



FOOD BANK

OF WYOMING™

Answering the Challenge of Hunger



Food Bank of Wyoming's 150+ Hunger Relief Partners, like Joshua's Storehouse in Casper, ensure that nourishing food gets to neighbors who need it in communities across the state. That work happens thanks to volunteers like Doris, Carolyn, and Laura. All three have been volunteering at Joshua's Storehouse for more than 10 years, loading up shopping carts with food every week Tuesday through Friday. "We get to know the people who come here regularly," said Doris. "That's my favorite part. We get to know some really nice people."

GIVE TODAY AT
wyomingfoodbank.org/give-impact-report



Finding New Ways to Meet Rising Need

There has never been such a thing as a “normal year” in the world of food banking, but the challenges presented to us in the last few years have been nothing short of extraordinary. During fiscal year 2023, we faced a difficult winter that challenged our delivery operations. At the same time, inflation rates hit levels not seen for over 40 years. Remember when the cost of eggs spiked to \$5, \$6, even \$7 a dozen from their usual average of a little over \$1? Keep in mind what that did to your grocery bills, then think about the thousands of dozens of eggs Food Bank of Wyoming purchases to provide to our neighbors experiencing food insecurity. Eggs, produce, milk, protein, grains, canned vegetables: All of these increased in price, causing our monthly food-purchasing costs to soar.

However, despite these historic challenges, we have innovated and connected with communities across Wyoming to see how we can help. Here are just a few of the things we achieved:

- Over the year, we drove 5,000 miles in nine trips across Wyoming to visit more than 90 Hunger Relief Partners in all 23 counties. We did this to better understand what is happening in their communities, learn about the challenges they are facing, hear about what is going well, and collaborate on ways that Food Bank of Wyoming can support them.
- We’ve grown and strengthened our relationship with the Wind River Indian Reservation communities and are currently working with both the Northern Arapaho and Eastern Shoshone tribes to establish brick-and-mortar food pantries. And, in order to support those communities as best we can, we are in the process of creating a series of cultural learning videos highlighting the tribes’ histories, relationship with food insecurity, cultural values, governance, and more. These videos will be shown to staff and board members and offered to Hunger Relief Partners with the goal of cultivating understanding and meeting the needs of the residents of Wind River Indian Reservation in ways that are culturally responsive and impactful.
- We hired the Food Bank’s first-ever food sourcing manager to connect with producers across the state and further our efforts to source local produce and protein and deliver it to our neighbors experiencing hunger. Because of that new position, we have partnered with growers like Vertical Harvest in Jackson and organizations like Eat Wyoming and the Wyoming Stockgrowers Association. And, thanks to the generosity of supporters like you, we were able to purchase and distribute more local produce and protein to our Wyoming neighbors than ever before.

We mark the 20th anniversary of our Wyoming distribution center in 2024 — a milestone that is both significant as well as telling. Food insecurity is not a new problem, nor is it a problem that will be resolved anytime soon. But as we continue to grow and adapt to the needs of our neighbors across Wyoming who are experiencing hunger, find new ways to bolster the work being done to address the root causes of hunger, and advocate for better systems to assist anyone who needs a hand, we take steps toward a better, more equitable future.

Thank you again for partnering with us. We are so grateful for you.



Sincerely,

Rachel Bailey

Rachel Bailey
Executive Director



This institution is an equal opportunity provider.

© 2023 Food Bank of Wyoming



Fiscal Year 2023

THESE NUMBERS ILLUSTRATE A SUSTAINED HIGH NEED FOR FOOD AND INNOVATIVE SUPPORT THROUGHOUT WYOMING



22% OF PEOPLE SERVED WERE CHILDREN

Clients Served 44,459



Total Pounds of Food Distributed
9,863,102

Meal Equivalent for Pounds Distributed

7,972,674



Meals Served on Average Per Day
21,843

Percentage of Pounds Distributed that was Fresh Produce

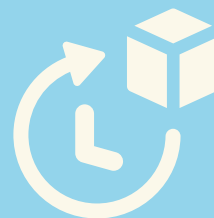


32%

Service Area Covered

97,093
SQUARE MILES

All 23 counties in Wyoming



Volunteer Hours Logged
11,819

Number of Hunger Relief Partners 150+

How We Help

Hunger cuts across demographics and borders, indifferent to the past or future chapters of a person's life. Food Bank of Wyoming meets individuals in the present, ensuring that anyone who needs it gets the nourishing food they need to thrive.



