



SERVINGS

News from the East Texas Food Bank

2024 Fall Newsletter

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East Texans Find Food And Other Services At Resource Centers

Maricela has three kids and works as a custodian. She finds it challenging to have enough food to keep her children fed, but the East Texas Food Bank (ETFB) Tyler Resource Center is a big help.

“My bills are so high—gas, etcetera—and you find you need to pay bills or find food.” She is grateful to shop at the pantry and access other resources, such as health screenings, that could help her family.

The Deep East Texas Resource Center opened in Lufkin in 2021. In 2023, resource centers opened in Longview and Tyler, followed by Texarkana in 2024.

To increase access, the facilities are open several days a week, including some evenings and Saturday mornings. Fresh fruit, vegetables, eggs, meat, pasta, soups and other items are regularly on the shelves, and people can speak to the benefits assistance team to apply for SNAP and other social service benefits.

Michael of Diana finds it difficult to move due to sports injuries he sustained when he was young. His wife works, but they rely on food pantries to get by. “It’s hard with one income: house payment, car payment. We make tough choices as to what groceries we can afford, and we typically only ate one meal a day until we discovered the Longview Resource Center.”

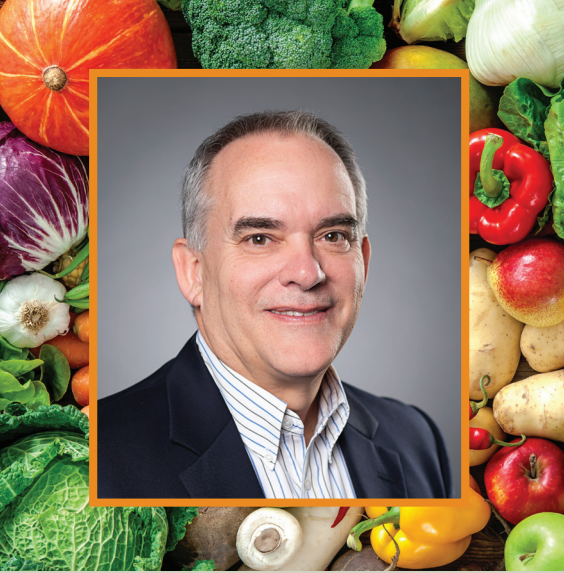
“Our resource centers are located in low-income neighborhoods, and in some areas, they are in what we call a food desert, where there are no grocery stores,” added Emerson. “It’s important to remove any barriers to our neighbors so they can easily access our services. Some arrive by car or bus, some walk, and we’ve even had some ride up on a bicycle with a special basket attached to it to take home their groceries.”



Your generosity empowers us to decrease barriers to food access for neighbors in need. For more information on how to support our programs or volunteer, visit EastTexasFoodBank.org.

“These resource centers are very important to ETFB’s overall strategic plan to distribute more food and serve more people,” said David Emerson, CEO. “Neighbors receive nutritious food and select what groceries work best for their families.”





TRUSTEES HARVEST PRODUCE FOR NEIGHBORS FACING HUNGER

For more than 15 years, inmates from the Smith County Jail have tilled the soil, planted seeds and tended to a vegetable garden near Noonday.

“It’s a voluntary program, but everyone in the jail wants to participate,” said Smith County Sheriff Larry Smith. “They learn a new skill, and some of them look forward to growing their own food one day or even working in agriculture. They feel they are part of something bigger by helping feed hungry people.”

Workers harvest potatoes, squash, corn, tomatoes and watermelons throughout the summer.

“We typically receive around 10,000 pounds of fresh produce each year and distribute through our pantry partners,” said Andrew Ayo, Chief Operating Officer for ETFB.

“Fresh produce is one way to help end the meal gap in East Texas,” said Tim Butler, ETFB’s Chief Development Officer. “This is a wonderful partnership with Smith County Sheriff’s Office, Texas Organic Compost, Topsoil Blends owned by John Soules Sr. and other farming volunteers who want to be part of the solution to fighting hunger and feeding hope in East Texas.”



A Message from our CEO

I hope this fall edition of Servings finds you in good health and high spirits.

September is a special month for us here at East Texas Food Bank, because it’s Hunger Action Month. During this time, people all over the United States stand together to fight hunger. It’s a month to spread the word, take action on the hunger crisis and dedicate ourselves to a solution.

We’re always eager to participate in this month and all the activities that come with it—but it’s also a sobering reminder of just how many of our neighbors face hunger every day. Thankfully, they can rely on ETFB for help—and we can rely on generous friends like you.

Your contributions to our cause are not just monetary donations; they’re a lifeline for those who need it most. We truly consider you our partner in the fight against hunger in East Texas, and we are deeply grateful for your ongoing commitment.

This September, I invite you to volunteer with us, give monetarily, join The Table monthly giving program, come tour our facility or simply wear orange to show your support for Hunger Action Month. Together, I believe we can create an East Texas where everyone has access to nutritious food.

With gratitude,

David Emerson
Chief Executive Officer

MONTHLY GIVING = BIG IMPACT

Monthly giving ensures a consistent and reliable source of support for our mission to fight hunger and feed hope in East Texas. Every month, your donation directly contributes to providing nutritious food to those facing hunger.

Monthly donors become part of a special community of supporters, The Table, who share a commitment to fighting hunger. You will receive updates on the impact of your contributions and have opportunities to engage with the organization and other like-minded donors.

