

# FOOD & NUTRITION PROGRAMS OF HRDC ANNUAL REPORT

JULY 1, 2021 - JUNE 30, 2022







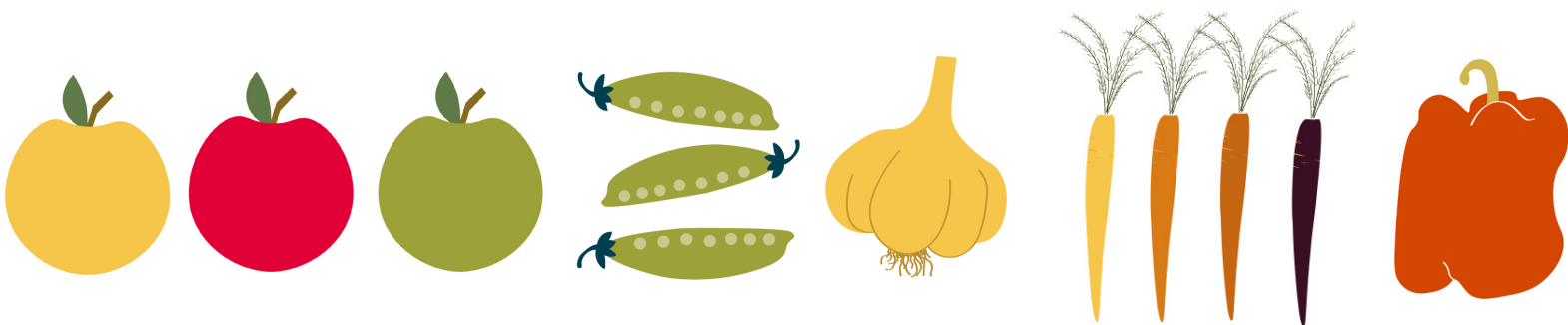
## HRDC instills hope, develops resources, designs solutions and changes lives.

We envision a place where poverty has no impact because opportunities and quality of life are equally afforded to everyone.





# OUR MISSION: TO IMPROVE FOOD SECURITY IN SOUTHWEST MONTANA



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# FROM OUR DIRECTOR

In July 2021, as we embarked on our new fiscal year, we ended our drive through model for food distribution. In September we went back to our self-choice store. We reopened our Belgrade evening distribution and welcomed more of our regular volunteers back into the daily rhythm. The grip of **COVID** seemed to be lifting slightly and our customers with children were still receiving the monthly family tax credit. In hindsight The **American Rescue Plan**, including assistance like stimulus checks, free school lunch for all, and rental assistance seemed to truly help. In the Fall, requests for food assistance were normal or even low. The **Can the Griz** food drive in November hit another record high in donations and together with the Missoula Community Food Bank we raised over a million pounds/dollars for our communities. Thanksgiving distribution requests were low. Huffing for Stuffing returned in person and all things seemed to be moving to a brighter future.

At the end of February, Russia invaded Ukraine and an economic ripple that became more like a tidal wave ran over our country. The **price of fuel and food** increased and those living pay check to pay check were hit hard. In 2022, families no longer received the monthly tax credit and did not see the annual credit in one lump sum on their returns. Families experiencing an already cost burdened budget were simply unable to make ends meet. Those cost increases not only hit our customers but the purchasing power of our food programs. This economic stress was reflected in our budgets.

We kept returning to the question: **what makes us more resilient through these changes?** The answer seemed to always come back to the community. A community that can grow and raise its own food. A community that can access the medical and mental health attention they need. Childcare, transportation, and the most daunting problem of all, housing, are required to have a resilient healthy existence. All these issues are complex, and all are crucial to help individuals, families, and communities flourish. Strides have been made in our community as Haven, Community Health Partners, and Family Promise expanded their services to meet the need. Our Housing First Village has launched with its first twelve residents and Habitat for Humanity is helping build the next nine. We take hope from the community's support of and investment in our plan for the next 30 years of growth with **Market Place at HRDC's Community Commons**.

