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HUNGER WARRIORS
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Everything we do strives to better our beloved state — from the dental and vision insurance we provide, to our philanthropic efforts.

Together, Delta Dental and our Foundation have given more than \$470,000 to fight COVID-19-related food insecurity in Iowa — this total includes matching the premium credits of more than 2,300 members to donate \$140,000 to the Iowa Food Bank Association.

To learn more about Delta Dental of Iowa's commitment to improving the health and wellness of Iowans, visit deltadentalia.com.





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It's easy for banks to say they're committed to making communities stronger. But actually doing it means rolling up your sleeves and getting to work. Bankers Trust gives more than \$1 million to charitable organizations annually, including hunger-related nonprofits such as the Food Bank of Central Iowa, Eat Greater Des Moines and the World Food Prize. And our team members volunteer nearly 18,000 hours each year. Some have even taken food insecurity into their own hands by creating the Bankers Trust Giving Garden, where employee volunteers plant, tend and harvest produce to donate to local food banks and pantries. **We're proud of our Difference Makers for helping our communities thrive.**

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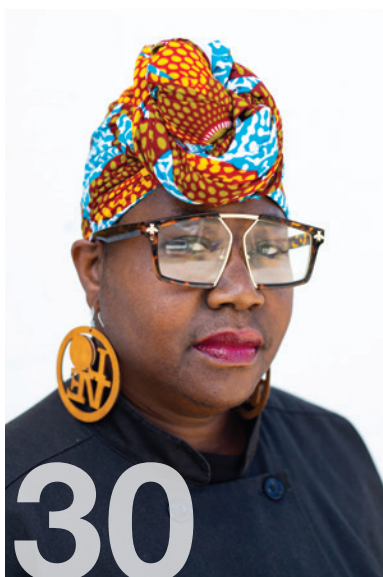
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On the cover: Lutheran Services in Iowa's Global Greens program provides refugees with a place to grow food and a way to start their own farming business. See story, page 42. Photographer: Kathryn Gamble.

An Ounce Of Hope.



An ounce of action is worth a ton of theory.

Ralph Waldo Emerson



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EAT GLOBAL.

LSI's Global Greens program reconnects former refugee farmers to the land as they build their own small farming businesses in their new home.

Through our weekly Farmers Market and Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) program, LSI is providing fresh produce to Iowa families.




25	160	250
farming families provided land through Global Greens	families have access to Global Greens community garden space	shares sold through LSI's CSA program

IOWA **STOPS** HUNGER

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To Our Customers and Communities:

We've always known that hunger is a real issue in every community across the United States.

However, with the onset of COVID-19, Iowa's derecho and other unusual events of 2020, a local spotlight is now shining on this nationwide concern. Feeding America estimates an additional 17 million people in the U.S. could be food insecure in 2020, bringing the total to 54 million people. Iowa is not immune from this issue, which is why it's so important to talk about hunger and what we can collectively do to address it.

At Hy-Vee – through the amazing work of our employees, customers, suppliers and partners – we've already taken steps in 2020 to help those who are food insecure by:

- Donating more than \$1 million in supplies to food banks, including 1,200 food agencies across Iowa.
- Providing more than 1.3 million pieces of fresh produce for free to people in need.
- Donating 1.5 million meals to Feeding America-affiliated food banks to help end summer hunger among families.
- Providing 5 million meals to Meals from the Heartland.
- Diverting and saving millions of pounds of food from local landfills through expanded food rescue operations.

It is our hope that by serving as the presenting sponsor of Business Publications Corporation's "Iowa Stops Hunger" initiative, we can use our resources to encourage others to donate – whether that be through food, funds or time. Together, we can make an enormous impact if we all take action.

We appreciate those who have already made commitments alongside us in this important fight against hunger. And we hope others who are interested in helping are inspired by the stories that follow.

**On behalf of Hy-Vee's 84,000 employees,
thank you for joining us in this life-changing effort.**

FEEDING THE WORLD STARTS AT HOME

THIS **IS** IOWA

Iowa is known for feeding the world. While we're No. 1 in corn, pork and egg production, many of our own citizens wonder where to turn for their next meal. We are proud to support the Iowa Stops Hunger initiative to raise awareness about hunger and food insecurity and how Iowans can make a difference. Join us in learning more about key issues, actions, potential solutions and how you can help.



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Task Force Focuses on Ending Food Insecurity

Thank you for reading this special publication, Iowa Stops Hunger. It may be hard to believe that hunger can exist in a state that prides itself on feeding the world, yet food insecurity is the harsh reality for too many Iowans. Unfortunately, many more Iowans have experienced food insecurity since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Just as we've been a leader in food production throughout our state's history, we've sought to be a leader in addressing hunger during this unprecedented time. Gov. Kim Reynolds gave me the honor of leading the Feeding Iowans Task Force, focused on identifying solutions to the many challenges the pandemic has presented around hunger and food insecurity.

The Feeding Iowans Task Force has focused on creatively leveraging the unique food production capabilities of our state to meet the needs of the food-insecure. We created programs like Pass the Pork and Beef Up Iowa, in which donated Iowa-raised pork and beef are processed in local facilities, and the resulting meat is donated to



ADAM GREGG
LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR OF IOWA

food banks and pantries across Iowa. We created a refrigeration grant program called Pack the Pantry to ensure our smaller food pantries have the cold storage capacity to accept these types of meat donations, as well as eggs and dairy products.

Gov. Reynolds has dedicated federal CARES Act funds to purchase

shelf-stable food by the truckload, which is then packaged by volunteers and Americorps workers. We have scaled and expanded the Double Up Food Bucks program, which provides matching dollars allowing SNAP recipients to purchase fresh fruit and vegetables at local farmers markets and grocery stores. We've coordinated closely with the Iowa Food Bank Association and provided critical grant funding to support the efforts to acquire food for those in need.

Perhaps most importantly, we've worked to raise the profile of the issues surrounding food insecurity—to let Iowans know that help is available, to connect them to those resources, and to eliminate any stigma associated with seeking assistance. That's where Business Publications Corporation comes in. Through its Iowa Stops Hunger initiative, BPC has been a key partner in highlighting the challenges we face, providing a forum to discuss solutions, and shining a spotlight on the issue of hunger in our state.

With your help, "Iowa Stops Hunger" can be more than a name of an initiative—it can be a reality.



People Helping People

Helping people is who we are. Donating our time, talents, and resources, we are committed to helping support, shape, and strengthen our communities.

bpc

Join Us To Help Stop Hunger

No one should go hungry. Such a simple yet powerful statement. I come from a long line of farmers and beef producers, and it was unimaginable to me growing up in Iowa that people could not have access to nutritious food. It seemed like a problem that happened somewhere else but certainly not here. Not in Iowa.

I was wrong.

As a college student, I worked at a social services agency in Ames and saw families who, despite trying to make ends meet, often had to choose between rent, medicine or food for their kids.

It made a deep impression on me.

Fast-forward to 2020: The problem still persists in our state and in fact has gotten worse. As the pandemic hit and we at Business Publications Corporation talked with community leaders, the increasing severity of this issue became clear to us. It also led to the question: "As a media company,



SUZANNA DE BACA
PRESIDENT AND GROUP PUBLISHER,
BUSINESS PUBLICATIONS CORP.

how can we at BPC use our voice to create awareness and inspire action?"

The answer is Iowa Stops Hunger, a joint, statewide project between our three flagship BPC publications—the Business Record, *dsm* magazine and

ia magazine—and presenting sponsor Hy-Vee to help stop hunger and fight food insecurity in Iowa.

This publication is just one piece of the yearlong journey we have embarked upon, which also includes a corporate challenge to engage businesses, a dedicated website (iowastopshunger.com), virtual events, videos, social media and more.

I encourage you to spend some time with this publication. The *dsm* editorial team and a host of talented writers and photographers dug in and explored this issue from multiple angles, creating stories on, among other topics, "hunger warriors" who are fighting food insecurity across the state; how hunger affects immigrant communities; farmers, students and gardeners who are working to feed their neighbors; and practical ways you can help.

No Iowan should go hungry. It's that simple, powerful and achievable. Please join us in making this a reality.

