The Giving Edition

Want to know how individuals, organizations and businesses in northern New Mexico respond to a global pandemic? Read more inside.
Food banks operate quietly behind the scenes during typical times, supplying nonprofit partners in hunger relief with food supplies that are then given out to people in need. In disasters, the same holds true. **Across the nation, food banks play a critical role in disaster relief.** Food banks handle the hunger relief component of disasters — Hurricane Katrina, the Los Conchas fire, Hurricane Harvey.

The Food Depot is responsible for providing hunger relief to people in nine counties in northern New Mexico. When the pandemic struck, the food bank responded, and kept responding every week since. In this moment in our history, The Food Depot staff stepped forward as first responders during an unprecedented crisis. The need for hunger relief skyrocketed, to levels never seen even by veteran food bank employees. The Food Depot staff leaped into action. Despite significant precautions, staff risked exposure by continuing to work on the front lines. The Food Depot’s staff was undaunted.

**In the past few months, The Food Depot staff has shown that they are a team, a highly productive team committed to a common goal — feeding our community.**

**Teamwork has been demonstrated at every level** — in the warehouse, across sides of the building, between at-home and in-office staff, among the leadership team. Everyone is pitching in, doing their best, and looking out for each other. When we work together we move mountains, and we have moved mountains — of food, that is.

**To our staff:** You never hesitated. You stepped forward, and you served your community. When you look back on this time and tell your grandchildren about it, you can hold your head up and tell them when your community needed you most, you acted.

I am inspired by each of you. Thank you for your service!

*Sherry Hooper, executive director*

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**Want to Get Involved?**

**Donate**
You can make a monetary donation:

*Online: thefooddepot.org*

*Over the phone: Contact Mona at 505-471-1633, ext. 112*

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**Advocate**
You can make a difference by sharing information about hunger in our communities. Share social media posts on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram.

For the latest information, go to thefooddepot.org.

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**Volunteer**
The Food Depot is always looking for volunteers to join the team.

Contact Ash at volunteer@thefooddepot.org to learn how to get involved. She can help you get started on your application!

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**Thank you to our temporary staff for assisting during the COVID-19 crisis:**

Zamir Crispin
Michael Ossolo
Karim Perez
Camille Rousculp

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**The Food Depot is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit, non-partisan, and an equal opportunity provider.**
A Time for a Sense of Community

A donor recently approached The Food Depot about how financial gifts could be maximized. After discussions with Jill Dixon, director of development, about the different options to do this, the donor established Thankful Thursdays. The donor wanted to share these thoughts:

“I wake up every morning grateful that I live in the land of enchantment. I’ve had time to slow down and enjoy the beautiful blue skies, the birds singing out my window and the wildflowers growing along the side of the road. I’m blessed that I’m not food insecure, one of the most basic human needs. Out of compassion for so many of my neighbors who are suffering and out of concern for the most vulnerable among us, I contacted The Food Depot.

I hope Thankful Thursday inspires an offering of hope and sense of community, nourishing not only those most in need, but also nourishing the souls of everyone hungry for good news.”

Thankful Thursdays

The idea brought forth another generous donor matching donations and because of this generosity, donations were tripled. The call to The Food Depot community was put out with a goal to raise $10,000 in one day.

The staff was overwhelmed by the support raising an incredible $85,326 in one day!

Thank you to everyone who was inspired by this day of giving and supported The Food Depot’s hunger relief work!

HOPE for the Homebound

Meeting the Needs

The rippling effects of the coronavirus pandemic touch us all. As alternative hunger relief strategies were developed in response to the public health crisis, it emerged that a small group was being left behind — the homebound.

While a drive through food pantry is an excellent approach to preserve safety and provide food quickly to a large number of people, it poses a challenge for others. For many in our community, transportation is a barrier.

Whether due to economic or medical reasons, there are people in our community who have difficulty accessing services. When those individuals lack a support system, that need is compounded.

Last month, Santa Fe County and the City of Santa Fe initiated a partnership with The Food Depot to provide food to those who are struggling and yet, are underserved. The program is called Hope for the Homebound.

