



# **“Feeding Neighbors, Fueling Hope”**

## **Annual Report**

**January 1-December 31, 2025**

## Mission Statement

Responding to God’s love, WAFER provides food and works to eliminate hunger.

## Vision Statement

WAFER is committed to addressing hunger-related needs in La Crosse County, while treating each person with personalized service and dignity. We will procure food, develop resources, and collaborate with other programs, organizations, and businesses to alleviate hunger and food insecurity in our area. We will strive for effective stewardship of resources to provide successful food assistance programs.

Over the course of the next five years, WAFER will be working to reach those in our population most at risk, children and seniors. Our strategic directives include:

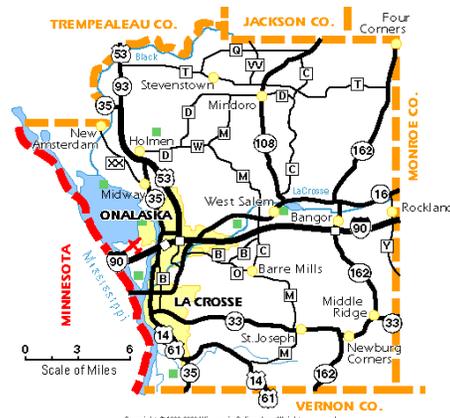
- Expanding and developing food procurement and food distribution
- Educating patrons on nutrition and food preparation

### December 2025 Board of Directors

President, Taylor Haley; Pastor at First Presbyterian Church  
Vice-President, Mike Voss; Sales Manager at Torrance Casting  
Secretary, Madalene Buelow; Retired Fundraiser  
Treasurer, Lee Bluske; Financial Advisor at Mutual of Omaha Companies

Pete Bassett; Finance Controller, River Valley Remodelers  
Mary Chilcote; Volunteer Representative  
Amy DuPont; Creative Media Manager, Kwik Trip  
Cory Gylock; VP/GM FOX 2548 (Nexstar Media Group, Inc.)  
Dorothy Stroschein; Lawyer, Lawyers at Work  
Mike Swinghamer; Architect, River Architect  
Kelly Wilde; Program Director/On-Air Announcer at Magnum Media

 Dedicated to fighting hunger  
in La Crosse County  
since 1985



Dear Friends,

It is hard to believe that another year has already passed. It often feels like we're just getting started, and before I know it, a month has flown by. I step into a new season, and suddenly I find myself at the end of the year once again. For me, this reinforces the importance of each day.

On a personal note, it is even harder for me to grasp that I have now spent two decades advocating for and serving low-income, food-insecure individuals and families in a food pantry setting. What a meaningful opportunity it has been to reflect on where we started and how far we've come—moving from handing out a simple bag of food to offering a full self-select shopping experience in a “food co-op” style environment, and from having very few fresh items to providing an abundance of nutritious choices.

I am proud of how our network has continued to advance opportunities, challenge outdated methods, and build a more inclusive, relevant, and impactful system of support.

Last year, like most, brought both triumphant moments and significant challenges. Bear with me as I share just a few highlights—each one made possible only through the dedication of our incredible volunteers, the commitment of our board members, and the hard work of our staff.

### A Strong Start to the Year

The new year started off on a high note. After a long wait, our new refrigerated truck finally arrived—a milestone that felt both exciting and deeply relieving. Our previous truck was nearing the end of its life, and we had been warned that one day it would simply stop running. Pandemic-related supply chain issues made the replacement process far more challenging than expected, but after two years of planning and seven months of production, we were able to begin the year with this essential new piece of equipment.



Why is a refrigerated truck so important? Quite simply, it is the lifeline of our fresh food recovery efforts. This vehicle allows us to safely collect perishable foods from local retail partners, producers, and distributors. As you'll read throughout this report, of the 1.8 million pounds of food provided in our local communities, nearly **1.2 million pounds** of food was recovered from retail partners this year. These items—often the most expensive to purchase—include produce, dairy, meat, and baked goods that elevate the nutritional quality of every food package we provide.

Because of the abundance of recovered product, we are able to welcome shoppers back once weekly for produce, baked goods, and surplus items in addition to the once monthly food package offerings. We are also able to share with other local organizations serving similar populations, including food pantries, meal sites, after-school programs, and more. In 2025, this collaboration allowed us to share the equivalent of **31,000 meals** with partners across the community.

This truck is more than a vehicle—it is an investment in dignity, nutrition, and community well-being. It ensures that high-quality fresh foods continue to reach the people who need them most.

Acquiring the new truck was only possible thanks to the coordination and expertise of **Nate Nedegard at Convenience Transport**, along with the generosity of many donors who believed in the importance of this project. We are deeply appreciative to the following for contributing to the funding needs:

- **Otto Bremer Trust**
- **ALM Charities**
- **Emplify Health by Gundersen**
- **Mayo Foundation for Medical Education and Research**
- **Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade, and Consumer Protection** through the *Resilient Food System Infrastructure* equipment grant
- **Community donors**
- **Three donor-advised funds at the La Crosse Area Community Foundation:**
  - The Robert and Eleanor Franke Fund
  - George and Virginia Schneider Family Fund
  - Guenther-Froegel Family Fund

Their collective investment and steadfast support of WAFER ensured that this essential vehicle could be purchased, allowing us to continue recovering fresh, high-quality foods and strengthening food access across our region.

