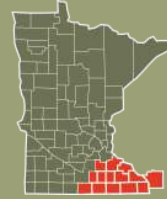


Channel One and Our Programs

Food Bank

In order to provide food to those facing food insecurity in our region, Channel One Regional Food Bank sources millions of pounds of food. That food is then distributed through our network of over 100 food shelves and programs.



14 County Service Region

Food Shelf

Channel One Food Shelf provides free, healthy food to individuals and families experiencing food insecurity through a welcoming, client-choice model. The food shelf also offers home delivery to home bound individuals through a partnership with Door Dash.



Kitchen Coalition

This prepared meals program partners with four local restaurants who take donated food and turn it into fresh, healthy ready to eat meals that are then distributed through nine non-profit partners. These meals are an innovative solution for those who face barriers to cooking their own meals.

CSFP

Commodity Supplemental Food Program

Eligible seniors in southeast Minnesota receive a free monthly box of nutritious foods through the USDA's CSFP. Managed by Channel One, this program serves over 900 seniors every month.

Mobile

Channel One's mobile food distributions serve communities with limited access to the charitable food system or transportation, as well as areas disproportionately affected by food insecurity.

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Dear Friends & Neighbors,



Happy 2026! For many of us, the new year brings hope and anticipation, whether it is welcoming a new child or grandchild, taking a long-awaited vacation, or simply feeling that 2026 will be a better year. But for our neighbors struggling to put food on the table, better can't wait. Over the past three years, food insecurity has risen, and we need our community to come together to make 2026 the year things truly begin to change.

At Channel One, 2025 was a year of unprecedented need. Thousands across our 14-county region relied on Channel One and our food shelf partners for the most basic necessity: food.

Last year, we supported 34,000 monthly visits to food shelves, a 67% increase since 2023, all while we faced a 50% reduction in government commodities and a 40% drop in manufacturer donations. To meet this extraordinary demand, Channel One has been purchasing more food than ever, and in this newsletter, you'll read some of the stories behind these numbers.

In 2026, you can help ensure all our neighbors have access to healthy, nutritious food. Whether you volunteer, make a donation, or encourage your workplace or faith community to raise funds, every action makes a difference. Thank you for helping your neighbors. Together, we are strengthening food access and building healthier communities for all.

Virginia Witherspoon

Virginia Witherspoon

Executive Director

Channel One Regional Food Bank

Mark Your Calendars for Channel One's 4th Annual Epicure!

Epicure: One Bite at a Time supports Channel One's ability to address food insecurity in 14 counties in southeast Minnesota and western Wisconsin. Last year, Epicure raised over **\$124,000** to address hunger in our region. Epicure is a celebration, offering a chance to eat, drink and socialize in our **55,000 square foot warehouse**. Guests will be offered a variety of epicurean bites from **approximately 12 restaurants**. In addition, tours of the facility and onsite food shelf will be available with our staff and board members. This is sure to be a sold-out event with about 250 guests. Tickets for this exclusive event can be purchased at HelpingFeedPeople.org/Epicure. **Admission is \$175.**



April 25, 2026

Save the Date

HelpingFeedPeople.org/Epicure

Community Comes Together: Response to SNAP Crisis Distribution

This past October and early November brought about extra stress for our food insecure community and communities around the nation. The longest government shutdown in history meant government employees were not receiving paychecks and SNAP benefit uncertainties resulted in more people turning to food shelves at a time when hunger relief programs were already stretched thin. The rapid increase in need was too much for many food shelves in Channel One's region and put them at a food deficit heading into the holiday season. Thankfully Channel One received \$180,000 from Olmsted County to hold a one-time food distribution targeted for those who were under threat to lose SNAP benefits. The initiative came together quickly as Channel One worked alongside county workers and partner non-profits to ensure our neighbors had enough food to eat.



Photo from SNAP Box distribution at Family Services Rochester

Within days, Channel One identified six partner distribution sites, Think Bank, Stewartville High School, Family Service Rochester, American Legion Post 551 in Byron, Graham Park, and Gage East. With the help of 21 different volunteer groups working back-to-back shifts for 3 days leading up to the distribution, Channel One packed boxes of shelf stable items and boxes of fresh produce, milk, eggs and protein. On Friday, November 7th, staff and volunteers mobilized at the six different sites ready to distribute food to over 2,500 households in Olmsted County. This effort could not be possible without the strong partnerships and relationships that Channel One has with not only the distribution sites, but also with the county, the residents, and the other crucial non-profits that serve our neighbors. The dedication of this community is always clear in times of crisis, and Channel One is tremendously grateful to all that were involved in this monumental effort.



Photo from SNAP Box distribution at Family Services Rochester

The Big Numbers

361 Volunteers
2,500 Households Served
182,400 Pounds
Distributed



131 35th Street SE
Rochester, MN 55904

In 2025, Channel One Food Bank...



supported
410,762*
household visits to
partner food shelves in
our region



distributed
15,834,082*
pounds of food to those
facing food insecurity in
our region

*Estimated data for 2025



volunteers donated
14,500*
hours in our
Food Bank and onsite
Food Shelf

Shop

HelpingFeedPeople.org/Food-Shelf

Donate

HelpingFeedPeople.org/Donate

Volunteer

HelpingFeedPeople.org/Volunteer

Supporting Families When They Need It Most



For Ashley, a full-time school employee, summer brings the joy of having her kids at home but also the challenge of feeding them more often. When food stamps were not an option, she worried about how to make ends meet.

Three years ago, she discovered the Channel One Food Shelf, and it changed everything. Each week, Ashley can pick up essentials like milk, eggs, and protein to help her family. “We are so grateful to have such a reliable resource,” she says. “If you need help, just advocate for yourself and go. They are so welcoming.”

Ashley explains, “Honestly, it really helps the family with things we cannot afford. When we have summers off from school, the kids eat more at home. Knowing we have this support takes a huge weight off our shoulders.”

Her story is a powerful reminder that everyone deserves access to food. Ashley encourages others, “Do not be afraid to ask for help. It makes a real difference.”