



The new Western Slope Etkin Family Distribution Center will provide 84% more space, and its Grand Junction location will enable Food Bank of the Rockies to facilitate more efficient shipping and receiving to better serve our Hunger Relief Partners across the Western Slope.

Growing to Serve More Western Slope Neighbors in Need

Last year, Food Bank of the Rockies distributed more food to more people across the Western Slope than ever before. In fact, since 2017 we have increased our distribution in this region by 66%, from 7.1 million pounds of food annually to more than 11.8 million pounds.

“The new facility will enable us to store and offer a wider selection of foods to our Hunger Relief Partners so that they can better serve their clients.”

We are incredibly proud to have so many dedicated Hunger Relief Partners helping us serve our Western Slope neighbors in such a dynamic way, but the reality remains that we have dramatically outgrown our current distribution center in Palisade — long before the pandemic further exacerbated hunger across

the region. That is why we are building the new Western Slope Etkin Family Distribution Center in Grand Junction.

There are many ways in which a bigger, better-equipped distribution center is critical to meeting the needs of our Western Slope neighbors. First, the increased storage space — 400% more refrigeration, 39% more dry storage, 59% more frozen capacity — will enable us to partner with local agricultural partners to provide more fresh produce to clients. And, with 84% more space overall, the new facility will also enable us to store and offer a wider selection of foods to our Hunger Relief Partners so that they can better serve their clients.

Furthering our goal of meeting people where they are, the Western Slope Etkin Family Distribution Center will provide the resources necessary to expand our programs and team up with community partners such as St. Mary’s Medical

Center Meals on Wheels Mesa County, who will use the commercial kitchen to increase the distribution of fresh meals to older adults from 600 every weekday to 1,000.

Our mission always has been and always will be to serve our neighbors with equity, dignity, and respect. To do that as well as possible, we need a larger distribution center on the Western Slope. Be part of our growth by joining our campaign to help us best serve our neighbors in need of all ages, circumstances, and locations. Together, we can end hunger on the Western Slope.

Help support your Western Slope neighbors facing hunger today.



Visit
foodbankrockies.org/ws-capital-campaign-give-or-scan-the-qr-code



In March, volunteers packed 5,800 seed packets to distribute to Hunger Relief Partners. The seeds, which were sourced and supplied by Ekar Farms, are part of our effort to seek innovative ways to provide the people we serve with as much fresh produce as possible. / Photos by American Lighting

From the Operations Team

Spring is a time to glimpse the promise of new growth. In our mission to end hunger in our 53-county service area, Food Bank of the Rockies is preparing for a new season of equitably distributing nourishing, fresh food to the people we serve.

We strive to do this by collaborating with partners and establishing unique programs. Since the FRESH program launched in June 2021, for instance, we have distributed over 4 million pounds of fresh fruits and vegetables to Hunger Relief Partners across Colorado and Wyoming, nearly 20% of which was sourced from local growers. We currently distribute an average of 759,000 pounds of produce every month via FRESH, and we have plans in place to provide new opportunities to help our partners expand their capability to handle fresh items.

A recent initiative we implemented to help our partners and the people they serve thrive is a seed-packet program. In March, volunteers packed 5,800 packets of seeds sourced by Ekar Farms to be delivered to Hunger Relief Partners. Along with the seeds, Ekar also provided helpful information for partners to use for growing the produce.

One more example of increasing partners' access to fresh produce is a project launching this summer. The project will involve Food Bank of the Rockies purchasing produce from four food hubs around Colorado and directly delivering it to partners in rural areas that historically have had difficulty sourcing fresh produce. Each hub will aggregate produce from several local growers, simultaneously allowing us to support small agricultural operations. We are also working with the receiving partners to determine what types of produce their clients most desire in order to source as many culturally relevant items as possible.