GENEROUS SUPPORTERS

FUEL EVERYTHING WE DO

Where Food Comes From

Over 96% of funding goes directly into our hunger-relief programs and supports all of the ways we attain food to distribute to our community members.



Sorting and Packing Food for our Neighbors



Each year, thousands of volunteers help us sort, pack, and get food into the hands of our neighbors across Wyoming. We could not do this work without their dedication and generosity!

Distributing Food to our Communities



We deploy 19 mobile pantries each month to rural communities throughout Wyoming to bring food directly to where it is needed most.



Specialized programming for after-school, summer, and weekend food for children.



The 150+ pantries, programs, and relief organizations we support through food and resources to nourish people experiencing hunger in their communities.



Monthly food boxes administered by the USDA at no cost to income-qualifying older adults at least 60 years of age.



Looking Ahead

We are hopeful for a day when Food Bank of Wyoming is no longer needed and everyone has enough nourishing food and resources to thrive. But until then, we will keep pioneering more effective, fulfilling ways to meet the needs of our community members.

Nourishing Neighbors

Through the Power of Community

Outside of the volunteer fire station in Rock River are dozens of vehicles, each waiting for Food Bank of Wyoming's mobile pantry to begin. Among the cars, trucks, and vans is Dennie with his wheelbarrow.

"My vehicle went down, my starter wire broke," said Dennie as volunteers loaded up his wheelbarrow with fresh produce and other essential food items. Deciding to walk a couple of blocks for fresh food was an easy decision for Dennie. "The closest thing you get here is a little mercantile, and they're rather expensive," he explained.

The mercantile is a small convenience store that offers a few basics. Beyond that, the biggest town closest to Rock River is Laramie, some 40 miles southeast down a mostly two-lane highway. Winters can be harsh, making travel difficult. This winter was particularly brutal.

"During the winter, our roads are closed a lot," said Deanna, who drove to the mobile pantry with her neighbor, Teresa. "This last year, it went from October 1 to the end of March, and we only had 12 days that were open."

Rock River Mobile Pantry volunteer coordinator Sylvia Parvin has lived in Rock River for five decades and has worn many hats over the years, including running a small grocery store and game processing plant, and serving as town



Food Bank of Wyoming operates 19 mobile pantries across the state in rural communities like Rock River to ensure every Wyomingite has access to nourishing food. / Photo by Dan Cepeda



By sponsoring the mobile pantry in Rock River, BluEarth Renewables and Clearway Energy are directly supporting the community and its residents. / Photo by Dan Cepeda


River, and BluEarth Renewables places an emphasis on finding ways to strengthen the communities they're in.

"If we're coming in and building a facility, we want to make sure we're also giving back to that community," said Erin Jenken, manager of communications for BluEarth Renewables.

In addition to making regular donations to Food Bank of Wyoming, the company ramped up their support this year and, in partnership with Clearway Energy, sponsored the mobile pantry in Rock River for six months.

"Part of the reason this partnership has grown in the way it has is because we were able to make sure our money ends up in the community, that Rock River is seeing the impact," said Jenken. "And with the mobile pantry, we know it is."

As part of their sponsorship, BluEarth supplied mobile pantry clients with reusable insulated grocery bags. Any bags and boxes of food that aren't sent home with neighbors during mobile pantry distributions don't go to waste, either: After the pantry closes, Parvin gathers up the remaining food and distributes it to people in the community who couldn't make it that day.

