

## Monthly Message: How Shelburne Food Bank partnerships build a resilient community

The Shelburne Food Bank does not work alone. It has many community partners who have joined the fight against food insecurity, and we count on these community heroes to work alongside us to address these needs. Partnering with the food bank isn't just a charitable gesture. It's a practical, community- strengthening decision that creates real, measurable impact for both the organization and the partner.

Food banks play a vital role in addressing food insecurity, which is a lack of reliable access to enough affordable, nutritious food. This issue affects not just individuals experiencing poverty but also working families, seniors and students. By redistributing surplus food and providing essential groceries, food banks help stabilize lives and reduce strain.

Partnerships help ensure a consistent food supply for people who need it most. This directly improves health, reduces stress and allows individuals to focus on work, school and family.

Businesses, especially grocery stores, farms, and restaurants, often have surplus food. Partnering with a food bank allows that excess to be redirected instead of thrown away, contributing to environmental sustainability.

Organizations that work with food banks demonstrate social responsibility. This builds trust and goodwill within the community and can strengthen relationships with customers, employees and stakeholders.

For companies, food bank partnerships show a commitment to ethical practices and community well-being. Donations of food or funds may be eligible for tax incentives. Additionally, reducing waste can lower disposal costs. Volunteer opportunities with food banks can boost employee morale, teamwork, and purpose. People often value working for organizations that give back. Food banks rely heavily on consistent support from businesses, nonprofits and individuals. Demand for food assistance has been rising due to factors such as inflation, housing costs, and economic instability.

Without partnerships:

? Food supply becomes inconsistent

? Distribution networks weaken

? More people fall through the cracks

Partnering with a food bank isn't just about feeding people today. It's about creating a more resilient and equitable community. When multiple sectors collaborate, the impact is multiplied: less waste, healthier populations and stronger economies.

The Shelburne Food Bank is very lucky to have so many great community partners! Weekly, we food rescue at No Frills, Foodland, Cobs, and Starbucks, and when available, at Giant Tiger and Mary Brown's Chicken, too.

New initiatives are important too, and here are the latest.

The brainchild of Jeannette French, Bobbi Ferguson and Kayleigh French, the Giving Spoon is a community-based nonprofit dedicated to reducing food insecurity and food waste by transforming surplus food into nourishing, ready-to-eat meals.

Giving Spoon brings volunteers together once a month in a licensed commercial kitchen to prepare nutritious meals using surplus and donated food. Meals are packaged and distributed through the local food bank. This is a pilot program, and we are delighted to partner with them to bring ready-made meals to our clients at the food bank.

Another new partnership event is from Make It Sweet, the mobile ice cream cafe that brought free ice cream to the food bank on Wednesday, May 6, from 11:30 to 1 p.m. Donations were accepted for the Shelburne Food Bank and Family Transition Place.

We love our partners! If you have an idea how your company could help the Shelburne Food Bank, please reach out to us at [shelburnefoodbank@gmail.com](mailto:shelburnefoodbank@gmail.com). We would love to hear from you! Become part of our village of support. Locals helping locals!