BusinessRecord **dsm** **ia**

We Give Back

GreenState.org



GreenState
CREDIT UNION

GIVING BACK TO THE COMMUNITY



In 2019, GreenState supported over 1,000 Iowa charities.



This year GreenState staff will volunteer over 3,600 hours to support charities and local community events.



GreenState contributed over \$1,700,000 to support Iowa charities and events in 2019. As we grow, so does this amount.

GIVING BACK TO THE MEMBERS

GreenState has consistently ranked in the top 1% nationally for returning earnings to members in the form of better rates on loans and deposits.

FINANCIAL INSTITUTION	RANK <small>(10,701 U.S. institutions)</small>
GreenState	72
US Bank	4,340
Chase Bank	6,486
Wells Fargo	6,946

*Data provided by Callahan and Associates 9/30/19

What is GreenState's Cooperative Structure worth to Iowans?

	GreenState	Iowa Average	Annual GreenState Benefit to Iowans ²
Average Loan Rate	4.73%	5.09%	\$18,720,000
Average Deposit Rate	1.95%	0.73%	\$52,460,200
Average Fees ¹	0.97%	1.26%	\$16,530,000
			\$87,710,000

Source: National Credit Union Administration 1. Expressed as % of Assets.
2. Based on actual GreenState balances.

GIVING BACK TO IOWANS

As a financial cooperative, GreenState's cooperative structure benefits all Iowans. Through competitive pricing and low fees, millions of dollars each year goes back into the pockets of members. Even non-members benefit from the competitive financial services landscape in our state.

Did You Know?



In 2019, GreenState originated **7,000 mortgages** totaling over \$1.6 billion. **By not** charging the typical 1% origination fee, Iowans **saved over \$16 million.**

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UPFRONT



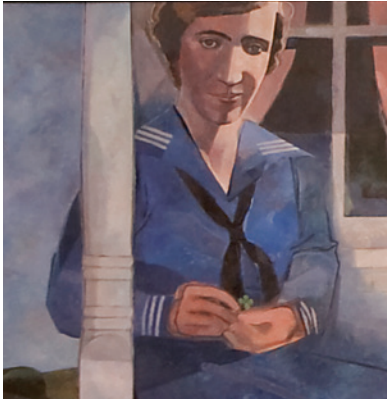
Iowa's pioneering humanitarian and agriculture leaders (shown from left) Jessie Field Shambaugh, Herbert Hoover, George Washington Carver, Henry A. Wallace and Norman Borlaug, are celebrated at the Iowa Gallery in Des Moines' World Food Prize Hall of Laureates. Gary Kelley of Cedar Falls painted the mural. Photo courtesy of the World Food Prize.



FIRSTS ON THE FOOD SCENE

KNOWN FOR FEEDING THE WORLD,
IOWA ALSO HAS CULTIVATED
TOP AGRICULTURAL LEADERS
WHOSE LEGACIES YOU CAN STILL
EXPERIENCE TODAY.

WRITER: BETH ESLINGER



JESSIE FIELD SHAMBAUGH (1881-1971)

EDUCATION ADVOCATE

More than 100,000 Iowa youths can thank this rural teacher for establishing after-school clubs focused on STEM, leadership, healthy living, and communication and the arts. Shambaugh is considered the mother of 4-H, and she created the iconic clover design. (Fun fact: The shape is federally protected, similar to the presidential seal.)

As a teacher, the Shenandoah native saw a need for supplemental programs for rural children, creating the Boys Corn Club and the Girls Home Club. Judging activities such as soil testing and corn evaluation became part of the programming and continue to this day. Today, 4-H engages kids and their families in both urban and rural locales with new programming, including Gardening to Give (see page 58). Recently, a Page County post office was renamed after Shambaugh.



HERBERT HOOVER (1874-1964)

PRESIDENT AND HUMANITARIAN LEADER

Iowa's first and only U.S. president also helped coin "Meatless Mondays" and "Wheatless Wednesdays." The West Branch native fed hundreds of millions of Central and Eastern Europeans during and after World War I as head of the U.S. Food Administration and later the European Relief and Rehabilitation Administration.

Under his leadership, 34 million tons of U.S. food, clothing and other supplies were shipped to Europe. His motto: "Food will win the war." As the country's food czar, he had Americans growing victory gardens. (The trend is spiking again this year due to COVID-19.) Visitors to his West Branch presidential library can see one of the largest collections of World War I flour sacks and review the Food Will Win the War display.



GEORGE WASHINGTON CARVER (1864-1943)

BLACK GROUNDBREAKER

The first Black American to attend Simpson College and the first to graduate from Iowa State College (with both bachelor's and master's degrees), Carver was an early advocate of crop rotation and ag education. Born into slavery in southwest Missouri, he started experimenting with plants in his youth. While leading the Iowa State Experimental Station, Carver worked on crop rotation, learning the benefits of soy to fix nitrogen in soil.

Carver eventually moved to the Tuskegee Institute in Alabama, where he worked in peanuts, creating 325 products with the legume. In 1941, Time magazine called Carver the "Black Leonardo." As part of the George Washington Carver scholarship program at Iowa State, 100 high-achieving multicultural students receive free tuition. Visitors to Carver Hall on campus can see Christian Petersen's bronze sculpture of the figure.



Giving back to move our communities forward.

We know a healthy and productive lifestyle starts with proper nutrition. We also know food insecurity doesn't discriminate. It's a problem that has the potential to touch all of us. That's why, in the last two years alone, the Wellmark Foundation has donated more than \$1 million to fight hunger. It's also why we partnered to establish the Wellmark Foundation Volunteer Center at the Food Bank of Iowa — a space dedicated to honoring those who selflessly give their time, talent and resources to ensure no Iowan goes hungry.

Together, we're making a difference.

[Wellmark.com/Foundation](https://www.wellmark.com/foundation)



UPFRONT



HENRY A. WALLACE **(1888-1965)** *PROGRESSIVE PIONEER*

Politician, editor, scientist, farmer: Wallace wore many hats during his career. But perhaps the most impressive is his development of hybridized seed corn, which increased production by 50% by the time of his death in 1965.

The founder of Hi-Bred Corn Co. (Pioneer was added to the name a decade later, in 1935) also reinvented ag policy during the New Deal as U.S. agriculture secretary. Food stamps and school lunch programs, regulations on crop prices, controlled production to meet demand and reduce surplus, and subsidies for planting cover crops can all be credited to Wallace.

The Iowa State College graduate also served as editor at his family's paper, Wallaces Farmer. Today, visitors can tour the Wallace farmstead in Orient, enjoy farm-to-table meals, and participate in cooking and gardening classes; his Des Moines home in Sherman Hill is also available for historic teas.



NORMAN BORLAUG **(1914-2009)** *FATHER OF THE GREEN REVOLUTION*

The only Iowan to win a Noble Peace Prize, Borlaug revolutionized wheat production while researching the essential grain in Mexico. Through experimentation, he crossed several varieties to boost yields and resist disease. Similar work with Asian rice fields helped provide this staple crop to the masses.

Known as the "father of the Green Revolution," the Cresco native helped feed half the world during his work. Borlaug founded the World Food Prize in 1986, which has been awarded to agricultural leaders from five continents. Today, the Food Prize also engages with youths interested in food careers through youth summits and internships. Its downtown Des Moines headquarters, the World Food Prize Hall of Laureates, is available for tours.

EARLY AG SECRETARIES FROM IOWA

Tom Vilsack and Henry A. Wallace might be the most commonly known U.S. secretaries of agriculture from Iowa, but three earlier Iowans also made their mark on the post.

James Wilson (1835-1920)

Born in Scotland, Wilson attended Iowa College (known as Grinnell today) and held the post from 1897 to 1913 under three presidents (William McKinley, Theodore Roosevelt and William Howard Taft). He was the longest working of any cabinet member in U.S. history, working just a day short of 16 years. While teaching at Iowa State College he mentored George Washington Carver and was a longtime friend of Henry C. Wallace.

Edwin Thomas Meredith (1876-1928)

Famously known as the founder of Successful Farming and Better Homes & Gardens, Meredith also served as the nation's top agricultural leader from 1920 to 1921 under the Woodrow Wilson administration.

