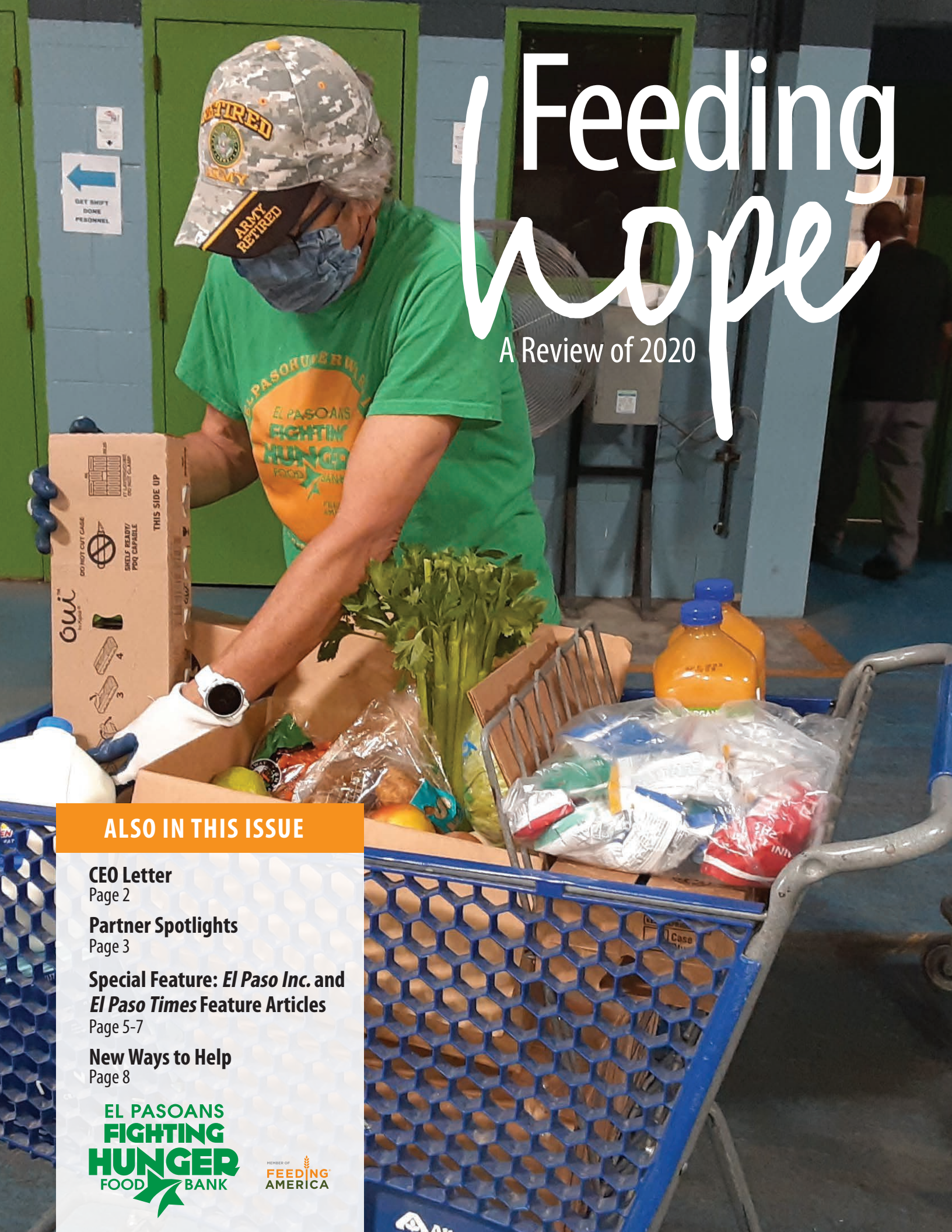


Feeding Hope

A Review of 2020



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2020: A Year in Review

We were privileged to help feed families this past year.

Dear Caring Friends,

Our Mission

We combat the hunger crisis in our region by strategically procuring and distributing nutritious food through community partners ... **because no one should go hungry.**

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EPFH Chief Executive Officer

Susan E. Goodell

Looking back over this past year, the accomplishments of this food bank seem nothing short of extraordinary. Who could have ever imagined that this young, fast-growing food bank would become such a critical lifeline across our borderland over the past nine months? The pandemic brought not only illness but also economic devastation and a national hunger crisis. As businesses closed and our most vulnerable people lost jobs, El Pasoans Fighting Hunger worked hard to increase our capacity and provide up to three meals a day for almost 138,000 El Pasoans, outpacing the largest food bank in the world in 2019.



