



Channel One  
Regional

**Food  
Bank**



2025

# COMMUNITY REPORT

# Dear Friends and Neighbors



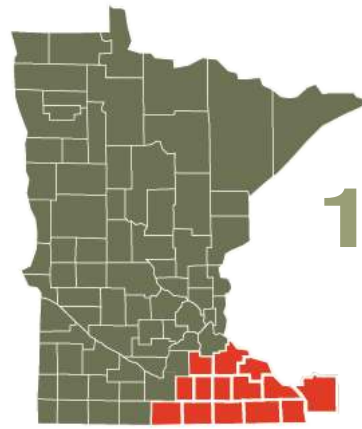
As I reflect on the past year, I am reminded of the resilience it has taken to respond to the growing need for food in our community. While the challenges have been significant, they have also reinforced what is possible when people come together behind a shared purpose. I am deeply grateful for the support that continues to move our work forward and encouraged by the opportunities ahead.

What stands out most is how this community responds in moments of need. As demand has increased and resources have been stretched, you have continued to show up with generosity and compassion. Today, we are sourcing more food than ever before to meet this demand and ensure that individuals and families can access nutritious food in a way that respects their dignity.

This work is made possible because of your support. It allows us to adapt, strengthen our partnerships, and expand our reach to those who need us most. While we have made meaningful progress, the need remains, and there is still more to be done. Together, we can continue building a stronger, more responsive network and ensure that more families across our region have reliable access to the food they need.

*Virginia Witherspoon*

Sincerely,  
**Virginia Witherspoon**  
Executive Director,  
Channel One Regional Food Bank



## Channel One's 14-County Service Area

### Community Programs

At Channel One Regional Food Bank, our mission is to strengthen food access and build healthy communities with a vision that every community in our region is food secure. We serve people experiencing hunger in 14 counties in southeastern Minnesota and western Wisconsin through a network of more than 100 food shelves, pantries and programs.

**Channel One also has several ongoing programs that contribute to the fight against food insecurity.**

- 🍎 **Food Bank** – Warehouse and food distribution center that serves 14 counties
- 🍎 **Food Shelf** – A full-choice food shelf where individuals can receive groceries in person or through home delivery in a dignified welcoming environment
- 🍎 **Kitchen Coalition** – A partnership that uses donated food to prepare meals for those facing hunger in our community
- 🍎 **Mobile Markets** – A food shelf experience delivered to communities facing high levels of food insecurity or transportation barriers
- 🍎 **CSFP (Commodity Supplemental Food Program)** – A program that allows for low-income seniors to qualify for a free monthly box of USDA groceries
- 🍎 **Mobile Pantries** – Drive-through food distribution in rural communities and areas with limited access to food and programs

# Rising to the Challenge

## SNAP Gap Distribution

In late 2025, uncertainty around SNAP benefits and missed paychecks for government employees drove a sharp increase in need across our community, leaving food shelves facing shortages heading into the holiday season. In response, Channel One partnered with Olmsted County to hold a one-time food distribution for households at risk of losing SNAP benefits. Working quickly with county staff and community partners, six distribution sites were coordinated. With the help of 361 volunteers, teams packed and distributed shelf-stable items along with fresh food including produce, milk, eggs, and protein. In just a few days, more than 3,900 neighbors were served and 182,400 pounds of food were distributed. This effort reflects the strength of our partnerships and the dedication of our community, and Channel One is deeply grateful to the volunteers and partners who made it possible.



## Decreased Government Commodity Foods

Over the past few years, Channel One has seen a significant drop in government commodity food, creating new challenges as the need for food continues to grow. These foods have long been a reliable source of staple items, but recent totals have declined by 50% since 2024. Because of this, we are purchasing more food than ever before to help fill the gap and keep food available for the individuals and families who rely on our services. Despite these challenges, we remain committed to providing nutritious options and working with partners to meet changing needs. This moment highlights the importance of continued community support to ensure our neighbors have access to the food they need.