Henry C. Wallace (1866-1924)

Father of Henry A., the elder Wallace studied agriculture at Iowa State College and taught dairy science there. He worked for his family paper, Wallaces Farmer, before becoming agriculture secretary in 1921, a position he held until his death in 1924. He served under Warren Harding and Calvin Coolidge. ■

Connecting Riders to Community Resources

"Having the mobile pantry at DART has really helped me make sure I get the food I need. Now, I can get food from the pantry while I wait for my bus home and don't have to worry about making a special trip or not being able to get to the pantry when it's open."

-DART Rider, Ramanda

Learn more at ridedart.com/stophunger

Enriching Lives, Connecting Communities,
Expanding Opportunities



TOP
WORK
PLACES
2020

Des Moines Register

9x Top Workplace winner



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216,759

Iowans served by the Food Bank of Iowa from March to May. That's an increase of about 67,000 over 2019, roughly the population of Ames.

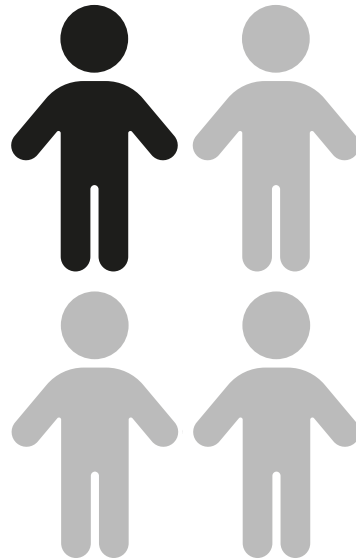
1 IN 4

Latino children experiencing food insecurity.



6.9 million

Pounds of food distributed by the Food Bank of Iowa from March to June. That's an increase of 20% over the same period last year.



1 in 4

Black children struggling with hunger.

20%

Food waste in Iowa landfills.

1 in 5

IOWANS FACING FOOD INSECURITY DURING COVID-19 (600,000). THAT'S AN 8% INCREASE OVER 2019.

\$244 MILLION

Additional money required to meet food needs in Iowa.



Sources: Food Bank of Iowa, FeedingAmerica.org, Iowa Department of Natural Resources.



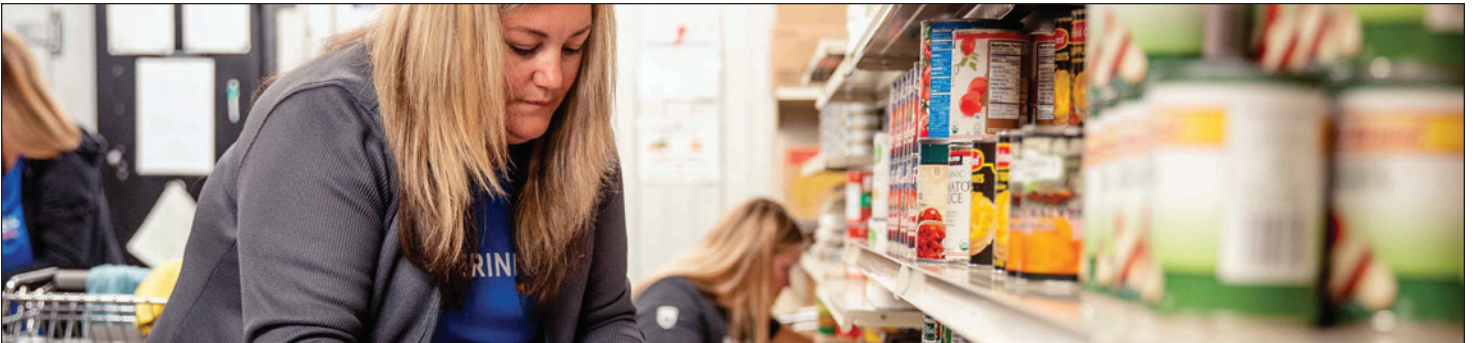
**Farmworkers are essential to feeding all of us.
We take care of them.**



Proteus provides agricultural workers and their families with affordable health care, education assistance, and job training. Along with the primary healthcare provided across the state of Iowa, Proteus has also been administering COVID-19 tests and follow-up care to farmworkers this year.

If you know anyone that has done farmwork and needs access to healthcare or COVID-19 testing, please call us at 1-800-372-6031.

The Agricultural Health Program is funded 99% by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, PY2020 funding is \$2,017, 567.



PART OF THE FIGHT TO STOP HUNGER

Grinnell Mutual is proud to support our local food banks and food distribution programs.
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AFTER THE STORM

AUGUST'S DERECHO AMPLIFIED FOOD INSECURITY ISSUES IN THE STATE.

With an estimated 14 million acres of crops flattened, more than 8,250 houses destroyed, power outages affecting 450,000 Iowans, and downed trees throughout central and eastern Iowa, the Aug. 10 derecho made a devastating mark on the state.

Iowans emptied refrigerators and freezers due to spoilage (shortly after the storm ISU Extension recommended tossing refrigerator contents within four hours of a power outage). In Cedar Rapids, one food bank that serves Meals on Wheels to the elderly lost its entire fresh and frozen food supply. Elsewhere in Cedar Rapids, hundreds of refugees were left homeless in a tent city.

The storm caused \$4 billion in damage to homes, businesses, schools and farmlands. It won't be known for months how severe the impact of the 140-mph storm will be on Iowa's food insecure. As of press time, Iowa's crops are anticipated to be 17% smaller than average years.

But in true Iowa fashion, neighbors helped neighbors clear tree debris and charge phones, shared generators, and distributed food from their food trucks and backyard gardens.

In Des Moines, the city extended its Emergency Food Distribution program, in which local restaurants, businesses and food trucks provided free meals during the pandemic and after the storm. Up to six venues each day served hot meals to residents in need throughout the city. The Iowa Department of Human Services offered low-income Iowans up to \$5,000 to replace food through disaster relief.

And in hard-hit Cedar Rapids, people from across the state converged on the community to help with cleanup efforts and provide food and diapers, as well as temporary shelter, to residents. ■

To help with the continuing recovery efforts in eastern Iowa, contact the HACAP Food Reservoir, the Greater CR Foundation Disaster Recovery Fund or Iowa Storm Help.

**COMMITTED TO
COMBATING FOOD
INSECURITY**



SUPPORTING SPONSOR:



SUSTAINING SPONSOR:



**JOIN US ON THE FOLLOWING PAGES
AS TWO IOWA CORPORATIONS SHARE
THEIR INSIGHT ON WHAT THEY ARE
DOING TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE IN
THE COMMUNITIES THEY SERVE.**



Lynn Montgomery receiving meals at her home from Ken Houser, Supervisor Home Delivery Operations at Mom's Meals.

HOME IS WHERE THE HEALTH IS

MOM'S MEALS
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WWW.MOMSMEALS.COM



WHY ARE YOU PASSIONATE ABOUT COMBATING HUNGER AND FOOD INSECURITY?

At Mom's Meals, we believe that better health begins with the meals we eat. We all need access to nutritious, tasty food to fill and fuel our lives. Mom's Meals takes care of others as if they are part of our own family, with every meal we make and deliver to Medicare and Medicaid beneficiaries across the country. Carrying this mission forward is more than just a delivery service; by providing clients the choice of what they want to eat, we are empowering better health.

WHAT STATISTICS ABOUT HUNGER SURPRISED YOU THE MOST?

Iowa produces one-eleventh of the nation's food supplyⁱ, but nearly one in ten Iowans is food insecure.ⁱⁱ

Food insecurity is also a critical factor in health and healthcare. One study shows that food insecure households are 47 percent more likely to visit an emergency room. Studies also show when people don't have access to enough nutritious food, it can lead to a range of chronic health issues including heart disease, high blood pressure, and diabetes.ⁱⁱⁱ

Mom's Meals is committed to combating food insecurity for our neighbors in need, across Iowa and the nation.

ⁱhttps://www.iowaeconomicdevelopment.com/userdocs/media/FS_Food_Ingredient.pdf

ⁱⁱ<https://www.feedingamerica.org/hunger-in-america/iowa>

ⁱⁱⁱ<https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/21551197.2016.1200334>



Go Green committee members who led the Bankers Trust Giving Garden efforts:

Erich Hinschberger - Credit Analyst, Kuuku Saah - Managing Director of BTC Capital Management, Valerie Hermanstorfer - Project Manager

HELPING SOLVE FOOD INSECURITY

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What does combating hunger and food insecurity look like to you?