## The Perfect Storm

As fall approached, the level of government commodity support continued to decline and purchasing priorities shifted, leaving us with the lowest stock levels we had seen in more than a decade. Donations simply could not keep pace with the need, and we were on a trajectory that made it impossible to sustainably purchase the items most in short supply. Then came the impact of the government shutdown and the pause on SNAP benefits—and the situation intensified quickly.

Families who had relied on SNAP to meet their food needs suddenly found themselves turning to WAFER to bridge the gap. Individuals who had once depended on WAFER but had been able to make it on their own returned for help. Many had not walked through our doors in 4, 8, or even 20 years.

For federal workers on furlough, this was a moment they never imagined. Some had been supporters of WAFER, and now they found themselves on the other side of the table—an unexpected and humbling place to be. When putting food on the table became uncertain, WAFER remained a trusted and reliable source. In the midst of so much unknown—how long the shutdown would last, when benefits would resume—WAFER was certain.



Already stretched thin, and people frequently lined up across the front of the building, we were honest with the community and asked for help. And true to form, our local communities stepped up. Regular donors increased their gifts of food, and businesses, service clubs, churches, and many others flooded us with donations to restock the shelves. More than once, staff and volunteers commented on the sheer volume of food coming in—an outpouring unlike anything we had seen before. In a season when the world’s heaviness could feel overwhelming, this generosity was a bright spot that warmed all of our hearts. We knew we were not standing alone.

In addition to food, many donors came forward with financial gifts to help purchase items that were not being donated. From individuals to businesses and everyone in between, our community banded together to ensure that every neighbor was cared for. Through these challenges—and throughout the year—we were also blessed by the generosity of donors with funds at the La Crosse Area Community Foundation. In 2025, the following funders joined in supporting their fellow neighbors:

Carney Haskell Impact Fund, Endrizzi Family Fund, Kerbaugh Family Fund, Sleik Family Fund, Reimann Fund, Mader Family Fund, Cason Fund, Rude Family Fund, Marv & Annette Friedewald Fund, Bonney Family Fund, Donskey Family Fund, Barbara and Donald Frank Family Fund, Berg Family Fund, The Anthony Fund, Graw Family Fund, Erickson Sisters Fund, Todd and Deb Mahr Family Fund, Carol and Duane Taebel Family Fund, Tom and Laurie Berkedal Family Fund, Jim and Jo Ann Wickizer Fund, Sundet Family Fund, Roland and Janeane Solberg Family Fund, Sullivan Fund, and Ellen and Henry Funk Family Fund.

Their collective generosity ensured that, even in the midst of a perfect storm, our neighbors had what they needed most: stability, compassion, and the reassurance that no one would face hunger alone. The resounding message from our community was simple and powerful: *we care about you.*

### The Volunteers — They Are Amazing

Funding is critical in keeping the doors open and providing consistent service, but volunteers are truly the lifeblood of WAFER. As need skyrocketed, volunteers stepped up in extraordinary ways. We welcomed new helpers—including federal workers on furlough—but it was our seasoned volunteers, those already deeply invested in this work, who gave even more of their time.

Volunteers are woven into every part of our operations. They assist shoppers with warmth and dignity, help people navigate the space, and ensure that long lines move smoothly so everyone can be served. They refill shelves after busy days, receive and sort donations, and keep the pantry organized and welcoming.

Their impact extends far beyond the pantry floor. Volunteers take on essential tasks that free staff to focus on organizational growth, community partnerships, and long-term planning. They support special projects, help with fundraising and development activities, and represent WAFER in the community—strengthening relationships and building trust. Their presence multiplies our capacity in ways that cannot be overstated.

They aren't here for the kudos. They enjoy the camaraderie, but service is in their hearts. Their quiet, steady commitment carried us through one of the most demanding seasons we've faced in the last decade—during what is already the busiest time of the year—and WAFER is stronger because of them.

### Celebrating the Volunteers

Each year, when possible, the staff hosts a celebration to honor our volunteers—the individuals who deliver direct service to the community and the board members who help guide the organization. This past year, we shifted from a sit-down dinner to a parking-lot picnic held right at the pantry.

The weather was beautiful. Volunteers mingled, reconnected, and met new faces. It was low-key, relaxed, and genuinely fun—a moment to step away from the busyness of daily operations and simply enjoy being together.

But more importantly, it was a chance to acknowledge the enormous impact these individuals make. Their work shapes every shopper's experience, strengthens our programs, and expands our reach. They help WAFER remain responsive, resilient, and deeply connected to the community we serve.

The picnic was a small gesture compared to the unending gifts of time, energy, and compassion they offer, but it is a joy to celebrate them in a space that feels like home—surrounded by our WAFER community, which truly feels like family. Please enjoy a few photos from the day.





When one of our staff members planned for an extended leave, two longtime volunteers immediately stepped up to cover the mobile pantry needs. Many more volunteers pitched in to prepare the vehicle and stock food before each of the 20 monthly outreach sites, ensuring there was no disruption in service. Their willingness to take on additional responsibilities meant that every scheduled stop remained reliable for the neighbors counting on us.

The staff would like to acknowledge two particular volunteers who stepped up to fill some very big shoes. Because of the size and weight of the mobile pantry vehicle, a special certificate is required—and not everyone feels comfortable driving something of that scale. Our deep gratitude goes to Tom and Lois Tucker, who embraced the responsibility.



Although much happened throughout the year, this section offers a sample of key accomplishments and milestones from 2025.

