



# IMPACT REPORT



AN INSIDE LOOK AT FOOD DISTRIBUTION  
**DURING COVID-19**





To meet the demand, Second Harvest responded.



## LETTER FROM PRESIDENT & CEO

**Change is nothing new**, even before the pandemic. Dealing with change is part of what we do as humans. Like any significant historic event, we will remember when the state of Ohio issued stay-at-home orders at the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic. Everything about how we worked and operated was about to change.

**Second Harvest responds** to the needs of its community, no matter the challenge. We were ready.

**Our organization learned valuable lessons.** We acted nimbly in thought and deed, and consistently evaluated, revised, and put in place best practices as we moved through the crisis. Our dedicated team showed up every day and never faltered, responding to whatever challenges were presented with tenacity and compassion. And we worked with YOU—our donors, community members, volunteers, the Ohio National Guard and Air National Guard, school districts, municipalities, and partner charities to meet the need.

**What can we expect going forward?** As an organization, our best plan for the future is to apply the lessons learned and prepare strategically, but be ready to pivot quickly, to ensure every family has access to the food they need to grow and thrive. Even as we slowly make our way back from this emergency, there are many people who will be striving to regain their finances, find jobs, and get their families back on stable ground. Our commitment to a brighter future for all has never wavered.

**We have deep gratitude** for every dollar donated, every volunteer hour worked, and every acknowledgement shared. Thank you for being part of this collective effort to feed our community.

In gratitude,

Julie Chase-Morefield  
President and CEO  
Second Harvest Food Bank of North Central Ohio



## DRIVE-THRU MOBILE PANTRY DISTRIBUTIONS

FOR NEARLY FOUR DECADES, SECOND HARVEST HAS BEEN A LIFELINE FOR THOUSANDS EACH YEAR

in North Central Ohio. Beginning in mid-March of 2020, the Covid-19 pandemic brought on a once-in-a-lifetime (we hope!) crisis. The average number of people we served instantly doubled every week. At some distributions, almost half were seeking food assistance for the first time.

To meet this increase in demand, the Second Harvest team quickly organized and transitioned our mobile distributions to a no-touch, drive-through model and asked our hot meal programs to begin serving to-go meals. For everyone's health and safety, we immediately purchased thousands of boxes, bags, to-go cartons, gloves, disinfectants, and other supplies to protect those helping with the distributions.

We were in uncharted territory and even with the introduction of safety protocols and additional supplies, many of our partner charities ceased operations due to lack of staff and volunteers. At the height of the pandemic, only 65% of the hot meal programs and 75% of the pantries remained open and operating.

Forced to respond, Second Harvest changed our method of distribution and expanded our reach to help those in areas with high need and no access to service. However, we did not have volunteers available to us due to the pandemic. It became abundantly clear we needed others to help us meet the need.

The action by Governor DeWine to deploy the National Guard ensured no interruption of emergency food assistance and, we truly believe, prevented collapse of a vital security net in our communities. Almost immediately, we welcomed the arrival of 15 Ohio National Guard soldiers and airmen. Together, we got to work to scale up our operations by pulling food orders, packing boxes of food, and planning upcoming food distributions. National Guard service men and women provided essential manpower and resources necessary to handle the massive response effort, during a time when we lost our entire volunteer workforce, which was a crushing blow to our daily operations.

To meet the demand, Second Harvest mobilized.



photo credit: Kristin Bauer/The Chronicle Telegram

### IMPACT INSIGHT

"I have been so proud of the partnership between Second Harvest and the Elyria City Schools. Witnessing the Pioneer staff volunteering to do what they could to make it easier for our families and surrounding community was truly amazing! The team from Second Harvest was there to guide us and help make it all possible—this partnership has touched so many."

- Ann Schloss  
Superintendent  
Elyria City Schools



### DATA SNAPSHOT



prior to pandemic  
**88,000**

Through the end of FY2020-2021, we served 172,000 unique individuals, which is double the demand for food from previous years.



during pandemic  
**172,000**

**12.4+**  
million pounds

FY2019-2020

Second Harvest distributed 12.4+ million pounds of food and grocery products.



