

Nourishing MATTERS



Harry Chapin Food Bank
OF SOUTHWEST FLORIDA

WINTER 2026

239-334-7007 | HARRYCHAPINFOODBANK.ORG



Four Neighbors, One Community

On a quiet street in Fort Myers, four women who once passed each other with polite smiles now share more than just a neighborhood. They share strength, faith, and gratitude.

It started with María Gonzales, the oldest of the group. She's retired, but her monthly check barely stretches far enough to cover her rent and medications. "The rent has gone up twice this year," she says softly. "I don't know what I would do without this food. It's the most important thing that keeps me going."

Every Monday, María heads to the mobile food distribution at the Stars Complex, organized by Harry Chapin Food Bank. What began as a quiet routine quickly became a gathering place for neighbors who understood each other's struggles.

That's where she met María Garcia, who had just started coming to the distributions two

months earlier. She and her husband rent a small apartment nearby, barely managing to cover the bills. "After paying rent, I only have enough for the water and phone," she says. "My husband pays for the electricity. We make it work somehow."

Then there's Yailil Avalos, the youngest, full of quiet determination. She rents just a single room and bathroom in someone else's home, doing her best to raise her children while searching for work. "No tenemos trabajo," she explains. "We haven't been able to find jobs. We have to care for our families, and what we have just isn't enough."

Recently, the women welcomed a new friend, Madelin De La Cruz, who arrived at the distribution wearing her blue dress and a warm smile that hides years of pain. "My back and knees hurt, and I haven't been able to walk

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Leading Our Community in the Fight to End Hunger

Message from the President and CEO

Dear Friends,

When we think about this past year, we don't see numbers. We see faces. We see the relief on a mother's face when she fills a grocery cart at a partner pantry after a slow season cut her hours at work. We picture the smile of a child opening a backpack and finding food to take home for the weekend. We remember the quiet "thank you" from a senior who no longer has to choose between medicine and dinner. These are the moments you make possible.

Because of your generosity, **Harry Chapin Food Bank distributed 38.7 million pounds of food across Charlotte, Collier, Glades, Hendry, and Lee counties this year — including more than 12 million pounds of fresh fruits and vegetables.** That is wholesome food on kitchen tables, in lunchboxes, and on plates at dining tables all across Southwest Florida. You helped turn worry into relief and hunger into nourishment.

We are equally grateful for the people who give their time. This year, **4,300 volunteers**

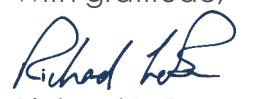
collectively contributed nearly 49,000 hours of service — an in-kind gift valued at \$1.5 million. From packing and distributing food to supporting special events, these volunteers are the heart and hands of our mission.

We also know that stewardship matters. **In 2025, 96 cents of every dollar entrusted to us went directly to programs feeding children, families and seniors.** Your gifts are treated with great care, and we are committed to using every resource wisely to fight hunger in Southwest Florida.

The need in our region remains urgent, but your partnership gives us hope. Thank you for standing with us — for giving, volunteering, advocating and sharing our vision that no one has to go hungry in our community.



With gratitude,


Richard LeBer
President & CEO

Four Neighbors, One Community

or work," she says. "I came once a long time ago when I needed help, and now here I am again, years later. I'm so glad this help still exists."

The four women found comfort in each other's company through simple conversation while waiting in line, sharing stories, exchanging recipes, and laughing under the Florida sun. Through the last few months, their casual conversation has grown into friendship and mutual support. Now, they look for one another every week, often arriving early to save a place in line.

For each of them, the Harry Chapin Food Bank's mobile distributions are not just a source of food. They are a source of hope. Every box of groceries means a few more meals, a little less worry, and the reassurance that they are not alone.

"Sometimes," María Gonzales says with a smile, "it's not just the food that fills you. It's knowing someone cares."