- **Securing a Federal Energy Rebate**

After months of navigating the federal portal, we successfully secured an energy rebate for the installation of our solar panels. With ongoing rumors that these credits may be discontinued, we are especially grateful to have received this funding while it was still available.

- **Launching a Volunteer-Led Community Engagement Committee**

The newly formed volunteer committee—chaired by board member **Mary Chilcote**—focused on expanding WAFER’s presence beyond our four walls. Volunteers sought out opportunities to connect with the community, attend resource fairs, participate in fundraising events, and speak with partner organizations. Their outreach helped strengthen awareness of food insecurity and deepen relationships across the region.

- **Advocacy and Engagement with State and Federal Leaders**

Budget discussions and broader economic uncertainty opened doors for meaningful conversations with state and federal policymakers. Throughout the year, we were fortunate to engage with **Senator Pfaff**, **Representatives Billings and Johnson**, and to host **Governor Evers** and **Representative Van Orden** for a tour of the pantry. *(Pictured with the Governor is Board President, Taylor Haley)*



In April, I joined **Feeding Wisconsin** at the State Capitol to advocate for increased funding for federal food assistance programs. I was also invited to give a presentation on nutrition education in a food pantry setting to a cross-section of federal program staff (DHS, WIC, UW-Extension), Feeding America food banks, food pantry operators, distributors, aggregators, and others—highlighting the importance of education alongside access.

- **Creative Community-Driven Food Drive Challenges**

To boost food donations, we introduced a new community challenge model—and two sectors eagerly embraced it and the first-ever **Financial Institution Food Drive Challenge** launched in May. This was followed by a second challenge in September among businesses connected to vehicle sales, service, and repair, **Wheels for Meals**. Frequent social media updates kept the community engaged in the competition.

The premise was simple: one business collected a specific item for a week, then challenged the next business to meet or exceed that goal. Week after week, the challenge was passed along—creating a steady stream of donations, raising awareness about hunger close to home, and demonstrating how unity can create meaningful change. (Pictured is a representative of each financial partner)



Please take a few moments to read more about WAFER in 2025. Further in this report, you will find an overview of our services, stories and highlights from the year, information about our volunteers, photos of just a few of the amazing individuals who share their time with us, snapshots of volunteer groups, program and service updates, financial information, a list of community donors, and a thorough breakdown of service statistics—including a historical perspective on how far we’ve come.

Thank you for choosing to partner with WAFER in 2025. Your gifts of time, talent, food, and funds make a world of difference for thousands of people every month. I invite you to get to know us—or get to know us even better. Come spend some time in the pantry, consider serving your friends and neighbors here at home, or join us for a tour to learn more about who WAFER is and all we strive to do for the people who need it most.

In Service,

Handwritten signature of Erin Waldhart in cursive script.

Erin Waldhart, Executive Director

# Service At A Glance – 2025 Highlights

WAFER’s programs continued to grow in both reach and impact throughout 2025. With the support of volunteers, donors, and community partners, we expanded access to nutritious food, strengthened partnerships, and deepened our commitment to reduce barriers for those experiencing food insecurity.

## Food Access & Distribution

- **38,000 people** received food assistance through in-house distribution, senior deliveries, weekend backpacks, and Mobile Pantry sites.
- Across all programs, **18,638 food packages** were provided.
- The **Mobile Food Pantry** distributed **3,436 food packages** and expanded to **20 established monthly stopping points** by year-end.
- The **Bangor School District Backpack Program** delivered **392 weekend food packages**, serving up to **50 children each week** during the school year.
- Shoppers accessed additional produce, bakery, and surplus item packages **873 times**.
- More than **700 families** visited WAFER for the first time in 2025.

## Survey Data

Throughout the year, WAFER gathered shopper feedback to better understand needs, experiences, and barriers. Their responses offer valuable insight into the realities households are facing:

- **May:** Nearly **800 households** were asked whether WAFER provides sufficient food options to meet their dietary needs and personal preferences. Only **1%** indicated their needs were not met.
- **June:** More than **800 households** were surveyed about interactions with volunteers and staff. **100%** responded favorably.
- **July:** Of more than **800 households** surveyed, **87%** reported that rising grocery prices made it more difficult to afford enough and healthy food for their household.
- **August:** When asked about access to adequate facilities or equipment to prepare healthy meals, **24 households** reported they did not have sufficient resources.
- **November:** Of **600 shoppers** polled, **90%** indicated food received from WAFER lasts a week or more.

## Food Sourcing & Rescue

- **1.7 million pounds of food**—equivalent to **1.3 million meals**—was distributed across all programs.
- Nearly **1,180,000 pounds** of food were rescued from local retailers, an increase of almost **15,000 pounds** compared to 2024. (A full list of retail partners is available on our donors page.)

## Education & Community Engagement

- **Nutrition Education classes** continued through our partnership with UW-Extension FoodWI Nutrition Educators Mary, Emily, and Karie. Due to federal SNAP-Ed funding cuts, we said good-bye to Karie and Emily in 2025. We are deeply grateful for the years of education, care, and connection they brought to our community.
- Dietitians from Mayo Clinic and Gundersen Health System rejoined the teaching rotation for the first time in five years, marking an important return to pre-pandemic collaboration.
- **Nutrition education class topics** throughout the year included legumes, greens, root vegetables, spices, summer snacks, mix-and-match meals, healthy snacks to go, Patch-to-Plate pumpkins, and healthy holiday swaps.
- **Facility tours** were offered every 4–6 weeks, welcoming individuals, businesses, school groups, and community partners. These tours continue to highlight the full scope of WAFER’s services and the intentional work being done to reduce barriers to food access.