Finding enough food for our isolated region is difficult under the best circumstances, but the challenges we have been facing were added to by national and global food shortages, breakdowns in supply, and never enough funding and manpower to get the job done—but somehow, we did it anyway. Each day as the pandemic worsened around us, our dedicated volunteers, staff, Get Shift Done workers, AmeriCorps Fellows, Team Rubicon, National Guard Troops, Workforce Development interns, and others found the courage to report to work, roll up their sleeves, and distribute over 500,000 pounds of food a day, six days a week for our community in need.

As the amount of food we regularly distribute grew by more than four times, our dynamic team was also building the local food bank desperately needed in good times and bad. We increased warehouse space by over 100,000 square feet, built additional offices, and established satellite locations scattered across the county to accommodate the new growth and demand. In response to the heartbreaking calls we received in the early days of the pandemic, we also developed a home delivery program which provides nutritious food to people without access to fresh groceries. Approximately 2,400 low-income individuals weekly receive food deliveries because of age, disability, or quarantine due to COVID-19.

All of this is to say that words can never express how proud I am of this organization and the people who make our mission possible. Filled with the courage, heart, talent, and commitment necessary to feed so many during this time, our team is beyond incredible. I am also grateful for the outpouring of love and support our community has invested into this young food bank that make our work possible. Every day is truly a miracle.

On behalf of all of us, thank you for your generosity and compassion. Your impact is without measure as we give people access to essential nutrition for a healthier and better life during this season. All of this speaks to a level of compassion that has left me thankful beyond words for the kindness toward everyone we have served so far.

2020 has been a year we will never forget, but I know our food bank has emerged stronger and better able to serve our most vulnerable neighbors for the recovery ahead.

Together, we are changing lives.

Susan Goodell
Chief Executive Officer

It's Coming in 2021... **FOOD FARMacy** (Food as Medicine)

If you have a family member with a serious chronic condition, the news can be devastating. If you don't have the money to purchase medicine and nutritious food, you or your loved one can be putting your life at risk.

In El Paso County, 13.9 percent of adults have Diabetes, according to the Texas Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System and Healthy Paso del Norte. It is also alarming that over 35 percent of Hispanic adults are considered obese, and the population with the highest incidence of obesity, 45 percent, are adults 45-64 years of age.

It is evident there is a great part of our community that deals with chronic disease every day, and there needs to be a place and program that will offer nutrition education and access to nutritious food.

El Pasoans Fighting Hunger Food Bank, in spite of the pandemic, is moving forward to establish the Fresh Food FARMacy Market Program. This program will offer clinically-based prescription food. EPFH will partner with medical doctors and nurse practitioners, and our nutritionists will offer help and work with individuals who are living with chronic disease.

What is clinically-based prescription food? Well, medical providers will be able to prescribe fresh fruits and vegetables as well as other relevant healthy food items to their patients. Patients will then fill these prescriptions at El Pasoans Fighting Hunger Food Bank Food FARMacy.

El Pasoans Fighting Hunger Voted One of the Best of "El Paso" Non-Profits

El Pasoans Fighting Hunger Food Bank is proud to be included in this year's Best of El Paso.

Shout out to @bestofelpaso for the love.



Thank you El Paso,
for voting us one of the best
NONPROFITS IN EL PASO!

We couldn't have done
it without you.



Partner *Spotlights*

Kellogg

When the Tony the Tiger Sun Bowl was canceled for the first time ever, Kellogg's stepped in to help El Pasoans Fighting Hunger Food Bank. The Food Bank received from Kellogg's a gift that will help the food bank provide over 1 million meals to individuals in need.



Thank you, Tony the Tiger!

Wells Fargo

With such a great need in the community, Wells Fargo and EPFH extended the Wells Fargo Drive-Up Food Bank program until October 17, 2020. The additional four Saturdays provided opportunities for more families to receive food during this difficult time.