**13.6+**  
million pounds

FY2020-2021

Second Harvest distributed 13.6+ million pounds of food and grocery products.





To meet the demand, Second Harvest replenished.

## SOURCING OF FOOD

### FROM THE BEGINNING, SECOND HARVEST FACED OPERATIONAL CHALLENGES AND

food chain disruptions while sourcing food. Fortunately, through the CARES Act, food banks received additional food through the USDA and The Emergency Food Assistance Program. Until the federal resources arrived, Second Harvest worked fast to purchase food to replenish rapidly depleting inventories. We tapped into our networks of new and existing food donors and suppliers to secure truckloads of food donations and purchased food. Over the first 12 weeks of the pandemic, Second Harvest had a total increase in costs that exceeded \$1 million dollars. In subsequent months, we continued to receive much-needed help from state and federal sources. One such program, the USDA Farmers to Families Food Box Program, provided dairy, protein, and produce boxes sourced from local and regional farmers and vendors. Yet, the need to purchase food directly continued. By the end of FY2020-2021, food costs increased by 7% while deliveries and supply chain struggles remained an issue.



## IMPACT INSIGHT



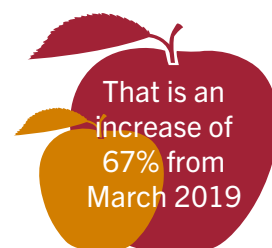
“In that moment, we understood that everything about how we were going to have to conduct our operations would have to drastically change, immediately. The governor just closed businesses, shops, schools, and restaurants. We turned people away from yesterday’s distribution, which served three times the expected number of families. Our team put together a budget of projected additional expenses to take us and our partner charities through to the end of June. Over \$1 million dollars! How can we do this? How can we afford this? I met with our board in an emergency meeting to discuss our next move. They gave the resounding directive to Go! People need us now. So we did.

**-Julie Chase-Morefield**  
President and CEO

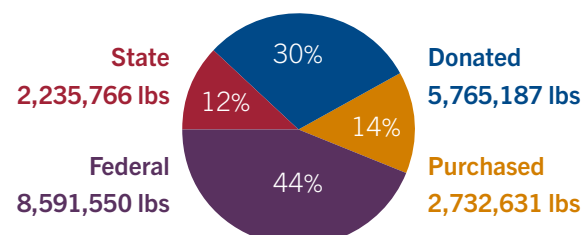


Total pounds of food distributed in March 2020:  
**1.1 million pounds**

(First time ever distributed in one month.)



Federal, state, donated and purchased product received for the period from March 15, 2020 - June 30, 2021.



Cost increases during the first 12 weeks of the pandemic 3/15/20 - 6/6/21

Cleaning Expenses	\$15,000
Truck Rental	\$4,500
Additional Staff & Overtime	\$23,500
Gloves, Disinfection, Portable Hand Washing	\$6,000
Bags, Boxes, Food Containers & Cutlery	\$60,000
Food Grant Funds to Food Pantries	\$160,000
Food Pantry Boxes Packed (4,875 boxes packed through 3/31)	\$83,661
Food Pantry Boxes (4/1 - 6/6, 30,000 boxes @ \$18)	\$540,000
Produce, Refrigerated, Frozen Food at Mobile Pantries	\$110,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$1,002,661</b>



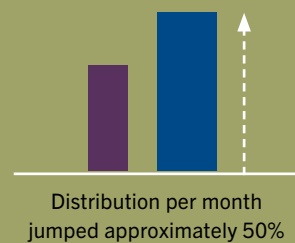
To meet the demand, Second Harvest scaled up.

## MOVING THE FOOD

### THE COVID-19 CRISIS PRESENTED UNFORESEEN CHALLENGES TO NOT ONLY SECOND HARVEST,

but to every food bank throughout the country. The distribution model employed by food banks for many years shifted nearly overnight to outside, drive-thru, no-touch, and no-volunteer workforce. In the first days and weeks, Second Harvest purchased and stocked up on to-go plates and containers, face masks, wipes, and any other essential supplies to ensure a smooth transition to this new method of distribution.