Three days a week, The Food Depot prepares boxes of nonperishable staple foods and bags of fresh produce.

Santa Fe Valet picks up the food and provides delivery to specific communities and door to door as appropriate. Hope for the Homebound is already reaching 175 families and individuals each week.

If you know someone in need of hunger relief assistance who cannot access existing services, please contact The Food Depot at navigator@thefooddepot.org.
Meet The Food Depot’s Extended Team: Our Volunteers

Volunteers are the backbone of The Food Depot. Whether in the warehouse or at one of the many food distributions, staff could not accomplish all that needs to be done to serve nine counties in northern New Mexico. These important people are the reason why The Food Depot was able to reach the milestone of distributing more than 1 million pounds of food in April.

In our response to the COVID-19 public health crisis, The Food Depot asked the entire volunteer team to opt-out if they felt they were in a high-risk category to keep everyone safe. Many of them chose to do so, and The Food Depot looks forward to the day when they can join us in person again. These volunteers continue to be important members on the team and support the efforts in many different ways, such as sharing information on social media or making a financial gift. Everyone can play a part!

We asked our volunteer team to answer these questions:

1. What do you value most about volunteering at The Food Depot?

2. What inspired you to volunteer with The Food Depot?

We were so excited with the number of responses. Here are some of their replies. For all of the messages we received, go to the volunteer page at thefooddepot.org.

I enjoy being needed and each time I volunteer, the staff thanks me so very much for being there to help. This is even on days when I haven’t really done very much because there has been a lull. … We are all little puzzle pieces in a big jigsaw puzzle, together it is the whole picture

– Jarratt A.

I wanted to do something with the time made available by the shut down that contributed directly to the new needs created by the circumstances. The opportunity to contribute to the community as a new Santa Fe resident.

– Kathryn W.

What I love most about volunteering with The Food Depot is knowing that I am helping people by providing food, glorious food!

– Mary N.

The reason I became a volunteer at The Food Depot is the chance to make a difference. I am 80 years young and enjoy seeing the big smiles and happy faces. I have been volunteering in one form or another for about 20 years and get back so much more than I can give. My purpose in life is giving back and sharing the beauty of it all. It makes me very sad that I can not participate more because of my age. I only hope that we found a positive solution to the coronavirus and I can go back to volunteering in person.

– Arnold H.

I don’t want anyone to be without food! Staying home alone for so many days, weeks, months is abnormal. Giving free food is a good reason to go out, be part of a team, get into action, change the world (one drop in the bucket of what needs to be done). Even if being around humans puts me more at risk, it makes life worthwhile.

I hope to give back; when I was homeless and hungry, a family brought fried chicken they had made at home to me. I can never forget it.

– Amy L.

I hope to give back; when I was homeless and hungry, a family brought fried chicken they had made at home to me. I can never forget it.

– Sally D.
Thanks to Our Volunteers!

More Responses to our Questions:

I used to need this help and always appreciated it for my own family. It’s my turn to give back and show my appreciation. Organizations like this are needed and I am so proud to be a part of this. I value the people there volunteering and making a significant difference.

— Tamara J.

When I retired in 2015 I felt at ease as to what my role would be after working for over 60 years. I tried several volunteer situations but none gave me the satisfaction, and camaraderie I was looking for. I came to Food Depot accidentally, but I knew right away that this was the volunteer work I wanted to do. The Food Depot offered me the opportunity to do hands on service direct to the needs of a wide community.

I also found the staff, and volunteers to be warm and welcoming. I have been working 2-3 days a week with the same volunteer group for almost 3 years, and I have found true camaraderie, dedication, and meaning to the word "volunteer."

— Al S.

I live a few blocks from the Food Depot and I signed up to volunteer after driving past the line of cars one Saturday morning; it seemed to stretch on for miles. We all know that so many hard working Americans are so underpaid that they are living paycheck to paycheck, but seeing what that means in terms of the number of vehicles was heartbreaking. No one should ever go hungry. I wanted to help get food on people’s tables.