Overall the food distribution events served 663,051 equal to 9,127 households. Pounds of food distributed surpassed 796,000.



EL PASO MEDIA OUTLETS

THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT AND FOR SHARING ALL THE POSITIVE NEWS AT EL PASOANS FIGHTING HUNGER FOOD BANK !

Enjoy two great articles highlighting the food bank.

ALSO A BIG THANKS TO ALL OUR DONORS, VOLUNTEERS, STAFF AND BOARD MEMBERS WHO ARE THE



OF EVERYTHING WE DO IN THE BORDERLAND.



elpasoansfightinghunger.org



PRESENTS

EL PASO INC. COMMUNITY SPIRIT AWARD SUSAN GOODELL

CEO, EL PASOANS FIGHTING HUNGER FOOD BANK

■ By David Crowder / El Paso Inc. staff writer

At last count, COVID-19 has infected nearly 100,000 El Pasoans and taken the lives of more than 1,300, and since the virus came around in March, there are many heroes who've grappled with this plague to keep people alive and healthy.

In that time, nearly 103,000 people in the El Paso region have applied for unemployment benefits through Workforce Solutions.

It is hard to imagine where El Paso would be and what kind of news would be coming out of this city were it not for El Pasoans Fighting Hunger and the food bank's CEO, Susan Goodell, the winner of El Paso Inc.'s Community Spirit Award for 2020.

In the first eight months of this year, the food bank has provided 118 million pounds of food to El Pasoans.

That works out to 98 million meals – three times last year's number – that would not have been provided otherwise to the thousands who drive up to the food line at 9541 Plaza Circle every day.

At times, Goodell's ability to find new food sources coming to an area where there is little produced locally has seemed almost miraculous because the loaves just keep coming.

That now includes a \$9 million gift announced two weeks ago by philanthropist MacKenzie Scott.

It was a highly competitive process that led to the award, which will now provide more security for the future than the four-year-old food bank has ever enjoyed.

"This incredible gift adds a level of strength and stability that this food bank has desperately needed," Goodell said.

It's also more than the total given out



Susan Goodell, CEO, El Pasoans Fighting Hunger Food Bank

by the world's biggest food bank last year.

That money will go a long way toward providing free food to El Pasoans as well as residents of Hudspeth and Culbertson County. In this three-county area, 23% of the population lives in poverty and is food insecure.

The food bank's success at meeting local needs this year has also been made possible by the help of hundreds of volunteers and the food bank's staff.

On Dec. 17, the call went out for more on Facebook: "Can you lend a hand? All hands on deck. The need for food assistance has almost tripled in 2020. We need volunteers to help us meet this demand."

Realizing that some people could not get to the food bank, Goodell partnered with Lyft, the ride-sharing service, which is now delivering more than 2,000 meals to people's homes a week.

El Paso attorney Stuart Schwartz, president of the El Pasoans Fighting Hunger nonprofit board, said the food bank staff has been extraordinary at meeting great needs day in and day out, but the credit for keeping the food

coming goes to Goodell.

"She's had the vision and the will to appropriately respond to food insecurity resulting from the pandemic and the exponential growth in demand for food," he said. "She has been remarkable, going out to find every single dollar she can to help us through this crisis and to motivate her staff to respond appropriately."

Food is a family enterprise for Susan Goodell and her husband, Warren. He's the executive director of the Kelly Center for Hunger Relief at 915 N. Florence St.

Last March, he recalled, they decided to take a long-overdue vacation to Washington State.

"So, we got in the car and started driving, and at the end of the first day, COVID hit, and Susan spent the entire week in the car or in the hotel room trying to put the pieces in place for the food bank to manage this," he said. "She hardly looked out the window at the beautiful scenery, and that's kind of how it's been for the past nine months."

Email El Paso Inc. reporter David Crowder at dcrowder@elpasoinc.com or call (915) 630-6622.

Seasons of need: El Paso food bank faces COVID-19 economic fallout beyond 2021

Daniel Borunda

El Paso Times

PART OF THE USA TODAY NETWORK



Volunteers form an assembly line where they load shopping carts with fresh fruit, vegetables and nonperishables to give to people in line outside. *Aaron E. Martinez/El Paso Times*

The flow of people appears continuous.

