

Friedens Food Pantries
P.O. Box 05411
Milwaukee, Wisconsin 53205-0411

If you have any comments or suggestions regarding this newsletter, please send to the above address or email director@friedenspantry.org.

www.FriedensPantry.org



How can you help?

We have a variety of volunteer opportunities for you and your family such as shopping with guests, unloading deliveries, and rescuing produce from local grocery stores. Email us at volunteer@friedenspantry.org to sign up. Consider hosting a food and supply drive (contact us for our current needs) and follow us on **Facebook** [@friedenspantry](https://www.facebook.com/friedenspantry) or **Instagram** [@friedenspantrymke](https://www.instagram.com/friedenspantrymke) to receive community updates.

Donate.

Amplify our food "purchasing power" by making a donation: mail a check to PO Box 05411, Milwaukee, WI 53205; or donate online www.FriedensPantry.org/donate

Food Center Locations:

(HQ and Mailing)

Coggs Center

1220 W. Vliet St.
Milwaukee, WI 53205

Hope House

209 W. Orchard St.
Milwaukee, WI 53204

Zion Rock

10230 W. Fond Du Lac Ave.
Milwaukee, WI 53224

Despensa de la Paz

1615 S. 22nd St.
Milwaukee, WI 53204

NOURISHING NEWS

Summer 2023

Friedens Food Pantries has been nourishing communities for over 40 years. As Milwaukee's largest food pantry network, we build community through dignified food access, food education, food rescue and sustainable practices, food advocacy, and community connection. Each year, we serve over 45,000 individuals in Milwaukee across four sites with over 1 million pounds of healthy, nutritious, free groceries.

Building Community Through Nourishment

At our community food centers, something truly transformational happens – we build community through nourishment. As individuals and families gather, not only do they receive essential foods but they also share moments of connection and hope. Each week I witness the incredible power of food to bring us together.

A couple weeks ago I was helping to sign in shoppers at our Zion Rock site. A petite woman came in the door; she looked a little confused and nervous. A different volunteer greeted her and showed her where she could wait until it was her turn to sign in. And soon enough she came up to my desk and let me know it was her first time at a food pantry. I explained that for her first visit we would do a quick intake with her. When I asked if there were any special dietary needs in her household, she replied that she was vegan but in recent months she and her son had been eating anything they could find, their situation was just that desperate. I let her know we'd be happy to substitute extra plant-based options for her. At that moment she burst into tears. I quickly rushed to give her a hug and through her sobs she told me how grateful she was and how stressful the past couple of months had been. What felt like such a small thing to me -- making sure a person could access the essential foods they needed -- felt like a major thing to her. And in that moment I felt the relief wash over her. And she knew she was in a safe place.

Our centers open doors to all sorts of connections. From community block parties to cooking demonstrations to gardening. These gatherings become opportunities for neighbors to come together, swap recipes and resources, learn new culinary skills, share their culture, and make new friends. Finding a place where you can belong and be nourished is essential to quality of life. And in a fast-paced and marginalizing world, it's more important than ever.

I invite you to join us in building community through nourishment. Your support is invaluable to ensuring the continued existence of hope for those facing hardship and food insecurity. **Here are a couple of ways you can make an immediate difference:** **volunteer your time and skills** to assist with food distribution or food rescue, **crucial financial support** to sustain our efforts and expand our reach. Your generous donations enable us to source fresh, nutritious food and invest in sustainable practices that benefit both our community and the environment. You might also consider leadership through **board service**, or you can **share our story and mission** with friends, family, and colleagues, inspiring them to be part of this meaningful cause.

Every contribution matters. By taking action together we ensure no one in our community goes hungry and that everyone has the opportunity to thrive.

Sophia Torrijos
Executive Director



Sophia Torrijos
Executive Director



Aleka Shewczyk
Operations Manager



Cheryl Ousley
Site Manager



Valerie MacMillan
Program Manager



Abby Brace
Volunteer Manager



Erik Koepnick
Community Engagement Manager

Save the Date!

