Learning, Growing and Evolving Through Crisis

The North Texas Food Bank began the fiscal year 2021 (FY21) in the middle of a global crisis unlike any we have ever experienced. At that time, the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic were still prominent and changing rapidly. Thousands of North Texans were unemployed, and the hunger needs of our neighbors remained significantly elevated. We are extremely proud and grateful for our NTFB employees and Feeding Network who worked hard to support peak demand so that our neighbors didn’t go hungry.

As we worked to meet the need, we were still implementing new safety and logistical protocols, refining our processes to best serve the members of our Feeding Network, and adjusting to the ever-changing landscape of hunger-relief during a pandemic – all while bolstered by the overwhelming generosity of the North Texas community.

As the year progressed, the changes and challenges evolved into new opportunities for growth and innovation. We reimagined events and optimized them for a virtual or socially-distanced environment. We focused on growth strategies for our Feeding Network to provide help where there was once a gap. And we launched a new strategic plan to address our region’s immediate and ongoing needs of providing Food for Today and Hope for Tomorrow. We also continued to invest in our own development and launched our organizational diversity, equity and inclusion efforts guided by our employees.

At the center of everything were the more than 800,000 food-insecure children, families, and seniors across North Texas. Your support enabled NTFB, along with its Feeding Network, to provide access to more than 125 million meals – the most annual meals in our history and a 28 percent increase over the prior year. This report demonstrates the many ways we maximized the impacts of your gifts to improve the lives of North Texans.

As we enter our 40th year of serving the North Texas community, we are taking what we have learned operating through the pandemic to boldly innovate our approach to fighting hunger. The changes we went through in FY21 have shown us what is possible, and as we head into FY22 – and the next 40 years – we are committed to growing our efforts to create lasting change and transform lives in North Texas. Thank you for making this possible.

Gratefully,

Trisha Cunningham
NTFB President and CEO

Michael Brookshire
NTFB Board Chair
Our Vision & Mission

Our Vision:
A hunger-free, healthy North Texas.

Our Mission:
To close the hunger gap in North Texas by providing access to nutritious food.

“The help we receive helps put food on the table and gives us one less thing to worry about buying.”

- Roger
The North Texas Food Bank continued to respond to the increased hunger needs of our community due to the COVID-19 pandemic through both our Feeding Network and our direct feeding programs throughout FY21. The North Texas Food Bank’s service area has the 5th highest number of food insecure individuals and 4th highest number of food insecure children out of the Feeding America service areas.

At the Food Bank’s Thanksgiving Mobile Pantry distribution at Fair Park, we joined several of our community partners to distribute food, including holiday turkeys. In just three hours, we distributed more than 700,000 pounds of food to approximately 25,000 people, including neighbors like Sylvia.

In February, North Texans encountered another crisis with the devastating winter storms and power outages. Neighbors who were still experiencing the impacts from the pandemic faced the additional strain of home damage and lack of access to water supply and essential food items. With your support, the Food Bank added mobile distributions and helped neighbors gain access to over four million meals and connect with resources to get the help they needed.

"The Food Bank will help me this Thanksgiving because without you I wouldn’t have one. It’s a blessing and I’m thankful.”
- Sylvia

In FY20, NTFB developed a Hunger Index through a pro-bono partnership with consultants from Bain & Company. The Hunger Index provides the Food Bank and our partners with insights into small pockets of unmet need (at the zip code level) across NTFB’s 13-county service area through the analysis of food insecurity rates, population, food distribution sources and other factors.

In FY21, the Hunger Index helped us determine where we should place our resources, including distribution sites for mobile and container pantries, financial investments in agencies and other potential partnerships. It also allowed us to bolster service through our Feeding Network in underserved areas, advancing equitable distribution of and access to food across the region.

"We have six members in our household, and the food you provide is more than enough. I’m just getting back on my feet. The food we receive helps us finish the week. It means a lot.”
- Adimir, Mobile Pantry Distribution Recipient

Mobile Pantry Program
Like a market on wheels, the Mobile Pantry program is a traveling pantry that delivers nutritious food, including fresh produce and refrigerated items, directly to communities in NTFB’s 13-county service area. In FY21, the Mobile Pantry Program distributed 13 million nutritious meals at 97 unique distribution sites.