We quickly scaled up our operations and found ourselves in the unique situation of competing with major retailers to get the amount of food needed to distribute in our nearby communities. With a demand higher than ever before, and complex supply chain issues, Second Harvest faced the challenge of getting the food it needed without running out of space. In addition to balancing inventory and space issues, Second Harvest turned to renting trucks for drive-thru mobile pantries and distributions to our partner charity network. National Guard soldiers would pack boxes in the morning and go out on mobile distributions in the afternoon.



Efficient, effective logistics were more imperative than ever. Before the pandemic, Second Harvest was moving approximately 813,800 pounds a month. That number jumped approximately 50% during the COVID-19 crisis to an average of 1.2 million pounds a month.

### DATA SNAPSHOT:

In March 2020: Second Harvest served over **65,000** individuals; **44,735** were from Lorain County



From March 1, 2020, until June 30, 2021, Second Harvest distributed:

- Over **19 million** pounds of food
- 3/19 million** pounds were fresh fruits and vegetables



photo credit: Bruce Bishop/The Chronicle Telegram

## IMPACT INSIGHT



Second Harvest added two new large-capacity trucks to its fleet thanks to grants from The Nord Family Foundation, The Eric & Jane Nord Family Fund, The Bloomfield Family Foundation, and the Ohio EPA. The trucks made their first delivery of food boxes and produce to the Longfellow Middle School drive-thru distribution in Lorain in early November 2020.

Both new, refrigerated trucks with lift gates helped address increased demand for food and grocery products per distribution in the most streamlined and efficient manner. These new trucks operate on clean diesel. One replaced a high-emission unit which was no longer useable. The refrigerated box from the old truck was repurposed as a stationary, refrigerated unit at our partner charity, Beyond the Walls Church in Elyria, which operates a food pantry and a hot meal program.





## VOLUNTEERS

### IT IS HARD TO IMAGINE SECOND HARVEST WITHOUT VOLUNTEERS.

They are at the heart of the Second Harvest mission. Before the COVID-19 pandemic, nearly 2,800 volunteers had donated close to 20,000 hours a year over the previous two fiscal years. Everything changed when the stay-at-home orders were issued and we temporarily lost these invaluable members of the Second Harvest team, all while food banks were designated as an essential service.

While faced with this loss, Second Harvest received support from the community in unexpected and incredible ways. The Ohio State Highway Patrol stepped in to deliver boxes of food to seniors in need. The Ohio National Guard and Air National Guard provided invaluable support to Second Harvest through June 2021, and as volunteers began to return, they worked side by side in our building and out in the community at mobile pantries and food distributions.

As the months wore on and volunteers slowly began to return, Second Harvest had to reimagine every system, process, and protocol for how things were done with volunteers to ensure the health and safety of everyone. We limited the number of volunteers coming in to maintain social distancing. We provided larger spaces to pack boxes and added a second conveyor belt to be more efficient and get more done in a shorter amount of time.

As our volunteers returned, new volunteers came with them. Throughout the pandemic, many saw firsthand the impact of Second Harvest in our community, perhaps for the first time. The community has responded in kind, as we welcome new volunteers to meet the continuing need in our region.



To meet the demand, Second Harvest improvised.

### IMPACT INSIGHT

For a time, we no longer had our regular volunteers, but we did have the Ohio National Guard. We still needed help to meet the burgeoning need. In a fluid situation, you take help where you can get it, forming unlikely partnerships. The mayors of Lorain and Elyria saw the need in their communities among seniors and disabled citizens for food and formed a partnership with Second Harvest to bring food pantry boxes directly to their doorsteps. The Ohio State Highway Patrol also helped with traffic control at distributions, and had officers deliver Senior Food Boxes to those who were homebound. The seniors were delighted with the kindness of the officers and appreciated receiving their food in such a dignified manner.



