



VOLUNTEER VIEWS & NEWS FROM THE FOOD BANK MARCH 2017

This newsletter is dedicated to the volunteers of the Regional Food Bank, Patroon Land Farm, and Food Bank of the Hudson Valley. You help us provide much-needed food and other supplies to people in need. Thank you!

New Distribution Record Set in 2017

**36,256,770 pounds
30,213,975 meals**

Last year, with help from thousands of volunteers, we distributed 36.2 million pounds of food and other basic need items to our network of food pantries, soup kitchens, shelters and other programs and helped feed 300,000 people.

We appreciate the generosity of our food industry partners and volunteers who helped make this record level of service possible.

Happy St. Patrick's Day!

**As you search for the pot of gold at
the end of the rainbow,
remember this:**

**You do not have to be rich
to give generously.**

**Volunteers give generously of
themselves every day.**

Food Bank of the Hudson Valley Volunteers Register for Shifts Online

Last month we launched an online volunteer management tool called CERVIS at the Food Bank of the Hudson Valley (FBHV). FBHV volunteers now register for shifts online right through the Food Bank's website. Regional Food Bank volunteers will soon have that option too. We thank our FBHV volunteers for test driving this new technology.

Patroon Land Farm CSA (Community Supported Agriculture) Shares Now Available for 2017

When you buy a CSA share, you receive an abundance of freshly picked produce for 16 weeks throughout the summer and fall. Your purchase supports the Patroon Land Farm, which the Food Bank operates to grow fresh produce for member agencies and the hungry people they serve. **A doubly good deal and deed to help those in need!**

A **Family Share** costs \$420 and provides enough produce for a family of four. An **Individual Share** provides enough produce for two people at a cost of \$260. Each Thursday during the harvest season, your share is delivered to the pick-up site you choose among many in the Capital District area. If your place of work or community group can sign up 15 members or more, you may be eligible for direct delivery to your site.

In 2016, the average weekly **Family Share weighed 20 pounds** and **Individual Shares 11 pounds**, and both included a wide variety of vegetables – **broccoli, tomatoes, cucumbers, peppers, zucchini, lettuce, carrots, onions, potatoes, corn, cabbage, beets, eggplant, and much more.** Sound like too much? Split a share with a family or friend!

For information on purchasing a CSA share, contact Bob Baker at (518) 786-3691, x296 or bobb@regionalfoodbank.net, or visit www.regionalfoodbank.net. Join the growing number of Patroon Land Farm CSA members today!

Patroon Land Farm Greenhouse – Seeding

While winter is still bringing us below freezing temperatures, at the Farm we have a warm inviting setting to begin the farm season. Our greenhouse, heated by the sun or gas heater if necessary, is ready to begin our time of seed planting. Potting soil has been delivered, seed trays have been pulled out from their winter sleep, and seed packs are lined up according to their order of planting. **We invite you to come join us** – bring spouses, children, family, friends, co-workers, or a group you belong to for a couple of hours of planting and good fellowship. **Please contact Farmer Laura at lauram@regionalfoodbank.net for details and to schedule a volunteer shift.**

Latham Dock Expansion Nears Completion

The long-awaited expansion of the distribution dock at the Regional Food Bank is almost done after many months of construction. We eagerly await the opening of the new space that will provide agencies with a larger, safer area to select produce and load orders. Once that project is done, efforts will focus on the office expansion and then move to the parking lot expansion. We appreciate everyone's patience during this long process and promise the new spaces will be better for everyone! Here's a sneak peak at the warehouse dock and new front entrance (both in progress):



BackPack Program Feeds Hungry Kids

Our Backpack Program continues to grow, reaching more chronically hungry children every year. We now offer the Program at 195 schools across 20 counties. Each week 5,200 children receive bags of food so they can eat on weekends when food is likely not available at home. Participating children benefit greatly from the Program, with better attendance and grades and fewer behavioral problems at school. Perhaps most importantly, they feel safer and more secure knowing they will not go hungry. If you support our Backpack Program, we thank you from the bottom of our hearts.

A Volunteer Program's Best Friends

If you've volunteered with us before, you've sorted good products from bad, placed good products in boxes, and put trash and recycling in giant totes. Boxes and totes are vital to our daily operation, as are stickers, markers, and shrink wrap to keep everything neat on the pallets. But even more important than these supplies are you, our volunteers, and our wonderful Volunteer Coordinators who keep everything running smoothly.

To Carol and Troy at the Food Bank of the Hudson Valley, and M.E., Ellie, Liz and Rich at the Regional Food Bank, thank you for providing volunteers with rewarding, productive experiences. People are nourished because of your combined efforts.

How to Reach Us to Volunteer

Regional Food Bank Volunteer Coordinators: 518-786-3691, x234 or volunteers@regionalfoodbank.net
Food Bank of the Hudson Valley: 845-534-5344, x116 or CGriffinDePaolis@foodbankofhudsonvalley.org
Patroon Land Farm: lauram@regionalfoodbank.net or Farmer Mark at 518-339-5726