# Volunteers

Volunteers are the backbone of WAFER. Without an amazing and dedicated group of individuals, WAFER wouldn't be nearly as impactful for people struggling with food insecurity.

WAFER volunteers reflect the best of our local communities. They are filled with compassion, determination, and service above self for others in need. WAFER staff are honored to stand alongside amazing volunteers and to witness their love in action.

In 2025, volunteers contributed **24,375 hours of service**—an increase of more than 1,000 hours from 2024. According to Independent Sector, the value of a volunteer hour in Wisconsin is **\$34.79**, meaning WAFER volunteers provided an incredible **\$848,006** in service last year. Even at minimum wage, their time represents **\$176,719** in staffing savings—resources that could instead be directed toward feeding neighbors.

“Giving” the gift of time looked different for each volunteer in 2025. Some devoted one or more days every week. Others offered their talents whenever and wherever they could. Many spent workplace volunteer hours with us, and some served to fulfill school requirements. Every contribution—large or small—made a meaningful difference

Volunteers filled a variety of needs, routine and new. These included:

- Packing food packages based on family size for individuals using drive-thru distribution, delivered to seniors, or through the Mobile Pantry.
- Assisting patrons through the shopping experience.
- Stocking and distributing food packages from the Mobile Pantry.
- Picking up donations and unloading vehicles.
- Sorting food donations.
- Stocking shelves and coolers.
- Assembling food packages for delivery programs
- Delivering food packages to households with transportation or mobility issues.
- Cleaning shelves, coolers, bathrooms, floors, and more.
- Assisting with administrative projects such as mailings, volunteer form filing, and more.
- Representing WAFER at community events.
- Attending events like food drives, volunteer recruitment, and community resource fairs.
- Facility and equipment repairs.
- And stepping in wherever possible to just get things done.

# Just a Few Photos of WAFER's "Rockstar" Volunteers in Action in 2025 – in the building, on the mobile pantry, or out in the community at events









**VOLUNTEER GROUPS** play a critical role in tackling larger-scale and more complex projects at WAFER. In 2025, group volunteerism remained strong. Businesses, in particular, were eager to spend time in our new facility, and many individuals who had volunteered in the old building were struck by the open, bright, spacious, and clean environment.

Their feedback has been both encouraging and insightful. Many expressed surprise at the magnitude of WAFER's operations, the breadth of programming, and the abundant variety of foods available for shoppers. These reflections highlight not only how far WAFER has come, but also the vital role volunteer groups play in helping us serve the community with dignity and efficiency

Pictured below are just a few of the groups who have spent time with us this year: UMR, DSG, Middle Coon Valley Lutheran Church, Altra Federal Credit Union – Day of Caring, Associated Bank, Inclusa, Metronet, River Bank, Wester Technical College, and many groups of University of Wisconsin-La Crosse students.





# Who Does WAFER Help?

WAFER provides food assistance to individuals and families throughout La Crosse County, including the City of La Crosse, Mindoro, Holmen, West Salem, Onalaska, Bangor, and Rockland. Our reach extends across urban neighborhoods, rural communities, and everywhere in between.

The face of hunger looks like the people we pass every day. Hunger does not discriminate—it affects individuals of every age, gender, race, background, and circumstance. The people who turn to WAFER reflect the full diversity of our community: single-parent households, two-parent families working hard yet still unable to make ends meet, individuals living with chronic disabilities or new diagnoses, people who are unemployed or experiencing homelessness, veterans, seniors, and many others.

Every story is different, but each one is met with dignity, compassion, and the belief that no one in our community should go without access to nutritious food.

## WAFER's Programs and Services (see statistic graphs below)

### Food Package Distribution

Food package distribution remains WAFER's core program. Patrons receive a 4–5 day supply of food at least once per month, with quantities adjusted based on household size. However, when surveyed, some shoppers report that the food lasts longer than one week. Each food package includes a balanced mix of non-perishables—such as canned fruits and vegetables, pasta, beans, tuna, cereal, peanut butter, crackers, soup, tomato products, mac-and-cheese, and assorted side dishes—as available.

Packages also include bakery items, dairy products (milk, yogurt, cottage cheese, eggs), frozen meat, and an abundant variety of fresh produce. Common offerings include lettuce, greens, onions, potatoes, oranges, apples, bananas, peppers, melon, squash, berries, cabbage, green beans, and carrots. Hygiene items are provided as available.

Across all programs and services, **18,638 food packages** were distributed in 2025.

### Mobile Food Pantry

Launched in September 2017, the Mobile Food Pantry is a specially designed vehicle that travels to communities and neighborhoods throughout La Crosse County, bringing food distribution closer to home. The Mobile Pantry mirrors the in-house experience and offers the same variety of foods, including canned goods, bakery items, frozen meat, dairy products, fresh produce, and hygiene items.

When the program began, patrons boarded the vehicle to select their foods. However, as usage surged during the pandemic, the model shifted to prepacked boxes to ensure efficiency and safety. Patrons may receive a food package either at the in-house pantry or through the Mobile Pantry—one location per month.

Regularly scheduled stops make the service predictable, reliable, and accessible. Days, times, and locations are available on the calendar on the WAFER website. In 2025, the Mobile Food Pantry provided **3436 food packages**.