### DATA SNAPSHOT: Number of Volunteers





To meet the demand, Second Harvest engaged.

## THE POWER OF GENEROSITY

### IN THE FIRST DAYS AND WEEKS OF THE COVID-19 CRISIS, ACTING WITH URGENCY

was imperative. We needed to totally transform our model while also experiencing a 67% increase in distributions and purchasing.

Two out of every five people coming to food distributions were individuals who had never been food insecure before.



We were in uncharted waters, but we were not alone. Our community of supporters was there with us every step of the way.

While we were seeing unprecedented numbers of people coming to distributions from all over the region, the community took notice, as well. People saw firsthand Second Harvest's ability to respond to a crisis. People saw hundreds of cars in line at drive-thru pantries, not on the news or in some other community, but in their own community. For many, this was the first time they saw hunger up close and personal. And our community responded. They stepped up and gave, everything from \$25 donations to individuals donating their entire stimulus checks. Neighbors helping neighbors inspired and kept us going.

Foundations and corporations responded with generous grants, including the Community Foundation of Lorain County, which provided \$250,000 in emergency funding within days of the stay-at-home orders. The generous response of our foundation and corporate community allowed us to purchase the groceries, produce, and supplies needed for over 172,000 unduplicated individuals—nearly one-third of the residents in the Second Harvest region.



## NEIGHBORS HELPING NEIGHBORS



Thanks to your generosity, Second Harvest distributed:



# 16 million meals

## IMPACT INSIGHT

“This is about trust-based philanthropy. We have a long history with Second Harvest, not just as a funder, but as a partner in our community. They are already an organization that is known as responsive, and if anyone could figure it out, we knew they would, and we were here to support them. It was not a difficult decision for our board.”



-Cynthia Andrews  
President and CEO  
Community Foundation of Lorain County



To meet the demand, Second Harvest pivoted.

## PARTNER CHARITY NETWORK

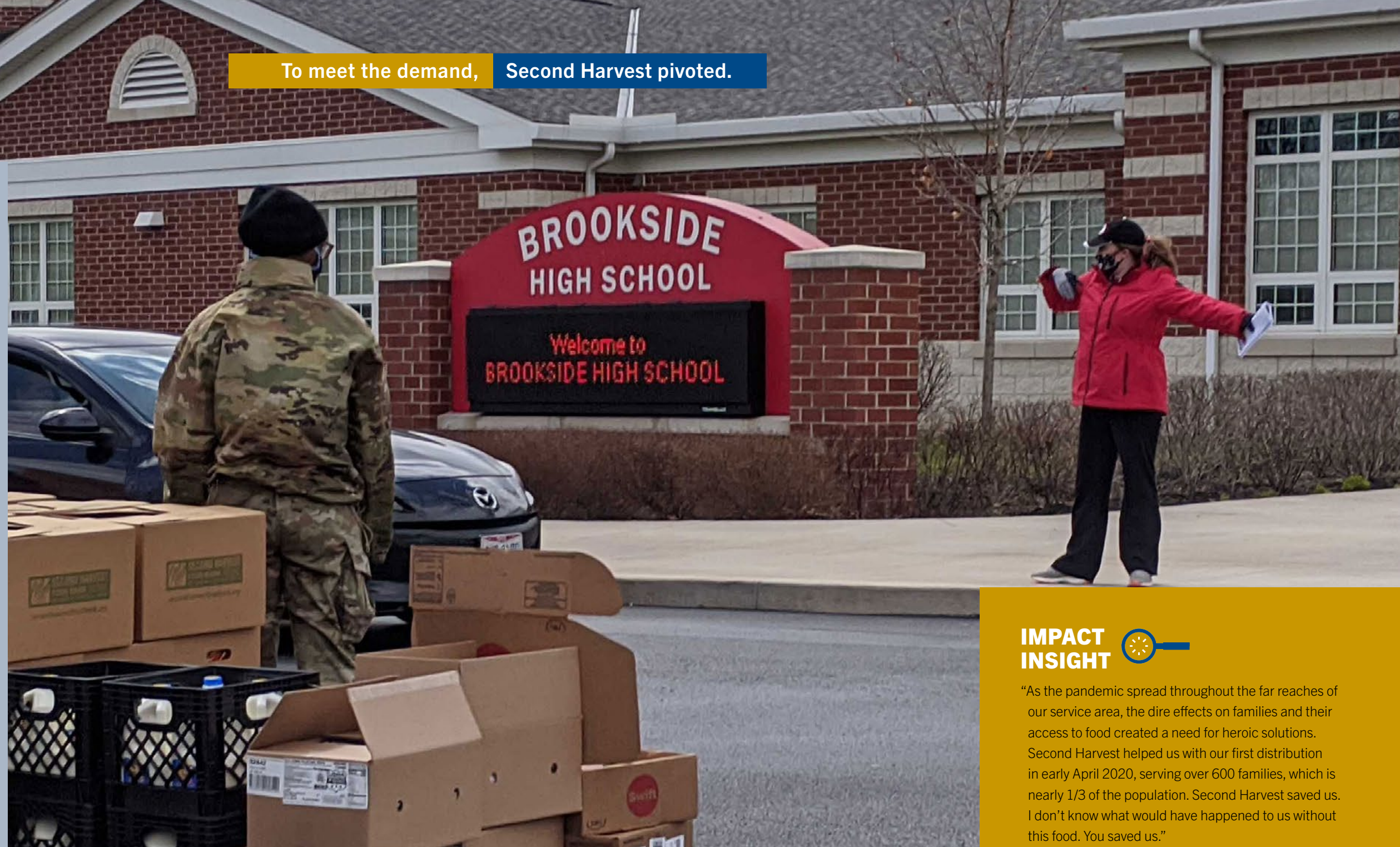
112 PARTNERSHIP CHARITIES WORKED IN PARTNERSHIP WITH SECOND HARVEST.

