

Food Bank of East Alabama ~BANK NOTES~

April 2024



In food banking, there are always ebbs and flows throughout the year. Typically, our most abundant supply of food can be found in the last quarter of the year. Some of that is due to our large-scale Beat 'Bama Food Drive. Some is due to the larger USDA food supply in October-December (the first quarter of the federal fiscal year). And, of course, there are often holiday-related food drives when people tend to be more mindful of their neighbors who experience food insecurity. As we talk with other Alabama food banks, we understand that all food banks are experiencing this down-turn in their inventory.

So, what can be done? As much as possible, take advantage of what the food bank does have to offer. As we move into the growing season, produce will become more available. At the time this newsletter was written, there were 15 produce items on the food list.

Another way to help support the food bank's need for inventory is to promote the May 11th Letter Carriers' Food Drive. This is the largest single-day food drive in the United States. Simply place a bag of non-perishable food items by the mailbox on that Saturday, and the letter carrier will do the rest. This food drive makes a huge difference in increasing available inventory—especially with assorted canned goods.

How can you promote this drive? Share the food drive information through your social media (it's easy to share the food bank's postings on your own social media outlets). Get word out to your civic club or church through newsletters or church bulletins. Talk to your own letter carrier to let them know how much you appreciate their support of this drive.

We need our community to know that there is a significant need for food assistance and that each one of us can make a difference in helping meet that need.

Fill a Bag. Help Feed Families.

Bag healthy nonperishable food items and place by your mailbox for your letter carrier to pick up and deliver to food banks and pantries in your community.

Solo empaque los alimentos que no se echan a perder y colóquelos cerca del buzón. Su cartero los recogerá y los llevará a los bancos de alimentos y almacenes benéficos locales.

* Donate items such as pasta, cereal, oatmeal, canola oil, peanut butter and canned goods including beans, fruit, vegetables, soup, tuna in water, meat and sauce. Avoid glass containers.

**Saturday,
May 11**





SNAP-Ed

Better Lives.
Stronger Communities.

Spring is here, and it's a great time to add new flavors to your meals, and welcome some bright and refreshing tastes. Not only does eating seasonally bring more delicious and affordable options to your table, it also adds a variety of nutrients to your diet.

Here are a few tasty picks to get you started:

- **Asparagus:** This versatile vegetable contains vitamin C and potassium, and can be cooked in many ways — bake, grill, boil, steam, microwave, or stir-fry! Wash well and trim the ends before cooking.
- **Peas:** Rich in vitamins A and C, fresh green peas are a spring favorite. Look for peas in the pod for the freshest flavor and eat them quickly or freeze them. They don't last long in the fridge!
- **Strawberries:** Readily available, containing vitamin C and fiber, strawberries are some of spring's sweetest treats. Enjoy them as a snack, or as a sweet mix-in with cereal, yogurt, or oatmeal.



Need more recipe inspiration? Check out the collection of spring recipes using seasonal, healthy and cost-effective ingredients. Go to <https://snaped.fns.usda.gov/nutrition-education/snap-ed-recipes/spring-recipes>

Don't forget about frozen and canned fruits and vegetables. They can be as healthy as fresh options, and are a great way to enjoy your favorite produce, even when it's not in season. Plus, they are convenient for quick and easy meals.

Partner Agency Spotlight

Christian Care Ministries Community Kitchen

We are introducing a new series highlighting the impacts that our partner agencies have throughout East Central Alabama. This series enables us to showcase our incredible community partners and their contributions to addressing food insecurity. It also serves as an avenue to raise awareness about needs and obstacles that our donors and the public might not know about (e.g., the need for volunteer support or equipment or storage space.) This month's spotlight is on Christian Care Ministries Community Kitchen.

The Christian Care Ministries Community Kitchen in Opelika has served the community for 20 years. The outreach began with four dedicated volunteers that cooked and served 25 meals each week. Since that time, the number of meals being distributed has grown to nearly 500 meals per week. In the aftermath of the pandemic, the Community Kitchen saw a steady increase in families and individuals coming for prepared meals. The meals are available for pickup at the door; other meals are delivered to homebound people.



All of the work is done by hard working volunteers under the direction of John Johnson. John said, "We will feed anyone who needs a meal, and we remember in Matthew that Jesus reminded us that when we feed the least of these brothers, we do it for Him."

The dramatic growth in meals being prepared and served has presented significant challenges in resources both financially and with volunteer support. If you would like to learn more about the ministry, you can contact johnjohnson@charter.net.

If you would like to be part of our Agency Spotlight Series, please email us at:

foodbank@foodbankofeastalabama.com

THANKS TO OUR PARTNER AGENCIES!

We have had a very good time during our agency site visits in the past several months. We feel fortunate to have incredible agency partners and appreciate all your dedication and effort.

Please don't hesitate to contact us if you require any assistance. You don't have to wait for our scheduled monitor visit. We'd be delighted to visit and witness your distribution process in action or assist in resolving any issues you may encounter.





Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7 	8	9	10	11	12	13 
14	15	16 Agency Shopper Orientation @ 8:45 am	17	18	19 	20 
21	22 	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30 [CLOSED] 				

Agencies Spend Less & Feed More at the Food Bank

February 2024

Number of Agencies Shopping:	122
Pounds Distributed:	436,233
Retail Value per FA (\$1.92 per lb.):	\$837,567
Food Bank SMF:	\$35,378
Savings to FBEA Agencies:	\$802,189



NEW PRODUCTS!

213354	Water, sparkling assorted	8 cans	D	7.00	1.26
213774	Cookies, Oreo w/ white fudge	12 x 8.5 oz	D	8.00	1.44
213515	Collards, fresh (LFPA)	Loose	R	15.00	0.00
213869	Pineapple	7 ct.	R	28.00	2.52
213477	USDA blueberries, frozen, wild	8 x 3 lbs.	Z	25.00	4.50
213204	USDA pork, pulled	20 x 2 lbs	Z	43.00	7.74
212628	Turkeys, whole, Butterball	2 ct.	Z	38.00	6.84
213529	Mashed potatoes, buttery	8 x 8 oz.	D	4.00	0.72

Civil Rights Assurance

In accordance with Federal law and U.S. Department of Agriculture policy, no person shall, on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age, or disability, be excluded from participation in or be denied, or otherwise subject to discrimination under this program.