— Spencer D.,
Comcast Manager Technicians—Technical Operations Northern N.M.

Sense of making a difference in the community. Support for a wonderful organization with a very important mission. Due to my age I have not been volunteering during the COVID-19 era – but look forward to returning when I can.

— Brenda S.

To be honest, I enjoy volunteering in many ways throughout the community and do as much as I can during “normal” times. In any time, food security is fundamental to enabling people to get through tough times and regain their footing. So, I value the opportunity to help my fellow New Mexicans. More specifically, however, this pandemic has made me feel helpless, and I am happy to be able to fight back against its impact, even in a small way.

— Erica S.

At the end of 1996, I started working with a young adult who is on the autism spectrum. I felt that if we both volunteered at The Food Depot, the experience would help him develop empathy. We volunteered on Tuesday afternoons for two years and the experience was beneficial for him and equally beneficial for me. We were both quickly made to feel at home. After the young man left Santa Fe to live in a residence out of state, I continued to volunteer.

— Scott S.

I have always believed in helping others, I make it into a fun and rewarding activity. I value the outcome of my efforts, it’s rewarding to see others happy when they get help without asking.

— Joseph G.
The Giving Corner

When the new year began, no one could imagine all of the events 2020 would bring.

The outpouring of support we’ve had from individuals, groups, businesses and foundations have been nothing short of amazing. Every single donation, small and large, matters. The ripple effects of COVID-19 will undoubtedly be felt, especially economically, for years to come. The Food Depot invites you to learn more about the people and businesses who have shared their compassion and supported the unique efforts of the community.

Los Alamos National Labs

The staff of Los Alamos National Labs (LANL) hosted an incredible virtual food drive in the early weeks of the public health crisis. With a match from Triad, LLC, of $10,000, the virtual food drive raised $63,580, enough to provide 254,320 meals. The Food Depot reached out to LANL’s Community Outreach Specialist Selena Valencia to ask them about their successful food drive:

What inspired you to do a virtual food drive for The Food Depot?

"Our employees at LANL felt the immediate need to give back in some way; but without being onsite and the efforts going towards minimizing the risk of spread were at hand, a traditional food drive was out of the question. We were able to come to a resolution of a virtual food drive where employees could donate online. This was a great solution in continuing to aid in the efforts that the Food Depot was currently facing while continuing to practice social distancing to minimize the risk of spread."

With the success of this food drive, how did you feel when you first saw the results?

"I was completely overwhelmed seeing the employees' response to the virtual food drive. The numbers that came in showed that our employees were seeing and hearing the need in the region and wanted to help in a way that was feasible in these uncertain times."

Thank you, Los Alamos National Labs staff and Triad, LLC!

Jon "Bones" Jones, Mixed Martial Artist Fighter

Jon "Bones" Jones has lived in New Mexico for more than a decade. The UFC champion recently donated $25,000, enough for 100,000 meals in northern New Mexico.

"We're in unprecedented times right now, but it's important that we continue to stand together and help each other however we can. The Food Depot has done some amazing work for New Mexico. I'm honored to support and hope we can ease the burdens of families in our community," Jon Jones told The Food Depot. Thank you, Jon Jones!

Market Street

There are many pieces of logistics that go into a food distribution, but one of the most consistent tools needed for an efficient event is simple: a paper bag.

Paper bags are necessary for storage and allow foods to be packaged for quick distribution. They can also be expensive and during a pandemic, challenging to get.

When Market Street came forward with a donation of 30,000 paper bags for food distributions, it was an incredibly welcomed donation. The donation will provide enough bags for several months of food distributions.

"COVID-19 created hardships for many residents of Santa Fe and northern New Mexico, and The Food Depot saw a large increase in requests for assistance. Providing 30,000 paper sacks was a great way for Market Street/Albertsons Market to contribute to the good work being done by the Food Depot. We are invested in the communities we serve." Jeremy Miller, store director of Market Street in Santa Fe, said.

Thank you, Market Street and to the City of Santa Fe for waiving the fees for Market Street associated with this donation.
More Thanks!