### Senior Share

The Senior Share program provides WAFER's standard food package to homebound, low-income seniors who are unable to visit the pantry in person. Food is pre-packed according to individual preferences whenever possible and can be delivered directly to senior meal sites, apartment complexes, community locations, or individual residences throughout La Crosse County.

In 2025, **292 Senior Share packages** were delivered. A small but mighty dedicated group of volunteers supports this program, ensuring seniors receive nutritious food with dignity, consistency, and care.

### Hmong Food Package

The Hmong Food Package is one of WAFER's longest-running programs, offered for more than 15 years. It was created in recognition that many Hmong families do not use or eat portions of the foods included in the "standard" food package. Because many common American staples are not part of the Hmong diet, this program ensures families can access foods that align with their cultural preferences and cooking traditions.

The Hmong Food Package includes four key staples commonly used in Hmong households: **bamboo shoots, fish sauce, rice noodles, and rice**. Families may choose these items as part of their monthly food package, ensuring that the support they receive is both nutritious and culturally relevant.

### Feeding Today's Youth – Bangor Backpack Program

In partnership with the Bangor School District, WAFER provides easy-to-prepare or ready-to-eat foods for children to take home over the weekend. While Bangor is not technically classified as a "food desert" (defined as urban neighborhoods or rural towns without ready access to fresh, healthy, and affordable food within a one-mile or ten-mile radius, respectively), community food resources are limited. This program helps bridge that gap. Approximately **40-50 children** took part in the program weekly during the school year.

The Weekend Backpack Program ensures children have access to nutritious food outside of the school setting, return on Monday ready to learn, and have stronger opportunities for healthy development. School staff identify participating students, and each child receives a backpack of food at least once per week. In 2025, **392 weekend food packages** were provided.

### Nutrition Education and Education Opportunities

Launched in 2014, WAFER's Nutrition Education initiative began as a collaboration between Viterbo University dietetic students and UW–Extension Nutrition Educators. Over time, the program grew to include additional community partners, including dietitians from Gundersen Health System and Mayo Clinic Health System, as well as chefs from Chartwell.

The program was created in response to a clear need: many patrons lack basic kitchen tools, food preparation skills, and confidence to fully utilize the ingredients available through WAFER. By focusing on produce-forward education and hands-on skill building, the project aims to address root causes of food insecurity and improve long-term health outcomes connected to food choices.

In 2020, the program was paused due to the pandemic and later reintroduced gradually—first virtually, then through a hybrid model. During this period, several long-standing education partnerships were lost as staff transitioned to new roles.

In 2025, WAFER successfully re-engaged community partners from Gundersen and Mayo, and together with UW–Extension, offered nine education sessions throughout the year. The goal is to provide one class each month, with every participant receiving education, recipes, samples, and a practical “incentive” such as a kitchen tool, cookbook, or ingredients to help them apply new skills at home.

Topics covered in 2025 included beans, greens, root vegetables, spices, summer snacks, mix-and-match meals, healthy snacks to go, Patch-to-Plate pumpkins, and healthy holiday swaps.



*Spice It Up*  
IN THE  
KITCHEN

Herbs and spices can make a simple dish burst with flavor. Whether using dried or fresh herbs and spices, they are good for our taste buds and our health! Join us as we talk about health benefits of herbs and spices, learn tips on how to include them in your recipes, and enjoy samples.

**Tuesday, June 24th, 2025 9-10AM**  
WAFER Food Pantry  
1603 George St, La Crosse

Income eligible participants will receive a gift for attending the entire class, one per household. Pre-registration is required at least 3 days in advance. 15 spots are available. Call 608-782-6003 or email [info@waferialacrosse.org](mailto:info@waferialacrosse.org) to reserve your place.



## Food Rescue

Food Rescue is a cornerstone of WAFER's operations and a key reason we are able to offer such a wide variety of fresh foods and pantry staples to our community. Every weekday, at least one driver travels throughout the area collecting food that is "unsalable" in retail settings due to reasons like dented packaging, close sell-by dates, or labeling errors. These items are still perfectly safe and nutritious—and rescuing them ensures they nourish families instead of going to waste.

Produce is often especially abundant, giving patrons access to a rich selection of healthy, nutrient-dense fruits and vegetables. Thanks to the generosity of our retail partners, families also have the opportunity to choose from dairy products, baked goods, eggs, meat, and other wholesome foods that support well-balanced meals. In 2025, WAFER rescued nearly **1,200,000 pounds** of food. Using the standard valuation of \$1 per pound, this represents approximately **\$1.2 million** in product recovered—at a cost of roughly **\$30,000** in vehicle and staffing expenses. This remarkable return on investment underscores both the efficiency and the community impact of Food Rescue.

A full list of our retail partners can be found on our website or later in this report.

# Financial Information

WAFER receives financial support from personal and business donations, foundations, grants, and the United Way.

Operating Expense Accounts - contain a minimum of 6 months of financial reserves to ensure uninterrupted service...\$233,059.77\*

Receivable - United Way Pledge, prepaid insurance, promises ...\$12,176.67

CIMA \$931,310.39\*\*

Current Assets: \$1,176,546.83

Property and Equipment: \$4,910,315.21

Non-current Assets: \$0

Total Assets: \$6,086,862.04

\*Operating Expense Accounts include checking and money market accounts.

\*\*Capital Improvement and Maintenance Accounts for ongoing programs including Nutrition Education Training and the Mobile Food Pantry, includes money market accounts.