This next step will help us meet the needs of our customers and community at large in an empowering and lasting manner. When a customer arrives

worried and hungry, they can get something to eat immediately, they can let their child play in our children's corner, talk to our staff about Early Childhood Education opportunities, and then they can go grocery shopping. There will be classes in our new space where volunteers, staff, and customers can sit together and learn about budgeting or preparing a meal that will feed the body and soul. Seeing **opportunity for change and hope for the future** is really our only course of action. So, when June rain came, and it was difficult to plant our gardens, we were grateful that perhaps our fire season wouldn't be so bad. When free lunch for all went away we helped make phone calls to move along the registration process. We continue to provide **a basic need** with as much compassion and hope as we can muster as we lean on each other.

Thank you for reading our annual report. Every number reflects an effort or a personal story to build a healthier resilient community.

Take care,

**Jill Holder, Food and Nutrition Director, HRDC**

P.S when staff members were asked "what has this year felt like?" these were the words that came to mind



# A GROWING NEED

**Fall 2021**.....

GVFB sees a 13% decrease in requests for food assistance over the prior year

.....**January 2022**

the \$3,600 child tax credit delivered monthly through the American Rescue Plan ends, removing a helpful tool for families

**February**.....

Russia invades Ukraine and global markets react

.....**March/April**

GVFB experiences a 60% increase in requests for food assistance over March and April of the prior year

**April**.....

HRDC breaks ground on Market Place at Community Commons in preparation for the next 30 years of service

.....**June**

Average food prices climb at a rate of 10.4% and gas prices hit \$4 a gallon\*

**August**.....

School starts without free lunch for all students, causing stress for families

\*Soll, D. (2022, September 13). Swelling grocery bills are pummeling the poorest - who spend over a quarter of their incomes on food. The Conversation. Retrieved October 1, 2022.



# BOZEMAN, MT

Gallatin Valley Food Bank's mission is to improve food security throughout Southwest Montana. We know nutrition is vital for everyone in our community and act as the crucial link between food and the people who need it. We serve anyone who needs help stretching their food budget.

**7,874** Individuals received groceries from GVFB this equals 33,387 instances that customers received a five day supply of food

**13,688** Food Boxes (5 day supply of groceries) provided

**1,519,283** Total pounds of food distributed

Our services used to be an as-needed resource for our community. Today, the food assistance we provide is part of ongoing food budgeting to help offset escalating costs, including food, rent, and gas. This means that we are seeing 10 to 15% of households multiple times a month.

We act as a food hub for our community. As a hub, we are the receiving warehouse for area partners and provide food to other nonprofits in Gallatin Valley.

Our store fully reopened to a full self-choice model on September 1st after operating a drive-thru distribution at the beginning of the pandemic. This meant the return of Tuesday evening shopping hours and our Belgrade Mobile Distribution, both of which allow us to reach customers where they are.



**6,176** Average pounds of food distributed to families everyday

**1,141** Households received help each month

**886** Households received help for the first time



# PROGRAM UPDATES

GVFB is home to several unique approaches to food security that fill in the gaps for vulnerable community members across Southwest Montana. This includes our Childhood Nutrition Programs; Healthy KidsPack and Summer Lunch, and the Senior Grocery Program or Commodity Supplemental Food Program (CSFP).



**31,848** Meals provided to area children this past summer (June-August) at 12 sites across the valley

**11,407** KidsPacks distributed to an average of 400 children at 32 sites in Southwest MT

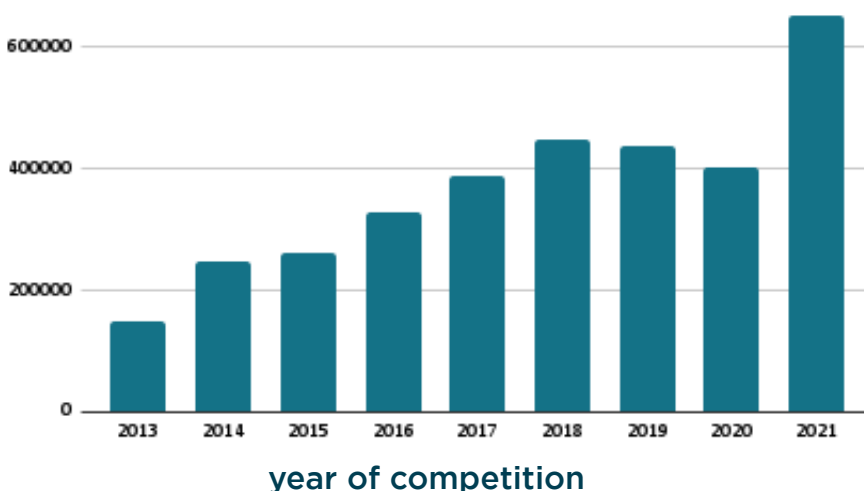
**298** Seniors in total received monthly Senior Groceries