## Curbside Deliveries

In December 2025, Operation Metro Surge was implemented across Minnesota, leading many individuals to stay in their homes. At Channel One, this resulted in a sharp increase in requests for home food delivery as families looked for ways to get the food they need. In response, we expanded curbside pickup and delivery by partnering with community organizations and volunteers, while continuing our mobile markets and DoorDash efforts. Over a three-month period, more than 1,700 home deliveries were made to families in need, and 185,000 pounds of food were distributed through our curbside program. As of the end of March, we have wound down curbside deliveries across the region while continuing to share information on eligibility, proxy pickups, and delivery options.



“Having a place we can turn to when things get tough makes all the difference for our family.”

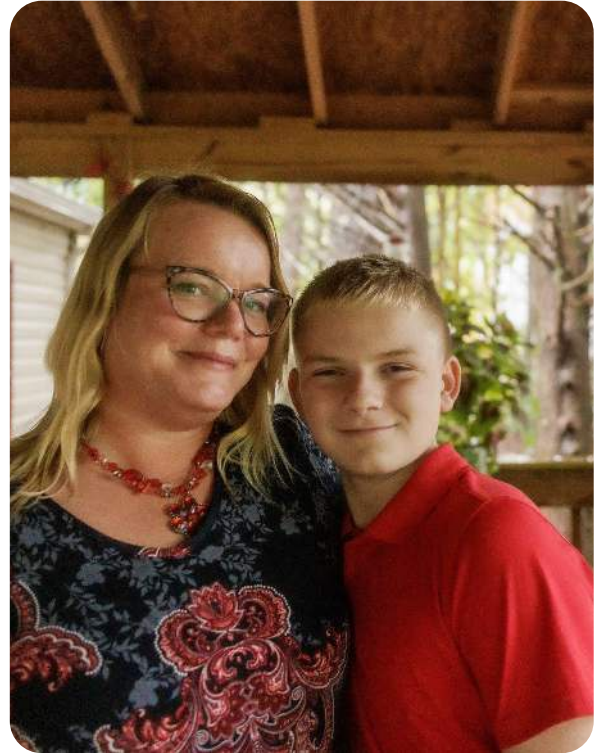
- Channel One Food Shelf Shopper

# Stories from our Shoppers

Ashley, a full-time school district employee, enjoys having her kids home during the summer, but the added cost of meals quickly became a challenge. With her children eating more at home, grocery expenses increased, making it difficult to keep up. She applied for food assistance but did not qualify, earning just enough to be over the limit while still struggling to make ends meet.

Then Ashley turned to the Channel One Food Shelf for support. She found a reliable resource where she could regularly pick up essentials like milk, eggs, and protein to help stretch her grocery budget. Ashley shares, “Honestly, it really helps supplement the family with things we can’t afford,” and adds, “When we have summers off from school, the kids eat more at home.”

While asking for help was not easy, Ashley says it has made a meaningful difference for her family. She encourages others in similar situations to seek support, saying, “Everybody deserves food, just advocate for yourself.”



Camila, a stay-at-home mom in Rochester, never imagined she would one day rely on a local food shelf, but difficult circumstances changed that reality for her family.

Today, Camila is shopping for both her family and her father, whose demanding work schedule often prevents him from visiting the food shelf himself. As she shops, she shares, “It’s nice to be able to get milk and meats, and that I can find everything I need here.”

Camila says she is especially grateful for all of the fresh food that is available at Channel One. “There are always good fresh fruits and vegetables that you don’t normally see at other food shelves,” she explains.

Looking back on her first visit, Camila understands how intimidating asking for help can feel. Her advice to others is simple: “Just come in. There’s no shame in it. If you need help, ask for it.”

# Channel One in the Community



Empty Bowls 2025 was a historic success, with 954 bowls of soup enjoyed and more than \$100,000 raised for the first time in the event's history in support of Channel One's mission to combat food insecurity. Guests enjoyed gourmet soups, fresh bread, and hand-painted bowls, creating a meaningful reminder of the impact hunger has in our community.

Thank you to everyone who attended, volunteered, sponsored, and supported Empty Bowls 2025.

To learn more about our Empty Bowls Event, scan the QR code here.



For the fourth year Epicure was hosted on April 25, 2026, welcoming more than 225 guests for an evening of gourmet bites, custom cocktails, facility tours, and exclusive food-centered experiences. Hosted by honorary co-chairs Drs. Amy Williams and Mark Larson, the event raised more than \$153,000 to support Channel One's mission to combat food insecurity.

