

In This Issue >>>

- Quarterly Update – p.1
- Donation Policy – p.1
- Garden Recap – p. 2
- Distribution Update – p. 2
- Summer Lunch Season Ends – p. 3
- Agency Update – p. 3
- GVFB 101 – p. 4
- Donor Spotlight – p. 4



FALL
2020

A PROGRAM OF  HRDC

GVFB NEWS

Local support for local families

Fall 2020 >>>

Updates to our donation policy:

Nonperishable donations can be dropped off at most local grocery stores. Look for donation bins near the front of each store.

Garden produce can be dropped off at GVFB. Please note that our drive-thru runs from 1 pm-4 pm and the parking lot will be closed during these hours. Donations during off-peak hours are encouraged (8 am- 12 pm or after 2:30 pm).

If you would like to make a financial donation visit gallatinvalleyfoodbank.org Thank you!

Food Assistance Hours (Drive-Thru):

Monday-Friday, 1:00 pm-4:00 pm

Office Hours (Lobby CLOSED):

Monday-Friday, 8:00 am-5:00 pm

What's New and Exciting?

A Virtual Panel: Poverty and the Pandemic

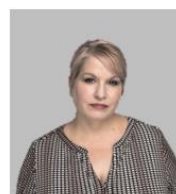
On July 30th we co-hosted a panel discussion with Montana No Kid Hungry around the impacts of the coronavirus pandemic on community members. Three panelists shared their insights, including two individuals who have firsthand experience navigating life during the pandemic on a very tight budget and a representative from the Montana Budget and Policy Center. The panel was facilitated by Elizabeth Marum of TRIO Student Support Services at Montana State University. We learned how the pandemic has exasperated the challenges that many people in our community face.

"This pandemic is impacting people in poverty much more than the middle and upper classes, and it will take us much longer to recover from this," Lori Lindgren said. Rima echoed many of the sentiments and added that "This stigma that's associated in this country with accessing help as though it's a bad thing and there's a judgement, is really, really a heavy burden for people to carry," Rima Zabian said.

You can find the recording here: www.gallatinvalleyfoodbank.org/2020/08/virtual-panel-poverty-the-pandemic/



Rima Zabian
Community Member



Lori Lindgren
Community Member



Tara Jensen
Montana Budget & Policy
Center



Garden Update >>> Summer Recap

It has been a strange summer with the constant presence of COVID-19 in the news, our communities, and our minds. Despite the daily challenges we now face, we are grateful to have the escape of the gardens. On a daily basis, we see visitors sampling snap peas, admiring the giant sunflowers, and meandering through the corn patch. Not only do the gardens produce beautiful food for our customers, they provide safe gathering spaces where we have continued to engage volunteers, offer free workshops, and create community.

The Learning Garden was cultivated by a diverse collaboration of community members this season. Gallatin Valley Farm to School, Big Sky Youth Empowerment, Blueprint (HRDC), The Bozeman 3, Headwaters Academy, and Bozeman Parks & Recreation all engaged youth in therapeutic and educational summer programming. Sweet Pea Festival beautified areas of the garden with sweet peas. Sacajawea Audubon Society planted a

bird-friendly demonstration garden that provides both food and habitat for native birds and pollinators. A collaboration of Indigenous members of our community also planted a garden that is part of a restoration project to bring back ancient seed varieties that were once cultivated by Indigenous people. Some of these seeds do not exist anywhere else! This garden represents the resiliency and continuation of the Native food system. Amidst it all, GVFB maintained several row crops with the support of an undergraduate intern from MSU. All food grown in these row crops is distributed to our customers.

As part of our mission to increase food security and disseminate information related to growing food, improving health, and increasing resilience within our community we launched a summer workshop series in the Learning Garden at Story Mill Community Park.

We hosted five free workshops that included topics on gardening, beekeeping, permaculture, bird-

friendly landscaping, and vermicomposting.

If you have excess garden produce or backyard fruit trees, please consider donating it to GVFB.

*Plant Peace. Sow Joy.
Grow Hope. Serve Love.*



Distribution Update >>> USDA Farmers to Families Food Boxes

As part of the Coronavirus Farm Assistance Program the USDA is exercising authority under the Families First Coronavirus Response Act to purchase and distribute agricultural products to those in need. Through this program, USDA's Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS) is partnering with national, regional and local suppliers, whose work force has been significantly impacted by the closure of restaurants, hotels and other food service businesses, to purchase up to \$3 billion in fresh produce, dairy and meat products.

Over the course of the summer, we hosted 5 pop-up events in Belgrade, serving 782 families (3,062 individuals) 20,132 lbs. of food; and 2 in Bozeman, serving 237 families (837 individuals) 5,925 lbs. of food.

We will continue to host pop-up distribution events in Belgrade and Bozeman as we receive the third round of Farmers to Families Food Boxes from the USDA. Check our website and Facebook page for upcoming events.