## CAN THE GRIZ

November 2021 marked the 22nd annual Can the Griz Food Drive and demonstrated how key these two weeks in November are to our operations. This friendly, off-field competition leverages the passion for the annual Brawl of the Wild football game between Montana State University and University of Montana. The result being that we are sustained with food and funds into the coming year.



Pounds and dollars donated



**192,816** pounds of food donated during Can the Griz 21

**449,657** record setting funds donated during Can the Griz 21



# FOOD RESCUE

Monday through Friday, our fleet of vehicles rescue food from grocery stores, producers, and restaurants. This food is sorted for quality so only the best goes to our customers. Nothing goes to waste as food that has gone bad or has exceeded the standards for its sell-by date is composted or sent with local farmers as animal fodder. A team of graduate students in the Master's of Public Administration program at Montana State University evaluated this program finding that it “adds between 1.3 and 1.8 million dollars worth of benefit” yearly. This research team also found that Food Rescue “reduces nearly 780,000 pounds of solids out of the waste stream.”



**857,389** Pounds of food collected from area grocery stores, bakeries, and farms

**70,809** pounds out the door as Animal Fodder or Compost

## HRDC GARDENS

Garden programming is one of our creative approaches to improving food security and increasing access to healthy, locally grown foods. GVFB has an acre of productive gardens onsite and manages another acre at the Learning Garden in Story Mill Community Park. The beauty of the gardens is they are a space to engage volunteers and customers through wellness. Raised beds full of peas, broccoli, and tomatoes greet customers as they follow the sidewalk to our front entrance. Volunteers get their hands in the dirt while our garden manager guides their curiosity as they learn where their food comes from. Our gardens are a special place to engage with others over a cherry tomato or two.

**636** Pounds of produce from the GVFB and Story Mill Learning Gardens distributed through the store

**1573** total volunteer hours in the gardens





# BIG SKY, MT

**883** Individuals received help from BSCFB

**1,944** Food Boxes (5 day supply of groceries) provided

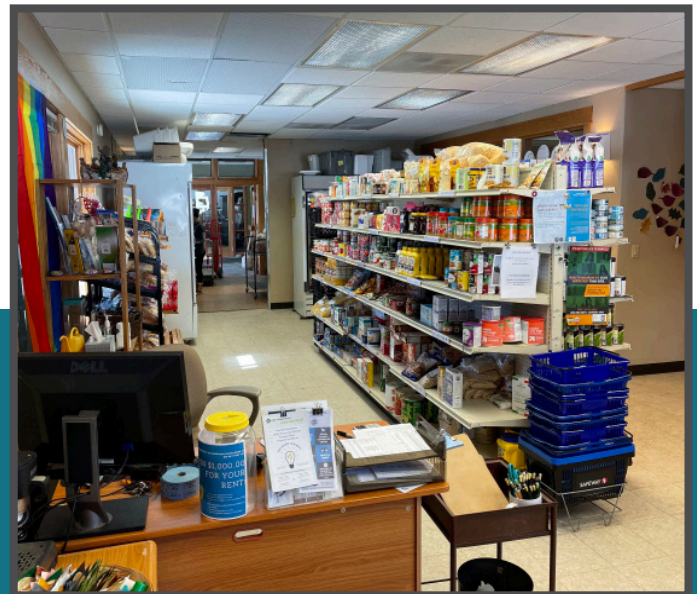
**37,226** Pounds of food distributed

The ongoing theme for HRDC's Big Sky Community Food Bank is collaboration and building of resources within the Big Sky community. We actively partner with a number of Big Sky nonprofits to support emergency housing for victims of violence, limited English speaking households, behavioral health, and service navigation.