Thank you to everyone who supported, attended, shared, and volunteered to make this year's event a success!

To learn more about Epicure, scan the QR code here.



## Volunteering at Channel One

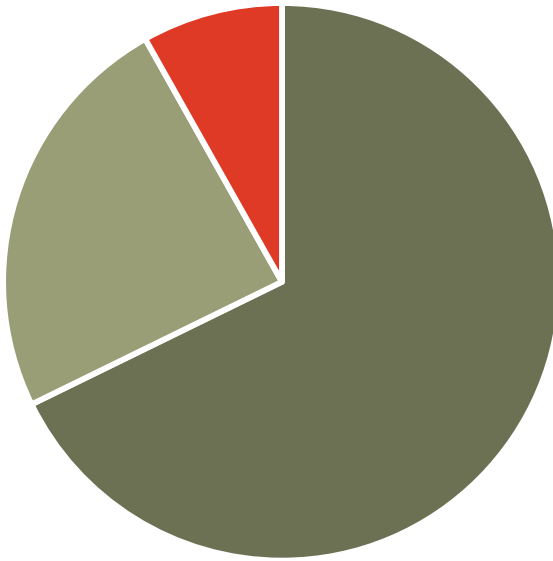
At Channel One, we are fortunate to have many incredible volunteer groups that support our mission, including the Mayo Clinic Emeriti group, which has volunteered with us monthly since 2021. For many members, volunteering is a meaningful way to give back while staying connected with their peers. One volunteer shared, "Food insecurity has increased in recent years, and we want to make sure we are giving back to the community in any way we can." Others spoke about the fulfillment that comes from helping neighbors in need and working together toward a shared goal. Channel One is grateful to the Mayo Clinic Emeriti group and all of the individuals and organizations who generously volunteer their time to support our work.

To learn more about volunteering with Channel One, scan the QR here.



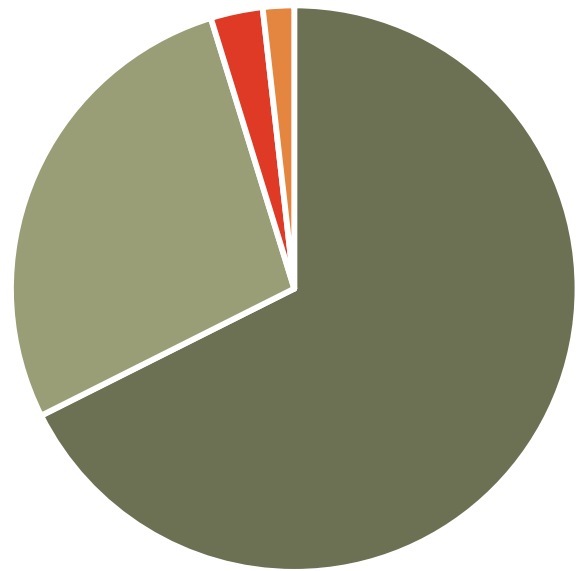
# 2025 Financials

Fiscal Year: July 2024 to June 2025



**Income**

	Amount	% of Budget
Food Donations – In Kind	\$17,653,269	67%
Contributions	\$6,268,732	24%
Program Services	\$2,123,492	8%



**Expenses**

	Amount	% of Budget
Food Distributed – In Kind	\$18,883,666	68%
Programs	\$7,721,830	28%
Fundraising Expenses	\$831,732	3%
Administrative	\$498,448	2%

## In 2025, this is what you helped accomplish!



supported  
**408,251**  
household visits to  
partner food shelves in  
our region



distributed  
**15,834,070**  
pounds of food to those  
facing food insecurity in  
our region



volunteers donated  
**14,000**  
hours in our  
Food Bank and onsite  
Food Shelf

In 2025, you helped us serve 68,460 people, including more than 20,260 children, experiencing food insecurity in our region.

Thank you for doing so much to help those facing food insecurity in our community!

