

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

North Texas Food Bank Battles Food Insecurity in Areas of High Need with Portable Container Pantries

Partnering with community organizations, the Food Bank provides access to nutritious food with the placement of temporary food pantries in areas of high food insecurity.

June 14, 2023 (Dallas) – The [North Texas Food Bank \(NTFB\)](#) is addressing the hunger gap in North Texas with an innovative new strategy that utilizes standalone container pantries to provide access to nutritious food in underserved areas. Partnering with community organizations, the NTFB Container Pantry provides a short-term solution to meet unmet needs while a longer-term solution can be assessed. The uses may include determining demand in a new location before building a permanent infrastructure or providing a temporary full-service pantry at a location where the current pantry space is being reconfigured to increase capacity long term, enabling the growth of nutritious meals and long-term sustainability for the community.



The NTFB launched the new strategy in the fall of 2021 with the placement of two container pantries in zip codes that had been identified as underserved areas. NTFB provides the food for the container pantry and the community partners ensure the pantry operates throughout the week with enough food, staffing, and volunteers. The initial container pantries were placed in Denton County at Hands of Hope in partnership with Christian Community Action and in Ellis County through Catholic Charities of Dallas.

The container pantries are intended to serve as a temporary point of food distribution while the organizations develop a more permanent infrastructure to serve the needs of the community. The amount of time the pantry will stay in one location will vary and is dependent on the organization's plans for a permanent food pantry. Hands of Hope completed a permanent food pantry 6 months after the placement of the container pantry, allowing the container unit to be moved to Uplift Infinity Preparatory School in Irving, part of the Uplift Education public charter school network.

“The partnership with Uplift Education is the first-of-its-kind school pantry and container pantry collaboration and supports our Hope for Tomorrow strategy of linking arms with educational organizations to build food-secure communities and to nourish young minds ensuring they can thrive in the classroom,” said Anne Readhimer, Vice President of Community Impact for the North Texas Food Bank. “While the effects of food insecurity can be harmful to anyone, they can be particularly devastating for children, preventing them from reaching their full physical, emotional, and educational potential.”



Uplift Education hosts monthly drive-through food distributions that now also serve as an opportunity for families to set appointments to visit the on-site container pantry on a more regular basis. The pantry is stocked with nutritious foods and is client-choice, meaning clients can walk through and select food items to supplement their family's needs. The Uplift Infinity Prep site initiative began in February serving 324 students and staff from the Uplift Infinity campus.

"I am grateful for this partnership with the North Texas Food Bank and the opportunity to further support and serve the families we serve with this food pantry. At Uplift we strive to provide well-rounded support for our scholars and families while being great community partners," said Yasmin Bhatia, Chief Executive Officer, Uplift Education.

The container pantry can hold roughly 3,000 pounds of food and is equipped with refrigeration capabilities which allows NTFB to stock the pantry with fresh produce as well as other pantry staples. If the container pantry is operational three days a week, NTFB estimates that one container pantry can provide access to 36,000 pounds of food each month or 360,000 nutritious meals each year.



The NTFB container pantry hosted by Catholic Charities of Dallas in Ellis County is sponsored by NFI Industries and the unit hosted by Uplift Infinity Preparatory School in Irving is sponsored by an anonymous donor. A third container pantry sponsored by UnitedHealthcare will soon be placed in Dallas County at Dallas Bible Church and will be operational by the end of June. A fourth container pantry is planned to be operational by the end of the year.

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About North Texas Food Bank

The North Texas Food Bank (NTFB) is a top-ranked nonprofit hunger-relief organization that sources, packages and distributes food through a diverse network of more than 400 feeding partners including food pantries and community organizations across 13 North Texas counties. The organization also provides food to children, seniors and families through various direct-delivery programs, including mobile pantries.

In its last fiscal year, the NTFB provided access to nearly 137 million nutritious meals, a 9% percent increase over the prior year. In response to the ongoing elevated hunger crisis, the organization has launched a \$500 million campaign, Nourish North Texas, to provide more food for today and hope for tomorrow by addressing the barriers to food security that our neighbors face.

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