We are serving many Spanish speaking customers and in June 2022, half of all customers spoke Spanish as their first language.

After slowing during the height of the COVID-19 pandemic, we saw a significant increase in services to families and Big Sky residents who've been here for years, as well as our seasonal workforce, including J1 students.

Big Sky Community Food Bank (BSCFB) enhances the food security, health, and dignity of our neighbors living and working in Big Sky, Montana. BSCFB is truly a resource hub for locals providing emergency food assistance, a clothing closet, computer lab, washer/dryer, and makerspace.





# THREE FORKS, MT

Headwaters Area Food Bank (HAFB), located in Three Forks, serves the west end of Gallatin Valley. HAFB provides food assistance, distributes senior groceries, and partners with other organizations to meet the needs of area residents.



**520** Individuals received help from HAFB

**2,533** Food Boxes (5 day supply of groceries) provided

**95,558** Pounds of food distributed



Our numbers continued to grow over the last year as housing prices pushed folks towards the west end of the valley. This year was marked by an increase of the in-house services we provide. We were proud to strengthen referrals and connections to other HRDC services including energy assistance and tax preparation. Mobile services to Clarkston and Harrison continued to reach rural communities with limited to no social services. A significant change in our area was an increase in unhoused community members. We led the way in Three Forks and participated in conversations centered on how to best support our unhoused neighbors.







## FORK & SPOON

Owned and Operated by  HRDC

**22,177** Hot meals were provided

**5,474** Volunteer hours donated to Fork & Spoon

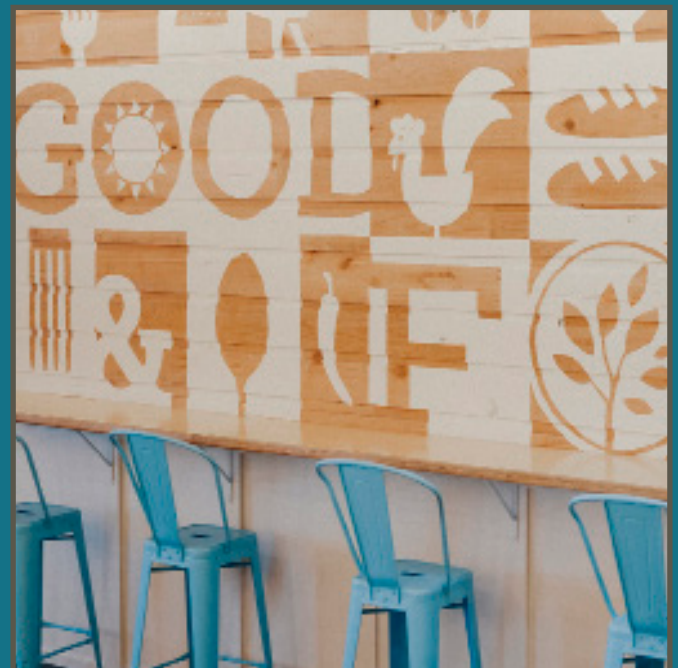
**\$2** Average contribution per meal (the average cost per meal is \$17.75)

Because Fork & Spoon operates on a unique pay-what-you-can model, each person who walks through our doors receives a full plate and a welcoming experience, regardless of how much they pay. This includes the dad who comes in with his son while mom works, the gentleman on disability who communicates with us on an iPad, and the mom who drives in from Belgrade with the entire family. There are so many others. Every night.

*Good* **Food**  
**Does** *Good*

# FORK & SPOON

Fork & Spoon is Montana's first and only pay-what-you-can restaurant. We focus on creating homegrown, scratch cooking using locally sourced ingredients whenever possible. Everyone is invited to join us for a delicious evening meal at a price they can afford.



