



good neighbors

Bastrop County cares for its own

Bastrop County Emergency Food Pantry



Dora (and Baby) Disabled and unable to work due to a car accident, she now cares for her sister's children as well.



Gloria Widow and caretaker of two grandchildren. The Brown Bag Program allows her to feed her grandchildren and she enjoys the fun activities with other seniors.

WHO DO WE SERVE?
Good people experiencing natural disasters; the loss of a home, family member, or employment; a major health set-back; or other life changing events. Our guests are strong and proud. You may know a few already.



Lucas Disabled and living with his parents, wife, and children. He helps care for his terminally ill mother.

Tera and Gene with their grandchild J.J.
Tera and her husband, Gene, provide financial support for nine people—their college-age children, grandchildren and foster children.



good neighbors

look out for one another.

Utilities. Rent. Food. All three are necessities. But too often, our neighbors have to make impossible choices. Pay utilities or eat? Pay rent or eat? When this happens, the Bastrop County Emergency Food Pantry (BCEFP) steps in to help.

Over 4,000 neighbors tap into our direct services at least once during the year. And that number is dramatically growing as our population booms, natural disasters increase, and economic challenges deepen. Furthermore, we are often the primary conduit of food between community and church pantries and the Central Texas Food Bank. We have seen a 40% increase in food demand in 2022 and project the number to rise in the foreseeable future.

BCEFP has always been a miracle worker in our county, but the challenges we face exceed the realities of our resources and capacity. Our crumbling infrastructure and inadequate storage capacity severely limits our ability to serve. The Good Neighbors campaign is rallying our community to help us build and strengthen our capacity. We're seeking investments from good neighborly-minded and generous folks who wish to help their neighbors in their hour of need. Because Bastrop takes care of its own.

36+ YEARS

The Bastrop County Emergency Food Pantry has served our region since 1987. We run a tight ship with minimal staff and a multitude of dedicated volunteers.

ONE

We are the singular conduit between the Central Texas Food Bank and all other food assistance providers in Bastrop County.

41%

We have seen a dramatic increase in the use of our services across all programs from the first quarter of 2022 to the first quarter of 2023.

Food challenges in our region.

Natural Disasters

For those experiencing disasters, the Bastrop County Emergency Food Pantry has always been a port in the storm. As emergencies increase—fires, floods, historic winter storms, and global pandemics—our port becomes ever more critical. According to the National Center for Environmental Information, Texas is the most disaster-prone state in the nation. Nearly 50% of all billion-dollar-disasters in the US between 2010-2019 impacted Texas. Our county alone has been hit with 10 federally declared disasters in the last decade.

Rising Population and Inflation

The Texas population is expected to double in 30 years. In 2019, the census data reflected that Bastrop County was the 18th fastest growing county in the state, growing by 30% over the past 8 years. In the last two years, it has grown by 2% more! Simultaneously, inflation has risen 8% in the last year, driving up the cost of living. Many people are moving into our county to avoid the high cost of living in Austin and other urban centers. For struggling families, rent absorbs so much of their income that food becomes secondary. There is often a 22% gap between the amount of food families need and the amount they can afford.

Nutritional Deficiency

Food quality suffers when food budgets are insufficient and healthy food is hard to come by. Nutrition is too often a luxury and many of our neighbors and their children are currently battling health and behavioral issues due to poor nutrition.

Remote Access

Rural communities experience hunger at a much higher rate than their urban counterparts, and the state of Texas' rate is higher than the national average. The challenges associated with living remotely—lack of transportation and access to healthy foods—leads to hunger; poor nutrition; increased risk of chronic disease like diabetes; poorer mental health; and behavioral and academic challenges for children. (Feeding Texas Hunger Atlas 2014).

OVER 12,200

people in our region don't know where their next meal is coming from. This number is rapidly increasing.