Comcast Cares Day

The annual Comcast Cares Day has become a staff and volunteer favorite around the warehouse. The team was beginning plans for this year’s event when the difficult decision was made to cancel. Comcast’s support of The Food Depot and its mission did not stop there. Comcast awarded a generous grant of $15,000. This is the equivalent of 60,000 meals and will make a difference in the lives of many New Mexicans. Comcast also provided public access to their many hotspots and for several weeks, the Internet Essentials program was free to new customers.

“Comcast is proud to stand with The Food Depot by providing additional support in response to the COVID-19 crisis. Hunger was already an ongoing battle in northern New Mexico before COVID-19, and The Food Depot has doubled their efforts to address hunger relief. We’re grateful to be their community ally and applaud their hard work to distribute more than 1 million pounds of food in April alone,” Julianne Phares, director, external affairs for Comcast said. Thank you, Comcast!

Millie Bobby Brown

Stranger Things actress Millie Bobby Brown recently donated $5,000, enough for 20,000 meals. Fans of the Netflix show may be excited to learn Stranger Things will be filming the fourth season in New Mexico, and specifically Santa Fe, according to Brown’s recent Instagram post. Thank you, Millie Bobby Brown!

Local Tennis Pros Serve Up ‘LOVE’ and Support

Monica McLin brought together a group of tennis pros in the area and raffled off 34 one-hour private tennis lessons for those who donated to The Food Depot.

"... I was in tears and beyond ecstatic! ... I am truly grateful to the Santa Fe community and tennis pros for their efforts to 'Rally Against Hunger,' " Monica said.

This fundraiser raised $14,245, the equivalent of 56,980 meals. Thank you Monica McLin and the Santa Fe tennis community!

Making “Lemon(aid)"

Anika and her daughter Elisa recently hosted a socially distancing lemonade stand in their neighborhood. Friends, family and their neighbors raised $500 in three hours! This is enough for 2,000 meals. Thank you, Anika and Elisa!

Facebook Donors

The Food Depot would like to acknowledge and thank numerous donors that support our work through Facebook fundraisers. Facebook does not share donor information with nonprofits, making it challenging to specifically thank everyone who donates through the Facebook platform, but it has a huge impact in The Food Depot’s hunger-relief work.

4 Birds Photography

Long-time photographer Christy Parent has been capturing moments in time, whether people, places or things for more than 20 years. Christy decided to start a Front Steps photography project in Santa Fe. The project consisted of a casual, 5-minute photo shoot including all members of a home from families to roommates to pets. Christy then asked the participants to make a donation to a Gofundme account to benefit The Food Depot. Through 24 donors, this project raised $2,750, enough for 11,000 meals. You can follow the project on social media with the hashtag #TheFrontStepsProjectSantaFe. In addition, Christy recently documented a food distribution for The Food Depot. We are grateful for the donation of time and skills. Thank you, Christy Parent, 4 Birds Photography and everyone who participated in these fun photo shoots!

Neighbor to Neighbor Update

Last year, the eighth annual Neighbor to Neighbor food drive eclipsed everyone’s expectations — except maybe those of the drive’s organizer, Linda Wilder-Flatt. Linda’s passion for hunger relief is well known throughout Santa Fe, and she put that passion into action as she motivated a record number of neighborhoods to donate. The food drive collected a record 364,290 pounds.

This year, the shape the drive will take is still being decided. One thing is for certain in these uncertain times — Neighbor to Neighbor will be back for a 9th year. Stay tuned to find out how your neighborhood can get involved. “In 2020, this drive will mean more than it ever has,” Linda said.

For information, email Linda Wilder-Flatt: lwf64n2n@comcast.net
Expenses Explained

Giving A Lot To Get A Lot

You’ve seen The Food Depot mobilize in response to the COVID-19 crisis. The incredible generosity of our supporters made this work possible. Financial contributions in April and May exceeded any two-month period in The Food Depot’s history. This generosity is inspiring, and critically needed during a time when expenses vastly exceed typical expectations.

The Food Depot and its partners observed a 30 percent increase in demand for hunger relief services in the past months.