Community effort and support from people like Parvin and companies like BluEarth Renewables and Clearway Energy power the work of Food Bank of Wyoming. We couldn't do any of it without them or you: thank you for your support and generosity. 



Part of the reason this partnership has grown in the way it has is because we were able to make sure our money ends up in the community, that Rock River is seeing the impact. And with the mobile pantry, we know it is.

clerk, town treasurer, and town judge. On this day, she's doing essential work at the mobile pantry, organizing volunteers and making sure distribution goes off without a hiccup. She also provides emotional support and friendship, often greeting the people arriving to receive food with hugs and kind words.

Parvin describes Rock River as "country living with city water and sewer." The population of about 250 is largely made up of ranchers and an aging population.

"Most people are retired and on fixed incomes," Parvin said. "There's also a lot of young families, and it's just tough with kids and budgets the way they are. We serve around 100 families each distribution. I think we're fulfilling most of the needs at this time."

Volunteers arrived hours earlier to fill food boxes and bags delivered from the Food Bank's distribution center, located about 100 miles away in Casper. Several employees from Clearway Energy and Canadian-based BluEarth Renewables were on hand to volunteer as well, including CEO Grant Arnold.

"We've been supporting Food Bank of Wyoming for a number of years and felt like it was time to increase our participation in the partnership," said Arnold. "The goal is to be a better part of this community for years to come."

BluEarth Renewables is a developer, owner, and operator of wind, hydro, and solar facilities located throughout North America. Often, these projects are located near smaller towns like Rock

Traversing the State

TO MEET OUR NEIGHBORS AND ADDRESS THEIR NEEDS

Imagine you had to drive across every single square mile of Wyoming. How long do you think it would take you? A month? Six months? Without taking a break and with an average speed of 70 mph, it would take someone 58 days to hit every single mile of the 97,093 square miles that we call home. That's a long time! And while we didn't achieve quite that in fiscal year 2023, we did drive over 5,000 miles to visit all 23 counties and visit more than 90 of our Hunger Relief Partners.



Empowering communities to access foods in the ways they desire is an important way Food Bank of Wyoming supports our neighbors across the state.

We did this because we value the perspectives, input, and unique needs of every person of every community that we serve. With our service area being the entire state, we prioritized visiting every part of Wyoming to gather valuable insights.

One of the partnerships we forged through our efforts last year was with Fort Washakie School on Wind River Indian Reservation and Buffalo Youth Nation Project, a Native-run nonprofit committed to serving the Native/Indigenous population of the Great Plains region.

Food insecurity rates among Native Americans are disproportionately high compared with other racial groups across the United States. To help address this disparity, Buffalo Youth Nation Project reached out to Food Bank of Wyoming to include Fort Washakie School in the Totes of Hope™ Program, which provides bags of nourishing food to kids and their families when school is out of session.

Lisa Ansell Frazier, a Native/Indigenous woman enrolled in the Cheyenne River Sioux Tribe, founded Buffalo Youth Nation Project in 2018. The nonprofit helps five tribes in four states improve food access in various ways. The Totes of Hope™ Program is one.

"Totes of Hope™ provide security and stability to the kids at Fort Washakie School," said Frazier. "This, in turn, provides healing. Discovering the Totes of Hope™ Program and Food Bank of Wyoming was such a blessing. This is truly a help to our community."

The kids who took part in the Totes of Hope™ Program were excited to take an active role in both assembling and benefitting from the bags.

"By enabling the kids to help take care of their community through this food, which is used not only by the kids, but also their parents, grandparents, and other relatives living with them, is in alignment with their cultural values," explained Frazier.



“The food goes beyond nourishment: it strengthens the community.”

Food Bank of Wyoming was able to supply enough food to serve 75 kids during the 2022–2023 school year, with Buffalo Youth Nation Project ordering the food from the Food Bank and Fort Washakie School receiving the food weekly to distribute to kids every Thursday.