***We wish to acknowledge community donors that partnered with  
WAFER from January – December 2025.***

***This list does not contain financial donors.***

***\*Due to human and unintentional error, it is possible a donor may be emitted.***

***Weekly Food Donors***

- Aldi - La Crosse
- Aldi – Onalaska
- Gundersen/Emplify Health - Nutrition Services
- HyVee
- Kwik Trip
- Linda’s Bakery
- Panera Bread
- Performance Food Group
- Sam’s Club
- Starbucks
- Target
- Walmart - La Crosse
- Walmart - Onalaska
- Westby Creamery

***School and Education Partners***

- Aquinas High School
- Aquinas Middle School
- Bangor FFA
- Chartwell, UWL Dining Service
- Coulee Christian School
- Holmen FFA
- Logan High School
- Logan Middle School
- UWL
- UWL Women's Track Team

***Churches***

- Bethany Evangelical Free Church
- Blessed Sacrament Parish
- Cathedral School
- English Lutheran Church
- First Baptist Church
- First Congregational Church
- First Free Church
- First Presbyterian Church
- Franciscan Sisters of Perpetual Adoration
- Good Shepherd Lutheran Church
- Journey Lutheran Church
- Living Word Christian Church
- Mt Calvary Lutheran Church
- Olivet Lutheran Church
- Our Redeemer Lutheran Church
- Prince of Peace
- Roncalli Newman Center Parish
- St. Paul's Evangelical Lutheran Church

***Governmental Agencies***

- Democratic Party
- National Association of Letter Carriers
- National Weather Service

## ***Business and Corporate Partners***

1st Community Credit Union  
3 Amigos Property Management  
360 Realty  
608 Brewing  
Ace Hardware  
Advisors Management Group, Inc.  
Airgas  
Amazon  
Associated Bank  
Authenticom  
Bakalars Sausage Co.  
Beer by Bike Brigade  
Belshire Apartments  
Benedictine Living Community  
Burn Boot Camp  
Chances R  
Citizens State Bank  
City Brewery  
Clason Buick GMC La Crosse  
Community Care and Share Pantry  
Cordells Automotive Service  
Coulee Bank  
Coulee Cards & Gaming  
Coulee Region Humane Society  
Crescent Jewelers  
CSL Plasma  
Dahl Automotive  
Degier Trucking  
Del's Service Center  
Diggity Dog Daycare  
DuraTech Industries  
Dynamic Lifecycle Innovations  
Dynamic Recycling  
Fantastic Sams  
Fed Ex Ground  
Festival Foods  
Five Below  
Good Steward  
Goodwill La Crosse  
Goodwill Onalaska  
Great Lakes Cheese  
Great Lakes Coca Cola  
Gundersen/Emplify Health  
Habitat for Humanity  
Hansen & Associates

Havenwood of Onalaska  
Hidden Trails Corn Maze  
High Roller Skating  
Hillview Health Care  
Hormel Foods  
I.C. System, Inc.  
Indus International  
International Association of Machinists - Lodge 21  
Kunes RV  
La Crosse Airport  
La Crosse Area Realtors Association  
La Crosse Country Club Ladies Golf Assoc.  
La Crosse County Administration  
La Crosse Forage and Turf Seed Corp.  
Marine Credit Union  
Mayo Clinic Health System  
Meringue Bakery  
MOKA  
Morrie's Automotive Group  
Mutual of Omaha  
Neighbor for Neighbor Food Pantry  
New Horizons  
North Country Steak Buffet  
OptumServe Health Services  
Organic Valley  
Outdoor Services Inc.  
People's Food Cooperative, Inc.  
Pizza King  
Pizza Ranch  
Place of Grace  
Pogy's  
Potato King  
River Bank  
River City Running Club  
Riverplace Apartments  
Rivers Edge of La Crosse  
Roadside Market  
Rod's Ride On Powersports  
Rooster Andy's Catering  
Sacia Apple Orchard  
Select Custom Solutions  
Smile Care Dental  
State Bank  
Steve's Meats  
Taco John's