The Mobile Pantry program utilizes data from the Hunger Index to direct our resources to communities most in need. These are one-time distributions designed to increase nutritious pounds of food at the zip code level.
Progressive Community Growth Model

The Progressive Community Growth Model aims to facilitate growth in new and underserved communities by creating long-term sustainable solutions in areas of high need. No zip code or neighborhood is immune from hunger, and the pandemic brought this reality to the forefront. The initiative utilizes the Hunger Index to identify existing NTFB Mobile Pantry sites that could manage their own distributions after adequate training.

The Progressive Community Growth Model is an opportunity to empower and strengthen organizations with the resources needed to help community members thrive.

In FY21, 22 sites were onboarded into the program.

Of those, eight graduated into full Partner Agencies with NTFB and four became partners with our Hubs (partners certified to redistribute NTFB food to smaller organizations), Crossroads Community Services and Sharing Life Community Outreach.

Progressive distribution events distributed more than 1.5 million pounds to 18,803 families last year.

– Hillary Campbell, Director of Undergraduate Programs in the Office of Undergraduate Education, UT Dallas

Hunger among college students and on college campuses is a rising concern. NTFB hosted two distributions with Comet Cupboard on the campus of The University of Texas at Dallas in Summer 2020 and after working its way through the Progressive Community Growth Model, it joined us as a Partner Agency in FY21.

Container Pantry Pilot

In FY21, we began planning the Container Pantry Pilot Program, an innovative new feeding strategy that will utilize standalone units that are set up as ‘mini’ grocery stores. The primary goal of the Container Pantry Program is to enhance Partner Agency capacity in underserved areas by providing a short-term solution to meet unmet needs while a longer-term solution is being assessed and planned. Based on NTFB calculations, one Container Pantry will provide access to 450,000 nutritious meals each year.

The first two NTFB container pantries will be deployed in FY22 and are being placed in zip codes that have been identified as underserved areas according to the Hunger Index.
Nourish North Texas

These growth initiatives and more are part of a new strategic plan called Nourish North Texas. With the lessons, learnings and gained efficiencies from our COVID-19 response, the Food Bank board of directors and staff created a new operational strategy to address our region’s needs.

A nourished community is a thriving community, and we are committed to serving as many of our neighbors in need as possible by providing Food for Today and Hope for Tomorrow.

Providing Food for Today and closing the meal gap will remain the foundation of NTFB’s mission and vision, and it is the Food Bank’s core competency. But as an organization dedicated to creating a hunger-free, healthy North Texas, we know the true cost of food insecurity is measured not just in meals, but also providing Hope for Tomorrow by partnering to address broader issues such as health outcomes, educational attainment, the ability to earn a living wage, and financial stability.

Grounded in eight key pillars, this strategic plan allows us to optimize both our food distribution and our impact across the North Texas charity ecosystem. Our approach is simple - leverage NTFB’s resources (nutritious food, funds, and capabilities) to respond to emergent food insecurity wherever it exists in a way that simultaneously addresses any barriers to food security that a person may face. Of course, all of this is directly fueled by our ability to rally the generous community in the fight against hunger.

To support the plan, the Food Bank launched a three-year comprehensive fundraising campaign, also called Nourish North Texas, with the goal to raise $500 million in food and funds by the end of June 2023. This includes $150 million in cash donations, $300 million in in-kind donations, and $50 million for an endowment fund. It is an ambitious campaign that will transform how we fight hunger in North Texas. This campaign allows us to invest in and expand our Feeding Network and to build new bridges to educational, workforce and community health resources that will help our neighbors move toward self-sufficiency.