Susan Anderson, one of two nurses at Fort Washakie School, oversees the distribution of the Totes of Hope™ each week along with her fellow nurse. The school has around 450 students total, ranging from pre-K to 12th graders and is one of four schools on Wind River Indian Reservation. It primarily serves the Eastern Shoshone community.

“The large majority of the families at the school are low income or in poverty, and the only meals the kids get are breakfast and lunch here at school,” said Anderson. “Having food that they can bring home with them that doesn’t require any extra groceries and is easy to prepare is extremely helpful and important. With Totes of Hope™, we can make sure they’re getting the food they need. We appreciate it and the families who use the food appreciate it.”



The food goes beyond nourishment: it strengthens the community.

In addition to bringing Totes of Hope™ to Wind River Indian Reservation, Food Bank of Wyoming also worked with tribal leaders of the Northern Arapaho and Eastern Shoshone tribes to engage with community members and hear more about their experiences with food access. Among the things we heard was a desire for increased opportunity to gather food through traditional practices, such as hunting. To help meet this need, the Culturally Responsive team procured additional hunting tags to harvest animals



during the ceremonial and hunting seasons; the meat that was procured was then processed locally and distributed via both mobile pantries in August. The Food Bank is also working alongside the tribal communities to establish brick-and-mortar food pantries to provide more equitable and reliable food access year-round.

Our work with Fort Washakie School, Buffalo Youth Nation Project, and the Northern Arapaho and Eastern Shoshone tribes is just one example of Food Bank of Wyoming’s dedication to understanding our neighbors across the state and working with them to support them as best we can. As these relationships grow and strengthen, so, too, can these communities.

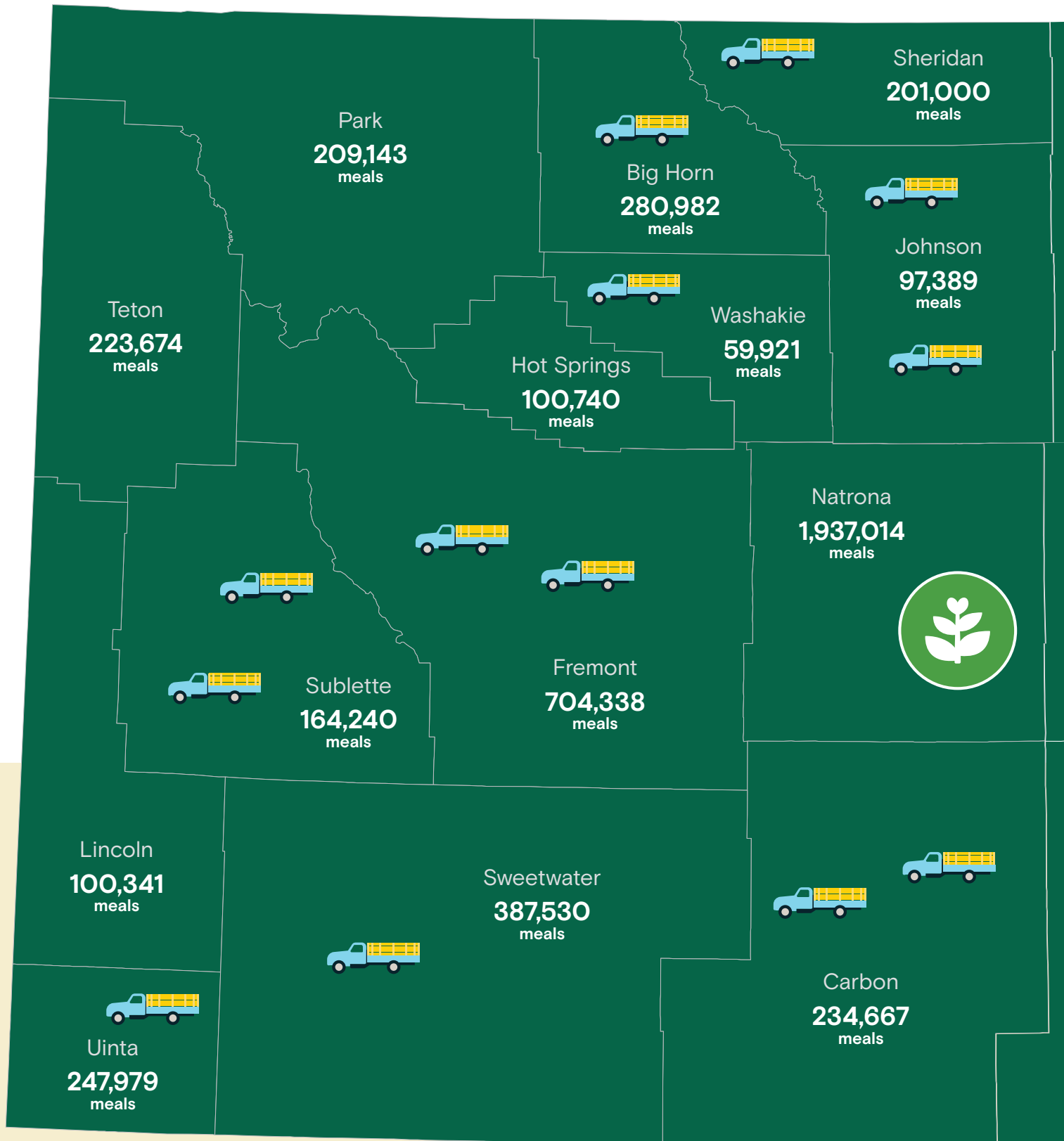
We recognize that these efforts are just the starting point in healing the centuries-long injustices inflicted on the Northern Arapaho and Eastern Shoshone people. Much more work needs to be done to build trust and food systems that empower and support Wind River Indian Reservation and the people who call it home, and we are dedicated to showing up however we’re needed to make that happen.

