



Hunger's *Hope*

Spring 2023

40 YEARS
Serving Weld County

MEMBER OF
**FEEDING
AMERICA**

Four Decades Fighting Hunger

Weld Food Bank has come a long way since that hot summer day in mid-August 1982 when Greeley Food Clearing House officially opened for operation.

Originally housed in the basement of the Salvation Army on 6th street, we were formed through the collaborative effort of community leaders and 12 local nonprofit agencies to create a centralized food collection effort. "Salvaging food," as it was called at the time, was a relatively new concept being adapted in communities across the country, turning the problem of food waste into the solution to hunger.

Eventually, we received a permanent home at a 1,000-square-foot building located at 1305 2nd Street in April 1983, exactly one year after the initial proposal to develop the food clearing house was submitted. Our organization continued to grow as more nonprofits began partnering with and utilizing our services. We looked a lot different back then compared to now. Our first-year proposed budget was \$6,100, we had no full-time employees, our warehouse could only fit 20 pallets, and we averaged 10,000 pounds of food a month which was picked up from grocery stores and farmers in an open-bed pick-up truck. Everything in the building had to be hand stacked, and the cooler for all perishable items was only 10ft by 7ft.

By 1990, we were in need of a larger facility. On September 1, 1990, we moved to 104 11th Avenue with ten times more warehouse space. About that same time, we changed our name to Weld Food Bank to better reflect the size and scope of our reach. By this time, we had three full-time employees, and our annual budget was \$127,300. Operations continued to grow as we transitioned from pick-up trucks to box trucks for food transportation and added more direct services such as the Commodity Supplemental Food Program (now Everyday Eats) and Kids Cafe.

Once again, it became clear we were outgrowing our building, and we undertook the huge endeavor of building

a new facility that would fit our growth. In April 2005, we moved into our current facility, a 36,500-square-foot warehouse space. Change continued after the move to a larger facility. We introduced the Backpack Program and School Food Pantries to help feed hungry kids over the weekend, expanded Kids Cafe, added Summer Feeding through a commercial kitchen, launched the Mobile Food Pantry to deliver healthy perishable foods directly to communities, and most recently began Farms to Families to further expand available foods to nonprofit agency partners. **Weld Food Bank now has eight direct service programs, 26 full-time employees, a fleet of 12 vehicles, an operating budget of \$4.3 million, and we distribute 13-15 million pounds of food annually.**

From the moment the first boxes of bread and produce arrived at the basement of Salvation Army in 1982 to today, as a semi-load of potatoes are unloaded, one constant has remained – Weld Food Bank is here to ensure our hungry neighbors are fed. Now in our 40th year of operation, we are seeing more people than ever before. **Our ability to adequately address this historic increase is due to our amazing community, who have been there for 40 years giving of their time and resources to help fight hunger in Weld County.**





CEO's Corner

Dear Friends,

It's hard to believe three years have passed since our lives were turned upside down. Looking back at all the changes we went through to keep our people safe and the community fed, **I am grateful for our staff, volunteers, and donors who helped us through it all.**

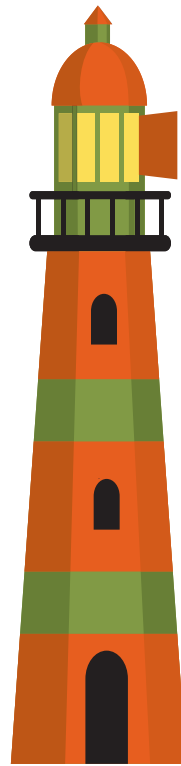
Unfortunately, the need now is at an all-time high as the weight of inflation is pressing down on many families. This is most evidently seen through our Emergency Food Box program. Beginning in March 2022, the number of emergency food requests began rising higher than ever before. The number of people accessing this program grew from 6,200 to over 10,000 a month in one year's time. We anticipate this number to grow the further we get into 2023. An added strain to these difficult circumstances is the decrease of available foods both locally and nationally. This has created a perfect storm.

I've been at Weld Food Bank through several recessions, two natural disasters, and a global pandemic. Each of these seemingly insurmountable events came with its own challenges. **However, this is where I want to again show my gratitude to you, our devoted community. It is only through your generosity and dedication to hunger which allows us to weather any storm.**

Thank you for always being there when your neighbors need you.

