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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Report: Food Bank distributes more meals than peak pandemic
September marks Hunger Action Month Kickoff

PITTSBURGH, PA (September 1, 2023) As hunger action month kicks off, a new report from Greater Pittsburgh Community Food Bank (the Food Bank) indicates an increase in need across southwestern Pennsylvania.

Overall, the organization has seen a significant increase in the need this past year. For fiscal year 2023 (July 1, 2022 – June 30, 2023), the Food Bank:

- Distributed enough food for nearly 42 million meals across its 11-county service area, a two million meal increase from 2020.
- Distributed 37 million pounds of food, a nearly 11 percent increase from last year.
- Distributed 12.5 million pounds of produce, a 17 increase from last year.
- Served nearly 429,500 people across 11 counties of southwestern Pennsylvania.
- Received more than 17,900 calls for food assistance, a nearly 12 percent increase from last year.
- Distributed nearly one million pounds of groceries to nearly 12,400 individuals through The Market, the Food Bank's onsite food pantry.
- Rescued 18.4 million pounds of food that otherwise would've gone into a landfill.

The Food Bank attributes several factors to the need and response to food insecurity in our region. Inflation and the elimination of emergency SNAP benefits have both strained finances for our neighbors.

Additionally, pandemic-era guidelines for summer food service program sites changed creating heavier restrictions and dramatically limited the number of sites eligible to feed children this past summer. This led to a three million meal decline in meals served to children through the federal summer meal program across the region.

"The need is as high now as it was in the early days of the pandemic. People are really struggling to put food on the table with the cost of groceries, gasoline and other costs rising recently," Lisa Scales, president and CEO of the Food Bank, said. "Alongside our partners, we are dedicated to working together to ensure all families have access to the nutritious food they need to thrive."

The Food Bank is calling on our community to take action this September. To get help, give help or advocate for those living with food insecurity in our region, visit pittsburghfoodbank.org.

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