



**The Food Bank  
Network of  
Somerset County**

# Annual Report

Executive Director  
**Steve Katz**

Prepared By :  
**Lisa Marie Arieno**  
Director of  
Development

Physical Address: 7 E. Easy Street  
(Middlebrook Crossroads Industrial Park)  
Bridgewater, NJ 08805

Mailing Address: P.O. Box 149  
Bound Brook, NJ 08805-0149

[www.somersetfoodbank.org](http://www.somersetfoodbank.org)  
732-560-1813

2024

# FOOD BANK NETWORK OF SOMERSET COUNTY ANNUAL REPORT 2024

## **Mission Statement:**

The mission of The Food Bank Network of Somerset County is to distribute food and to provide other basic human needs to those less fortunate in our community in a manner recognizing and advancing self-worth and human dignity.

Somerset County is one of the wealthiest counties in America, yet in 2024 there were 28,400 individuals who were food insecure, many of whom could not count on having an adequate supply of food.

Personal events such as job loss, death of a breadwinner, or long-term illness can suddenly plunge a family into becoming food-insecure.

Global or regional disasters like a pandemic or catastrophic flooding, both of which have hit Somerset County in recent times, further increase the number of our neighbors facing hunger.

Source: *Feeding America "2023 Map the Meal Gap Report"*



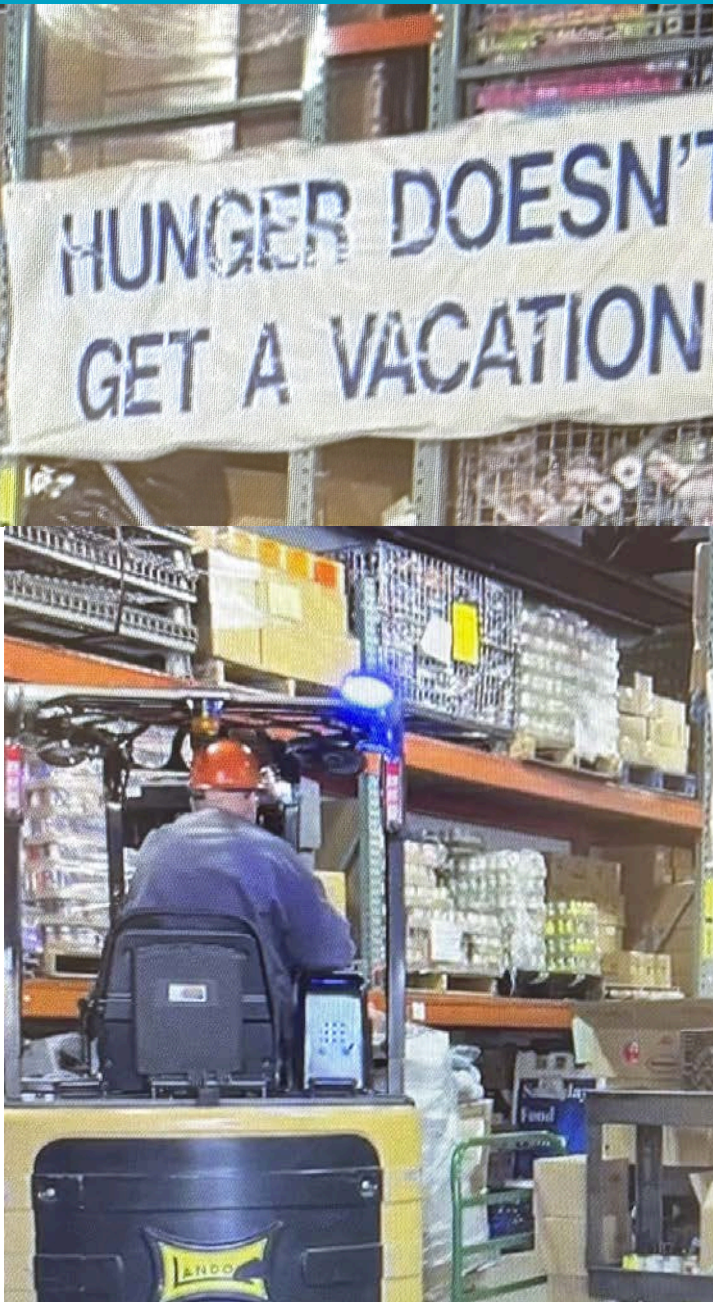


# 2024 Annual Report

## THE FOOD BANK NETWORK OF SOMERSET COUNTY GROWTH IN NUMBERS POST COVID 19

Over the last two years, the Food Bank Network of Somerset County has:

1. Established satellite pantries in Raritan, Manville, and the VA in Lyons (in addition to the already established pantries in Bound Brook, N. Plainfield, and Somerville) and added a 2nd monthly mobile distribution to low income housing units in Warren (in addition to the existing mobile distribution in Branchburg).
2. Increased the number of annual client visits from about 27,000 in 2023 to over 32,000 in 2024.
3. Increased the number of children supported by our Backpack Program from 1,219 (19 schools) in 2023 to 1,778 (25 schools) in 2024.
4. Increased food distribution from 1.2 million pounds in 2022 to 2 million pounds in 2024.
5. Was appointed a SNAP Navigator by the State of NJ starting in 2025.
6. Hired a full-time social worker to offer "wrap-around" (non-food) services to our clients.
7. Added a new walk-in freezer and walk-in refrigerator to our warehouse, which increases our ability to store perishable items by about 30-40%.



***"Hunger is not just an international crisis, it exists in our own communities."***

***Mother Teresa of Calcutta***

## Hunger Doesn't Take A Vacation. . .

Established in 1982, The Food Bank Network of Somerset County, Inc. is a non-profit, non-governmental, and non-sectarian organization recognized as a 501(c)(3) public benefit entity.

The mission of The Food Bank Network is to provide food and other essential human needs to those in our community who are less fortunate, while fostering self-worth and human dignity.

We operate through food pantries situated in Somerville, Manville, Bound Brook, VA Lyons, Raritan and North Plainfield along with mobile distributions in Branchburg and Warren, and maintain a warehouse in Bridgewater. Our aim is to empower individuals to achieve self-sufficiency. The Food Bank Network assists Somerset County residents on a walk-in basis, as well as through referrals from various social service organizations.

This effort relies on the dedication of our staff, a volunteer board of directors, and numerous volunteers throughout the county who generously contribute their time to support our mission. All of this is made possible by the kind contributions of our individual and organizational donors, through both monetary and in-kind support.

### **Fighting Hunger in Somerset County: The Food Bank Network's Impact**

Founded in 1982 after Marguerite Chandler's encounter with Mother Teresa, the Food Bank Network of Somerset County has grown into a lifeline for thousands. What began as a small pantry has expanded into a 10,000-square-foot warehouse in Bridgewater, distributing fresh produce, frozen goods, and shelf-stable items through a dignified, market-style pantry experience.

Our seven volunteer-run pantries—located in Bound Brook, Manville, North Plainfield, Somerville, the VA campus in Lyons, and Raritan as well as our warehouse pantry location in Bridgewater serve as vital access points for struggling families. In 2024, we introduced mobile pantries to reach Section 8 housing residents, further eliminating barriers to food security.

We feed 7,500 individuals monthly, facilitating 32,000 client visits annually. Our Backpack Program, delivering over 1,700 weekend meal pouches to food-insecure children, remains our fastest-growing initiative.

Beyond food, we collaborate with community partners to offer healthcare, library services, and essential resources. Despite minimal public funding, our efficient operation thrives through corporate support, local businesses, and dedicated donors.

*Food insecurity can strike anyone. Together, we can ensure no one in Somerset County goes hungry!*

# Backpack Program

The Food Bank supports a weekend meal program (the “Backpack Program”) throughout Somerset County for school children facing food insecurity on weekends.

Each student is provided with a one-gallon sized zip lock bag filled with child friendly, easy to open and prepare foods that do not require refrigeration or stove top cooking.

Many at-risk children who receive free school meals are left without the nutrition they need on weekends. By providing children with a package of food each Friday, they return to school on Mondays better equipped to learn.

***As of 12/28/2024, 1,778 pre-school and elementary aged school children participated in the program.***



The Foodbank Network of Somerset County has been offering the Back Pack program since 2009 to children ages 3 and up and elementary aged children. The program is free to the number of children that are recipients of free or reduced cost federal government lunches during the school week.