With gratitude,

Bob O'Connor
Chief Executive Officer



Beacons of

HOPE

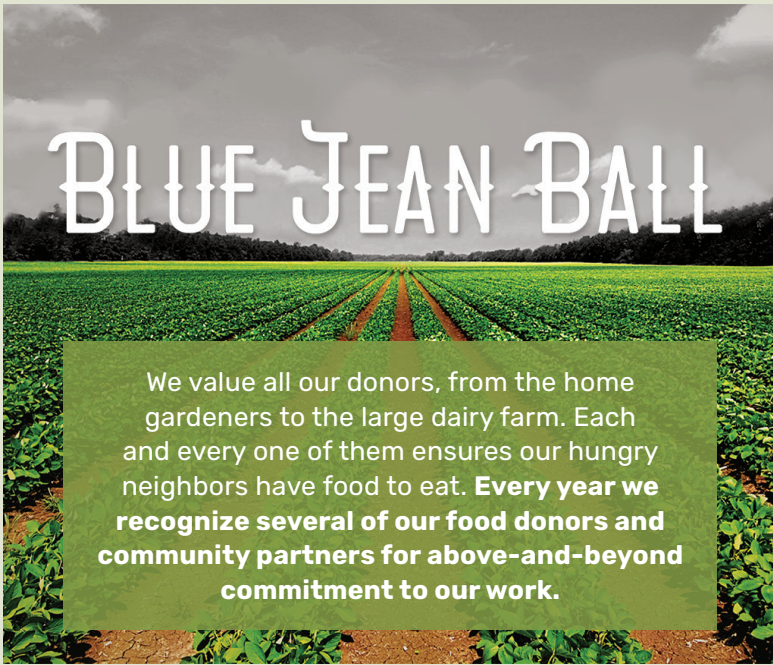
Mubin Aslamy & King Soopers

In February, we were honored to receive a \$44,000 check from King Soopers' holiday campaign at their Erie location. This particular store was chosen as the presentation site because \$13,000 of that total donation came from their customers. In fact, that was the most raised at any store in the entire company. Leading the charge was cashier Mubin Aslamy with nearly \$3,400.

Originally from Afghanistan, Mubin has been at this King Soopers store since 2017. He attributes his success to a positive attitude and trust from the customers. Reflecting back on the campaign and the current struggles of his community, he said, "It's important nowadays, if people are in need, we need to help." The more people he could help, the better. This understanding of the importance of helping people was not Mubin's alone, but a companywide initiative. They understand it is people helping people, neighbor helping neighbor, that makes the most impact.

Thank you Mubin and King Soopers for being beacons of hope in Weld County!





2022 Award Recipients

Agricultural Donor of the Year 2022
Strohauer Produce

Community Food Donor of the Year 2022
Sam's Club

Community Partner of the Year 2022
OtterBox

Donor Partner of the Year 2022
Sprouts Market

Donor of the Year 2022
Aurora Organic Dairy

Innovative Donor of the Year 2022
Town of Severance

Upcoming Events



June 2023

Keep your eyes out for food bank staff and volunteers at various locations throughout Weld County. We will be collecting non-perishable food items to support our nonprofit agency partners. **Those interested in volunteering at this food drive can call 970-356-2199 ext. 307.**



September 15

The seventh annual Hops for Hunger will once again take place at Boardwalk Park in Windsor, CO. Attendees will enjoy a wide selection of local craft beers along with delicious BBQ provided by JBS USA, LLC. All proceeds will support our direct service programs in the Windsor community. **For more information and to purchase tickets, visit weldfoodbank.org/hops or call 970-356-2199.**



September 21

Dine Out for Hunger is a one-day event where local restaurants show their support for the fight against hunger by donating a percentage of that day's sales to Weld Food Bank. This a great opportunity for community members to not only support the food bank's cause, but also to support local businesses. **As we get closer to the event, visit weldfoodbank.org/dofh for a list of this year's participating restaurants.**

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Stephanie Gausch, *Chief Development Officer*

Tom Hill, *Agency Food Coordinator*

Weston Edmunds, *Communications Manager*

Yolanda Cruz, *Certification Specialist*

Zach Varner, *Volunteer/Backpack Assistant*



Stone Soup

This year, Stone Soup turned 21, and to celebrate, we brought Las Vegas to Weld County! Throughout the evening, participants were treated to a delicious catered meal, live and silent auctions, and musical entertainment from the one and only, Almost Cher. In all, enough was raised to provide nearly **XX** million meals to children, seniors, and their families in Weld County. **Thank you to our incredible community for helping make Stone Soup a continued success!**

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June 5 - 23

This is a great opportunity to build your company's commitment to the fight against hunger through unique team-building activities. Employees of participating companies work

within their organization to donate the most funds, food, and time. The fan-favorite CanSculpture contest at the Greeley Stampede will be returning for the seventh year.

Whether you have one employee or 1,000, you can compete. Each category (food, funds, and time) carries with it a point value. The competitor with the most points per employee in their 'division' will win the title of Compete to Beat Hunger Champion. However, the true winners of this competition are the people we serve. All donated food will go to our direct service programs and partner agencies, and for every dollar donated, we will be able to provide four meals.

We will be holding an informational kick-off on Wednesday, May 17, at 12:00 pm at Weld Food Bank, 1108 H Street, Greeley. Lunch will be provided. This kick-off will be your best opportunity to learn more about Compete to Beat Hunger, and to sign up your business. **For more information, please call 970-356-2199 or email info@weldfoodbank.org.**