



# Lakeshore FOOD RESCUE

IMPACT OF YEAR 1 OF FOOD RESCUE  
EXPANSION IN OTTAWA COUNTY

Dear Community Partners,

Lakeshore Food Rescue (LFR) works to strengthen food rescue efforts across the West Michigan lakeshore, increasing our area's ability to reduce food waste and expand healthy food access for local families. In its first year of countywide expansion effort (2023), LFR's impact - in pounds rescued, partners acquired, and food shared - has grown dramatically. Outside of the program's immediately measurable impact, LFR has helped strengthen cross-sector relationships, building collaboration and trust. Through an expanded team, a growing fleet of vehicles, and enhanced technology to mobilize volunteers, **LFR rescued over 2 million pounds of food this year** - a 67% increase from 2022. In 2023, we:

- Partnered with **41 brand new food donors**;
- Added **24 new nonprofit food recipient partners** who now have more healthy food to share with guests in need in their own communities of service; and
- **Shared over 660,000** pounds of rescued food with these partners (this weight excludes the Community Action House Food Club).
- Utilized the phone application Food Rescue Hero to mobilize **41 volunteer drivers** to rescue local food using their own vehicles

Every new donor, partner, and pound of food rescued is the result of intentional relationship building and collaborative problem solving. As LFR expands, we're able to consider the specific needs of each nonprofit agency we support - working together to create a partnership and process that builds more sustainable food access for each unique community. I'm glad to share a few examples of this below.

**In Grand Haven**, our team supported Love in Action through the opening of their Co-op market. In addition to coordinating weekly deliveries of rescued food from Holland to Grand Haven, we offered support in networking with new food donors. We leveraged our relationship with Holland Aldi stores to solidify a connection between Love in Action and their local Aldi. As Love in Action considered the logistics of launching a program similar to the Community Action House Food Club, we acted as a resource, providing recommendations on everything from expiration date processes to formatting shelf tags.

*"I'm very grateful for the support of Community Action House as we opened the Co-op. You provided tours of your facility & openly shared information/training. You continue to share fresh produce with us weekly for our Co-op." - Cheryl Youngquist, Love in Action Operations Director*

**In Coopersville**, we assessed Coopersville Cares' unique situation - geographically isolated in comparison to many food distribution sites, cold storage was a barrier in keeping food supplies fresh. Our team installed a Fresh Fridge to increase their cold storage capacity. When we had surplus milk available, our team transported the dairy, and staff from each agency unloaded 1,500 pounds of milk by hand - undeterred by the lack of a loading dock and forklift.

*"The impact Lakeshore Food Rescue has had for Coopersville Cares has been incredible. We have had large amounts of food come into the pantry for our food distributions. We have had milk, chicken, and produce, all items that we have a hard time keeping a supply of. We are grateful for all that has come our way. I can't say enough good things about what their support has meant to us! I hope this program will continue with as much success in the year 2024. Thank you for all you do!" - LeeAnn Rosel, Coopersville Cares Director*

**In Allendale**, The Replenish Basic Needs Center at GVSU lacked the cold storage needed to keep healthy foods in stock for students. Our team was thrilled to provide a Fresh Fridge to increase their fresh food availability. As they transitioned to using Meijer's wholesale purchasing system for pantries, we provided insight on navigating the more complex system. Our team was onsite to help GVSU staff pick up their first wholesale order, offering expertise as they worked through complicated warehouse processes. LFR helped forge a new relationship with the Family Fare in Allendale and delivered their first donation straight to Replenish.

*"[LFR] has already shown up in huge ways for Replenish...[LFR] supported Replenish during one of our largest student care package distributions of the year. This is a time where many of our students go weeks without easy access to food and other resources during holiday closure. [LFR] has significantly reduced barriers, fostering increased accessibility for both our basic needs pantry and for students needing support. Its inclusive approach has not only eased logistical challenges but has also played a pivotal role in enhancing the overall reach and impact of our work within the academic setting... [ensuring] a more equitable and widespread distribution of resources within our Laker community! We are forever grateful for not only the food resource connection...but also being connected to people who understand the importance of this work!" - DL McKinney, Grand Valley State University*

**In Hudsonville and Jenison**, we added two Meijer stores, two Family Fare locations and an Aldi store as regular food rescue donors. Our fleet of trucks rescues food from these locations 2-3 each week. This influx of food has allowed us to share over 65,000 pounds of food with Jehovah Jireh ministries in Hudsonville this year. We've also been able to utilize our fleet of trucks to help make sure Jehovah Jireh's donations are still picked up even when their location is closed or their trucks are broken down.