As the need has grown exponentially, typical sources of donated food have disappeared, driving up the cost of operations. Local product donors have less to give, and interruptions to the food chain have delayed access to food, eliminated donation sources, and increased food prices.

In April, The Food Depot spent over $600,000 purchasing food to meet a skyrocketing demand for hunger relief services. This is equivalent to the amount budgeted for an entire year of food purchase, spent in just one month.

Between March 9 and the end of May, The Food Depot has incurred relief expenses in excess of $950,000.

Expenses have been related to the following:

- Food purchase, produce
- Food purchase, nonperishable staple foods
- Boxes (for food distribution)
- Bags (for food repackaging and distribution)
- Totes (for temporary food storage)
- Protective equipment (gloves, masks, sanitizing wipes and solvents)
- Temporary staff
- Truck rental (to increase food distribution capacity)
- Refrigerated trailer rental (to increase cold storage for produce)

The Food Depot operates much like any other business, with fiscal responsibility. The finance committee reviews financial reports monthly, including a P&L and the Balance Sheet. Feeding America mandates that all food banks maintain three months of working capital in reserve; The Food Depot complies with this mandate. The Food Depot strives for transparency, publishing its annual audits and 990 filings. For 12 consecutive years, The Food Depot’s earned a 4-Star Charity Navigator rating.

In interviews, this question is frequently posed: “Is The Food Depot okay? Do you have enough?”

The answer to that is both yes and no. The Food Depot has enough right now. At current expenditure levels, The Food Depot can continue providing hunger relief services at current levels through 2020 and beyond. The Food Depot recognizes that people who are economically vulnerable have been dramatically affected by the pandemic. This vulnerability will persist beyond temporary closures. The Food Depot expects the increased demand for hunger relief supplies to persist, and potentially expand again, in the coming months.

It is challenging to make solid business projections in unprecedented times. Therefore, The Food Depot moves forward with a desire to balance the responsibility of providing adequate hunger relief services while conservatively preparing for an uncertain future.

Together, we will be there for our community, whatever comes.

Community Partners

A heartfelt thank you to these individuals and organizations for assisting with donations, details, and logistics:

- 3HO Foundation
- 4 Birds Photography
- Anika and Elisa’s Lemonade Stand
- Anonymous Donors
- Aerial Frog Drone Photography
- Band Together Santa Fe Artists
- Basecamp Project Management Software
- Bag ‘n Hand Food Pantry
- Barker Realty
- Big Jo’s True Value Hardware
- Braulio Chavez
- Carmen and Penny Rodriguez
- Christian Life Church
- City of Santa Fe
- Coca-Cola Santa Fe
- Comcast
- Communities in Schools
- Delancey Street
- Earth and Anchor
- Elena Dorfman Photography
- Feeding Santa Fe
- Hope Unlimited Church Santa Fe
- Hutton Broadcasting
- Java Joe’s
- Jon “Bones” Jones
- Jordan Bosiljevac
- Kick Ass Entrepreneurs of Santa Fe
- Knights of Columbus
- Market Street / Albertson’s Market
- Meow Wolf
- Millie Bobby Brown
- MoGro
- Monica Lin and Area Tennis Pros
- Ohkay Hotel and Casino
- One for Neptune
- Orangetherapy Fitness Santa Fe
- Pronto Signs
- Pueblo of Ohkay Owingeh
- Pueblo of Pojoaque
- Recovery Corps Rio Arriba
- Santa Fe County
- Santa Fe Place Mall
- Santa Fe Police Department
- Santa Fe Public Schools
- Santa Fe Tortilla Company
- State Farm
- Starbucks
- Suzy St. Claire
- Talus Wind Ranch/Talus Wind Heritage Meats
- Teach for America New Mexico
- Team Rubicon
- United Church of Santa Fe
By the Numbers:

A Look at Logistics

In April, The Food Depot reached a bittersweet milestone. With the incredible assistance of partner agencies and volunteers, more than 1 million pounds of food was distributed in nine counties in northern New Mexico.