By supporting our efforts, you are supporting this healing and helping to strengthen our great state. Thank you. 🌿



TOP: Harvesting animals during the ceremonial and hunting seasons is a pivotal practice for the Northern Arapaho and Eastern Shoshone tribes.

BOTTOM: Keeping protein gathering and processing local ensures Wind River residents directly benefit from every element of the operation.

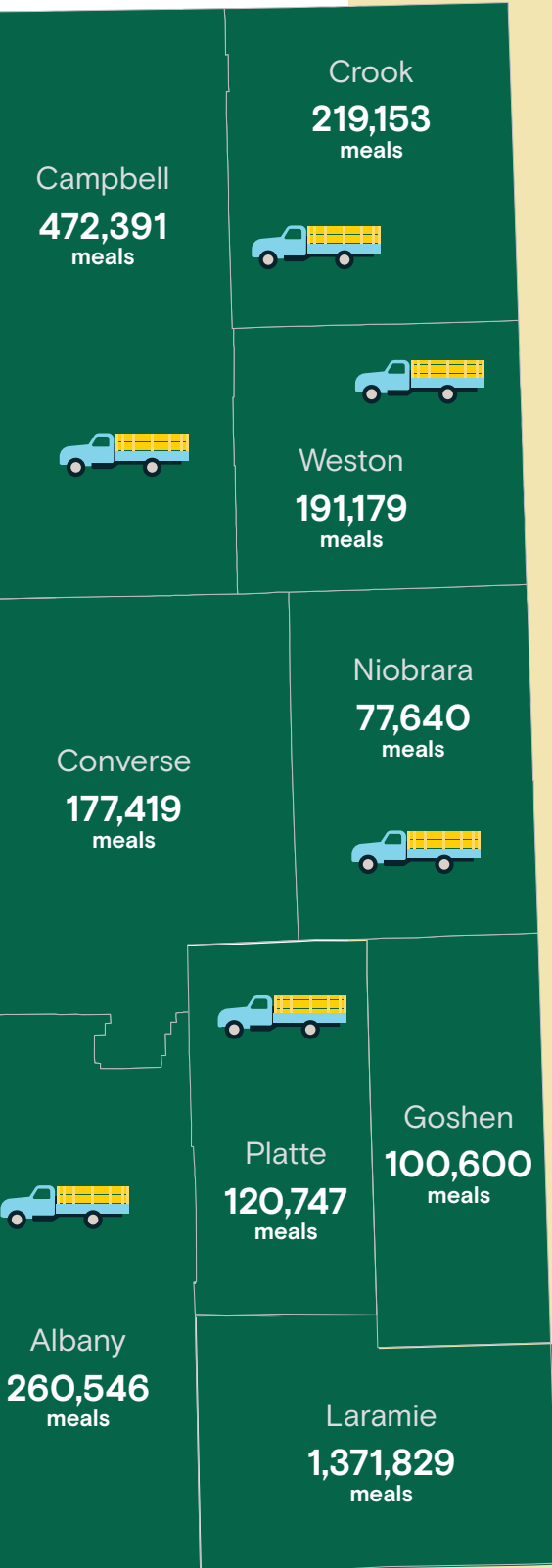




Nourishing Neighbors Across Wyoming

Hunger cuts across demographics and borders, indifferent to the past, present, or future chapters of a person’s life. Through our 150+ Hunger Relief Partners and mobile pantries located across the state, Food Bank of Wyoming meets individuals wherever they need us, ensuring that anyone who is experiencing hunger gets the nourishing food they need to thrive.

The adjacent map demonstrates how we serve Wyoming, including the equivalent amount of meals provided per county in fiscal year 2023 (derived from total pounds distributed).



Food Bank of Wyoming Distribution Area



Food Bank of Wyoming Distribution Center



Food Bank of Wyoming Mobile Pantry

Note: The number presented in each county is the meals equivalent for pounds distributed there through our Hunger Relief Partners and mobile pantries in fiscal year 2023. Total pounds of food distributed across all of Wyoming in fiscal year 2023 was 9,863,102 pounds, the equivalent of 7,972,674 meals.



P.O. Box 1540
Evansville, WY 82636



Mailing Address
City, State Zip

LOOKING AHEAD

Taking Action Against Hunger, Together

We are looking ahead to the next several years with one goal in mind: Ensuring all of our neighbors have enough nourishing food to thrive.

Reaching that goal involves launching new express truck routes along the western and central corridors of Wyoming. In order to provide as much fresh produce as possible to our Hunger Relief Partners and the neighbors they support, every two weeks one of our drivers will embark on an overnight route with the sole purpose of infusing these communities with nourishing fruits and vegetables.

Additionally, we are establishing and strengthening several statewide partnerships with like-minded organizations that will enable us to serve our communities more intentionally and effectively. It is inspiring to see people and organizations working together to address food insecurity, develop local food solutions, and confront the root causes of poverty across the state, and Food Bank of Wyoming is working to be the very best partner possible to nourish our Wyoming neighbors.

Food insecurity impacts every community in our state and across our nation. As we enter our 20th year of supporting our neighbors in Wyoming with nutritious, fresh foods, we are hopeful for a day when our work and the work of our Hunger Relief Partners is no longer needed. Until that day, thank you for partnering with us in this important mission. Your support makes all the difference.

LEAVE A LEGACY:

Join the Heirloom Circle

Did you know you can include Food Bank of Wyoming in your will? By doing so, you'll be part of our Heirloom Circle and leave a legacy of generosity while ensuring future generations of Wyomingites have the food they need to thrive.

To learn more about this opportunity, please contact Jill Stillwagon at jstillwagon@wyomingfoodbank.org or 307-232-4009.



Inspired to learn more about how we are answering the challenge of hunger? Look inside for stories of impact, and find our full report online at wyomingfoodbank.org/impact-report