# 2025 Strategic Pillars

Channel One used co-design to help shape the 2025–2028 strategic pillars. Through partnerships with community members, volunteers, and co-designers, these voices have become active stakeholders at every level of decision-making. The insights and outcomes gathered through this process continue to guide and inform Channel One’s strategic plan. As part of the 2025–2028 strategic planning process, community co-designers participated in three research and design explorations. Participants conducted interviews and conversations within the communities they are connected to in order to better understand local needs and challenges. Through this work, the co-design team identified three key focus areas that they believed would provide the greatest benefit to the communities we serve.

## Advocacy

Strengthen regional advocacy efforts by communicating the need across the region to local, state, and federal officials to achieve legislative priorities and communities’ awareness and empathy to reduce hunger.

## Dignity

Create a consistent dignity-first experience across the Channel One agency network.

## Economic Stability

Bolster economic sustainability internally and in the Channel One Agency network to ensure reliable access to food across the region.

## Thank you to our 2026 Board of Directors for their service:

**Melissa Dickison - Board Chair**  
Think Bank

**Tom Leimer - Vice Chair**  
Knutson Construction

**Tyler Yule - Treasurer**  
McNeilus Truck & Manufacturing

**Angie Ames - Audit Chair**  
Kwik Trip, Inc.

**Sara Carlson - Strategic Planning Chair**  
Integrated Capital Partners

**Anthony Broersma**  
Fastenal Company

**Paul Mackin**  
Think Bank (Retired)

**Andy Danielsen**  
Mayo Clinic

**Stephanie Fisher**  
Associated Bank

**Roger Hofer**  
Mayo Clinic (retired)

**Benjamin Mulholland**  
Crosswinds Church

**JoEllen Frain**  
Mayo Clinic

**Consuelo Cohen**  
RPS Homeless Education Navigator

**Ryan Ringel**  
Post Consumer Brands

**Chanchrisna Kish**  
Mayo Clinic

# 2025 Top Community Giving Partners

Academy of Our Lady of Lourdes  
Affinity Plus Federal Credit Union  
American Family Insurance  
Dreams Foundation, Inc.  
Bethel Lutheran Church  
Carl & Verna Schmidt Foundation  
Carl and Ihla Petersen Trust  
City National Bank  
City of Rochester  
Compeer Financial  
Conagra Brands  
Costco  
Custom Alarm  
Eagle Brook Church  
Enterprise Holdings Foundation

F & M Community Bank  
Feeding America  
Friends of Chester Woods  
Gillette Family Foundation  
Gloria Dei Lutheran Church  
Hormel Foods and Foundation  
Hy-Vee  
ITC Midwest LLC  
J. A. Wedum Foundation  
Kwik Trip, Inc.  
Land O'Lakes, Inc  
Mardag Foundation  
Mayo Foundation  
MEI Total Elevator Solutions  
Olmsted County

Oshkosh Corporation Foundation, Inc.  
Otto Bremer Trust  
Pharmaceutical Specialties, Inc.  
PMR Foundation  
Post Consumer Brands, LLC  
Poterucha Family Foundation  
Rochester Area Foundation  
The Summer Fund  
Think Bank  
Total Wine & More  
United Health Care Svcs Inc  
United Way of Southeast Minnesota  
Walmart Foundation  
Zumbro Lutheran Church

## 2025 Top Food Donors

Aldi  
Bimbo Bakery  
Brakebush  
Bushel Boy Farms  
Canteen  
Cashwise  
Church of Jesus Christ  
of Latter Day Saints  
Costco  
Cub Foods

Dollar General  
Family Fare  
Faribault Foods  
Fresh Thyme  
Hormel Foods  
Hy-Vee  
Just Foods Co-op  
Kemps  
Kwik Trip  
Mayo Clinic

McLane Minnesota  
PetSmart  
Post Consumer Brands  
Reichel Foods  
Rochester Meats  
Sam's Club  
Seneca Foods  
Target  
Walmart  
Watkins Incorporated



**Shop**

[HelpingFeedPeople.org/Food-Shelf](https://HelpingFeedPeople.org/Food-Shelf)

**Donate**

[HelpingFeedPeople.org/Donate](https://HelpingFeedPeople.org/Donate)

**Volunteer**

[HelpingFeedPeople.org/Volunteer](https://HelpingFeedPeople.org/Volunteer)