Our partners are the vital lifeline to getting food to those at risk of hunger throughout our region. Many of our partner charities depend on volunteers, so some had to make the difficult decision to temporarily suspend operations to protect the health and safety of volunteers.

Second Harvest had to quickly pivot to ensure that communities that had shuttered food programs had access to food during this time. As we planned for the best way to accomplish this task, we were able to turn to some of our other partners, such as school districts and municipalities, that opened parking lots and stadiums for drive-thru distributions, guaranteeing access to food for anyone who needed it.

As with every challenge, an opportunity presented itself. We needed to determine how Second Harvest could best support its partner charities moving forward under normal circumstances and prepare for a more sustainable situation whenever the next crisis arises. This included exploring what equipment and supplies partners needed to come back online and start operating again, as well as how we could provide support to partner charities to level up their operations.

By working together, we can ensure an effective, efficient network of partner charities that are ready to serve their communities throughout our region well into the future.



## IMPACT INSIGHT

“As the pandemic spread throughout the far reaches of our service area, the dire effects on families and their access to food created a need for heroic solutions. Second Harvest helped us with our first distribution in early April 2020, serving over 600 families, which is nearly 1/3 of the population. Second Harvest saved us. I don’t know what would have happened to us without this food. You saved us.”

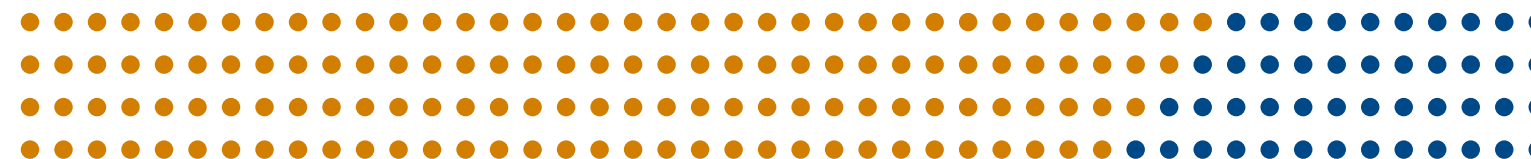
-Pastor Greg Griffiths  
Partner Charity, The Willard Church of God



### DATA SNAPSHOT

Number of programs:

160



Percentage of partner charities that closed during the pandemic:

25%



## TRIBUTE TO THE NATIONAL GUARD AND AIR NATIONAL GUARD

IT IS IMPOSSIBLE TO OVERSTATE THE  
INTENSE NATURE OF THE PAST.