1 IN 5

children in Bastrop County are food insecure. That's a 20% increase from 2019

12%

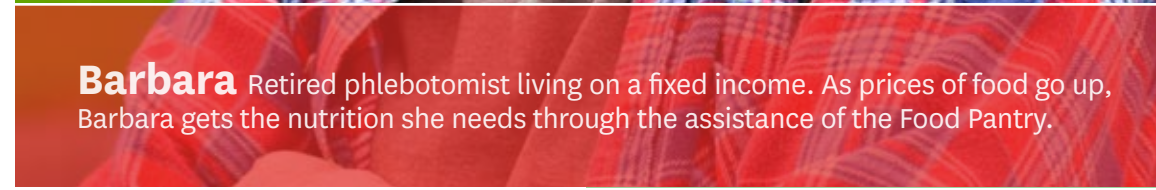
of seniors in Bastrop County need on-going food support.



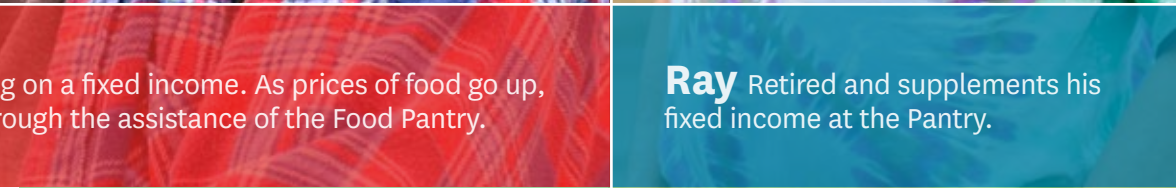
Barbara Retired phlebotomist living on a fixed income. As prices of food go up, Barbara gets the nutrition she needs through the assistance of the Food Pantry.



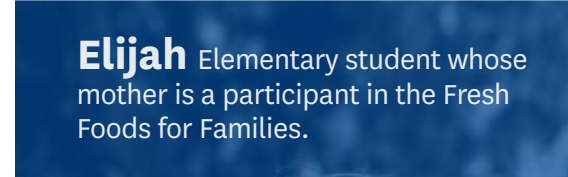
Ray Retired and supplements his fixed income at the Pantry.



Elijah Elementary student whose mother is a participant in the Fresh Foods for Families.



James Retired and a participant in the Fresh Food for Families program.



A food pantry like no other.

Much has changed since food pantries were first created, as nutrition science has evolved to include the importance of fresh produce and healthy food staples. The Bastrop County Emergency Food Pantry (BCEFP) has kept up with these changes. We provide more than just canned or other non-perishable foods, which often lack the nutrition needed for our clients to thrive. We think beyond their day-to-day survival toward a longer-term holistic approach, which helps families on the edge of economic disaster by providing nutritious food and addressing the root causes of their poverty. As a leader and large-scale operator within our region's food relief ecosystem, we can assist smaller local pantries and relief groups by bridging the supply gap between them and the Central Texas Food Bank.

A unique approach that includes the following:

- ① **Ongoing, large-scale, nutritional support for struggling families.** We provide individuals with enough nutritious food to help them throughout their time of need versus only enough food for the next few days. During emergencies, people can receive a 30-day supply of food. For our non-emergency programs (Brown Bag and Open Arms), we offer 30-days of shelf stable foods as well as weekly access to fresh foods to supplement their monthly food support.
- ② **Assistance that goes beyond food.** We connect individuals to other local resources they may need and help them apply for assistance through programs like the Texas Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) and Medicaid.
- ③ **Programs that support long-term transformations.** We are a multi-service agency that provides strong educational programs and workshops that help individuals budget, cook, and live well within their means.
- ⑤ **A food pantry experience that functions like a grocery store.** We offer a wide range of foods so people can make choices that suit them best. Clients can avoid taking foods they already have or do not want due to personal taste or health reasons, which reduces food waste.

Our Services:



Emergency Assistance
When crises occur, we offer emergency food, utilities assistance, and help with applications to receive benefits under SNAP and Medicaid. **We have seen a 30% increase in these service over the last year.**



Educational Workshops
We offer short workshops through partnerships with local banks, nutritionists, and nurses to help people learn how to budget, plan menus, shop wisely, and eat nutritionally.



Fresh Food for Families
We offer a once-a-month distribution of fresh foods available to everyone in our County.



Open Arms
Aimed at low-income individuals with disabilities, this program provides supplemental nutritious foods as well as weekly access to fresh produce, whole grains, and proteins.