The lines at El Pasoans Fighting Hunger Food Bank start forming before sunrise, with residents showing up before having to go to work. Some days, the line lasts past sunset.

There are gray-haired retirees surviving on pensions, laborers with sun-hardened faces and young mothers tugging along toddlers wearing small colorful face masks.

When this extremely difficult year ends, the food lines and the economic aftershocks of the COVID-19 pandemic are expected to continue in El Paso beyond 2021 as the food bank faces the expiration of some federal funding at the end of 2020.

"I think people do not fully understand the magnitude of need," said Susan Goodell, CEO of El Pasoans Fighting Hunger Food Bank.

El Paso's food bank, which helps supply 132 partner pantries, shelters and charities, saw demand quadruple in 2020 compared to the previous year.

The food bank had to grow, adapt and re-engineer to meet the challenges of the pandemic.

In 2019, El Pasoans Fighting Hunger distributed 32.5 million pounds of food. It's on pace to distribute 130 million to 140 million pounds of food this year, Goodell said.

The food bank is currently feeding an average of 6,000 to 8,000 families a day, Goodell said as clients lined up on a recent sunny afternoon.

When the COVID-19 outbreak was battering El Paso the hardest during an "intense" November, the food bank was consistently seeing 9,000 to 10,000 families a day, Goodell said.

El Pasoans Fighting Hunger Food Bank last week received a gift of \$9 million from philanthropist and author MacKenzie Scott, who has donated billions to charities in communities suffering in the COVID-19 crisis.

"I think it's a little short of a miracle this food bank has been able to feed so many people on a consistent basis," Goodell said.

Economic casualties from pandemic

Some might have the misconception that food banks serve beggars, panhandlers and homeless people.

The reality is that the food bank is helping a cross-section of El Pasoans who never sought such assistance before.

"The economic fallout has just been horrible for the people we serve," Goodell said.

The pandemic worsened financial hardships as businesses reduced work hours, shut down or closed permanently in El Paso County, where one in five residents already was living in poverty, according to 2019 U.S. census estimates.

Before the pandemic, the food bank mostly assisted people in poverty.

"Now, we're seeing people from middle-class backgrounds who lost their livelihood," Goodell said.

"As the pandemic goes on, we are seeing new people regularly because for many people it's a point of pride and they don't want to come here until they've exhausted all other resources, which is really unfortunate. People should not have to lose everything before they look for help," she said.

The government-mandated shutdowns intended to slow the spread of the virus had devastating financial shocks that resulted in spikes in demand at the food bank, Goodell said.

"When the city and county shut down, what little work people were able to find evaporated very quickly. So, within a week of a shutdown, we will see a huge spike," she said.

Demand also spikes with weather extremes — home-cooling costs in the summer and heat in the winter, Goodell explained.

"Our people are constantly making decisions: Do they have heat? Do they have medicine? Do they have food? There is not enough money to afford everything," Goodell said. "So, when there is an extra expense like heat, it just decreases their resources."

'Every little bit helps'

The food bank helps her family make ends meet, said a young woman waiting in line, her hands full as she carried a toddler in one arm and held the hand of a kindergarten-aged boy.

"My husband makes just enough that we don't qualify for food stamps. I come here sometimes because every little bit helps," she said before rushing off to get a shopping cart pre-filled with groceries.

On a recent Wednesday, the carts were packed with boxes of zucchini, broccoli-and-cheddar bites, frozen blueberries, pancake mix, apple juice, a pair of half-gallons of milk and other food.

The food bank's drive-thru distribution system was switched in July to a walk-up model following the departure of 96 National Guard troops who helped load boxes onto vehicles for three months.

Now, clients park in an 80-space parking lot, walk up and register with clerks using computer tablets at tables set up lengthwise to ensure 6-foot distancing. The clients then line up to receive a pre-loaded shopping cart that they take back to their parked cars.

Demand beyond 2021

The demand caused by the pandemic's economic downturn at El Paso's food bank will last beyond 2021, Goodell said.

It might take at least another six to nine months for people who lost their jobs to get employed again. After getting a new job, it could take another 18 months to three years to replace life savings and the other losses due to the pandemic, Goodell estimated.

Goodell is concerned that some federal funding sources that have supported the food bank will expire at the end of December.