20+ months—being on the front lines of responding to the COVID-19 crisis with the dedicated Second Harvest team and the incredible National Guard soldiers and airmen—working hard every day to exercise creativity, move nimbly, and respond robustly to the need for food assistance.

Ohio National Guard service members working at the Nordson Food Distribution Center were instrumental in our response to the COVID-19 crisis. The men and women who served brought leadership, dedication, and passion to our mission and fully integrated themselves into our operations and partner charity network to serve our communities, establishing lasting relationships and friendships. These men and women filled positions as drivers, packers, warehouse associates, distribution teams, logistics, and office support.



Together we hosted nearly 500 mobile food distributions in rain, snow, and heat; delivered food by truck to food pantries across the region; packed over 100,000 food pantry boxes; and helped homebound seniors by packing and delivering boxes of shelf-stable food. In all, we provided nearly 16 million meals to seniors, families out of work, and children out of school.

To meet the demand, Second Harvest collaborated.



### DATA SNAPSHOT:

Ohio National Guard packed over

**100,000** 

food pantry boxes and helped seniors by packing and delivering boxes of shelf-stable food.

Ohio National Guard assisted  
Second Harvest with over

**500** 

Drive-Thru Mobile Pantries throughout our 4-county service region.

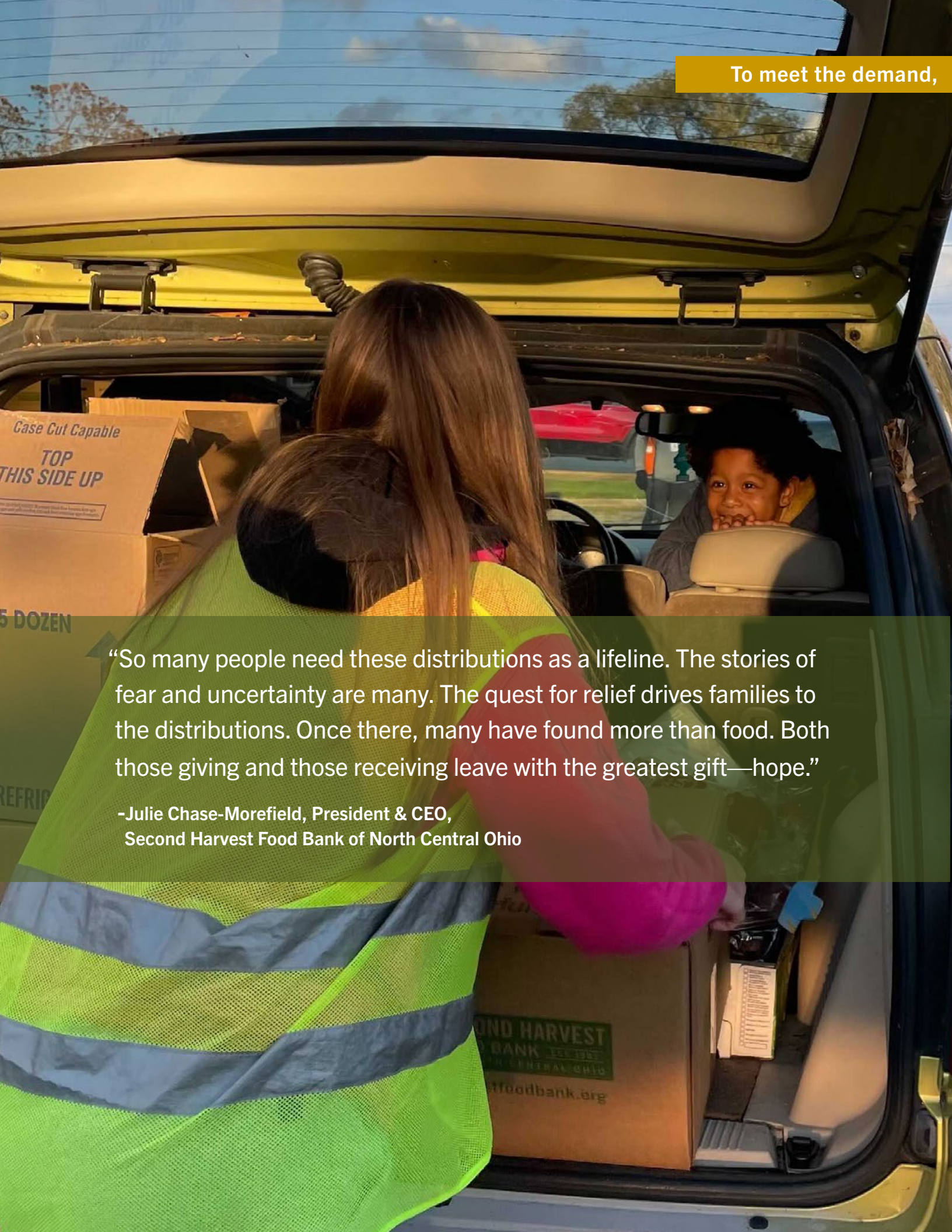
### IMPACT INSIGHT

The need for food still outpaces pre-pandemic levels across our region and we remain steadfastly focused on moving families back to stability. As a response to the pandemic, we have increased our staff by 36%, including hiring four Ohio National Guard soldiers.

