

Dear Friend of the Pantry,

It is with a complex mixture of emotions that I write this letter. As a community, what we've accomplished over the past year is simply incredible. I'm filled with gratitude and pride just thinking about our hard-working staff, the support the Food Pantry has received and the hard work our community has put towards making sure neighbors are fed. We'll need to keep this momentum going. A Covid-era federal grant which provided \$200,000 annually for the past three years is slated to end in December 2025.



While this upcoming funding gap is a challenge, it also represents an opportunity to ensure the Food Pantry remains a long-term sustainable resource for anyone in need in Gunnison County. In fact, I'm certain we are ready to overcome both this challenge and any others on the horizon because one specific resource has proven itself to be unwavering.

And that resource is you, the person reading this letter.

Across the board, 2024 was a banner year for Gunnison Country Food Pantry. While the need for food assistance skyrocketed, so did funding, volunteer commitment and staff expansion. As an organization, it is my pleasure to announce that, over the past year, we have served the highest number of people with the best quality of service in our history. This fact is clear in the numbers.

With your help, the Food Pantry has provided assistance on 11,790 occasions to 1,283 households. That works out to 2,530 unique individuals who received free groceries. The food and associated costs were supported, in large part, by the 401 individual donors who contribute financially. The entire operation was facilitated by 236 volunteers who dedicated 8,315 hours to feeding their neighbors.

It's no exaggeration to say the local community is the foundation of our success. It's something we can't replace.

That's in contrast to the federal grant which is set to expire. It's true the financial boon it provided was important to our recent, exponential expansion. We used the resources to provide the framework for a sustainable future. It is with a new facility, expanded staff and even more committed pool of volunteers that we prepare to meet the next set of challenges. So let me give you a slightly more detailed picture of what's on the horizon. The rise of food insecurity isn't specific to Gunnison County, though the nature of our beloved valley means the issue has a unique tint.

Food insecurity has been rising since the pandemic, and food pantries across the country are bracing themselves in the face of proposed cuts to federal funding to programs like SNAP and Medicaid, which could put more people at risk of needing assistance. These facts are underscored by a drastic rise in the amount of money the Food Pantry is spending per guest. In 2020, the organization averaged \$2.25 per household per visit. Last year, that amount rose to \$8.15 per household.

The reality is, the Food Pantry will need to simultaneously expand services while reckoning with the fact that those same services are getting more expensive. While grant funding remains an important resource, the most stable form of funding comes from individual donors. The surest way to shore up funding long-term is to look back to our most important collaborator: you. But, again, if history is any indicator, this reinforces my confidence that we're ready to take on anything the future throws at us.

If there's anything I believe in, it's in our collective strength.

I look forward to working together in the coming months and years to further establish the Food Pantry as a reliable and sustainable resource for anyone who needs our services. I hope you'll join me in doubling down on the organization's long-term success.

We are all in this together

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jodi Payne".

Jodi Payne
GCFP Executive Director
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Gunnison Country Food Pantry

2024 Impact Report



FINANCIAL SNAPSHOT

Income: **\$903,247**

In-Kind Income: **\$526,665**

Direct Expenses (Food): **\$639,803**

Operation Expenses: **\$450,731**



FOOD RECOVERED

Care and Share Food Bank: **103,901 LBS**

Feeding America Partners: **127,765 LBS**

Community Food: **27,105 LBS**

236



VOLUNTEERS

8,315



VOLUNTEER HOURS



195,888

lbs.

Food diverted
from landfill



8,737

lbs.

To local
producers for
animals

60%

of food distributed
was rescued

PROGRAM IMPACT

Gunni Packs: **2,401** were delivered, totaling **16,807** kid-friendly meals

Healthy Snacks: **91,248** servings of healthy snacks were distributed to schools in GWSD

Fresh Mobile Pantry: Had **961** visits June through November

Emergency Boxes: **26** partners distributed **213** boxes

NO COST GROCERY DISTRIBUTION

1,283 households comprised of **2,530** individuals shopped for No Cost Groceries **11,790** times in 2024. Breakdown of guests below.



Children 0-17
579



Adults 18-59
1,725



Older Adults 60+
226



Minorities Served
56%



Working full/ part
time/ seasonal
56%