Nourish North Texas began quietly in July of 2020 amidst the pandemic. Thanks to the generosity of supporters who recognized the unprecedented crisis so many families faced, in the campaign’s first year we raised nearly $53.4 million toward our $150 million public support goal, nearly $84 million toward our donated food goal, and $18 million in endowed funds.
Feeding Network

Approximately 80 percent of the food NTFB distributes is in partnership with our vast Feeding Network of more than 200 Partner Agencies across a diverse 13-county service area which spans more than 10,000 square miles. These partners include food pantries, soup kitchens, shelters and more, and they play a pivotal role in our mission to bridge the hunger gap in North Texas by providing access to nutritious food.

In FY21, our Feeding Network continued to meet the need during challenging times, providing access not only to nutritious meals, but also to vital wraparound services that help lift our neighbors out of food insecurity. To support Partner Agencies in their critical work, the Food Bank eliminated handling and shared maintenance fees in FY21 to keep our partners’ costs low, facilitate growth, and allow more of their resources to focus on programming and services that address the underlying barriers to food security.

Feeding Network

In FY21, the Food Bank also grew the Capacity Building Grants initiative that provides opportunities for members of our Feeding Network to build capacity and increase nutritious meals served to those in need. This can include expanded storage and equipment, such as additional freezers and shelving; mobile pantry vehicles; additional staff; and more. In FY21, the Food Bank awarded $1.1 million in grants to 19 members of our Feeding Network.

Spotlight: Food Sourcing

Last year, NTFB purchased six times more food compared to pre-pandemic levels, and finding innovative strategies to offset this cost was critical. NTFB Food Sourcing has 340 unique retail partnerships and in FY21:

• Developed 18 new retail partnerships.
• Rescued 28 million pounds of nutritious food.
• Introduced a new Virtual Food Drive tool that allows individuals or groups to easily fill a virtual shopping cart with our most-needed food items.

“The generous support provided by the North Texas Food Bank created energy and excitement within our agency for staff and volunteers. The refrigerator allows us to meet the increased demand in our community and lightens the workload for our volunteers. The Comfort Station (Container) created a focal point to serve our neighbors in need and a place for volunteers to work safely and efficiently.”

- Beverly Grimley, Director of Special Programs, Metrocrest Services, FY21 Capacity Building Grant Recipient

“Hunger does not discriminate. The issue of food insecurity is about all of us, all the Dallas region, and what we are seeing every week is real. It could be any of us.”

- Robin Raslin Gormley, Senior Director of Hunger Relief and Emergency Assistance, Jewish Family Service of Greater Dallas, NTFB Partner Agency
**FY21 Program Highlights**

**Child Programs**

Through programs and partnerships, in FY21, NTFB provided children experiencing hunger with access to 45.7 million nutritious meals, including adding additional school sites and expanding its Child Programs offerings, typically focused on elementary schools, into middle schools.

“Thank you so much to the School Pantry and everyone who supports the North Texas Food Bank for helping families.”

- Alejandro, School Pantry Parent

The School Pantry Program added three middle school sites in FY21.
Senior Programs

Through the Commodity Supplemental Food Program, NTFB provided nearly 2.5 million meals to seniors who qualify for the program in FY21. Seniors continued to be served through SNAP assistance, the NTFB Partner Agency network and our mobile pantry distributions. In FY21, NTFB provided seniors with access to more than 18.8 million nutritious meals.

“It's important that my husband and I have nutritious meals to keep our health going, and the food pantry helps us do that.”

- Phyllis, Food Program Participant
SNAP
The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) is one of the nation's most important defenses against hunger and in meeting the increased need spurred by COVID-19. In FY21, NTFB provided access to more than 27 million SNAP meals through its Social Services Assistance program.

NTFB’s advocacy efforts aided in a major win for families needing SNAP benefits in FY21. Senate Bill 224, a bill that NTFB advocated for over the past four years, became law. SB 224 simplifies the SNAP certification and recertification requirements for senior citizens and persons with disabilities, making it easier for them to get and keep their SNAP benefits.
Nutrition & Garden Services

NTFB is active in the community, teaching low-income families how to purchase and prepare nutritious meals on a budget through educational workshops. NTFB also partners with community garden locations to obtain fresh, locally-grown produce. In FY21, NTFB’s Jan’s Garden donated 568 pounds of fresh produce to The Storehouse of Collin County, a member of our Feeding Network.