Army Staff Sergeant Michael Coykendall and Army Specialist Aaron Gonzalez are now drivers for Second Harvest. Sergeant Heidi Wolfe is our new mobile distribution coordinator under Program and Partner Services and Corporal Michael Patterson is working in facility maintenance.







To meet the demand, Second Harvest inspired.

“So many people need these distributions as a lifeline. The stories of fear and uncertainty are many. The quest for relief drives families to the distributions. Once there, many have found more than food. Both those giving and those receiving leave with the greatest gift—hope.”

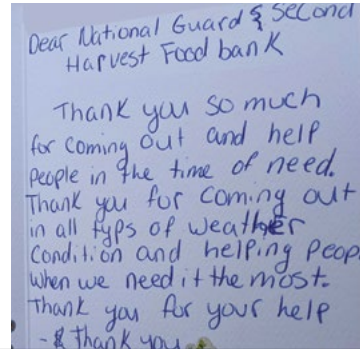
-Julie Chase-Morefield, President & CEO,  
Second Harvest Food Bank of North Central Ohio



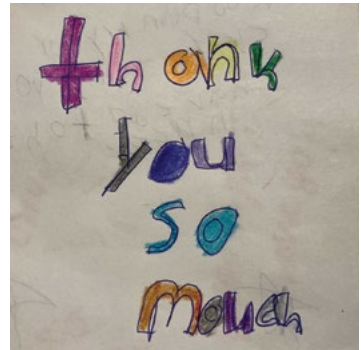
“Thank you to everyone that helped today. It was very well set up and seemed to go pretty fast. Everyone that worked today deserves a day of rest. Thank you!”



“Everyone was smiling! Thank you all so much!”



“Thank you Second Harvest and everyone that is standing out in the cold, helping.”



“Thank you for everything. I so appreciate everything and everyone who helped out. My family will be so happy. Thank you so much!”



“You all are truly a blessing to many others & myself! God Bless You All! There is a special place in heaven for all of you, & ALL who donate & help!”



“Thank you so very much for the very dedicated workers. You are a Blessing to all you serve.”





**SECOND HARVEST**  
**FOOD BANK** EST. 1982  
OF NORTH CENTRAL OHIO



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