At Bankers Trust, we believe combating hunger and food insecurity requires a combination of efforts across the food system. That's why the bank proudly supports several organizations that are addressing food insecurity in Central Iowa and beyond, including the World Food Prize, Meals from the Heartland, the Food Bank of Iowa and Eat Greater Des Moines. These organizations are tackling hunger and food insecurity in innovative ways, from producing more and better food to feed the world to reducing waste and creating programs that get food to the people who need it most.

What most excites you about your initiative?

Our employee-led Go Green Committee is taking an active role in addressing food insecurity. In 2019, committee members created a giving garden where employees volunteer their time to tend produce that will be donated to local food pantries through DMARC. The garden gives employees a chance to personally support and, in some cases, see the impacts of food insecurity first-hand.

How do you think people can make a difference?

Our home state of Iowa is one of the top food-producing states in the nation, which makes it startling to learn how many Iowans struggle with hunger. As Iowa's largest community bank, Bankers Trust is committed to helping combat food insecurity, especially in the communities where our customers and employees live and work.




THE HUNGER WARRIORS

WRITER: RACHEL VOGEL QUINN

PHOTOGRAPHER: EMILY BLOBAUM

SKEPTICS MAY ARGUE THAT ONE PERSON CAN'T CHANGE THE WORLD, BUT THESE SEVEN INDIVIDUALS BEG TO DIFFER. SEEING THE NEED IN THEIR LOCAL COMMUNITIES, THEY STEPPED UP—WORKING INSIDE AND OUTSIDE THE SYSTEM, DONATING MONEY AND TIME, HOSTING EVENTS, FOUNDING ORGANIZATIONS, GROWING FOOD, AND COOKING MEALS.



In college, one of Shelley Buffalo's friends would bring her cheese sandwiches for breakfast every morning to take the edge off her hunger and give her the energy to get out of bed. Buffalo is shown here at the Meskwaki community gardens.



THE TRADITIONALIST

SHELLEY BUFFALO, TAMA

*Meskwaki Food Sovereignty Initiative,
Local Foods Coordinator*

When Shelley Buffalo was growing up in Tama County in the early 1970s, her family shopped at the local market and butcher shop. Her mother got eggs from a neighbor down the road.

“That was an end of an era for local foods,” she says. “The local economy has been completely gutted.”

The 1980s farm crisis put farms out of business across the country, many of which were consolidated into industrial-scale operations. Native American communities like the Meskwaki were hit particularly hard by the crisis, because they had relied on local, sustainable foods for thousands of years. Buffalo links this to the current “dismal” health disparities. According to the Indian Health Service, American Indians and Alaska Natives born today have a life expectancy 5.5 years lower than the U.S. average.

“Because of colonization, our ancestral foods have been replaced with a lot of heavily processed foods,” Buffalo, 52, explains. “And that has impacted our tribal health.”

Food insecurity in the Meskwaki Settlement has increased during the COVID-19 pandemic. The meatpacking industry suffered, and the tribe’s casino was closed for three months. Buffalo believes that one solution is food sovereignty, which she

Continues on page 38

THE GARDENER

DAQUAN CAMPBELL, WATERLOO

Greens to Go, Americorps VISTA

Growing up in east Waterloo, DaQuan Campbell disliked helping in his grandmother's garden. "I never would have guessed that I would actually be trying to make a career out of this," he says with a laugh.

As the Americorps VISTA member who manages the Greens to Go mobile produce stand, part of the University of Northern Iowa Local Food Program, the 26-year-old Campbell works to increase access to fresh fruits and vegetables in underserved areas. With help from two teenage staff members, Campbell harvests seasonal produce from local farms, which is then sold to customers at stands around the city. By providing free harvesting labor to the farmers, Greens to Go gets a discount, which they pass along to their customers, many of whom have trouble finding fresh produce.

Campbell also serves as market manager for the Waterloo Urban Farmers Market, where he has increased vendor participation and customer attendance. At home, he tends his own garden.

With a degree in business management from the University of Northern Iowa, Campbell dreams of becoming a full-fledged farm producer in the next few years, scaling up his operation to meet his neighborhood's needs.

"We really need to be focused on trying to get produce to consumers who lack the access," he says.

"In the Waterloo community, there are certain areas where there are more liquor stores and fast food restaurants than there are grocery stores," says DaQuan Campbell. A significant portion of low-income residents live a mile or more from the nearest supermarket.



Di Daniels likens herself to the character Tigger from “Winnie the Pooh,” she says: “I bounce around and love you so much you can’t resist me.”

THE COLLABORATOR

DI DANIELS, STORM LAKE

SALUD Director and Co-Founder

The first time Di Daniels visited Storm Lake, in 2009, she waited in a grocery store line behind people from Laos, Guatemala and South Sudan. Having spent eight years living in Honduras, she was intrigued by the diverse community of 10,000.

According to U.S. Census Bureau data, 30% of Storm Lake residents were born outside the United States. Nearly 30 languages are spoken in the northwest Iowa town (about 25% of residents work at the Tyson Foods plant).

Daniels, 69, is fluent in Spanish and has previous experience working with different cultures.

She moved to Storm Lake in 2011 and co-founded SALUD, a multicultural organization intended to eradicate health disparities. “It’s a lofty goal,” she says with a laugh.

In 2015, motivated by troubling data on food insecurity in Buena Vista County, SALUD began hosting monthly Hunger Dialogues, where community members come together to brainstorm solutions. They also host annual food security summits.

From the Hunger Dialogues emerged a series of action-oriented programs: distributing donated garden produce, teaching container gardening to the homebound, organizing a monthly mobile food pantry with the Kiwanis Club, establishing a “you-help, you-pick” garden, and implementing food distribution at the middle and high

Continues on page 38



THE CHEF

YOLANDA JEFFERSON, DAVENPORT
*Owner, Chefy Bear on Wheels and
Black Pearl Catering*

Yolanda Jefferson has risked getting fired to feed the hungry. While managing a cafe at a homeless shelter, she once overheard a woman tell her daughter that it was the only food she would get that day. Jefferson loaded up the mother's car with extras from the cafe, despite the rule against it.

"If I see a need, I immediately jump on it," she says. "Food is love to me. When you feed somebody, you're loving them."

Jefferson, 49, has been feeding people in Davenport for over 20 years. A professional chef, she makes her living from Black Pearl Catering, but her passion is Chefy Bear on Wheels, a community service project she started two years ago.

Through conversations in her community, Jefferson heard about people facing illness and unemployment who couldn't access local resources. Through Chefy Bear, Jefferson feeds between 50 and 200 people a week, cooking lunch for pickup six days out of seven. Most people need only a few weeks of free meals before they can get back on their feet.

"It doesn't make sense that, in this country, in this day and age, people have to jump through hoops to get food," she says. "There is too much food out here that is going to waste that needs to be in people's stomachs."

Jefferson receives donated food from Hy-Vee and Aldi, and community members drop off extra groceries. She won't turn anything down, and gives away what she can't use. She even cleans and cooks fish that people catch in the Mississippi River. She doesn't have a regular menu but creates meals from whatever shows up. Sometimes it's meatloaf or spaghetti. Other times turkey tetrazzini or roasted pork loin in apple glaze. For last year's Martin Luther King Day of Service, she hosted a meal for 500.

"There's a Catch-22 in what I do," Jefferson says. "I am grateful that God has gifted me to serve people. But it's hard because you know the need is so heavy."


That load is getting heavier during the pandemic. Her catering business fell off when events were canceled en masse. Any profit she makes from Black Pearl goes straight into food for Chefy Bear. This year, she's struggling to pay for her commercial kitchen. To save money, Jefferson lives with her mother and grandmother. Her goal is to keep feeding as many people as she can for as long as she can.

"Little old Yolanda from 11th street in Davenport has an opportunity to change a life every day," she says.

"God knew these days were coming, and he knew he needed his strongest people in place to make sure that his people were taken care of," Jefferson adds. "And that's what I am here for."



Yolanda Jefferson's family compares her to a train that "just keeps going and going and going."



Mike Naig often takes his three sons home to the northwest Iowa farm in Palo Alto County where he grew up.

