



*Creating a Hunger-Free
Community*

Pantry Times

June 2020



Food Support for All, Making it Possible

Now more than 12 weeks into the public health and economic crisis brought on by COVID-19, so much about Helena Food Share's service has changed. Yet, one thing remains true: the Helena area community wants to be sure no one goes hungry. You have been stepping forward, as never before, making it possible for food support to be available for those who need it.

Because of you, Helena Food Share has been able to respond,

moving into action and adjusting services so anyone could still get help with food, even while the stay-at-home orders were in place. We immediately put a "grab and go" cart system into place so a full share of groceries would be provided for every household. Helena Food Share's staff and a core group of new and existing volunteers made sure that everyone – including those brought to the doors of a food bank for the first time in their lives – got the food

they needed for themselves and their families. From mid-March through the end of May, nearly 4,700 "grab and go" food assistance services went out the door to 1,900 households. 600 of the households served were new households who came in during the stay at home.

The Kid Pack program also continued during the final 14-weeks of the school year. With schools closed and kids at home, this program – which provides essential food support for kids during the weekend – became even more important. More than 14,000 Kid packs will have been served to kids throughout the Helena area.

During this time of uncertainty, with your help, Helena Food Share will continue to ensure access to food for all in our community who need it.

Farmers to Families Food Box Program

Helena Food Share is participating in the USDA Farmers to Families Food Box Program, a program buying fresh foods from U.S. farmers for distribution to people needing food. The boxes will be available every Tuesday through the end of October to anyone who asks. There are no eligibility requirements and no application is needed. Thank you for making it possible for Helena Food Share to bring this valuable food resource to Helena.

Grow a Row for Those in Need

Spring growth is underway and despite the limitations created by COVID-19, Helena Food Share is getting our garden ready to offer fresh produce to customers this summer. Hidden just under the rich soil are seeds that will produce an array of vegetables to share with our customers.

Our campaign for nutritious fresh food each summer is supported by many donors, local farmers and members of community gardens, as well as the many green thumbs in Helena who grow a row – or two! – for Helena Food Share in their backyards.



Volunteers and staff work together to get this year's garden ready to meet the community's need for fresh food.

We'd like to invite community members to "grow a row" this summer to help get fresh, local food to our neighbors in need. Your green thumb can assure that our neighbors have access to plentiful and healthy food this summer and fall.

Running out of garden space at home?

How about becoming a Helena Community Gardens volunteer? In a long-standing partnership, Helena Community Gardens regularly donates thousands of pounds of fresh produce

to Helena Food Share every summer. It's a great family activity, and for a great cause, too!



If you'd like information about Grow a Row, please call (406) 443-3663 ext. 113.

Wish List

As we prepare the garden for later harvest, we would appreciate donations of tomato and pepper starts.

Items can be dropped off at:
Helena Food Share Pantry
1616 Lewis Street
Monday-Friday,
8:30a.m.-3:30p.m.

Thank you for helping provide fresh produce for our neighbors.



Helena Food Share volunteers gather baskets of food for pantry customers.

Volunteers are Heroes, Too

One of the most wonderful things about our community is the generous spirit of the many people who reach out to those in need. The volunteer corps of Helena Food Share is a shining example of this. For over 30 years, generous, compassionate and selfless people have come to share food with seniors, families, veterans, kids and anyone in our community who needs help. Ensuring that people have access to food is a commitment so many people make by showing up day after day, year after year.

Volunteers are at the heart of Helena Food Share. Most of our regular, long-term volunteers needed to stay home during the pandemic. This has been a very difficult choice for them, our staff and customers. Their presence is missed daily, and we look forward to the time when they will be able to return to the pantry.

We are grateful for new volunteers who came forward to help with meeting the ongoing need. Morgaine began volunteering soon after the COVID-19 stay at home required our change in operations. She has only helped at Helena Food Share during this time when specific COVID-19 safety protocols have been in place. She explained the precautions volunteers must take everyday. “We get our temperatures checked at the door, always wear a mask and gloves, and provide full, pre-packaged carts at the front door of the building.” Morgaine helps to prepare the prepackaged food carts for our customers. When asked what she loves the most about volunteering here, Morgaine says, “I’ve really enjoyed seeing the way people get together to participate in our community, and seeing so many people donate has been really inspiring.”

Become a
HUNGER HERO!

Sign up to make a monthly donation. Simply visit [HelenaFoodShare.org/hunger-hero](https://www.HelenaFoodShare.org/hunger-hero) and choose how much you would like to donate each month. Thanks to your gift, thousands of our neighbors will be able to count on receiving nutritious food.

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Pantry Times is a publication of Helena Food Share.

Contact Us: (406) 443-3663
To Volunteer: ext. 106
To Donate: ext. 104
Need Help?: ext. 110

Our Pantries:
 1616 Lewis Street, Helena
 50 Prickley Pear, East Helena

Office: 1437 Helena Avenue
[HelenaFoodShare.org](https://www.HelenaFoodShare.org)

If you are interested in becoming a Helena Food Share volunteer, email volunteer@helenafoodshare.org.

So, thank you to all our volunteers. We would not be Helena Food Share without you.



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HelenaFoodShare.org



Helena Food Share Pantry Info

Our Lewis Street and East Helena pantries are open during regular hours, providing food support for all who need it. There is no eligibility requirement; just bring a form of ID.

Lewis Street Pantry

1616 Lewis Street in Helena
(406) 443-3663

Pantry Hours:

Monday: 12:30 – 6:30 p.m.
Tuesday: 12:30 – 3:30 p.m.
Wednesday: 12:30 – 3:30 p.m.
Thursday: 12:30 – 6:30 p.m.
Friday: 12:30 – 3:30 p.m.

East Helena Pantry

50 Prickly Pear in East Helena
(406) 443-3663

Pantry Hours:

Monday: 2 – 3:30 p.m.
Thursday: 5 – 6 p.m.