DRIVING CHANGE

DRIVING CHANGE | DONOR NEWSLETTER | October 2026

Welcome to ***Driving Change***, Beyond Hunger's quarterly donor newsletter. In this issue, we'll share updates on the state of food insecurity in our community, highlight how Beyond Hunger is responding to growing needs, and explore ways you can make a difference this holiday season.

A NOTE FROM JENNIE



As we approach the holiday season, our community is facing an increasingly urgent hunger crisis. The Greater Chicago Food Depository's latest report found that nearly 1 in 3 Chicago households—and 1 in 2 with children—experiences food insecurity. This is a sobering reminder that far too many families are struggling to afford the food they need.

At Beyond Hunger, we're seeing this crisis firsthand as more neighbors turn to us for support, including people who have never visited a food pantry before. Last fall, we experienced the busiest single-day food distribution in our organization's history. With food and household expenses continuing to strain budgets, we are preparing for another holiday season marked by significant need.

Our team is working everyday to coordinate food drives, organize volunteers, and collaborate with community partners—like you—to ensure we're ready to meet that demand.

Your generosity means we can remain committed to providing nutritious food with dignity to everyone who visits us—not just during the holidays, but every day of the year.

LATEST NEWS

As families prepare to gather around the table this holiday season, the rising cost of food presents challenges not only for our neighbors but also for Beyond Hunger. Even with our ability to purchase food at discounted prices, costs continue to climb. For example, the price Beyond Hunger pays for turkey, a holiday staple and important source of protein, has increased by 40%.



Despite these challenges, Beyond Hunger continues to find ways to make nutritious food more accessible. **In fiscal year 2026, we sourced more than 1.8 million pounds of food, up from 1.6 million pounds in fiscal year 2025.** This growth reflects the collective efforts of our donors, volunteers, rescue partners, and food network partners. As food insecurity continues to affect our neighbors, these partnerships remain essential to helping us provide nutritious food throughout the year.

HOLIDAY MATCH CHALLENGE

Double your Donation this November & December

As more families turn to Beyond Hunger for support, **The Kelly T. Arquette Family Foundation** has made a generous match gift in Kelly's memory. **Every donation to Beyond Hunger's year-end holiday campaign (November 2 - December 31) will be matched dollar for dollar, up to $30,000 in matching funds.** Since 2020, Kelly's commitment to helping families celebrate the holidays with dignity has helped ensure Beyond Hunger can offer a variety of holiday staples each year. Your support, by participating in the holiday match, helps carry Kelly's legacy forward.

A GREENER WAY TO SAY THANK YOU

Beginning **November 16, 2026**, Beyond Hunger will send gift acknowledgement letters by email rather than postal mail. This change will help us reduce paper and mailing costs while ensuring you receive your acknowledgement promptly. **Do you prefer to continue receiving a paper acknowledgement? No problem!** Please complete the brief survey to select your acknowledgement preference. And tell us what you would like to hear about in future newsletters.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT SURVEY

DID YOU KNOW?



The pantry Is meant to supplement SNAP, not replace it.

Beyond Hunger and our community partners are working together to provide nutritious food, but food pantries alone cannot meet growing need.

Beyond Hunger is part of a national network of food banks, pantries, and meal programs. For every 1 meal this network provides, SNAP provides approximately 9.

Food pantries were meant to fill gaps: when benefits run out, an unexpected expense, or a lost job. They were never meant to replace a family's grocery budget.

That is why the recent decline in SNAP participation is concerning. In Illinois, participation dropped 13% between January 2025 and April 2026. **At Beyond Hunger, 32% of families visiting this year lost SNAP benefits. For these families, losing benefits can mean fewer choices about the food they put on the table.**

Community generosity helps us respond to immediate needs, but long-term food security requires more than food assistance alone. Beyond Hunger remains committed to providing nutritious food and advocating for policies that strengthen food security for all our neighbors.

WAYS TO SUPPORT

Our fall benefit concert featuring Death Cab for Cutie is almost here! This is our largest fundraising event of the year and the energy going into this show is palpable! Though tickets are sold out, we do have a few opportunities to support:

Sponsorships
We have a small number of sponsorships with tickets remaining. This is a great way to bring a group of friends or promote your business at the most rockin' show of the year. Please contact Lauren@gobeyondhunger.org by November 6th if you are interested.

Donate for a Chance to Win 2 Deluxe Seat Tickets
From 10/30 until 11/ 13, donations of $25 will be entered for a chance to win tickets to see the show from the best seats in the house! **Details**.

UPCOMING EVENTS

12/1/2026 - Giving Tuesday

This global day of giving is fast approaching. Follow us on social media Giving Tuesday for updates.

Community Events



11/1/2026 - Day of the Dowd

Drummer Gerald Dowd will play for 12 hours with 14 different local bands at Robert's Westside all to benefit Beyond Hunger. Don't miss the live music, kids activities, auction items, and MORE!

GET YOUR TICKETS

11/1-11/20 - Anfora Wine Merchants' Thankful Trio

Anfora Wine Merchants is running their annual Thankful Trio. For every trio pack sold, Anfora will donate $15 to Beyond Hunger!

Check back in November for details and see what amazing Trio of Wines they're offering!



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