



September 2026

Hunger Action Month Toolkit

Your Hunger Action Month™ Toolkit

Hunger is more than an individual challenge – it's a systemic issue that touches every corner of the 21 counties served by the Central Texas Food Bank (CTFB). While food insecurity exists in every community, the barriers to access vary. From urban neighborhoods with limited fresh food options (food deserts) to rural areas far from grocery stores, the challenges are complex. Addressing hunger requires innovative, community-centered solutions that meet people where they are – leveraging partnerships, empowering local programs, and strengthening food systems to build a healthier, more nourished Central Texas.

Each Hunger Action Month (HAM), we come together to educate, inspire, and mobilize our community – spotlighting the shared solutions that make a lasting difference in the lives of our neighbors.

This toolkit is your guide to how you can help us make tomorrow possible for neighbors across central Texas.





The Facts About Hunger in Central Texas

By The Numbers	More than 593,000 Central Texans experience food insecurity. • 1 in 6 adults experiences food insecurity. • 1 in 4 children experiences food insecurity. • 1 in 5 older adults experiences food insecurity.
The Cost of Hunger	One Emergency Away: One in two neighbors experiencing food insecurity could not handle an unexpected \$400 emergency. Costly Tradeoffs: One in three neighbors reported not being able to easily access transportation to buy groceries; about the same amount report having to make tradeoffs between food and other costs such as housing, transportation, insurance, and utilities every single month. Meals Missed Often: Two in three neighbors cut the size of meals or skipped meals in the last 12 months because there wasn't enough money for food.
Neighbor Voices	"What do Travis County neighbors need most? "Having healthy food choices available to you [...] at times where you can get to them, and at a price you can afford." – Travis County Stakeholder "I've always lived paycheck to paycheck. It's just been me and four kids... But after COVID, it's more on my brain. Before...a next-door neighbor would [say] 'Oh we have extra [food]' or something – it'd always seem to work out. Now it's like, everybody's in that pinch." – Waco Neighbor "I've been a single mom [since] 2004. I didn't have a lot of money to work with because I had all these bills [to] pay, and I Had to make sure I was covering them...[School meals] were a godsend to help my kids get lunch every day." – Hays Neighbor "With seniors, a lot of them have food insecurities. They choose between medicine and food – especially fresh produce, which is often the last thing they buy if they have any money left." – Bastrop Partner "We're barely making it. [We need] some help, the low-income families, [to] kind of adjust and survive in this increase, this inflation... All the food costs more now... I was raised in Cedar Park... What happened to my little town that became a city? Now you can't even get [an] apartment... Resources are missing for people with low incomes, people with disabilities, people waiting on disability, [like me]." – Williamson County Neighbor

30 Ways In 30 Days: Your Hunger Action Month Calendar

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
		1 🍷 Hunger Action Month starts today! Choose how you'll play your part this month: give, volunteer, learn, advocate or share.	2 Pass It On: Save CTFB's Find Food Now tool and share it with someone who should know it's there.	3 Orange Out: Wear something orange and tell someone why you're wearing it.	4 🍷 National Food Bank Day: Food banks do more than you think. Explore one CTFB program that's new to you and share what surprised you.	5 🍷 Eat Orange: Add an orange fruit or vegetable to your plate today. Carrots, oranges, sweet potatoes, peppers. You get it. 🍷
6 Pantry Roulette: Pick one forgotten ingredient from your pantry and build a meal around it.	7 Labor Day: Meet the people behind your food. Learn about one job that helps move food from its source to our tables.	8 Follow the food. Learn how farmers, retailers, donors, food banks and community partners work together to get food where it's needed.	9 Myth Bust: Tell someone one thing about food banks or food insecurity that surprised you.	10 Know where to turn. Explore Find Food Now and learn what food and other resources are available in your community.	11 🍷 National Day of Service & Remembrance: Honor the day through service. Volunteer, register for a future shift or invite someone to serve alongside you.	12 Bring a Buddy: Sign up for a CTFB volunteer shift with someone who's never volunteered with us before.
13 Fridge Check: Before you shop this week, see what needs to be used first and plan a meal around it.	14 🍷 National Food Is Medicine Day: Food is more than a meal. Learn how access to nutritious food can support health and explore CTFB's food-and-health work.	15 Recipe Swap: Share your favorite nutritious, budget-friendly meal with a friend and ask for theirs.	16 Learn one new fact about food insecurity in Central Texas and pass it along.	17 Use Your Voice: Learn about a food-access issue affecting your community and discover one way you can advocate.	18 More Than Food: Explore one way CTFB works beyond immediate food assistance to create lasting change.	19 Pass the Carrot: 🍷 Tag someone who's making tomorrow possible in your community and tell us what they're doing.
20 Share Your Why: Why does food access matter to you? Tell someone or share it on social.	21 Leftover Glow-Up: Turn leftovers into something completely different. Bonus points for sharing the result.	22 Meet the Network: Learn about one nonprofit community partner helping neighbors access food close to home.	23 Look upstream. Learn how transportation, housing, health, employment or food availability can affect someone's ability to access nutritious food.	24 \$10 Meal Challenge: What nutritious meal can you make for around \$10? Make it, photograph it and share your idea.	25 \$10 Meal Challenge: What nutritious meal can you make for around \$10? Make it, photograph it and share your idea.	26 Meet Your Food: Visit a farmers market, farm stand or local producer and learn where something you eat comes from.
27 No-Spend Dinner: Make tonight's meal using only what you already have at home.	28 Read a CTFB neighbor, volunteer or partner story and share something that makes you hopeful about what's possible.	29 HUNGER ACTION DAY: 🍷 GO ORANGE. PLAY YOUR PART. Take one action today and invite someone else to join you.	30 Keep It Going: Hunger Action Month ends. Action doesn't. Choose one thing you did this month that you'll keep doing.			