Brown Bag
Aimed at low-income seniors, this program offers weekly access to fresh produce, whole grains, and proteins plus bi-weekly health and wellness centered activities, workshops, and health screenings. **We have seen a 29% increase in these service over the last year.**

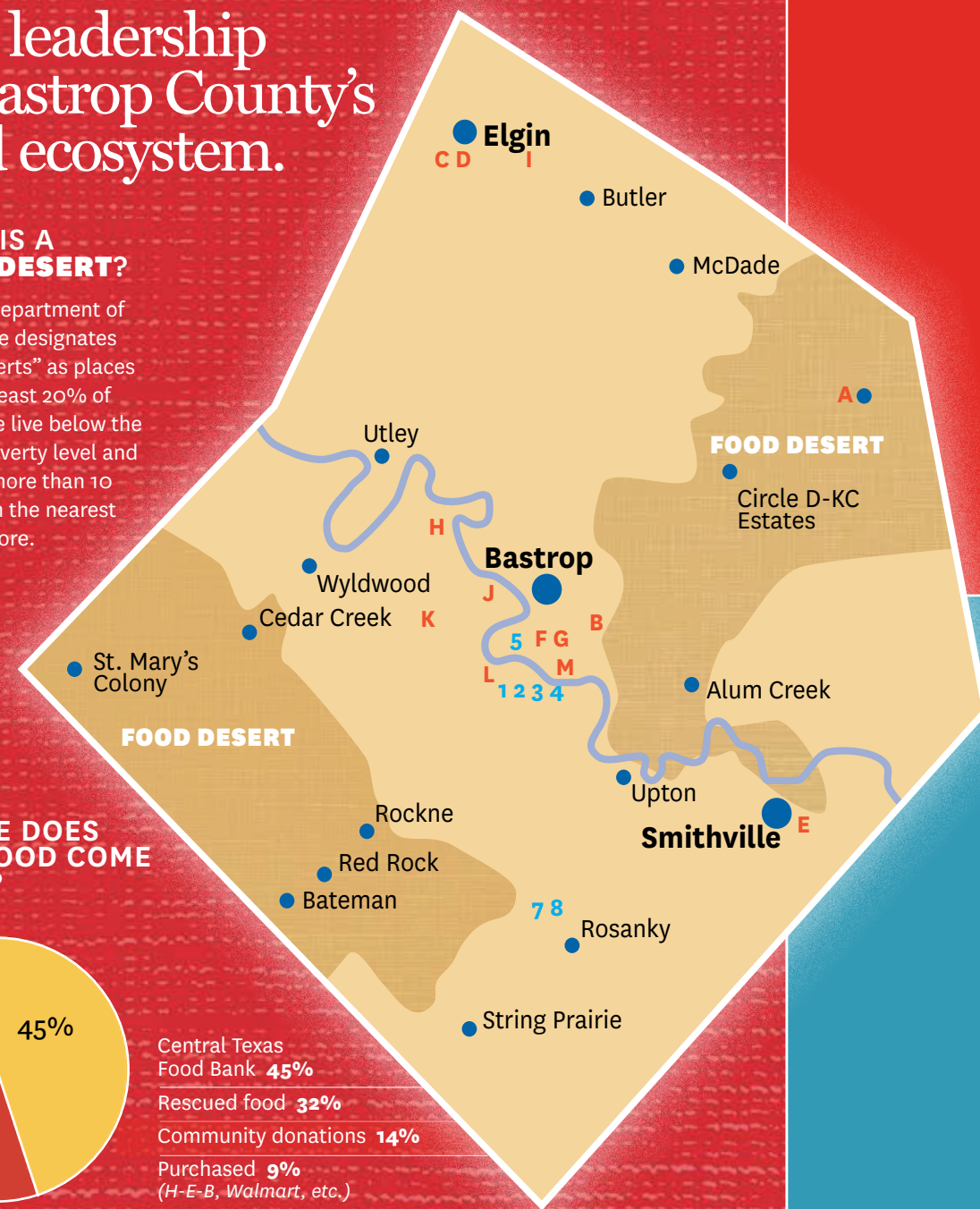


Nibbles Backpack
We provide weekend meals and snacks during the school year for 252 children from low-income families at 4 elementary schools and 2 intermediate schools. **We have seen an 8% increase in these service over the last year.**

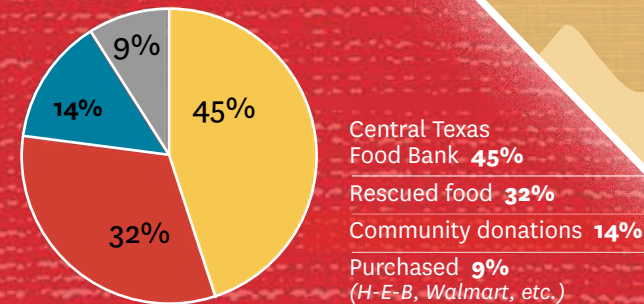
Our leadership in Bastrop County's food ecosystem.

