



Food Drive

by [nextAdmin1](#) | Jan 18, 2021 | [Events](#)

A brand-new year is here and with it a new term, every year it is something new because well, face it, what we said previously just doesn't cut it any more—hangry, plant-based, freegan, COVID-positive. How often did you hear those terms before January 1, 2020? **Food-insecure or food-insecurity**, defined as a term based on a few criteria, for example, someone who must make the decision to purchase food for the family or pay other bills (rent, heat, water). Food-insecurity has, unfortunately, become a reality for an ever-increasing number of Coles County residents during the last year. One of the leading residual effects of 2020 is hunger. More than ever before Coles County residents and their children are suffering food insecurity at an alarming rate, the elderly of the county is among the hardest hit in terms of making the difficult decision between food and bills.

Two out of every five families in Coles County, over 44% of households with children, suffer a shortage of food due to the need to provide other life necessities such as heat, water, and rent. Shockingly 10% of those age 55 -64 living in Coles County, those still working but on the cusp of retiring, are food insufficient. According to the non-profit, Feed America, that is one of the highest rates in Illinois, higher even than that of Chicago/Cook County. Stop and think about that for, using another new term, “a hot minute”. More people

are going hungry right here in our own backyard than in Chicago. In the 18- county region known as Eastern Illinois, there are 138,300 families who are food insufficient, they have no idea where their next meal will come from.

On a daily basis, in our line of work, we encounter those who are making difficult decisions between paying bills and feeding their children and families. We want to see no one faced with those hard choices; therefore, we have made the decision to be part of the answer to their problems and do what we can to help. From now until the end of February, we are hosting a food drive for the Eastern Illinois Food Bank. Several collection boxes have been placed in our office lobby for a quick drop-off on your way to or from work. While grocery shopping for your family this week, **please** pick up an extra jar of peanut butter or box of Mac n Cheese, whatever you can, and drop it by our office lobby and let us tag you on Facebook and Instagram to celebrate you as a shiny star of the community. Don't want to make an extra trip in to see us, that's fine, save it all and drop it in the box the next time you come by to make a payment. Tell you neighbors what you are doing and ask them if you can drop a food item off for them as well.

Following is information about items most needed by the Eastern Illinois Food Bank to help you in making your selections for donation. (note they also accept pet food and personal care products). As always, if you would prefer to make a monetary donation, we would gladly accept that and provide you with a receipt and ensure that the funds are donated to the food bank in your name.

The Eastern Illinois Foodbank welcomes food donations of all sizes!

Our Super Six list is what we need most:

1. Canned meats
2. Canned complete meals (ravioli, SpaghettiOs, etc.)
3. Canned beans and other vegetables
4. Canned fruit
5. Boxed meals
6. Peanut butter

We also accept toiletries, cleaning products and pet food

The Foodbank also welcomes donations of fresh produce from your garden or farm. Please plan to drop your donation off during warehouse hours, (7am – 3:00pm Monday through Thursday and

Friday 7am-12:00pm). Alternatively, you might consider registering as a grower through Ample Harvest to directly support your local pantry.

Food We Can't Take:

NO open cans, bags, containers, bottles etc. of food. All donated food must be in its original form. NO homemade food, please (No matter how delicious). NO food in glass containers. Please help those in our community who are struggling, don't ever let a child go to school hungry or face a weekend at home with no food until lunch is served at school on Monday. Participating in the food drive is a small gesture that will make a huge difference in the life of one of your neighbors in Coles County.

[Contact us](#) with questions about the food drive!