"We are working really hard to find every last bit of food that we can because government support ends on Dec. 30 and we believe food will be more difficult to find for charitable purposes starting in January," Goodell said.

Federal and state government stimulus and agriculture programs provided 55% of funding in this extraordinary year, Goodell said. Federal Emergency

Management Agency funds were used to purchase two months' worth of food.

For example, the U.S. Department of Agriculture Farmers to Families Food Box program supported a home delivery program taking 2,400 boxes each week to elderly and disabled residents and COVID-19 positive people.

Massive operation keeps food flowing

The food bank is a massive operation with several distribution sites, a fleet of 22 trucks, including 15 tractor-trailers, that keep warehouses stocked and hundreds of workers and volunteers busy.

On a recent afternoon, a Christmas song played on a radio as forklifts ran back-and-forth, transporting bulk loads while workers placed food packages into shopping carts and prepared boxes for home delivery

Some of the workers are from Get Shift Done for El Paso, a program of the El Paso Community Foundation that hires displaced restaurant and bar employees.

"One of the really wonderful things about food banks is that everyone can be part of the solution," Goodell said. "People can come and volunteer. They can make a financial contribution. Every dollar we raise is seven meals for someone who's hungry or they can advocate for us with their elected officials."



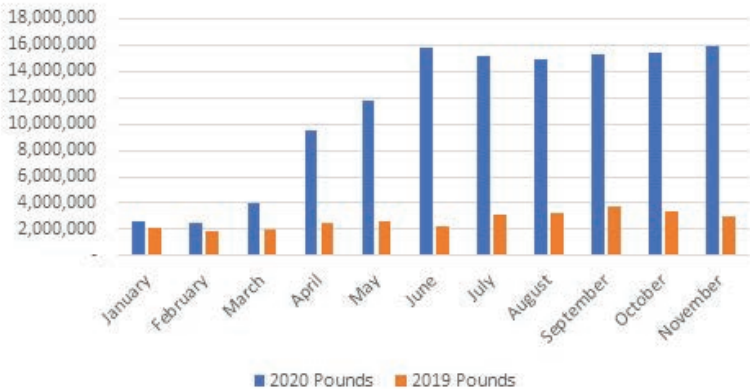
Families line up outside of the El Pasoans Fighting Hunger Food Bank in El Paso's Lower Valley. The lines at the food bank start forming before sunrise and, often, the line stays past sunset. *Aaron E. Martinez/El Paso Times*

More information

<https://elpasoansfightinghunger.org> or 915-298-0353.

Marked Increase in Volume of Food Distributed Due to Pandemic

EPFH Pounds of Food Distributed




In January, the El Pasoans Fighting Hunger Food Bank saw an increase in the pounds of food distributed.

In November, EPFH recorded the highest increase; the food bank distributed almost 16 million pounds of food over the 3 million plus in the same month of 2019.

In total, at the time this article was written, the food bank had distributed **122,692,662** pounds of food, far more than the **32,526,236** distributed for the whole year in 2019. The food bank at the end of December was on track to distribute more than 130 million pounds of food in 2020.


New Ways to Help: Lessons Learned from 2020

SPONSORSHIPS




\$18

FOR A HOME DELIVERY FOR A FAMILY WHO IS STRUGGLING TO PUT FOOD ON THEIR TABLE




\$90

PER MONTH FOR A HOME DELIVERY TO THOSE WHO ARE HOMEBOUND: SENIORS, DISABLED OR IN QUARANTINE DUE TO COVID-19.



\$164

PROVIDES FOOD FOR A CHILD FOR A YEAR



\$655

FOOD FOR A FAMILY FOR A YEAR

DONATIONS IN HONOR OF SOMEONE
TREASURE A SPECIAL FAMILY MEMBER, FRIEND, COLLEAGUE, GROUP, OR GIVE A GIFT IN TRIBUTE OF A LOVED ONE.

PLANNED GIVING
CALL US TO ASSIST YOU IN EXPLORING THE BEST OPTIONS FOR YOU.

Sustained Giving

Our new website allows donors the option to make a sustained gift through monthly payments. **We currently are seeking 2,500 donors to make \$20 monthly contributions;** that would result in \$600,000 for El Pasoans Fighting Hunger Food Bank and 4,200,000 meals for people in need!



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