THE CONNECTOR

MIKE NAIG, DES MOINES

Iowa Secretary of Agriculture

As Iowa secretary of agriculture, Mike Naig has made it a point to visit food pantries and food banks while traveling the state. What he learned on those tours became unexpectedly useful when the pandemic hit, a crisis he calls an “all-hands-on-deck” moment.

“This work was born out of two things that we really didn’t want to deal with,” says the 42-year-old Naig. The first was a processing disruption, with a backup of animals on Iowa farms. The second was growing food insecurity, with an acute need for meat.

In response, the Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship worked with the Iowa Pork Producers Association to create Pass the Pork, funded by the federal CARES Act and private donations. Working with small meat lockers and producers and the Iowa State University Meats Laboratory, the program delivered 50,000 pounds of processed pork to food banks by the end of July.

The department also created a similar initiative for beef, called Beef Up Iowa, in partnership with ISU and the state’s beef producers; both programs are part of Gov. Kim Reynolds’ Feeding Iowans Task Force. (See “Growers Give Back” on page 54 for more on these programs.)

Naig says he is proud of meat producers, who, during a challenging time in the agriculture industry, “are thinking about what they can do to help others.”

Every Christmas, the Bruces work with the Dallas County Sheriff's Office to provide a week's worth of free food to hungry families.



THE PHILANTHROPISTS

MARY AND DOUG BRUCE

West Des Moines

Mary and Doug Bruce, married 34 years, have spent their lives giving back to their community. Fighting food insecurity is a cause close to their hearts.

"We live in Iowa, the breadbasket of the world," says the 67-year-old Mary. "It's heartbreaking to see children who do not have food."

That dichotomy is especially galling to a family whose livelihood is so closely tied to the agricultural industry. Before passing the torch to his daughter last year, Doug Bruce, 71, was the fourth-generation owner of Osmundson Manufacturing Co. in Perry, which produces tillage blades and tools.

In 2017 the Bruces were one of the top donors to an extensive \$6.9 million renovation of the Food Bank of Iowa, financing the addition of a kitchen for cooking classes and a

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Shelley Buffalo

Continued from page 31

describes as “regenerating our ancestral relationships with the land and with food.”

Buffalo runs the Meskwaki Food Sovereignty Initiative (MFSI), which manages about 3 acres of garden space for school outreach, Senior Services meals, and community members who don’t have their own garden space.

Other MFSI programs include a springtime Seed and Transplant Giveaway of mostly indigenous species, including corn, beans and squash. They also till personal gardens and plan to offer a fall Harvest Box of storage foods to senior citizens and families in need.

MFSI is also working with the Chicago Field Museum and with Seed Savers Exchange, based in Decorah, to reintroduce seeds of indigenous origin found in their collections. Buffalo says these projects will help bring back varieties they’ve lost due to large-scale, commercial agriculture, cultivating diversity that is essential to surviving climate change.

“In order to truly bring people back to their ancestral foods, we’ve got to get them growing again,” Buffalo says. “That activity is truly healing—and incredibly empowering.”

Working in the garden has given Buffalo the fortitude to cope with past trauma, like the systemic racism she experienced at school. One teacher refused to let her go to the bathroom, landing her in the hospital with

“GARDENING IS AN ACT OF RESILIENCE. IT IS A FORM OF EMBRACING YOUR ANCESTRAL WAYS. AND IT’S A REAL ACT OF JOY IN THE FACE OF SOMETHING AS SCARY AS THE PANDEMIC.”

SHELLEY BUFFALO

impacted bowels. Another intentionally tripped her in the hallway.

Buffalo frequently hears trauma stories like these from other tribal members. She says gardening can help soothe that pain. Tearing up, she says: “I want to reflect something back to the community that is not trauma, that is resilience. Change the narrative to show how beautiful and resilient our people are.”

Di Daniels

Continued from page 33

schools. In response to the pandemic, they now offer monthly food deliveries to the homebound in collaboration with a local church.

Daniels works tirelessly to ensure participation from all the diverse populations in Storm Lake. She says Latina women are the driving force behind the organization, serving in multiple positions of leadership.

The Hunger Dialogues have raised awareness about food insecurity in Storm Lake, leading to productive conversations about how to address the systemic causes of hunger. Resolving those challenges, Daniels acknowledges, will take a while. “But in the meantime,” she says, “nobody has to go hungry while we are trying to figure this out.”

MARY AND DOUG BRUCE

Continued from page 37

room to break down bulk food donations.

They also support the BackPack Program, which provides sacks of healthy, kid-friendly food to students every Friday during the school year. (See page 51 for information on how you can get involved with the program.)

Declaring that philanthropy has improved their quality of life, the Bruces encourage everyone to practice generosity in some form. “Just do it,” Mary says. “Write the check. Give your time. It doesn’t have to be a huge amount.” ■

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- Create ongoing awareness of hunger/food insecurity in Iowa
- Educate Iowans about hunger/food insecurity and related organizations and resources
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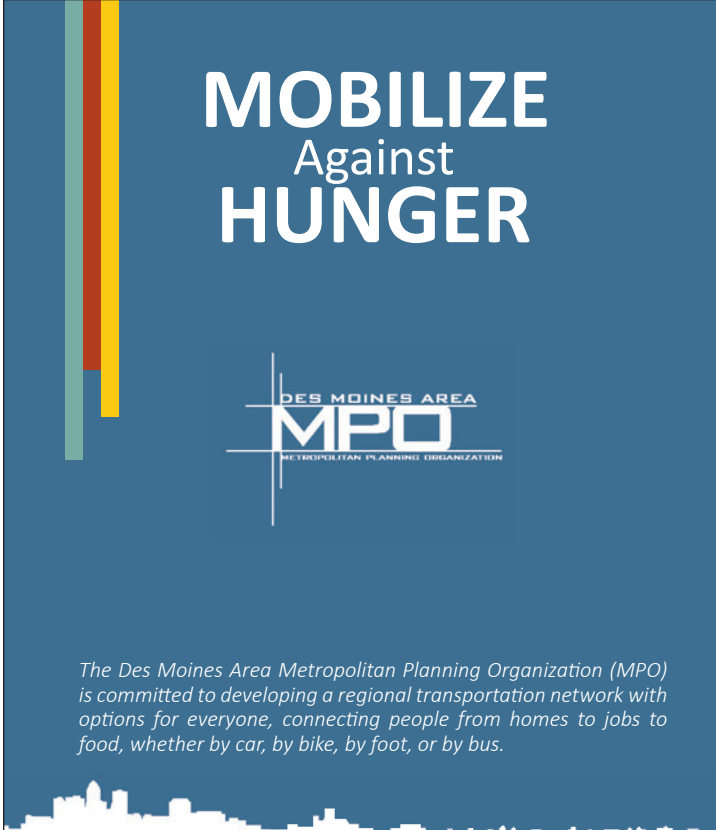


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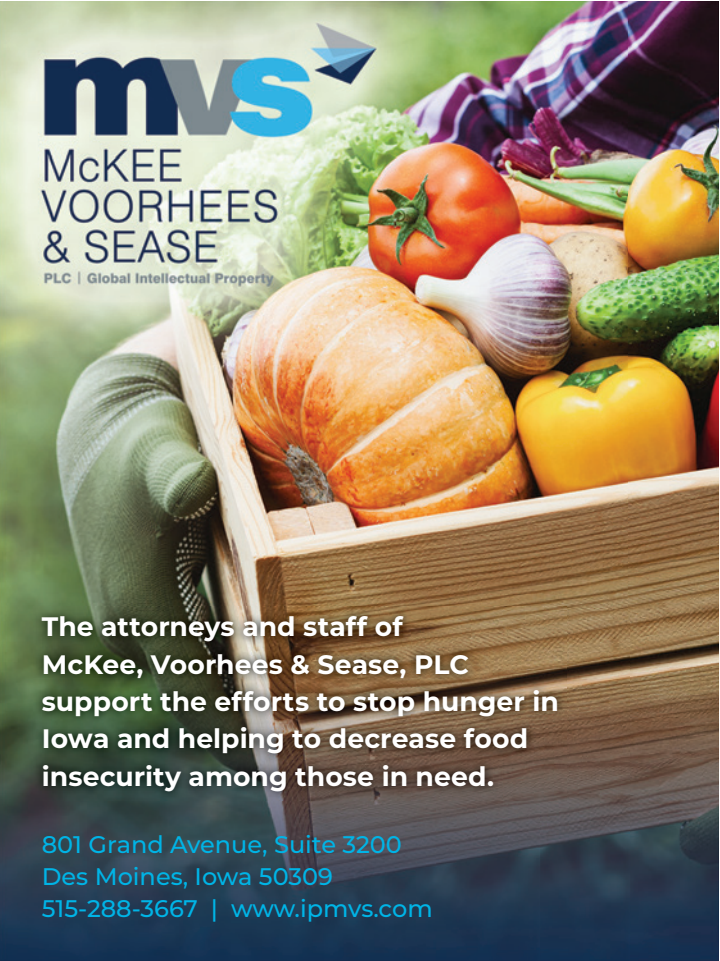


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FOOD FOR ALL





Bishnu Rai, originally from Bhutan, farms through Lutheran Services in Iowa's Global Greens program based in Des Moines. She's photographed here in her kitchen.