WHAT IS A FOOD DESERT?

The U.S. Department of Agriculture designates "food deserts" as places where at least 20% of the people live below the federal poverty level and 33% live more than 10 miles from the nearest grocery store.



WHERE DOES OUR FOOD COME FROM?



FOOD RESCUE LOCATIONS

Establishments that the food pantry "rescues" food from that would otherwise end up being thrown out.

1. HEB
2. Chicken Express
3. Pizza Hut
4. Walmart
5. Simply Sweet
6. Chic-fil-A
7. Dollar General
8. Fruitful Farms

LOCAL PANTRIES

BCEFP provides these pantries with fresh produce and whole grains

- A. Ridgeway Baptist Church
- B. Primera Baptist Church
- C. Advocacy Outreach
- D. Elgin Cupboard
- E. Smithville Pantry
- F. Bastrop Pregnancy Resource Center
- G. Ascension Catholic Church
- H. Feed the Need
- I. Burton Foster Care
- J. Shiloh Primitive Baptist Church
- K. Community of Hope
- L. Family Crisis Center
- M. Friendship Bible Baptist Church

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I don't know what I'd do without the Pantry. I come every week and rely on them to make ends meet.

“

Barbara, retired

The next 35 years hold challenges only we can meet—together.



Our county's food supply challenges are difficult enough. When we compound these challenges with our own internal systems limitations—space constraints, lack of storage, and dilapidated infrastructure—our ability to serve is compromised. While we have been able to serve the community with no walk-in refrigerators or freezers, inadequate shelving, no loading dock, inadequate space for private client consultations and no dedicated space for educational programs, it is becoming increasingly challenging and is not sustainable. Ideally, the BCEFP wants staff and volunteer time to be spent in the expansion of services. Right now, too much of that precious time is spent hauling and re-hauling boxes, rearranging spaces each time a program sets up, and walking between makeshift buildings. Heartbreakingly, we also must turn away nutritious food due to limited and inadequate storage—food our neighbors need.

Two process-efficient buildings to replace 5 deteriorating ones.

Right now, the BCEFP footprint consists of a piecemeal conglomeration of old original buildings (one over 100 years old), as well as small temporary structures. Our future footprint will include two buildings—a new 2-story warehouse and a re-purposed education building. The warehouse will house all our food delivery/processing operations as well as client intake rooms, staff offices, and conference room space. Our education building will include a commercial kitchen and will offer space for a variety of programs and classes.

WAREHOUSE AND OFFICE SPACE



Features of the new spaces:

- A walk-in freezer and refrigerator
- Shelf-stable storage
- Loading dock
- Increased warehouse space
- Three intake rooms for guests
- A grocery store
- Conference room
- Food storage separated by each program
- Dedicated food sorting and inspection space
- Conference room
- Commercial kitchen
- * Administrative staff all under one roof

