



**FOOD BANK OF
NORTH ALABAMA**

WINTER 2026

HARVEST NEWS



YEAR IN REVIEW: FROM SHIRLEY SCHOFIELD, CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

As we settle into 2026, I want to celebrate some inspiring successes and acknowledge the challenges we faced in the past year. The government shutdown in late 2025 was the longest in U.S. history, directly affecting federal employees, their families, and people receiving benefits through the federal government.

Our community has stepped up in so many ways to ensure families, seniors, veterans and those with disabilities have access to the food they need. A record number of volunteers helped pack boxes, fulfill backpack orders,

sort through donated items and do every job necessary to ensure we can collectively continue to meet the need in our community. We had several successful food, fund and diaper drives - including the largest single donation of diapers for our annual Great Diaper Drive this year. For the first time, the Food Bank officially received appropriations from the state, the City of Huntsville, Madison County and the City of Madison in recognition of our vital work.

Thanks to our wonderful partners, we set another record for food distributions this year: **15,250,000 pounds of food**, including fresh produce and healthy items. That's **12.7 million meals** that went out into the community!

Much of this year was spent bolstering the capacity of our distribution partners—the 235 church food pantries, backpack programs, shelters, soup kitchens and recovery centers. Our new distribution center has enabled us to be able to get more food into the community. We want to make sure our partners can grow with us. Through various grants and other funds, we have been able to provide coolers, freezers, and even vehicles to a large number of partners. We



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have spent a record-amount of funds on this project, and this work is on-going. We are continuing to add partners to our Store Donation Program, which rescues more than 6.6 million pounds of food from being sent to landfills.

To ensure the Food Bank is listening to the needs of our partners, our Partner Advisory Council has been meeting regularly to weigh in on decisions. We retooled our annual Hunger Summit this year into four mini-regional summits that included more opportunities to hear from our partners about their experiences and to share their expertise. Our partners' demographic information allows us to better measure our impact in the community.

We used it in a pilot program that allowed us to revamp summer meals, allowing us to distribute **14,744 ready-to-eat food boxes to 2,948 kids during the summer of 2025.** These were distributed in 7 counties with the help of 9 school districts, 35 schools, and 33 agency partners.

To fill in any gaps in our 11-county network, our Special Programs Department directly distributed more than 1 million pounds of food. The Food Bank's Farm Food Collaborative program, which works with almost 40 Alabama farmers, helped facilitate more than \$750,000 in sales for the farmers, a 23% growth over the previous year, ensuring our local food system is robust.

All of these successes, these strong collaborations, assured the Food Bank and its network was able to weather the loss of federal funds and food, yet still distributed more food than ever before. We are truly stronger together!

Shirley Schofield

Chief Executive Officer

2025 HUNGER SUMMITS

One of the services the Food Bank of North Alabama offers its network of partner agencies is an annual Hunger Summit. This is a conference organized by the Food Bank with sessions, speakers and panels focused on meeting food insecurity.

This year, the Food Bank tried something different: instead of one large hunger summit, the Food Bank offered four smaller regional summits with subjects tailored to the regional agencies. They were held in Scottsboro, then Decatur, Florence and Huntsville.

"We haven't done it this way in a long time," said Amanda Carter, whose promotion to Agency Relations Director was announced during the summits. "This method really helped our agencies understand their collective impact on their communities."

The summit was designed to encourage collaboration between attendees, which fostered conversation and insight that a larger event wouldn't have been able to facilitate.

Agency Relations Coordinator Kelly Nichols said, "We knew it wasn't going to be about the volume of people who came, it was going to be more about connection and outreach with the agency. I feel like that we got to spend more time hearing from our agency partners and it allowed our groups to collaborate more and learn from each other."

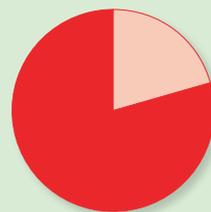
Across the four mini-summits, 95 people attended from 60 different agencies. They discussed planning for the future, succession plans, retail pickup opportunities and building relationships with local retail partners. Participants were able to talk about collective impact, both community-wide and to individual visitors to area partners. Attendees were also able to gain insight into navigating media relations and concerns regarding food availability.

"It was a great experience and an excellent opportunity to hear how all can help to improve the Food Banks of North Alabama's commitment to the community of food insecure neighbors," said one agency partner.



OUR GENEROUS SUPPORTERS: NEW MILESTONE!

The Food Bank of North Alabama's capital campaign **Food is the Focus. People are the Why.** has reached an exciting milestone:



79.41% of our goal,
at \$11.31 M of
\$14.25M raised!

With over 3/4 of the campaign finished, we are excited to close out the final quarter. We're so grateful to the generous supporters for their incredible generosity!

Those donors include:

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