, right, is married with four children. Her son, London, attends school at Pinecrest Elementary in Immokalee, where 100 percent of the students live below the poverty level. “I believe life is what you make of it, and I enjoy helping when I can and however I can. But sometimes, life just happens.” Marbel had to miss a lot of work due to her younger children’s medical evaluations. “I was left with the difficult decision of paying a necessary bill or buying groceries,” she said. The family doesn’t qualify for government assistance. “Sometimes, buying any kind of food feels out of reach.”
Collier County Center

The food bank opened the 13,500-square-foot Collier County Center in October 2017 to grow and expand services. The food bank distributed 5.1 million pounds of food in the last fiscal year in Collier County.
Just after Hurricane Irma hit on Sept. 10, 2017, the food bank was first on the scene to provide food to hard-hit areas. The Food Bank received more than 90 tractor-trailer truckloads of food, water and ice, and it distributed more than 3.9 million pounds of these supplies in the first six weeks after the storm. We held 72 mobile pantries in one month, more than triple the average. The food bank launched a “Recover, Rebuild, Restore” campaign to raise $500,000 to help families put their lives back together. The campaign exceeded its goal in six weeks.

*In the first six weeks after the storm.
Care & Share: Senior Feeding Campaign

The Care & Share program, launched in July 2017, supplements the diets of more than 2,300 low-income seniors in Collier, Lee and Charlotte counties with nutritious, easy-to-prepare food. It helps them to lead a healthier life, while balancing bills like rent, utilities and medical care. Seniors receive kits containing canned fruits and vegetables, protein, grains, cereal and other food each month. When possible, the food bank provides fresh produce with these kits.

In-school pantries

The food bank now has nine in-school pantries for area students and families, and three schools that receive food boxes that are distributed to the families of the students. There are six pantries in Lee County, two in Charlotte County and three in Collier County.

CSFP

The Commodity Supplemental Food Program (CSFP) is a government program that provides nutritious food to eligible low-income seniors 60 years of age or older. Food boxes are distributed once a month in Glades and Hendry counties.

TEFAP

The Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP) is a federal program that helps supplement the diets of low-income individuals, including elderly people, by providing them with emergency food and nutrition assistance at no cost.
Jose was at one of the food bank’s mobile pantries in Collier County with his wife and six children, four boys and two girls. He had recently moved to the area from Louisiana. He got a job as a landscaper and just started work. “The kids are starting school,” he said. “I can make more money here.”

Mobile pantries

The mobile pantry program, called Fulfill, continues to be one of the most efficient ways for the food bank to distribute fresh, nutritious food directly to clients, many of whom do not have access to grocery stores due to location or lack of transportation.

In fiscal year 2017-18, clients received 3,244,104 pounds of food, or 2,703,418 meals, through 737 mobile pantries and produce deliveries at 80 locations.
Food distributed: **24 million pounds**
Produce distributed: **6.4 million pounds**
Food value: **$41.5 million**
Equivalent meals: **20 million**

Population: **1,250,644**
Food-insecure population: **154,740**
Food-insecure children: **47,320**

**Our vision**

Our vision is that no one has to go hungry in our community. The 24 million pounds of food we distributed in the last fiscal year helps, but our calculations show that to fully meet the growing demand, we will need to distribute **48.6 million pounds of food** by 2032. With your help, we know we can get there.
Charlotte County

Food distributed: 2.7 million pounds  
Produce distributed: 1.01 million pounds  
Population: 169,642  
Food-insecure population: 23,140  
Food-insecure children: 4,820

Collier County

Food distributed: 5.1 million pounds  
Produce distributed: 1.3 million pounds  
Population: 348,236  
Food-insecure population: 36,640  
Food-insecure children: 12,420

Glades County

Food distributed: 564,000 pounds  
Produce distributed: 146,000 pounds  
Population: 13,420  
Food-insecure population: 2,020  
Food-insecure children: 530

Hendry County

Food distributed: 1.6 million pounds  
Produce distributed: 539,000 pounds  
Population: 38,376  
Food-insecure population: 5,100  
Food-insecure children: 2,620

Lee County

Food distributed: 12.5 million pounds  
Produce distributed: 3.4 million pounds  
Population: 680,970  
Food-insecure population: 87,840  
Food-insecure children: 26,930
The Harry Chapin Food Bank distributed 24 million pounds of food and other grocery items, including $41.5 million worth of fresh produce, valued at $20 million. This food equals about 3,839 meals for people in need. Volunteers provided more than 41,000 hours, which equate to more than $1 million of in-kind service value.