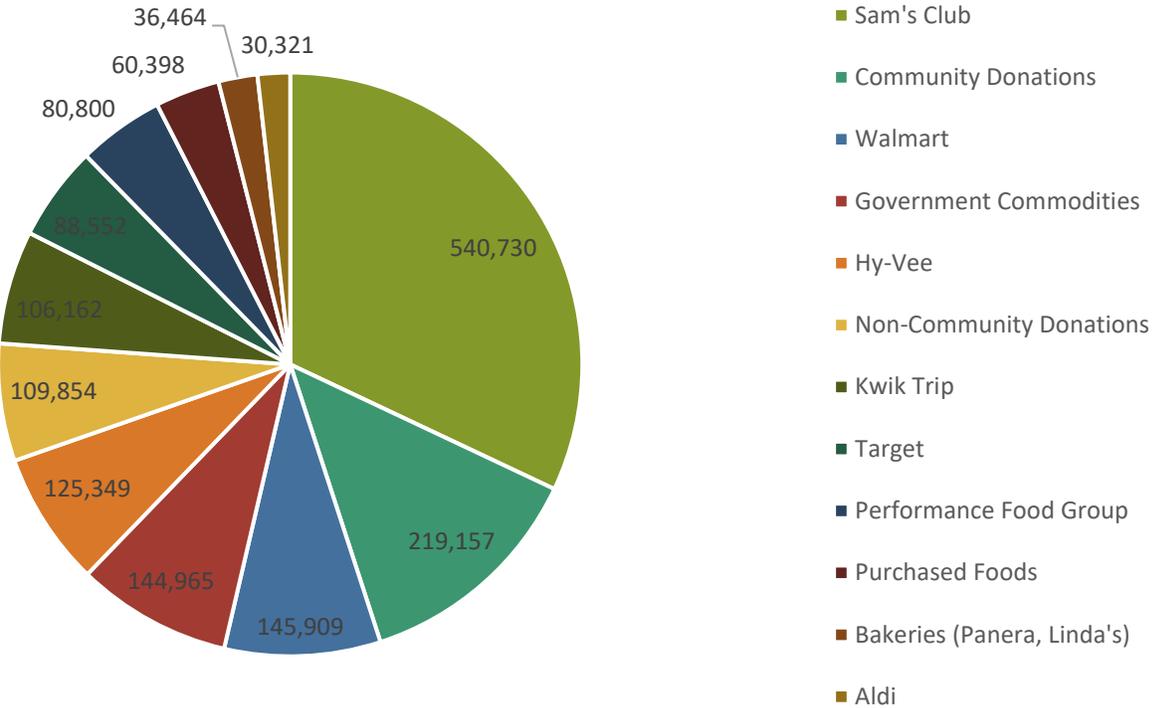
***Business and Corporate Partners cont'd***

The Alpine Inn  
The Good Fight Community Center  
The Yoga Place  
Thrive Chiropractic and Wellness Center  
Town and Country Garden Club  
Tree Huggers Co-Op  
Viking Electric  
Westby Direct Distributors  
WNB Financial  
Women In Philanthropy

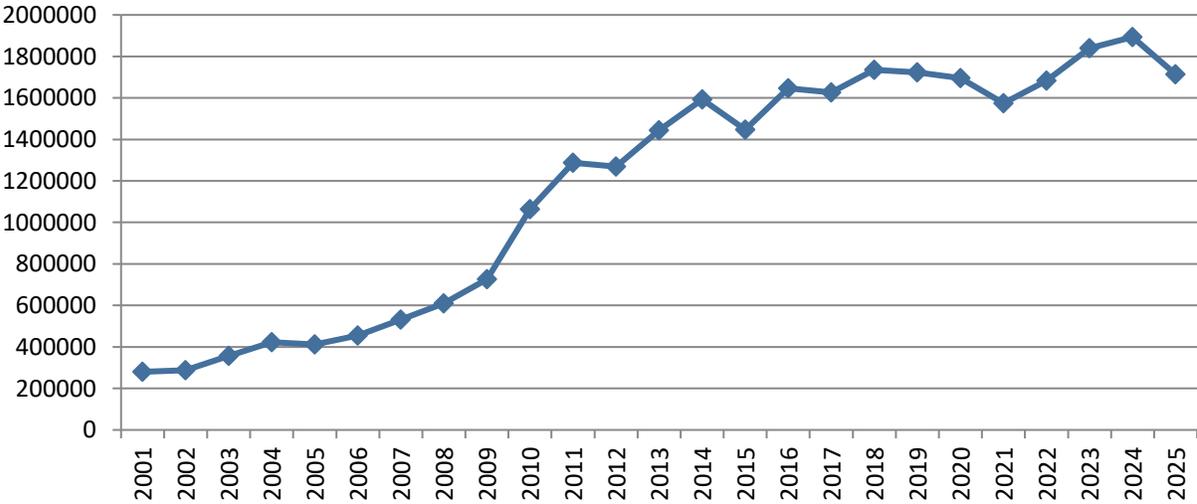
***Service Groups***

Gateway Area Boy Scouts  
Girl Scouts of Wisconsin - Badgerland  
La Crosse Concert Band, Inc  
Lucky Lakers 4H Club  
Oktoberfest Fraus  
PEO Sisterhood Chapter CR  
North American Squirrel Assoc.  
Rotary Lights

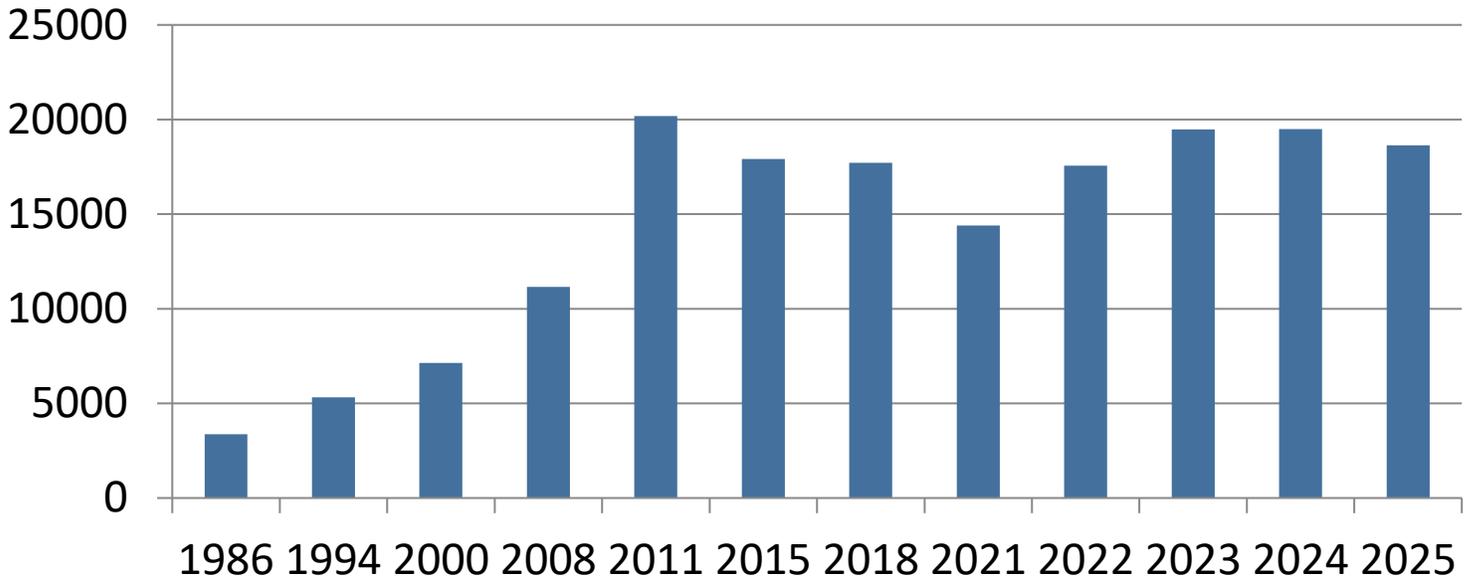
# 2025 Food Procurement Sources and Poundage