Join online today at etfb.link/240112



CORPORATE PARTNER SPOTLIGHT: UBank

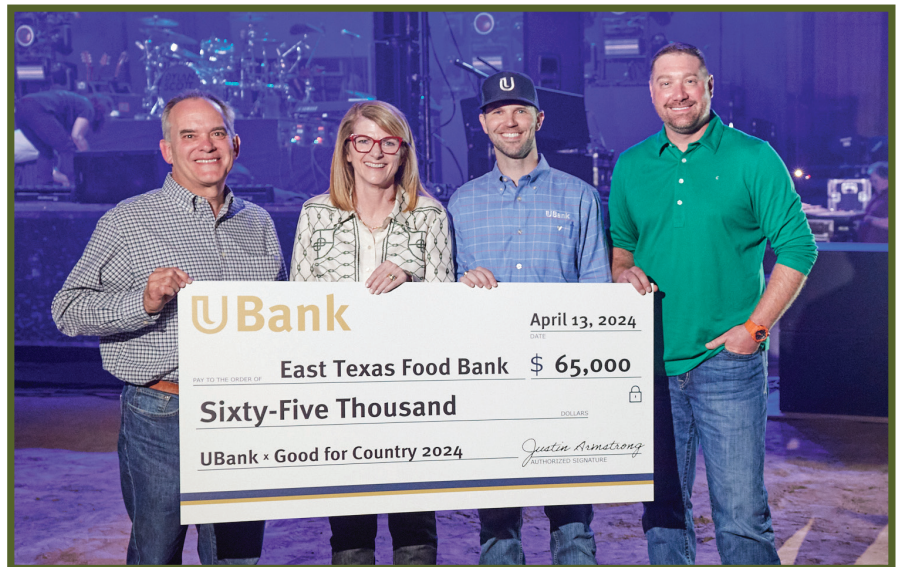
UBank is a community-oriented bank that's always looking for creative ways to give back. Most of the staff is from East Texas, so helping the community is a key initiative of their company.

"For the past five years, UBank has hosted the Good for Country concert in Lufkin to support the East Texas Food Bank and the incredible work they do in Deep East Texas and beyond to fight hunger," said Jack Ellis, UBank Market President of Lufkin & Huntington. "We are pleased to have raised \$125,000 for ETFB."

According to the recent Feeding America study Map the Meal Gap, 18.7% of Angelina County residents are at risk of hunger. **Through several programs, we serve an estimated 15,000 low-income households in Deep East Texas.**

UBank

"Thank you to UBank for bringing people together to enjoy music while making sure East Texans who struggle with food insecurity get the resources they need," said David Emerson, CEO of ETFB. "We are currently serving over three million meals through our programs and partners in Angelina County—so this concert will be a tremendous help in making a difference."



VOLUNTEERS SERVE UP THE MISSION

Several times a month, you'll find retired Air Force officer Rebecca Appert volunteering at the East Texas Food Bank. She started getting involved with ETFB as a donor before rolling up her sleeves to pack food boxes for seniors or children's backpacks.

"I believe communities are built on the commitment by individuals to support other members of the community to be their best selves. I feel it is my responsibility to support those who need a hand-up. As a young woman, I, too, had to make the choice between paying the bills and buying groceries. A food bank gave me the relief I needed during this difficult time. I have honored that by paying it forward since then."

Rebecca was recognized this spring during our annual volunteer appreciation event as an Outstanding Individual Volunteer. "Volunteers are essential to the East Texas Food Bank," said David Emerson, CEO of ETFB. "Over 10,000 volunteers a year touch most items of food we serve and contribute over 35,000 hours of service. We need volunteers to pack boxes of food but also to serve neighbors at our mobile pantry locations all over East Texas as well as help people shop at our resource centers."

Rebecca believes that solving the problem of food insecurity starts in your local community, and hopes we can all help our neighbors for the wellbeing of our community.

"Meeting the basic needs of our neighbors so they can strive to be their best selves will pay dividends to all of us in the long run," added Emerson.

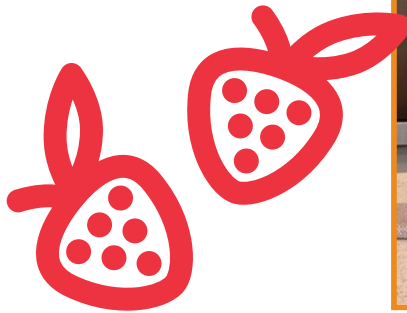


EAT THE RAINBOW: A COLORFUL APPROACH TO BETTER NUTRITION

Our Nutrition Education team launched a new campaign this year called “Eat the Rainbow.” This colorful program aims to help people of all ages eat a more balanced and nutritious diet by filling their plates with various fruits and vegetables of every color.

“A colorful plate makes your meals more visually appealing, which means you are more likely to eat more of them,” said Kinsey Thompson, ETFB Nutrition Education Manager. “As we age, we need to make sure we are including the essential nutrients for healthy aging. Our dietary needs change as we get older and we must prioritize proper eating habits with fruits and vegetables.”

For healthy recipe ideas, visit us online at EastTexasFoodBank.org/recipes.



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FEED YOUR LEGACY

We all desire to leave a lasting impact beyond the years we’re given. A powerful way that many people choose to change lives beyond their own is through a legacy gift.

We’ve established a full menu of planned giving opportunities to help you further your fight against hunger and extend your philanthropic efforts beyond your lifetime. There are many options for planned giving and you may choose the one that best fulfills your desired impact.

After you’ve taken care of your loved ones, would you consider the East Texas Food Bank in your legacy plan? Please contact Chief Development Officer Tim Butler for additional information or with any questions you may have at tbutler@easttexasfoodbank.org.

ETFB BY THE NUMBERS

1 in 6

East Texans are Hungry

1 in 4

Children are Hungry

30+ Million

Meals Distributed this Year

200

Agency Partners

26

Counties Served

4

Resource Centers: Lufkin, Tyler, Longview and Texarkana



East Texas Food Bank
3201 Robertson Rd.
Tyler, TX 75701-2532
903.597.3663

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