# THE MIGHTY SPORK

The first pay-what-you-can food truck in Montana hit the road in Summer 2021. Created with a grant from COVID Business development funds, The Mighty Spork brings healthy and delicious meals to areas across HRDC's service area. The Mighty Spork is a true community resource. We provide increased food security to folks in rural towns, who may be unable to drive into Bozeman to eat at Fork & Spoon regularly. The Spork also attends local festivals, markets, and private events.



**4362** Mighty Spork pay-what-you-can meals served

**9** chef-crafted menu items



# VOLUNTEERS

Volunteers are vital to alleviating hunger in Southwest Montana. From the warehouse, to the stores, to the kitchen, to the food rescue routes, and to the gardens, volunteers touch every corner of our Food and Nutrition Programs. Our volunteers find meaning here and embody the sense of community and connectedness that we strive for. With staff shortages across our community, volunteers are increasingly essential.

**18,357** Total hours donated 2021-22

**\$275,355** value volunteers donated  
at a value of \$15 an hour

## HOURS BY PROGRAM

- GVFB: 9,176
- Fork & Spoon: 5,474
- Summer Lunch: 1,238\*
- BSCFB: 562
- Kidspack: 427
- HAFB: 651
- Huffing For Stuffing: 451
- Senior Grocery Drivers: 378

\*hours from 2022 Summer Season





# VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT



## **Bob and Janet Palmer**

This pair drives a food rescue route every Tuesday morning as well as contributing to Can the Griz and Summer Lunch. In their experience HRDC's Food & Nutrition Programs spend resources in the right way, "and we want to contribute to that."



## **Dick Dowdell**

Dick provides guidance and leadership year-round as a member of our advisory council, but in November we truly rely on him. This was Dick's 6th November helping out with Can the Griz and Thanksgiving distribution!



## **Roxane Longano**

Roxane brings an eye for organization and plenty of heart and soul to the warehouse. She is a "box guru" and enjoys packing groceries for homebound seniors. Positive energy, compassion, and chocolate fuel her time volunteering.



# FOOD & NUTRITION STAFF

## GVFB:

Left to Right:

Jill Holder, HRDC Food and Nutrition Director  
Laura Stonecipher, Programs Manager  
Lyra Leigh-Nedbor, Child Nutrition Coordinator  
Chloe Loeffelholz, Outreach Coordinator  
Nick Savage, Warehouse Coordinator  
Jess Heagler, Volunteer Coordinator  
Kyla Crisp, Food Rescue Coordinator  
Jon Horn, Operations Manager  
Not Pictured:  
Cally Ward, Garden Manager  
Adia Saurey, Service Navigator



## HAFB:

Left: Kathy Thompson, Operations Assistant  
Right: Kim Gelder, Operations Manager  
Not Pictured: Emily Smith, Operations Manager

## BSCFB:

Left: Laine Hegness, Operations Assistant  
Right: Sarah Gaither Bivins, Operations Manager  
Not Pictured: Candice Brownmiller, Operations Assistant



## F&S:

Left to Right:

Hunayf Pate, Executive Chef  
Eric Sellegren, Kitchen Assistant  
Jim Dean, Evening Lead and Sous Chef  
Andy Galloway, Program Manager  
Rachel Ariaz, Food Truck Lead  
Arielle Adams, Program Assistant  
Jennifer Treff, Front of House Coordinator  
Not Pictured:  
Allie Zanieri-Hale, Evening Lead  
Kayla White, Kitchen Assistant  
Britta Binde, Evening Lead  
Louisa Bryson, Catering Assistant  
Leah Smutko, Head Chef  
Jacqui Colt, Catering Chef  
Rick Hilles, Program Manager



# ADVISORY BOARDS

HRDC is governed by a Board of Directors representing our customers, public organizations, local government, and private businesses. All of our food banks benefit from community input and guidance through advisory boards specific to each unique service area. These individuals give their time and talents to benefit HRDC and are dedicated to the mission, customers, and community impact.