“Everyone should have nutritious and tasty meals available to them, and it feels good to know we are providing fresh, healthy vegetables to people in need.”

- Kim Rollings, NTFB Jan’s Garden Volunteer
Event Highlights

Each year, the North Texas Food Bank hosts signature and countless community events and campaigns. In FY21, we reimagined existing events such as Taste of the Cowboys and Empty Bowls, and created new ways to engage with the community due to the impact of the pandemic, including the OutRun Hunger Virtual 5K, Movies on Mapleshade, and the First Annual Nourishing North Texas Telethon. Funds raised from FY21 events provided access to more than 3.3 million meals.

Campaign Highlights FY21

North Texas Giving Day
Raised funds to provide a record-breaking
5.6 million meals

Collin County Peanut Butter Drive Campaign
Raised funds to provide more than
287,000 pounds of peanut butter

Face of Hunger Holiday Campaign
Raised funds to provide more than
78 million meals

Volunteers

Volunteers are the hearts and hands of the Food Bank, and we were grateful to welcome back external volunteers in FY21 after an earlier halt in our traditional volunteer operations due to COVID-19.

In FY21, volunteers contributed more than 65,000 hours of their time toward the Food Bank’s mission, including the Texas National Guard who continued to support us in FY21 after being deployed at the onset of the pandemic. Volunteers play a critical role in carrying out essential services of the Food Bank that would otherwise take up significant resources, allowing those funds instead to be utilized to further expand NTFB’s offerings, reach and impact.

“I had a hard time sleeping one night and soon realized the thing keeping me up was the thought that I was not doing enough to help families and individuals experiencing greater hardships from COVID-19 and job displacement. I signed up for the NTFB Disaster Relief Mobile Pantry that same night and showed up the next morning. I have been doing it since then.”

- Alexander

Kernel Highlight: Jill Mendenhall & Max Chesser
This husband-and-wife team have been volunteering at the North Texas Food Bank for over three years after retiring from their corporate jobs, increasing their volunteer efforts to five days a week during the COVID-19 pandemic. Jill and Max have been consistent, daily warehouse Kernels - volunteer shift leaders - since day one of the pandemic. Both Max and Jill continue to volunteer in the warehouse each day to help the food bank feed as many hungry community members as possible.
Introducing Nihao Food Bank Initiative
In FY21, the North Texas Food Bank welcomed one of its newest partnerships, the Nihao Food Bank Initiative. Nihao is a Chinese American, volunteer-driven grassroots movement. Its goal is to raise awareness about hunger in North Texas, improve community engagement among the Chinese American diaspora and direct resources toward NTFB to fight hunger. Launched at the end of FY21, it raised nearly $40,000, hosted several volunteer events, and established a Youth Ambassador program.

Commitment to Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI)
The North Texas Food Bank is committed to an inclusive, equitable and just world for our staff, volunteers, and the neighbors we serve. In FY21, NTFB:

- Formed a DEI task force committee called STEP – Steering Toward Equitable Practices – to create and promote an inclusive work environment that celebrates and values diversity.
- Prioritized equitable access to food through its Nourish North Texas strategic plan. We will continue to focus our efforts on reaching and supporting those that historically have faced greater barriers to equitable representation, access and resources.
- Collaborated with POWERHANDZ and the Power to Give Foundation to co-host our first Black History Month celebration of giving event. As part of the event, NTFB presented the Black Leadership Power of Community Awards, honoring local leaders who have made countless contributions to the North Texas region, especially when it comes to advancing the issue of racial equity and ensuring equitable access to nutritious food.

By the Numbers

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To see the latest North Texas Food Bank audited financial statements, please visit ntfb.org/financials
FY21 Leadership

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Chief External Affairs Officer
Jeanne Clark
Chief Financial Officer
Suzanne Drotman
Chief People Officer
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