Leya Neema remembers a time, not long after she and her family settled in the United States in 1998 as refugees from Burundi, when they would sit down to a dinner of raw ramen noodles. “We didn’t know how to make ramen noodles ... so for a long time we’d eat them uncooked. And crunch on them,” recalls Neema, now a case manager in the Refugee Resettlement Program with the Catherine McAuley Center in Cedar Rapids, which serves refugees from more than 50 countries. “We would dip it in tea and then eat it.

“The problem isn’t that we were not getting food,” she says. Instead, “we didn’t know how to eat it. A lot of the food available at food pantries are things in boxes, cans or precooked.”

There were times, Neema adds, when this type of food insecurity would lead to health challenges. “A lot of families didn’t have a lot of food in Africa and ate simple with fufu (a common staple in West Africa) and vegetables, which are not in a lot of food banks,” she explains. “Here, we’d get boxed foods and canned foods, but when you’re being introduced to a new culture and new foods, it can be upsetting to your stomach. It’s a new thing introduced to your body and can make you sick, which can scare you from trying other things.”

Neema and her family’s experience with the U.S. food system is one shared by other immigrant and refugee families. It’s estimated that more than 24% of immigrants experience food insecurity, about twice the rate of the

general population, according to Bread for the World, a national organization that advocates for policy changes to end hunger. They are often forced out of their home countries because of war and persecution, only to face food insecurity here.

ROADBLOCKS TO FOOD SECURITY

Discrimination, language barriers, mistrust of the government, and cultural differences can hinder immigrants’ ability to put food on the table. The fear of contracting COVID-19 has amplified the problem, experts say, keeping refugees and immigrants home and away from the resources they need to provide for their families.

“When we get a call from an Iowan, it’s usually someone who has gone down all kinds of avenues to solve a problem,” says Monica Stone, deputy director of the Iowa Department of Human Rights and administrator of the Division of Community Advocacy and Services, which connects underserved populations in all 99 Iowa counties with government resources. “There might be a language barrier, or the government process is too complicated, or they don’t know the right organizations to go to get their needs met.

“It’s like a layer cake,” she adds. “We only hear about the frosting, but ... the real need is in the layers underneath. I say, ‘Tell me what your needs are,’ and they say, ‘I don’t have food to feed my family this weekend.’ We can build a package of services that can help solve the problem long-term.”

Stone understands that some individuals may be reluctant to contact a government agency, fearing that

LSI’s Global Greens program helps refugee farmers grow and sell their crops. Shown from clockwise, Congra Alex (originally of Burundi), whose farm is in Carlisle; Mariselina Manirakiza (also of Burundi) at her farm outside Indianola; Bizimana Charles at his Altoona farm (from Burundi and spent time in refugee camps in Congo and Tanzania); Tika Bhandari at her site in West Des Moines (originally from Bhutan).



sharing their information could result in harassment from immigration officials or deportation.

“People in the refugee and immigrant communities want to go to the local organizations that are better trusted,” she says. “They meet people who speak their language and they develop strong relationships with others in a closer community. ... In that case, we’ll work hard with those organizations to lift people up.”

Matt Unger, CEO of the Des Moines Area Religious Council, a multifaith collaboration of 200 congregations from five different faiths, says visitors to DMARC’s network of 14 food pantries can present any form of identification to receive food, and employees and volunteers do not ask for a visitor’s immigration status.

EXPANDED FOOD OPTIONS


Unger adds that providing culturally appropriate food for different ethnicities can be difficult to navigate, but it’s something DMARC is actively trying to remedy. “Ethnic foods are different from the typical kinds of food you’d get from a pantry, which can cause issues for us, too,” he says. “We [try to] get the most bang out of our food purchasing buck so we are able to offer food at low or no cost. We buy a good portion of the food we’re providing. The specialty cultural foods are harder to buy in bulk and can cost more than we can spend.”

Likewise, one of the Iowa Food Bank Association’s goals is to provide more ethnic food options for the underserved, according to Linda Gorkow, executive director of the association, which works statewide through six Feeding America-affiliated food banks to distribute food to 1,100 food pantries across Iowa.

“In Iowa, there’s a variety of need,” she says, including for food that is both healthy and culturally appropriate.

For example, in the Latino community, people “don’t eat a lot of canned food,” says Zuli Garcia, who, when the pandemic hit, founded a mobile food pantry called Knock and Drop in Des Moines. “It just goes to waste. They mostly stick to food with chicken or egg, vegetables, rice, beans—things that are culturally specific to the community.”

Lutheran Services in Iowa’s Global Greens program provides refugees not only with a place to grow culturally appropriate food for their families but also a path to self-reliance: The farmers learn the skills to start their own business, selling their produce at a weekly farmers



A refugee from Burundi, Beuline Bucumi spent time in Zaire, Congo and Tanzania before emigrating to the United States. She's part of LSI Global Greens and works out of West Des Moines.



market, through a community-supported agriculture outlet and online.

Nick Wuertz, director of refugee services at LSI, says Global Greens goes beyond the usual methods of addressing hunger and food insecurity by providing more personal solutions for immigrants and refugees in central Iowa.

“There are many refugees and immigrants who want to grow fruits and vegetables for themselves, whether they’re wanting to explore their skills and utilize their farming experience from their home countries or just reduce the expense of buying from a store,” Wuertz says. “It’s really important that they have access to culturally appropriate food for their families.”

LABEL CONFUSION

The Department of Human Rights’ Stone says families often face challenges not only in terms of what they’ll eat, but how they shop for it and how it’s prepared. As with Neema’s family, many refugees and immigrants don’t know how to navigate a grocery store and don’t understand labeling. Stone recalls when she helped a refugee family settle in Iowa a few years ago, the matriarch of the family decided after a few months that she’d like to do the grocery shopping on her own.

“They had been trying all these different foods and figured out that they loved fried chicken,” Stone says. “At the store, there was this can of Crisco and on the label was a pile of fried chicken. She couldn’t read English and didn’t understand what the product was for, but that’s what she bought because it had a picture of fried chicken on it.”

Dawn Oropeza, executive director of *Al Exito* in Des Moines, which focuses on academic and leadership programming for Latino youths, says such language barriers can prevent food-insecure immigrants from getting the help they need.

“Iowa being an English-only state puts a lot of people in a tough spot,” she says. “Most places you call don’t have people who speak Spanish, so it’s a barrier to begin with. A lot of our kids end up being the translator for the family.”

Knock and Drop’s Garcia adds that younger children may not fully understand what they’re interpreting. “Using a young child to interpret an already stressful situation isn’t a burden they should carry,” she says. “They don’t always know what they are they saying. It should be our responsibility.”

Garcia suggests organizations work toward having someone on staff who can translate the information they offer into languages other than English. Additionally, sharing information through various media outlets that serve ethnic communities is important, she says.

ACCESSING MARKETS

The language barrier has also been an added challenge for Global Greens farmers since the pandemic began, notes Dan Bowser, food hub and markets supervisor for LSI. Demand for fresh food has grown, but as many consumers are still concerned about going out, they’re shopping online. English-speaking, computer-literate farmers can take advantage of this expanded market, but for immigrant farmers who are still learning language and technology, “this has been devastating. They can’t access this new market,” he says.