This is more than double the average per month for The Food Depot and its partner agencies. Working to meet this increased demand comes an increased amount of logistics for The Food Depot staff.

Here’s a closer look at some of those details since March 9:

146: the number of bank deposits prepared by Robyn including processing thousands of checks

9,371: the number of donations processed by Mona and Robyn

4,441: the number of emails received by Ash from prospective/current volunteers

75: the number of media mentions, articles and interviews featuring The Food Depot

203: the number of meetings Sherry has led or participated in

More than 250: the number of social media posts made by Jennifer

In April:

57 percent: the amount of fruits and vegetables distributed

16 percent: the amount of protein distributed

231: the number of local pickups from food donors handled by Paul, Sammy, Leonard, Fred, and Jerry in April

A few statistics that are not typos:

16: volunteer shifts per week to prepare food for distribution

8,737: volunteer hours invested between March 26 and June 13

More than 450: the number of volunteers who have enrolled with The Food Depot since the pandemic response began

2,538: the number of pantry bags packed and palletized by Tim and his volunteer teams in three days in a given week

For the months March, April and May:

7,565: applications processed for The Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP). This required approximately 75,000 pages be reviewed for accuracy and compiling data by Elizabeth.

Big Jo True Value Donors

The Food Depot’s Siler Road neighbor, Big Jo True Value Hardware recently donated 1,500 paper bags and $5,000.

This is the equivalent of 20,000 meals and will truly support food distributions.

Thank you, Big Jo’s!
Why your Support is Still Needed...

For many New Mexicans, the last few months have been and will continue to be a wide range of challenges and emotions.

Lines of cars for food assistance stretched for more than a mile at times. There were New Mexicans in these lines for the first time who shared they didn’t know if they belonged there. Some were embarrassed and ashamed, but everyone needs help at different times in their lives. With the ripple effects of an already challenged New Mexican economy, The Food Depot expects the increase in need for food assistance to continue.

As stated in the article on page 14 and 15, The Food Depot cannot predict the future, but is responsibly planning to prepare for the need in northern New Mexico. When you give a financial gift, every dollar donated provides four meals.

Contact Tim at tfowler@thefooddepot.org for more details about hosting a virtual food drive to support The Food Depot. Thank you for your continued support!

The Food Depot’s Resource Navigator Program

The Food Depot is here for northern New Mexico.

The incredibly challenging last few months have many needing support for the first time. As the food bank of northern New Mexico, we can help you find food resources in your area, apply for SNAP (formerly Food Stamps), and offer other types of food assistance and information. There may be other assistance available. The Food Depot’s Resource Navigator, Chris, can assist with the CONNECT network.

As part of CONNECT, a partnership between the City of Santa Fe, Santa Fe County and many others, we may be able to connect you to assistance with:

- Housing and rent
- Utilities
- Healthcare
- Counseling and emotional support
- Addictions and mental health
- Relationship violence
- Other resources

Email Chris at navigator@thefooddepot.org or call 505-470-2236 for more information.

A Leader in Our Community

In Memory of Linda Milbourn

The Food Depot is pleased to be part of the community effort to acknowledge the dedicated work of Linda Milbourn and her contributions to the Santa Fe nonprofit community at both the Santa Fe Botanical Garden and the New Mexico Foundation.

Linda felt passionately that every child in New Mexico should have access to food.

The Food Depot, Northern New Mexico’s Food Bank, addresses that goal through their Food 4 Kids program. Learn more about the impact of Food 4 Kids at thefooddepot.org/food4kids.

Linda’s family and friends have made a $10,000 contribution in Linda’s memory to support The Food Depot’s work to address child hunger in New Mexico, a need which is especially critical as a result of the ongoing food shortages caused by the COVID-19 pandemic.

This contribution has been made in the hope that it will be matched or exceeded by additional contributions from those who similarly wish to honor Linda’s memory in this way.

If you wish to support this timely cause please go to thefooddepot.org and submit your contribution, designating that gift in honor of Linda.
Save the Date:

National Hunger Action Month is September 2020

thefooddepot.org