EMPTY BOWLS

A FUNDRAISER FOR FRIEDENS FOOD PANTRIES

The Kern Center at MSOE
1245 N Broadway, Milwaukee



Sunday, Oct 8th
12-3pm

Learn more & purchase bowls at
friedenspantry.org/empty-bowls



Reduce Waste, Increase Access

If you've volunteered with us you know that Friedens goes beyond just giving away food. We have a unique role in the food system, working to alleviate hunger while simultaneously reducing waste. Each week our Operations Manager and a fleet of volunteers recover thousands of pounds of food from local grocery stores. After a rigorous sorting and inspection process, our community benefits from an expanded variety of foods to choose from when they shop with us. Much of this food--which is still wholesome but may have slightly damaged packaging--would normally be destined for a landfill. Not only are we working to reduce food waste, we're able to provide items to our guests they won't find in traditional pantries.

Another way we're working to reduce food waste is through composting. Thanks to the expertise of Dr. Neal O'Reilly, Director of Conservation and Environmental Sciences at UWM, his environmental science students, and Martin Ventura from UW Extension, we've started composting on-site at our Despensa de la Paz location in a compost system specially designed for us. Each bin can create 2,000+ lbs of compost in 3 months, reducing the amount of food sent to landfills. We have one bin that is already nearing capacity, and a second is well on its way to being built. We are excited to share this rich compost with our community members, especially in the spring when we distribute seedlings! Stay tuned for progress updates.

If you are interested in **volunteering with our food rescue program**, please contact operations@friedenspantry.org. If you would like to **help us with our composting project**, please email valerie@friedenspantry.org.

9,000+ lbs of compost annually

A New Way: Take What You Need

At Friedens, we're always finding new ways to best serve our community with respect and dignity. In Milwaukee, we led the way by being one of the first 'choice' model food centers. This lets our guests pick their food like they do in a grocery store. Now, we're trying something new again. We've taken the choice model a step further at our Coggs location by removing limits on what people can take. Caring for, and sharing with our neighbors is a foundation of a strong community. Even though community need is at an all-time high, we trust that families take what they will use leaving what they may not need for the next shopper. The first month of trying this 'choose what you need' approach at Coggs has been a success. We're seeing individuals take what they need for their families, leaving enough for others, while also leaving with a greater sense of dignity and self-determination in the process.

**Are you interested in helping us keep up this great work?
Consider hosting an in-person or virtual **food drive**.**

Contact operations@friedenspantry.org
for more details.



Joining Hands to Serve

We love our volunteers and depend on volunteer service at all of our pantry sites to ensure access to free, fresh food for nearly 45,000 families annually. During the pandemic our pool of volunteers dropped off dramatically.

We need your help.

All 4 of our food center sites need a volunteer boost so we can continue to serve our neighbors with the highest quality food and hospitality possible. We've launched 3 new ways to connect with our volunteer needs:

- 1) a Friedens Volunteer Community **Facebook Group**,
- 2) a Volunteer Community **E-newsletter**, and
- 3) a **Volunteer On-Call** list.

Email volunteer@friedenspantry.org to get connected today!

SCAN ME



Hunger's Rising Tide

In Milwaukee, more families need more food--and so do we. This Spring we reported a 34% increase in families accessing our food centers. **As of July, that number has jumped to 40%.** Our hearts are filled with gratitude for the families who trust us to provide them with free, quality food and community care, and our shelves are emptying more quickly than ever. **Recently we went weeks without cereal**--a food that contributes especially to the health of children in our community (25% of whom live under the poverty line).

Now is the time to host a food drive or make a sustaining monthly donation to keep our shelves stocked so no family has to go without life-sustaining food. **Donate now:** <https://friedenspantry.org/donate/>

40% INCREASE IN NEED