On the consumer end, he adds, those “who are fluent can find produce easily. Customers who don’t speak English are finding it harder to get what they need.”

Those who work with immigrants and refugees say that overall, Iowa can be a welcoming place, but that more can and should be done to address food insecurity among that population.

“Iowa is decent,” says Neema of the Catherine McAuley Center. “There are a lot of people, agencies and employers that have a heart and want to help people. We’ve gotten better at accepting new people and cultures, but there’s still a lot of work to do.” ■

The photos featured in this story will be part of a book on the Global Greens program, which Lutheran Services in Iowa expects to publish next spring. Edited by Barbara Hall and photographed by Kathryn Gamble, the book, which as of press time didn’t have a title, will include stories about and recipes from Global Greens farmers. For more information, contact LSI’s community refugee services department at 515.271.7443.

Clockwise from top: An African refugee making traditional fufu; Lachhi Naupaney of Bhutan cooking in her garage; Tika Bhandari in her home.



7 WAYS TO HELP

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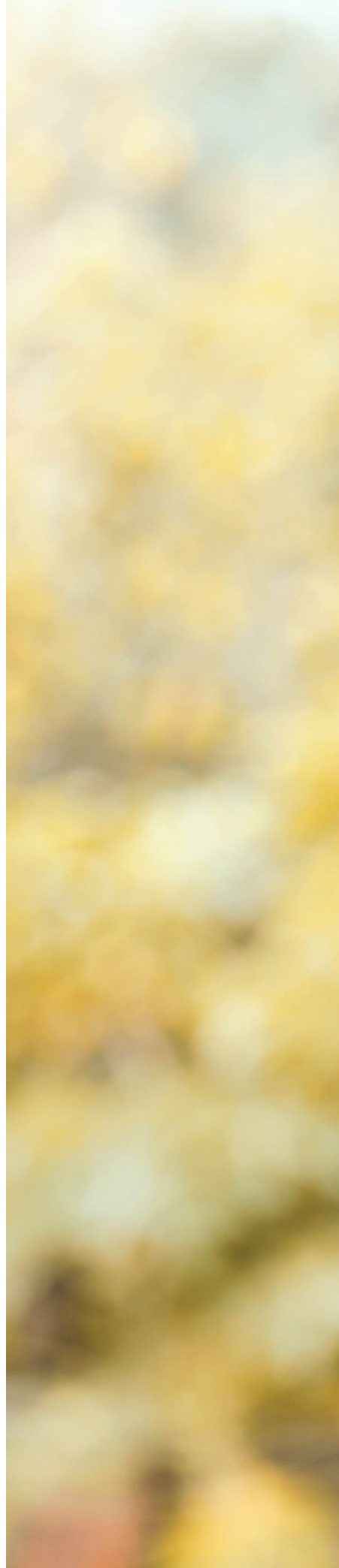
WRITER: KARLA WALSH

While cleaning out your pantry of canned and boxed foods is a start, you can make an even bigger difference in other ways to support hunger-related causes.

“Food donations are great, and I don’t ever want to discount the importance of traditional food drives,” says Dylan Lampe, senior manager for marketing and communications at the

Food Bank of Iowa. But, he adds, the organization can maximize its impact through monetary donations (\$50 funds 200 meals once the Food Bank taps into its cost-efficient food supply streams) or time (in the form of volunteering).

Here are some other ways you can help combat food insecurity across Iowa.





1. SPONSOR A BACKPACK BUDDY

Last year, the Food Bank of Iowa provided about 10 million meals to Iowans in need. One of the most crucial programs the organization facilitates is the statewide BackPack Program, which provides a bag of family-friendly, well-balanced food items to kids every Friday. Delivered free to partner schools, these meals allow kids to focus on learning in the classroom, rather than their growling stomachs, come Monday morning.

As of press time, the Food Bank was still coordinating a pandemic-related modification to the program. In the meantime, they plan to fill the shelves of more than 100 school pantries with family-sized portions of cereal, canned fruits and vegetables, pasta, pasta sauce, peanut butter, canned protein, and fresh produce.

It costs \$165 to sponsor a child for a full year, or you can make a donation at any level at foodbankiowa.org/backpack to support a student in your neighborhood.

SHARE YOUR ACTIONS!

POST PICS OF YOUR VOLUNTEERISM (AND OTHER WAYS TO GET FELLOW IOWANS INVOLVED) AT #IOWASTOPSHUNGER.

2. FIND A LOCAL HUNGER-RELATED VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITY.

VolunteerIowa.org offers many hunger-alleviating activities you can do from the comfort of your own home, including making T-shirt bags to hold deliveries. You also can sign up to deliver food, which is vital since moving food from a food bank or pantry to homes takes a substantial amount of time and gas.

Visit the Volunteer Iowa website and sort by “Food Distribution Opportunities” to find options such as delivering Meals on Wheels, packing food boxes, or planting a garden in your neighborhood to grow food for those in need.

3. TRACK YOUR FOOD SPENDING, SET A BUDGET, THEN DONATE THE REST.

Even if you're not at risk for food insecurity, you can benefit from getting a better handle on your food budget. Take a peek at your food costs for the previous month, write that number down, then visit the website *Spend Smart Eat Smart* (spendsmart.extension.iastate.edu).

The site can “help Iowans make the most of [their] food resources,” says Christine Hradek, program manager for Iowa State University’s Human Sciences Extension and Outreach. “Skills like meal planning can really help you stretch your food dollar and avoid wasting food.”

The site’s free resources help you find new ways to use staple items (such as beans, rice, pasta or tortillas), learn how to cook once and eat twice, and plan to give leftovers new life so you can reduce food waste. Then take note of your food spending for the next four weeks. Consider donating the money you’ve saved to your favorite Iowa hunger-related relief organization.

4. HIRE CATERING FROM THE JUSTICE LEAGUE OF FOOD.

This organization trains at-risk high school and college-aged youths, teaching them culinary and life skills that lead to employment opportunities in Central Iowa kitchens. As they go through a curriculum that covers knife skills, financial literacy, and making deadlines, the students are paid to help create food for orders from diners at the Hall, a beer hall and casual restaurant in West Des Moines.

You also can hire the students and their leaders to create a catered spread for your holiday feast, with all proceeds going back into the program. Learn more at justiceleagueoffood.org/get-involved.

5. RESCUE FOOD FOR TABLE TO TABLE.

Based in Iowa City, Table to Table “rescues” food from places such as Panera Bread, University of Iowa Catering and local farmers’ markets. The food, which otherwise would go to waste, is then given to those in need.

Since its launch in April 1996, Table to Table volunteers have delivered more than 20 million pounds of wholesome food to agencies that feed hungry, homeless and at-risk populations. Check out table2table.org/volunteers to learn more about opportunities, including transporting food, packing boxes and facilitating logistics with donor and recipient groups.

6. PARTICIPATE IN “CHRISTMAS PACKS” FOR MEALS FROM THE HEARTLAND.

Since 2008, this program has provided more than 150 million meals to food-insecure people in Iowa and around the world. This year, get into the true spirit of the holiday season Dec. 21-30 by joining other volunteers for a two-hour shift to build “Christmas Packs” at the Patty Cownie Packaging Center (357 Lincoln St., West Des Moines). With family and friends, you’ll box up thousands of meals.

“We love to finish strong with these packs as we set benchmarks on a calendar-year basis, so that’s the opportunity for our community to rally and help us hit our goal,” says Mike Schneider, director of development for Meals from the Heartland.

Visit community.mealsfromtheheartland.org/site/Calendar to sign up. Kids can get in on the act, as well. ■



7. GARDEN FOR GOOD

Located on a farm near Madrid, Iowa Gardening for Good grew more than 180,000 pounds of food to donate to local food banks in 2019. It makes for a safe, nature-based way to volunteer if you're not quite ready to convene in enclosed spaces. Take the time this winter to get comfortable garden apparel and tools so you can dig in come spring.