# Total Pounds Distributed 2001-2025



## Food Package Distribution 1986-2025

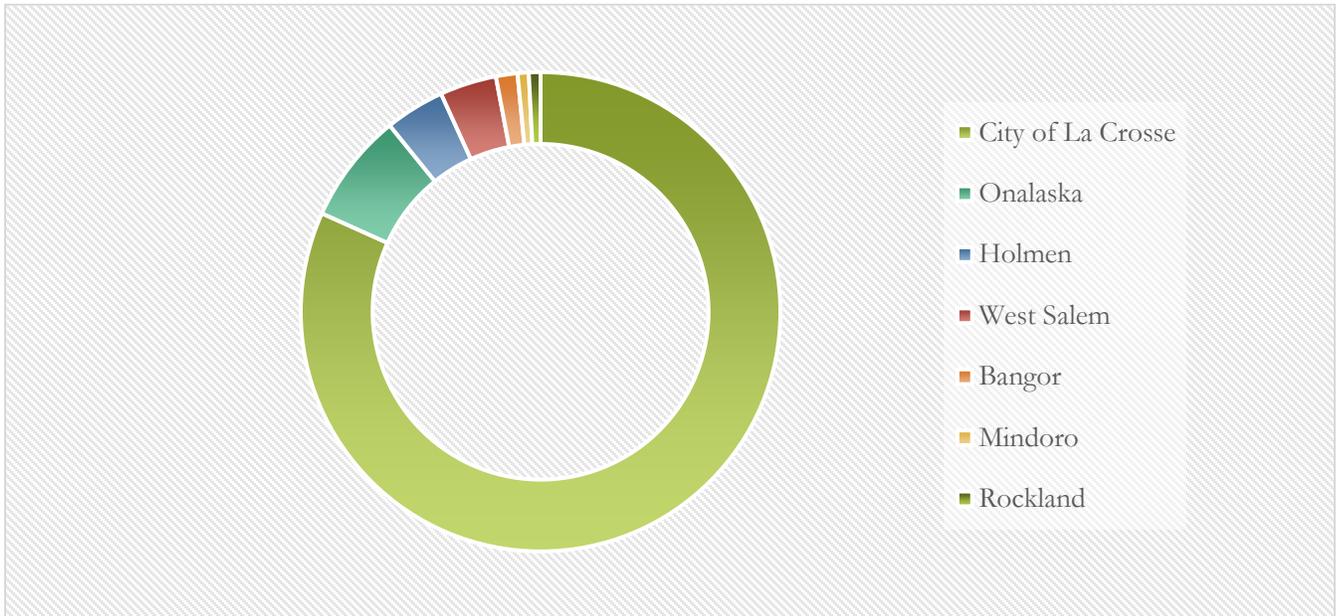


## Food Packages Distributed by County

County	Number of visits in 2025	Number of visits in 2024
La Crosse	17051*	18110*
Vernon	80	61
Trempealeau/Jackson	150	122
Monroe	30	3
Houston, MN	36	16
Other	3	8

\* Does not include partial packages or weekend backpacks provided as demographics are not collected, only the number of households.

# Food Package Distribution in La Crosse County Communities



## Unique People Served by County 2025

County	2025	2024
La Crosse	7880	8034
Vernon	46	59
Trempealeau/Jackson	108	42
Monroe	9	40
Houston, MN	40	35
Other	3	54



THANK YOU FOR  
HELPING TO FILL THE  
SHELVES TO PUT FOOD  
ON THE TABLE AT  
MEALTIME FOR OUR  
FRIENDS AND  
NEIGHBORS RIGHT HERE  
AT HOME! WE ARE  
HONORED TO BE YOUR  
**HOMETOWN FOOD  
PANTRY!**

Should you have questions regarding the contents of WAFER's annual report, please contact a board member or the Executive Director.

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Phone: 608-782-6003

Email: [waferdirector@waferlacrosse.org](mailto:waferdirector@waferlacrosse.org)

Website: <https://waferlacrosse.org>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/WAFERlacrosse/>