# Our Board of Directors

THE FOOD BANK NETWORK OF SOMERSET COUNTY



Gordon White III, President



Michael Mahoney, Vice President



Sumita Saini,  
Treasurer



Cress Dominick,  
Secretary



Pastor Dan Fenco, Member at  
Large



Chris Yen, Member at Large



Bryan Watkinson, Member at Large



Bob Uccardi, Member at Large



Kiran Kathari, Member at Large

The Board of Directors for The Food Bank Network of Somerset County, NJ, serves as a volunteer leadership body that plays a crucial role in guiding the organization's mission and operations. Their primary responsibilities include:

- **Strategic Oversight:** The board provides strategic direction to ensure that the Food Bank effectively addresses food insecurity in Somerset County.
- **Governance and Accountability:** They uphold the organization's commitment to transparency and ethical practices, ensuring compliance with legal and financial standards.
- **Resource Development:** Board members often assist in fundraising efforts and community engagement to secure the necessary resources for the Food Bank's programs.
- **Support for Staff and Volunteers:** While the day-to-day operations are managed by professional staff, the board supports these efforts by leveraging their expertise and networks.

# Staff (4 Full Time 4 Part Time)



**Steve Katz, Executive Director**  
Steve Katz, Executive Director



**Jessica Nichols, Operations Manager**



**Paulette Retano, Office Manager**



**Widette Fox, Backpack Program Coordinator**



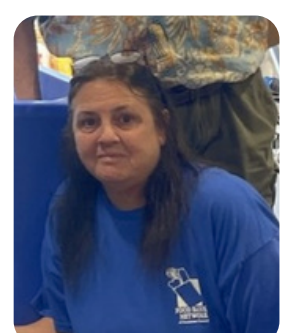
**Dominique Cousin, MSW Manager of Empowerment Services**



**Lisa Marie Arieno, Director of Development & Group Volunteer Engagement**



**Katie McCluney, Volunteer Coordinator**



**Sandy Ferrante, Client Coordinator**

## A Year in Review

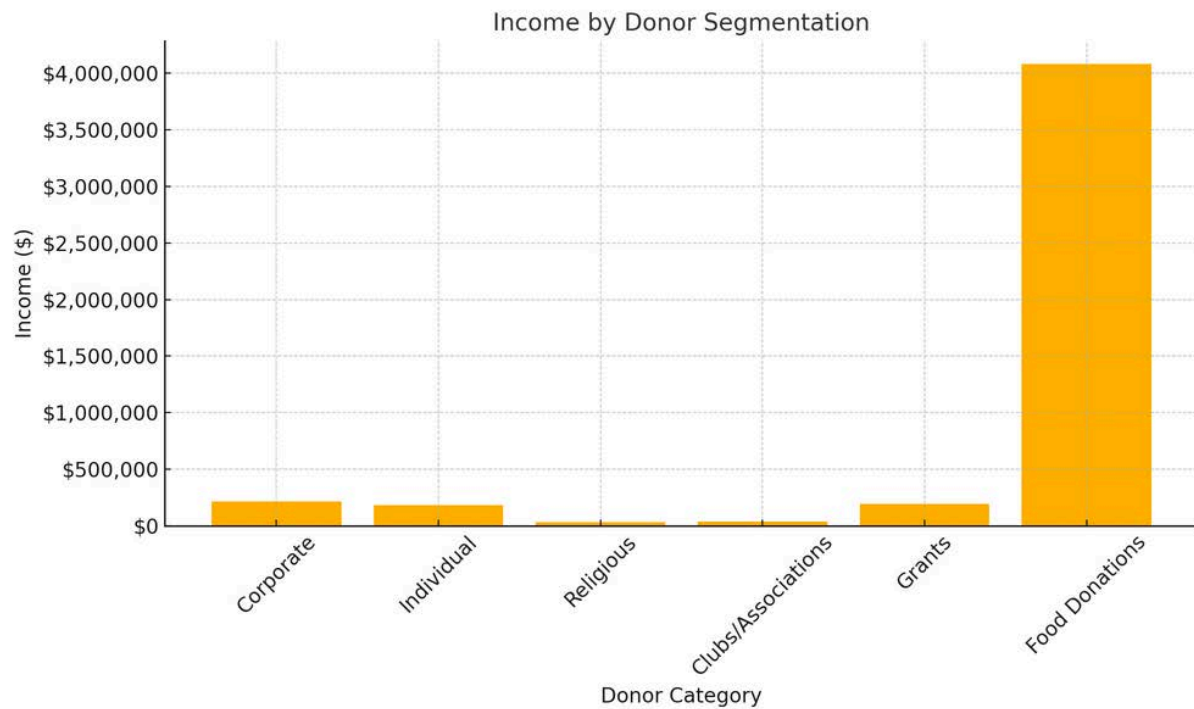
**We operated our warehouse and 7 pantry locations with over 200 core volunteers through the year.**