Current Capacity	Future Capacity
<p>FACILITIES: Five disconnected buildings of various ages. The primary warehouse facility is 100 years old and originally designed as a residential home, which not only decreases efficiency, but also adds to the backbreaking physical labor necessary to move and store food.</p>	<p>FACILITIES: One new 8,000 SQ warehouse with office space on the second floor and one refurbished existing building dedicated to workshops and education.</p>
<p>FOOD STORAGE: Multiple small refrigerators and shelving units which, when combined, house up to 45,000 pounds of shelf-stable and refrigerated/frozen food. We can only accommodate a limited amount of fresh produce.</p>	<p>FOOD STORAGE: A walk-in freezer and refrigerator as well as a consolidated space designed to store shelf-stable food will more than double the amount (over 90,000 lbs.) of shelf-stable and refrigerated/frozen foods we can store (including fresh produce). It will also streamline the inventory process.</p>
<p>FOOD DISTRIBUTION: We currently serve approximately 3,000–4,000 unique individuals, many of whom we see an average of 7 times in a year. In addition, we're an integral part of distributing food to other pantries who lack the resources (refrigerated trucks and manpower) to retrieve food from the Central Texas Food Bank. We have the trucks and manpower to retrieve and deliver food, but currently can't store and distribute the amount of food our county needs.</p>	<p>FOOD DISTRIBUTION: With additional warehouse space and the ability to store fresh produce, we will be able to distribute more food to our clients and other local pantries. This added capacity will also enable us to increase the number of direct-to-client mobile pop-ups we can conduct. Currently, we host only a few each year. In the future, we'll be able to host between 5 to 15 a year (serving 500 to 1,500 additional people).</p>
<p>RESOURCES AND PROGRAMS: Our county-wide Food Pantry accomplishes a great deal with very little. We offer cooking classes without a commercial kitchen and host educational programs and workshops without a dedicated space. Currently, limitations of space and resources fall short of meeting the needs of the community.</p>	<p>RESOURCES AND PROGRAMS: A dedicated education and workshop space with a commercial kitchen for cooking and nutrition classes, classroom space for workshops, and additional rental space (passive income) for local non-profits with missions aligned with ours, such as WIC, legal aid, and community health, will allow us to provide more services to more people.</p>
<p>OPERATIONS: Our current operations are conducted in a patchwork of buildings with a variety of piecemeal resources. In other words, our supply chain process is not streamlined. Staff and programming are divided among 5 aging buildings that weren't designed for this work.</p>	<p>OPERATIONS: Food and the food-related staff will be housed in one building. Educational classes will be housed in a re-purposed education building. This simplified structure will tighten our supply chain process, ease communication, strengthen bonds between team members, and provide more user-friendly functionality for our clients, including a grocery-store-like experience where they can "shop" for their food.</p>

"Bastrop is experiencing unprecedented growth and the demand on Bastrop County Emergency Food Pantry directly correlates. Investing in BCEFP allows your donation to be leveraged beyond anything an individual can execute or even imagine. Everyone in the community benefits from BCEFP, so please join me in doing your part."

CONNIE SCHROEDER, FORMER MAYOR, CITY OF BASTROP, TX

Food is essential. So are good neighbors.

Bastrop County Emergency Food Pantry knows how to navigate the complicated food delivery network that connects and serves our neighbors. We've been the hub of relief in Bastrop County for over 36 years. And we've been proud to accomplish so much with so little.

Asking for help is difficult because we are a proud leader in Bastrop County—visionary, hard-working, independent, and committed to excellence. But like many of the people who use our resources, we know when we can't go it alone. Partners like you, who see the value of future-proofing emergency food services in our county, are critical to filling plates when food is scarce. Critical to transitioning individuals and families back to a successful path. Critical for feeding children so they can perform at their best in school as well as caring for seniors and the disabled. Critical to keeping Bastrop County safe and healthy.

Together, we can care for each and every neighbor needing food assistance and education—giving the next generation the nutritional resources to grow, learn, and find a healthy way forward.



Martha and her daughter

Sole breadwinner in a seven-person household and a participant in Fresh Food for Families.



Some say
**good
neighbors**

are hard to find.

*We say,
not in Bastrop County!*



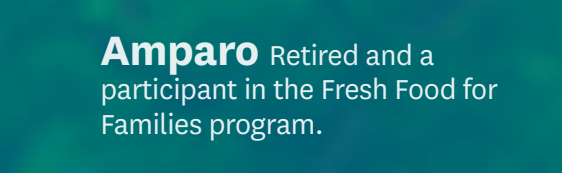
Pat Retired and a participant in the Fresh Food for Families program.



Margaret Retired frame maker living on social security. As prices go up on gas, food, and health insurance, she needs to supplement her fixed income.



Sibyl Retired school teacher and widow living on a pension. She cares for an adult daughter with health issues and acquires fresh produce to supplement her grocery budget.



Amparo Retired and a participant in the Fresh Food for Families program.



Ramon Retired and a participant in the Fresh Food for Families program.