Visit iowagardeningforgood.com/draftvol to learn more about volunteer opportunities, including planting, harvesting and delivering produce. Or if you live too far to make the trip frequently, you can also donate through the site. Each dollar leads to about 5 pounds of locally grown produce that will be delivered directly to area food pantries. ■



GROWERS GIVE BACK

**FARMERS, STUDENTS AND GARDENERS
THROUGHOUT THE STATE ARE ALL WORKING TO
FEED THEIR HUNGRY NEIGHBORS.**

WRITER: LISA LAVIA RYAN
PHOTOGRAPHER: DUANE TINKEY

Students at the Des Moines Public Schools agriscience program raise chickens, pigs, goats and more for donation on their farm south of the Blank Park Zoo.

The horticulture students grow apples, peaches and pears; more than 1000 pounds of fruit were picked this summer for Eat Greater Des Moines.





Just south of Blank Park Zoo in Des Moines is a “living classroom” for Des Moines high schoolers interested in agriculture careers. One of its goals: providing food for local residents who need a little extra help, especially as COVID-19 continues to wreak havoc on the way Iowans live, work and eat.

“Basically, we’re raising hogs for those who have a difficult time affording or obtaining meat on their own,” says Kevin Anderson, an animal science instructor for Des Moines Public Schools. “It started with a pig we were gifted by the Animal Learning Center at the Iowa State Fair. We thought, what better use for this animal than to use it to feed those in need?”

Anderson and his students worked with Story City Locker in Story City to harvest the meat and deliver it free to the Des Moines Area Religious Council food pantry network. Three years later, about 60 students from all five Des Moines high schools and several surrounding

communities are enrolled in the academy’s agriscience program and earn college credit for, among other things, raising hogs to benefit DMARC pantry patrons.

Emma Aston, 17, a student at the academy, says the program has been meaningful. “Everyone should have access to nutritious food, especially those who can’t afford it,” says the Hoover High School senior. “When you know your project is going towards a good cause, [the satisfaction] is always worth the sweat.”

This program is just one way people involved in various aspects of agriculture are stepping up to address food insecurity in their communities. Farmers, gardeners, ag students, youth leaders and other producers across Iowa are supplying meat and produce to provide healthy meals for those in need.

For the Des Moines Public Schools program, the students are working even harder to help meet a greater degree of need due to COVID, and they don’t see the additional demand easing anytime soon, Anderson says.

“They’re raising, harvesting and donating chickens, sheep, goats, rabbits and tilapia,” he says. “They’re also managing and harvesting honey from three beehives and have donated hundreds of eggs. They also love taking the eggs home, as in many instances, COVID has hit their own families hard and affected their grocery budgets.”

The 11-acre urban farmstead supplements food pantries and other organizations in additional ways. Recently, Eat Greater Des Moines harvested 1,000 pounds of peaches, pears and apples. Last spring, the horticulture program donated tomato, pepper and broccoli plants from its spring sale for gardens at Urban Dreams, Taylor House Hospice, Franklin community garden, Sprouts Des Moines Urban Youth Garden and the DMARC pantries.

“We continually ask ourselves how we can get nutritious food in front of people who need it, but that question has even more urgency around it now because of COVID,” Anderson says. “When grocery budgets are cut,



Paige Baney, a senior from North High School, raises goats at the DMPS farm. She's in her third year with the program and has shown goats at the Iowa State Fair.



4-H YOUTHS IN ACTION

With the motto “to make the best better,” 4-H youths have championed food insecurity issues in their hands-on projects as part of their new program for 2020, Gardening to Give. It provides weekly hands-on, research-based challenges.

“The idea is ... those who participate are doing a family activity,” says Marybeth Foster, strategies and systems manager with Iowa 4-H on the Iowa State University campus. “They’re learning about gardening and donating the produce.”

Foster notes 4-H groups throughout the state are working on myriad food-related projects. Some 4-H’ers raise poultry to donate eggs and participate in beekeeping to produce honey; others grow gardens and raise funds to fuel food banks; additional groups offer thank-you baskets to farmers.

Nicci Supple, a 4-H leader in Hopkinton, said her group helped supplement the local food pantry with fresh produce and nonperishable foods in mid-August after the derecho. She says 4-H projects naturally lend themselves to helping those in need, as community involvement is a focus of the program.

“Training young leaders is all about helping them recognize and respond to those in need,” she says. “With COVID and the derecho, they are seeing greater need than ever. Keeping others in our community from going hungry should be a responsibility we all share.”

Students at the DMPS farm raise about 30 chickens for eggs from 6 breeds.

meat is often the first thing to go, and people aren't always able to replicate its nutritional value with other food."

GROWING TOGETHER

Christine Hradek, program manager for Iowa State University's Human Sciences Extension and Outreach, works toward a similar goal. She helps coordinate the USDA's Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Education (SNAP-Ed) in Iowa, offering education on nutrition, cooking and food-budget management to low-income Iowans.

One way Hradek's programs address food insecurity in Iowa is through Growing Together, a partnership between SNAP-Ed and master gardeners. More than 2,000 volunteers help grow produce to donate through the program, which provides mini-grants to 29 groups throughout the state for the purchase of seeds, plants and tools.

Susan DeBlieck, master gardener state coordinator with ISU Extension and Outreach, helps coordinate the grants. DeBlieck says it's "tremendously satisfying" to see the gardeners step up to grow produce to donate to area pantries.

"Given that COVID and the recent derecho have caused so many individuals to be newly food-insecure and have stressed our food pantries, it's a game-changer for our growers to be providing this food that people not only love, but that can help support their physical well-being," she says.

Growing Together volunteers work with the pantries to determine their clients' needs—as well as what can easily be stored and distributed—then they plant the fruits and vegetables.

"It used to be the case that you'd go into a food pantry and the only produce you'd see would be brown bananas," DeBlieck says. "Today, you can go in and see beautiful tomatoes and kale and zucchini. It's proof that one person and a plot of soil can change someone's story."

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KEVIN ANDERSON

MEAT PRODUCERS COLLABORATE

Iowa's beef and pork producers also have been serving those in need through two programs—Pass the Pork and Beef Up Iowa—launched this past spring as part of Gov. Kim Reynolds' Feeding Iowans Task Force.

Funded by the federal CARES Act as well as private donations, the programs are a collaborative effort involving the Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship, meat producers, and students and staff at Iowa State University, who are helping process meat from producers who have limited processing options due to COVID-19.

Joyce Hoppes, consumer information director for the Iowa Pork Producers, says the generosity of Iowa farmers makes them some of the "unsung heroes" of the pandemic.

When Pass the Pork was started at the end of April, the goal "was to pair food-insecure Iowans with farmers who were facing challenges with the market and with the supply chain, and our farmers stepped up in huge numbers," Hoppes says. "The project is in phases, and in the first phase alone, farmers donated 451 pigs—enough for 200,000 meals. All six food banks in Iowa received some of that pork."

Hoppes says those involved with the program hope to see it continue. "The desire to help speaks so well of the character of our farmers; even in such a challenging time for so many of them, they welcome the opportunity to help others in need," she says. "No matter how long we have to deal with COVID, you can count on one thing: Whatever Iowans can do to help one another, we will, and we sure won't let others go hungry." ■

Here to Help

THESE ORGANIZATIONS CONNECT IOWANS IN NEED WITH FOOD RESOURCES.

Iowa Food Bank Association *lowafb.org*

The association is a collaboration involving food banks and affiliates across Iowa, including the Food Bank of Iowa, Food Bank for the Heartland, Northeast Iowa Food Bank, Food Bank of Siouland, Riverbend Food Bank, St. Stephen's Food Bank, and the Hawkeye Area Community Action Program. Together, these organizations serve more than 1,000 nonprofit groups—such as pantries, schools, shelters and other sites that distribute food—in all 99 counties. The association is affiliated with Feeding America, the nation's largest hunger-relief organization.

Iowa Hunger Directory *lowahungersummit.org*

This comprehensive index profiles 500 organizations fighting hunger in every county. Developed through the World Food Prize, the directory lists descriptions of each organization and provides contact information. An interactive map highlights community organizations fighting hunger, and the site also offers newsletters and online resources.

USDA *Nutrition.gov*

The U.S. Department of Agriculture offers a variety of food assistance programs, including WIC (Women, Infants, and Children) SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program) and the national school lunch program, as well as help for senior citizens. The USDA also offers dietary education, guidance on food safety, and tips for healthy living and weight control. ■





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