*"This has empowered us with much needed fresh produce to feed our 730 families who visited us this year!" - Geoff McGannon, Executive Director, Jehovah Jireh Ministries*

Already, we're seeing the impact of a highly relational, deeply collaborative program that connects players at different levels of our local food system. We're glad to offer the expertise, infrastructure, and support that agencies need to get good food on the tables of families that need it most - and we know that a one-size-fits-all approach won't create the solutions needed for long term success.

Lakeshore Food Rescue's expansion, made possible through community partnerships, has been critical in deepening our county's ability to share food efficiently - meaning that at the end of the day, less food is wasted and more families find the healthy food they need to thrive. And I'm pleased to share that we're on track for an even more impactful 2024, as we continue to expand our efforts.

Thank you for being a key partner in our work.

Sincerely,

*Krista Burgett*

Krista Burgett | Lakeshore Food Rescue Program Manager



End Food Waste



Fight Hunger



Mobilize Community



A community-powered initiative  
by Community Action House



**Number of food rescue donors participating**

2022                      83 total donors

2023                      121 total donors                      41 new donors

**46% growth**

**Number of food access and distribution agencies participating**

2022                      32 total agencies

2023                      45 total agencies                      24 new agencies

**40% growth**

Food access and distribution agencies during 2023 (**new** in bold)

<b>Allegan County Community Action Agency</b>	<b>Blessings Food Pantry</b>	<b>Boys &amp; Girls Clubs of Holland - South</b>	Boys & Girls Clubs of Holland - North	<b>Brothers &amp; Sister's Homes</b>	<b>Calvary Reformed Church</b>
<b>Children's Advocacy Center</b>	Community Food Club - Grand Rapids	Community Kitchen at Western Seminary	<b>Coopersville Cares</b>	Cornerstone Tabernacle	<b>Culture Works</b>
DHHS Migrant Unit	Escape Ministries	Feeding America West Michigan	Feeding Our Neighbors	<b>First-Hand Aid</b>	Gateway Mission
<b>Gurdwara Singh Sabha</b>	<b>Hands Up Ministries</b>	Harvest Stand Ministries	<b>Heritage Homes</b>	<b>Hispanic Center of West Michigan</b>	Homeless Outreach
Hungry for Christ Food Ministry	I AM Academy	Jehovah Jireh Ministries	Journey Home	Kids Food Basket	<b>Lakeshore Food Club-Ludington</b>
<b>Lakeside Clubhouse</b>	<b>Love in Action Tri-Cities</b>	<b>Moving Forward AFC</b>	New Beginnings Church	Ottawa Food Migrant Distribution	<b>People Helping People- Pullman</b>
<b>Ragamuffin House Minstries</b>	Refresh at First United Methodist Church	<b>Replenish Basic Needs Center at GVSU</b>	Salvation Army-Holland	<b>St. Paul's United Methodist Church</b>	St. Vincent de Paul Pantry
<b>Sus Manos Gleaners</b>	<b>The Momentum Center</b>	<b>Urban Apostolic Network</b>			

**Pounds of food rescued**

2022	1,231,743 lbs
2023	2,062,451 lbs

**67%** growth

**Pounds of food shared external to CAH Food Club**

2022	265,063 lbs
2023	661,920 lbs

**150%** growth

**Financial value of shared food**

2022	\$ 508,921
2023	\$ 1,277,505

**Pounds of food gleaned from Holland Farmer's Market**

2022	22,557 lbs
2023	47,803 lbs

**112%** growth

**Documentable environmental impacts of the project**

2,972.75 tons of **CO2eq avoided**

Equivalent to **643 passenger vehicles** driven for one year

147.61 million gallons of **water saved**

Equivalent to **224 olympic swimming pools**

*Based on the ReFED Insights Engine Impact calculator <https://insights.refed.org/>*

*Original assumed scenario is excess food going to the landfill. Based on the lbs of food we redirected to either human consumption or compost during 2023, this is the net environmental benefit.*