Our Impact in 2025

Pounds of Food Distributed

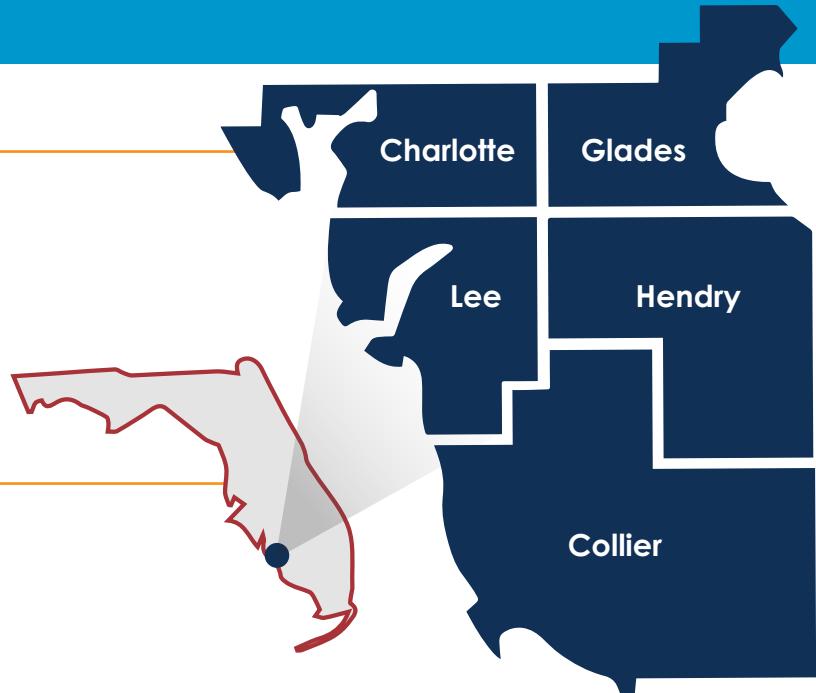
38.7
MILLION

(2024: 39.5 Million)

Pounds of Fresh Produce Distributed

12
MILLION

(2024: 10.5 Million)



Pounds of Food Distributed by County

CHARLOTTE COUNTY

5.2
MILLION

(2024: 5.2 Million)

COLLIER COUNTY

11.5
MILLION

(2024: 12.6 Million)

GLADES COUNTY

705,200

(2024: 700,000)

HENDRY COUNTY

2.2
MILLION

(2024: 2.5 Million)

LEE COUNTY

19
MILLION

(2024: 18.4 Million)



Scan QR code to see our full impact report.

Volunteer Impact

4,300
VOLUNTEERS

49,000
HOURS

\$1.5 Million
IN-KIND SERVICE



Hunger Action Center Groundbreaking

On November 19, we celebrated the Harry Chapin Food Bank Hunger Action Center groundbreaking, marking a pivotal milestone in our mission to strengthen hunger relief across our community.

Ending Hunger in Southwest Florida

Together, we are building boldly with construction now underway for the new Hunger Action Center. This transformational space is specifically designed to support our robust feeding network of 175+ agency partners, expand access to fresh, healthy food, and serve more of our neighbors across Southwest Florida. Once complete in winter 2026, it will more than double our operational capacity and help ensure every child, family, and senior can access the food they need.



A Bold Beginning

Whether you celebrated with us in person or cheered us on from afar, we thank you for standing with us as we build boldly. Your support will ensure that our neighbors have

hope today and food on their table for generations to come.

These moments mark an important step toward a hunger-free future and reflect the commitment of our community leaders, partners, donors, and supporters like you who make progress like this possible.

Be Part of What Comes Next

As construction continues, we look forward to sharing updates and opportunities to help bring this bold vision to reality. From volunteering to community events, there are many ways to stay engaged while we continue serving our neighbors across Southwest Florida, as we have for more than 40 years.

 **Thank You** 
to Our Project Partners



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To learn more about the campaign,
visit harrychapinfoodbank.org/feedingthefuture

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Harry Chapin Food Bank
OF SOUTHWEST FLORIDA

Fort Myers Distribution Center
3760 Fowler St.
Fort Myers, FL 33901-0930

Collier County Center
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Naples, FL 34104-3745

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