**We hosted over 100 corporate volunteers at our Bridgewater warehouse location.**





THE FOOD BANK NETWORK OF SOMERSET COUNTY 2024  
ANNUAL REPORT



## INCOME DISTRIBUTION

### SUMMARY

CORPORATE: \$213,814.47

INDIVIDUAL: \$182,258.11

RELIGIOUS: \$34,288.37

CLUBS/ASSOCIATIONS:

\$37,242.46

GRANTS: \$191,662.99

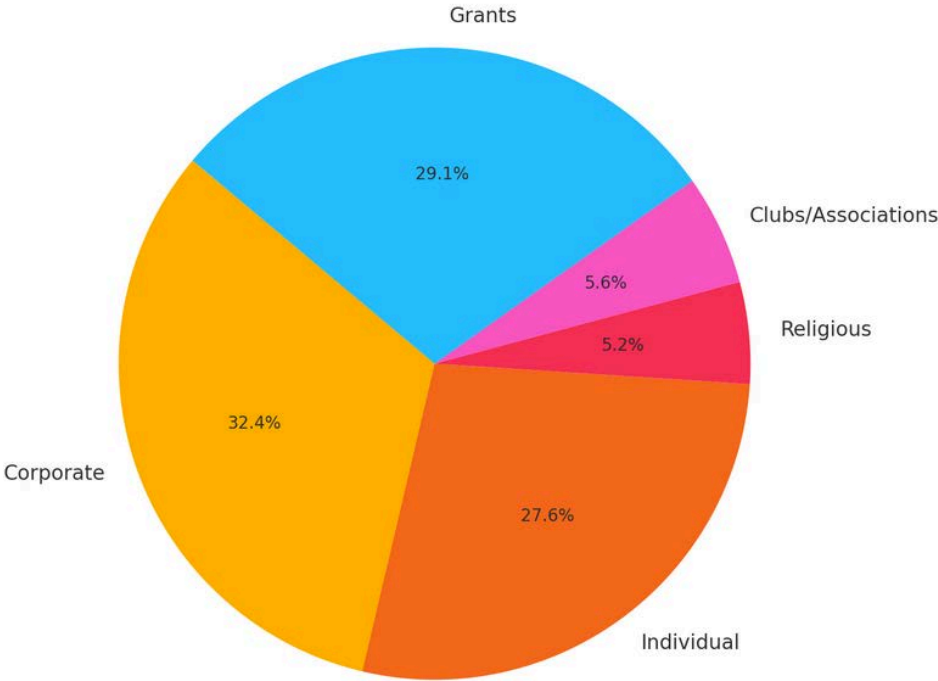
FOOD DONATIONS:

\$4,083,268

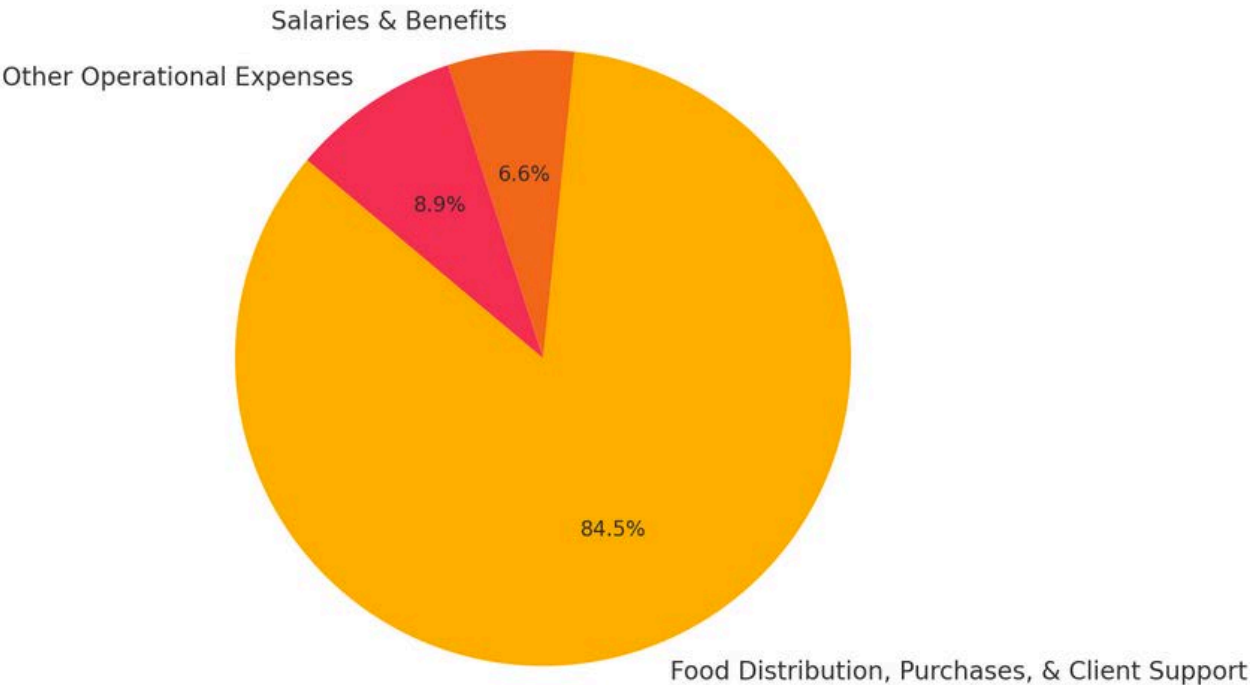


THE FOOD BANK NETWORK OF SOMERSET COUNTY 2024 ANNUAL REPORT

Income Distribution Summary (Percentage Breakdown)



Expense Breakdown



Food Distribution, Purchases, & Client Support: \$4,290,312  
Salaries & Benefits: \$337,163  
Other Operational Expenses: \$451,366

## Warehouse & Pantry Service Locations

### 1- Warehouse/Main Facility

7E Easy St., Bound Brook, NJ

**Monday – Friday, 9:00 AM – 2:30 PM and Thursday evening,  
5:00 PM – 8:00 PM**

### 2- St. John's Lutheran Church (basement)

108 W. Union Ave., Bound Brook, NJ

**1st and 3rd Saturday of every month, 10:00 AM – 1:00 PM**

### 3- Vermeule Center

11 Vermeule Place, North Plainfield, NJ

**1st and 3rd Saturday of every month,  
9:00 AM – 11:00 AM**

### 4- United Reformed Church

100 West Main St., Somerville, NJ

**1st and 3rd Saturday of every month,  
10:00 AM – 12:00 PM**

### 5- Faith in Action Church

228 South Main St., Manville, NJ

**2nd Saturday of every month, 10:00AM-12:00PM**

### 6- VA Lyons Pantry

Building 143, 1st floor, Lyons, NJ

**3rd Monday of every month, 9:30 AM – 12:30 PM**

**For more information, please call 732-560-1813**

### 7- Raritan Pantry 29 Thompson Street

## Our Growth in Numbers is Rising

### Hunger is Here in Somerset County

The Food Bank Network of Somerset County witnessed a record breaking year in so many ways for the Food Bank Network of Somerset County, as the numbers below indicate:

- 32,236 clients visits (compared to 12K in 2021 and 27K in 2023)
- Average of 1,812 households served per month (50% more than in 2023)
- Average of 281 new clients per month (compared to an average of 188 in 2023)
- 2.2 million pounds of food distributed (double what was distributed in 2021).
- 1,778 kids/25 schools enrolled in the Backpack Program (up from 660 kids/11 schools in 2021)

These are not just statistics though – these numbers tell a story about how food security continues to be a chronic challenge, even in relatively well-to-do places like Somerset County. These numbers also highlight why we continue to need support from our generous neighbors in our communities. Visit our website– use the QR code below.



**Contacts: Steve Katz, Executive Director**  
**[steve@somersetfoodbank.org](mailto:steve@somersetfoodbank.org)**

**Lisa Marie Arieno, Director of Development & Group**  
**Volunteer Engagement: [lisamarie@somersetfoodbank.org](mailto:lisamarie@somersetfoodbank.org)**

**Food Bank Network of Somerset County**  
**Mailing Address: P.O. Box 149**  
**Bound Brook, NJ 08805-0149**  
**[www.somersetfoodbank.org](http://www.somersetfoodbank.org)**  
**732-560-1813**

### VOLUNTEERS NEEDED DAILY!

**Visit: [www.somersetfoodbank.org/need-help/volunteering](http://www.somersetfoodbank.org/need-help/volunteering)**