GVFB Advisory Board members pictured at Fork & Spoon

## HRDC BOARD OF DIRECTORS:

Scott Malloy	Kris Moos
Linda Young	Scott MacFarlane
Bill Berg	Brooke Poole
Bailey Bliss	Peter Schmidt
Mitch Bradley	Gene Townsend
Ron Brey	Billie Warford
David Kack	LeRoy Wilson

## GVFB ADVISORY COUNCIL:

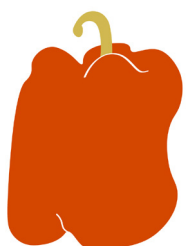
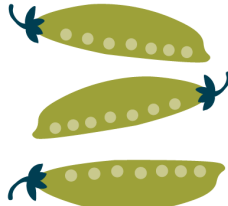
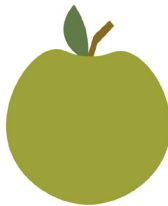
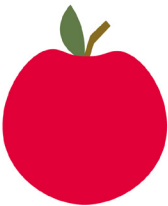
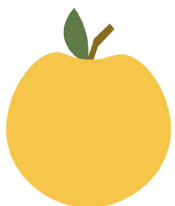
Dick Dowdell	Justin Varley
Jerry Johnson	Donna West
Judy Mathre	Mitch Bradley
Melissa Meredith	Carmen Byker-Shanks
Joe Sofianek	Rick Cameron
	Lori Christenson

## HAFB ADVISORY COUNCIL:

Chuck Wambeke  
Aimee Jones  
Gene Townsend  
Lamont Kotter  
Kevin King  
Rhonda Uthlaut

## BSCFB ADVISORY COUNCIL:

Pam Rempt	Robert Gerard Koehler
Diane Bartzick	Christine Lugo-Yergenson
Leslie Piercy	Anna Husted
Jeremy Blyth	Seth Griggs
Laine Hegness	Betty Smith





# OUR FUTURE

## COMMUNITY COMMONS

*noun*

land or resources belonging to or affecting the whole of a community.



### MARKET PLACE

*noun*

a central location where resources & services are shared.

### HOMEWARD POINT

*noun*

people or things that are oriented toward home or on their way home.

For nearly 50 years we have been building a better community through helping our neighbors in need from a variety of locations all across town. Today, our new home is under construction and when complete, it will significantly improve our ability to assist our customers within an integrated service venue. With that in mind, our sights are set on ensuring **everyone feels welcome** regardless of circumstance.

## MARKET PLACE

Market Place will be home to all HRDC programs that address hunger in our community, including our **Gallatin Valley Food Bank, Fork & Spoon** pay-what-you-can restaurant and more. The majority of HRDC staff that work closely with our customers will also be relocated to our Market Place.





## BUILDING A BETTER COMMUNITY

While we provide a dignified and friendly service for our customers at 602 Bond Street, we know we can do better. Our current lobby is cramped and not as accessible as it should be. There is no privacy when a customer is sharing their personal story. There is no place for budgeting or nutritional training. We have no meeting space for customers or staff. Currently Gallatin Valley Food Bank and KidsPack utilize off-site storage for nonperishables and freezer storage. The Fork & Spoon is 2 miles away and we struggle to share inventory. Our truck and delivery access are limited and travel across our parking lot through customers which is both dangerous and inconvenient. The donation area is many times crowded and prohibitive to good donor service. Our parking lot is overflowing by over fifty percent.

A larger store will create a more cohesive shopping experience, one that doesn't feel rushed and overcrowded. Our new home will allow customers to access multiple interventions in one place at one time, meaning we reduce the amount of time customers are facing instability. A person can get something to eat immediately through our Fork & Spoon restaurant so they can make decisions with a clear head. Market Place will provide space for educational programming where classes will be held on nutrition, meal preparation, and financial planning. From an operations perspective, the food storage warehouse at Market Place will reduce staff and volunteer time moving food due to insufficient space, increase the utilization of food product, and decrease food waste. By the numbers we will go from 85 pallet spaces in our current facility, where we are forced to utilize off-site storage, to 750 pallet spaces in our new warehouse. The kitchen will allow HRDC to process more local produce helping our local economy while also getting the best possible food to our customers. There will be ample freezer and refrigerator storage so we can save those local beets and carrots for the depths of winter. This dream has been built not only to better serve our customers but with the entire community in mind. It will be a resource for decades to come.