Summer Lunch Update >>> Another Season in the Bag

In March, Summer Lunch began supporting area schools transitioning to the Summer Food Service Program, the USDA's nutrition response to emergency school closure. We partnered with Belgrade, Bozeman, Three Forks, and West Yellowstone school districts to expedite the administrative process and get meals to kids. Building relationships with each district food service director was crucial to feeding kids this spring and summer.

The Summer Lunch season began June 15th with nine meal sites across Bozeman. Belgrade, and Three Forks took charge of their own production and distribution of meals. These partnerships eased the strain of past meal production models and utilized local volunteers to deliver the service.

The USDA passed waivers early in the pandemic to allow grab and go meals for pick up by children or their parents/guardians. This development turned our old model on its head. As a result, we transitioned to an entirely cold menu with shelf-stable components. This shift worked well and brought inefficiencies to light that existed within our old model of bulk hot food dished up at meal sites. While some missed the chicken nuggets, most found the grab and go model easy and effective.

We were fortunate to have a robust staff this summer, cruising through our busiest weeks in July with 5 folks (2 staff, 2 AmeriCorps Summer Associates, 1 Intern). This was the most efficient staff we have had to date.



The USDA has just passed a waiver to allow the extension for the Summer Food Service Program. Montana Office of Public Instruction is still combing through how this may be implemented locally. This big change is a positive transition for feeding kids across the valley. We will keep our website updated with information on where to access meals.

While we reduced our overall sites in 2020, total numbers grew. We are still compiling our numbers for August, but can comfortably say that in total, we provided more than 27,000 meals over the 11 weeks of Summer Lunch.

HRDC COVID-19 update >>> Adapting to new systems



- We distributed outdoor gear to people without homes.
- We installed portable restrooms around town to ensure everyone has access to a bathroom.
- We visited every tent around town to conduct wellness checks.
- We made sure every person could shower and do laundry and wash their hands.
- We created an innovative and engaging online preschool.
- We conducted drive thru preschool graduations.
- We created a whole new service navigation and case management approach that can work virtually and help people self-resolve.
- We transitioned our youth home into a supportive classroom.
- We called every senior to make sure they are safe and cared for.
- We made sure not one person missed their dialysis treatment.
- We generated hundreds of thousands of dollars to support our customers and our community.
- We made sure every essential worker got a ride to work.
- All our food banks transitioned to drive-thru or curbside models providing safe, fast service.
- We have cooked and delivered countless meals.

"Staff and Volunteers are always welcoming, friendly, and never judgmental! I only go when necessary, but never feel like an inconvenience, or like the scum of society when I do go! I have been to other food banks that treated their community members horribly. Thanks, GVFB!"



GVFB 101

Here you can find information on who we help, what programs we offer, and how to get in touch with us.

| | |
|---|---|
| <p>Huffing For Stuffing</p>  | <p>It is hard for us to imagine Thanksgiving morning without the hustle and bustle at the Museum of the Rockies, but the pandemic has forced us to reconsider. We are currently planning a virtual event to keep everyone safe. We hope to open registration early September. More details can be found at huffingforstuffing.com. Don't worry, it will still be FUN!</p> |
| <p>Can the Griz</p>  | <p>Save the date for our annual Can the Griz Food Drive November 6th-20th! This drive is a friendly competition between Montana State University and the University of Montana to see which school can collect the most donations for their local food bank. With no football in November, this event will look a little different, but its importance has not changed. Thanks to the outpouring of support this event received in 2019, GVFB had a strong inventory on hand to stock the shelves and make important deliveries when the pandemic hit. More details will follow in the coming weeks, please consider helping us Can the Griz again this year!</p> |

Donor Spotlight >>> Community Co-op & Townes Harvest

Sustainable Food for Everyone!

Community Co-op and An Apple a Day: In May, the Apple a Day program donated \$1,645 to our Senior Grocery Program. We used these funds to purchase fresh items such as yogurt, produce, and meat. Our seniors appreciated the extra fresh food.

In August, our KidsPack program was selected to be the recipient of these funds. We are so grateful to have community partners like the Co-op who generously support our mission!

Townes Harvest: Our partners since the beginning, Townes brings us fresh produce from the moment their greenhouses start producing. Not only do they provide gorgeous produce, they literally are “a farm team” (baseball reference) for our operations. We have utilized the expertise of many of their staff as well as pulled interns from their ranks. We are proud to have Wes Cawood as our Warehouse Coordinator, a former student manager of Townes Harvest.

We also would like to give a special thanks to the growers and distributors who support us regularly; Streamline Farms, Gallatin Valley Botanical, Root Cellar Foods, and Quality Food Distributing. They help provide local nutritious foods to those who might not have them otherwise.



Contact us!

Phone: 406-586-7600

Email: infogvfb@thehrdc.org

Mail: PO Box 1129 Bozeman, MT 59771

Location: 602 Bond St, Bozeman, MT 59715

Website: gallatinvalleyfoodbank.org