Hunger Action Month is a reminder that everyone has a role to play in increasing food access. Throughout September, we're sharing 30 ways to take action in 30 days, from volunteering and giving to learning, sharing, reducing food waste and connecting with your community. Some actions take just a few minutes; others invite you to dig a little deeper. Choose one, try them all or find the ways that are most meaningful to you. Every action is one way to play your part in making tomorrow possible.

Your Action Makes A Difference

To truly take action, it helps to understand what food insecurity looks and feels like — and how it connects to broader systems. Hunger isn't just about missing a meal. It's about making tough choices between food and medicine, rent, or transportation. It's about navigating limited access, rising prices, and complex policies. Deepening your understanding helps build empathy and drives more informed, effective advocacy.

Take the SNAP Challenge

Live on the average daily SNAP budget (about \$6 a day per person) for one week. This simple yet powerful activity helps illustrate the tough choices millions of families face every day.



Do a Pantry Staples Cooking Challenge

Cook a meal using only shelf-stable items you already have in your pantry. Or go one step further: post a "before" picture of a single pantry item (like a can of beans or bag of rice), and an "after" photo showing the creative meal you made with it. Encourage others to try it too!

Explore the Central Texas Food System

Dive into the Central Texas Food System Dashboard to learn how food is grown, distributed, and accessed in our region. Explore curated research, county-level data, and tools like Food Access Community Needs Assessments (CNAs), FACT Sheets, and the "Food for Thought" series. This resource connects the dots between food access, health, economics, and the environment, helping us understand what it takes to build a stronger, more equitable food system. Get started at centraltxfoodsystem.org/resources.

Volunteer

Give your time and make a direct impact by helping out in our garden, kitchen, warehouse or at mobile pantries. Whether you're contributing individually or with a group, volunteering is a hands-on way to help your neighbors facing hunger. Sign up now at centraltexasfoodbank.org/volunteer.

Host a Food + Fund Drive

Collect non-perishable food from your neighbors, coworkers, or community, or start a Virtual Food Drive to maximize impact. Every dollar you raise helps us provide three meals.

Activate + Advocate

Contact Your Elected Officials

Your voice matters. Urge your lawmakers to pass a strong, bipartisan Farm Bill that protects vital programs like SNAP, TEFAP, and CSFP — tools that help millions of people put food on the table for their families.

Not sure where to start? Share your story, call their office, or send an email using our easy advocacy tools. Speaking up is one of the most impactful ways to support long-term hunger solutions. Find your local representative at wrm.capitol.texas.gov/home.

Support Local Food Systems

A healthy, resilient food system starts close to home. Support local farmers, growers, and producers by shopping at farmers markets or choosing locally sourced items when you can.

Every dollar spent helps strengthen the regional food economy and creates more equitable access to fresh, nutritious food across Central Texas. It's a small step with long-term impact.

Want to get creative? Host a documentary night, potluck, or other themed event to bring people together while supporting hunger relief. It's a simple, powerful way to make a difference.

Communications Toolkit: Guidance, Resources + Inspiration

Let's get loud this September. Hunger is affecting more of our Central Texas neighbors than you might realize, and your voice can help change that. Whether you're online, at work, or out in the community, you have the power to raise awareness and inspire action.

- **Tell your story.** Share a personal experience with food insecurity, or why reducing hunger matters to you. You can submit your story on our website to inspire others.
- **Post hunger facts on social media.** Use our ready-to-share graphics and key stats to educate your followers and spark conversation.
- **Encourage friends and family to volunteer or donate.** A simple ask goes a long way. We provide shareable links and language to help you invite others to take action.
- **Host a Lunch & Learn.** Raise awareness at your workplace with a short presentation about hunger in Central Texas. We've created a deck you can use to get the conversation started.
- **Wear orange.** Orange is the color of hunger awareness. Rock your orange gear all month long - especially on Hunger Action Day, September 29 - and tag @ctxfoodbank to show your support.
- **Use your voice.** Share your commitment on social media to encourage others to join you. Make sure to use #CTFBHungerActionMonth.
- **Engage with CTFB online.** Follow us on social, like and engage with our posts, and help connect more people to food assistance. Every share helps spread the word.

Take Action This Hunger Action Month™