Volunteers are vital to the success of our programs. In fiscal year 2017-2018, 3,839 volunteers provided more collectively. Independent Sector values volunteer hours at $24.69 per hour nationally.

Four-star charity for nine consecutive years!

For nine consecutive years, Charity Navigator has given the Harry Chapin Food Bank 4 stars—the watchdog group’s highest rating—for cost effectiveness and efficiency. View our profile at http://bit.ly/hcfbcharitynavigator.
Scot and Nicole Chausse and their two children, Quinten and Chloe, enjoyed their first Family Volunteer Day. Since the quarterly event began, about 300 people have sorted about 35,000 pounds of fresh produce.

Working in partnership with the National Letter Carriers and the United Way, we brought in 273,649 pounds of food in the 26th annual #StampOutHunger Food Drive in Lee County.

The 10th annual Walk on Jan. 20, 2018 had more than 1,000 participants and raised $319,000.

The initial Let’s Feed Collier food drive was held in February 2018 at 19 Publix Super Markets in Collier County. The food drive brought in more than 15,000 pounds of food.

A Place at the Table, a dinner held on April 19 at our Collier County Center, highlighted what it’s like to not have enough food to eat, and the hard decisions some families, seniors, single parents, veterans and others must make to put food on the table.

Working in partnership with the National Letter Carriers and the United Way, we brought in 273,649 pounds of food in the 26th annual #StampOutHunger Food Drive in Lee County.

We fight hunger all year round, but in the month of September we participate in the national push to raise public awareness. Orange is the color for Hunger Action Month.
Take action

Volunteers are vital to the success of our programs. In fiscal year 2017-2018, **3,839 volunteers** collectively provided more than **41,000 hours**, which equates to more than **$1 million of in-kind service**.

For more information about volunteering, visit:  
[www.harrychapinfoodbank.org/donate/volunteer](http://www.harrychapinfoodbank.org/donate/volunteer).

Independent Sector, a national coalition of nonprofits that advocates for the charitable community, values volunteer hours at $24.69 per hour nationally.

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Ways to give

Donate funds at [www.harrychapinfoodbank.org/donate](http://www.harrychapinfoodbank.org/donate).

Give using a credit card **online**.

Become a **monthly giving donor**.

Give a gift **in honor or in memory** of family or friends.

Or, **mail your donation** to our Fort Myers or Naples locations.

- 3760 Fowler St., Fort Myers, FL 33901
- 3940 Prospect Ave., #101, Naples, FL 34104

To make a gift or for more information, contact Miriam Pereira at 239-334-7007, ext. 127.

**Donate nonperishable food** at our Fort Myers Distribution Center and Collier County Center in Naples. If you would like to donate food or hold a food drive, please visit [www.harrychapinfoodbank.org/donate/gifts-and-drives](http://www.harrychapinfoodbank.org/donate/gifts-and-drives).

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Brantley Garcia, age 5, brought in 270 pounds of peanut butter and jelly, the result of a food drive he held at Canterbury School. Brantley heard on the radio about the WAY-FM PB&J food drive, which benefited the Harry Chapin Food Bank.
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*As of October 2018
Together, we can solve hunger

Donate

$1 = $8 worth of food
(239) 334-7007
donate.harrychapinfoodbank.org

Advocate

It takes more than food to fight hunger.

www.harrychapinfoodbank.org
www.facebook.com/harrychapinfoodbank
www.twitter.com/HCFBSWFL

Volunteer

Volunteers are vital to our mission.

harrychapinfoodbank.org/donate/volunteer

Phone: (239) 334-7007

Fort Myers Distribution Center
3760 Fowler St.
Fort Myers, FL 33901

Collier County Center
3940 Prospect Ave., #101
Naples, FL 34104