All of these programs highlight the importance of collaboration. It takes all of us working together to ensure we equitably distribute the foods our neighbors want and need in order to flourish. We are incredibly grateful to our 800+ Hunger Relief Partners, agricultural partners, volunteers, donors, and everyone else who helps make this work possible.

Thank you for helping us ignite the power of community to help our neighbors thrive.



Gratefully,

Steve Kullberg
Chief Operations Officer
Food Bank of the Rockies

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Western Slope

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This institution is an equal
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The correlation between poor economic conditions and food insecurity is stark, and is worsened by centuries-old discriminatory practices aimed at BIPOC communities./ Photo by Caitlyn Barnett

The Unequal Impact of Hunger on Communities of Color

The pandemic has affected everyone over the past two years. However, individuals who identify as Black, Indigenous, or People of Color (BIPOC) have felt the weight especially acutely as additional economic hardships caused by COVID magnify the systemic barriers already in place prohibiting them from thriving. This unequal impact can be seen in the levels of food insecurity experienced by BIPOC communities.

In 2020, poverty rates for Latino, Black, and Native American communities were 17%, 19.5%, and 24.9% respectively, compared to 10.1% for non-Latino whites. Among the many negative effects caused by poverty is food insecurity, defined by Feeding America as “a lack of consistent access to enough food for every person in a household to live an active, healthy life.”

Food insecurity can also be defined as an economic condition driven by a lack of critical resources. For BIPOC communities, centuries-old discriminatory policies have long resulted in a higher likelihood of poverty, unemployment, and a lack of financial resources.

The correlation between poor economic conditions and food insecurity is stark. The 2019 American Community Survey found that Black, Latino, Native American, and Pacific Islander communities experienced higher levels of poverty, disability, and unemployment, and lower levels of homeownership and median income than Asian and non-Latino white communities — as well as noticeably higher rates of food insecurity.

At the core of Food Bank of the Rockies’ mission is to provide people with equitable, dignified access to food. Until racial equity is the norm, we must collectively strive to do more to nourish all of our neighbors in need.

2020 Poverty Rates:

Latino: 17%
Black: 19.5%
Native American: 24.9%
White: 10.1%

Spring Clean your Estate Plan

Looking for a charitable plan that provides for the people you care about while achieving your philanthropic goals? Include Food Bank of the Rockies in your legacy plans! For questions about this opportunity, **contact Major and Planned Giving Manager Laurie Hagerman at lhagerman@foodbankrockies.org or 720-715-7720.**

Providing Food and Hope in Buffalo, Wyoming

A line of cars snakes around Johnson County Fairgrounds in Buffalo, Wyoming, on a blustery Tuesday morning. Dozens of people have arrived at the mobile pantry early to ensure they get food for themselves and, often, friends and family members who couldn’t be there.

Food insecurity has long been present in Buffalo, and the need has only increased since COVID-19. On average, 150 people attend the monthly mobile pantry.

“I never thought I’d have to worry about getting food. But boy, when that virus hit, it just knocked everything out,” said Sherree, below on the right, sitting in line with her friend, Janice, below on the left.

Sherree is on disability and lives with her elderly mother. Janice is her neighbor, and the two are all smiles as they recall the many meals they’ve crafted from the food boxes.

“We don’t believe in wasting any of the food,” said Sherree. “What Janice can’t think of to make, I can, and vice versa. We’re very grateful for this food. It gets tight with our budget; sometimes we have to choose between prescriptions and food. This is a life-saving gift for us.”



To learn more about how you can support your local mobile pantry by volunteering, visit foodbankrockies.org/get-involved/volunteer

FOOD BANK OF THE ROCKIES™

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Mailing Address
City, State Zip

FOOD BANK OF THE ROCKIES™

Hunger challenges our neighbors every day. With support from individuals like you, we are able to provide help to anyone who finds themselves in need. Discover inspiring stories of how together we are nourishing communities in our newsletter.

We ignite the power of community to nourish people facing hunger.

