



STRENGTH IN COMMUNITY



2019 - 2020 ANNUAL REPORT





LETTER FROM THE DIRECTOR

Dear Just Food Supporter,

Over the past ten years, Just Food has learned so much about addressing hunger in our community. We have learned the needs of the families we serve and researched to implement innovative programs that change lives. We were proud to launch two major initiatives in the past year: the Cruising Cupboard, our mobile food pantry, in September 2019, and the Care Cupboard, our pantry in Heartland Community Health Center, in October 2019. These programs allow us to provide access to healthy food all across Douglas County and connect our clients with the healthcare resources they need.

Ten years ago when we were founded, we had no idea that in 2020 we would be facing the single biggest impact to hunger in our country since the Great Depression. Fortunately, because of generous donors, volunteers, supporters, and the thousands of lessons we have learned along the way, we were ready to answer the call.

The impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic will last for years to come. Families in our community have lost significant amounts of income. Thousands of people have filed for unemployment, some for the first time, and many have visited a food pantry for the first time in their lives. Just as much as the very first car we served via curbside distribution in March 2020, we are committed to assisting these families who need our help today. We are so grateful for the amazing supporters and volunteers who make this possible every day.

No matter how long this lasts, we want Douglas County to know that we are here for everyone who needs help. This is our promise to the community: that we will emerge stronger as we work to diminish the impacts that this pandemic is having on our community and to our friends and neighbors. We will always continue to learn, so we will always be ready to answer the call until hunger is eradicated.

Thank You,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Elizabeth Keever'.

Elizabeth Keever

2020 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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**OUR MISSION IS TO
END HUNGER
IN OUR COMMUNITY BY:**



**INCREASING ACCESS
TO HEALTHY FOODS**

**REDUCING BARRIERS
TO HEALTH AND
WELL-BEING**

**CULTIVATING
SELF-SUFFICIENCY**



EMERGING STRONGER

At the end of 2019, Just Food celebrated 10 years of fighting hunger in Douglas County. We have made an incredible amount of progress over the past 10 years and 2019 was no different. We opened the Cruising Cupboard, Just Food's mobile food pantry, became a member of the National Diaper Bank, and launched innovative partnerships including the Care Cupboard, Just Food's pantry in partnership with Heartland Community Health Center.



The COVID-19 pandemic has created unprecedented economic challenges in Douglas County leaving thousands more residents food insecure. This pandemic has disproportionately impacted people of color, immigrants and refugees, the LGBTQ community, and single parents and caregivers. Our work today is more vital than ever. Just Food worked hard to immediately address the need and developed new service models and partnerships to ensure no one goes hungry. We believe that we will emerge stronger as an organization and more resilient community.

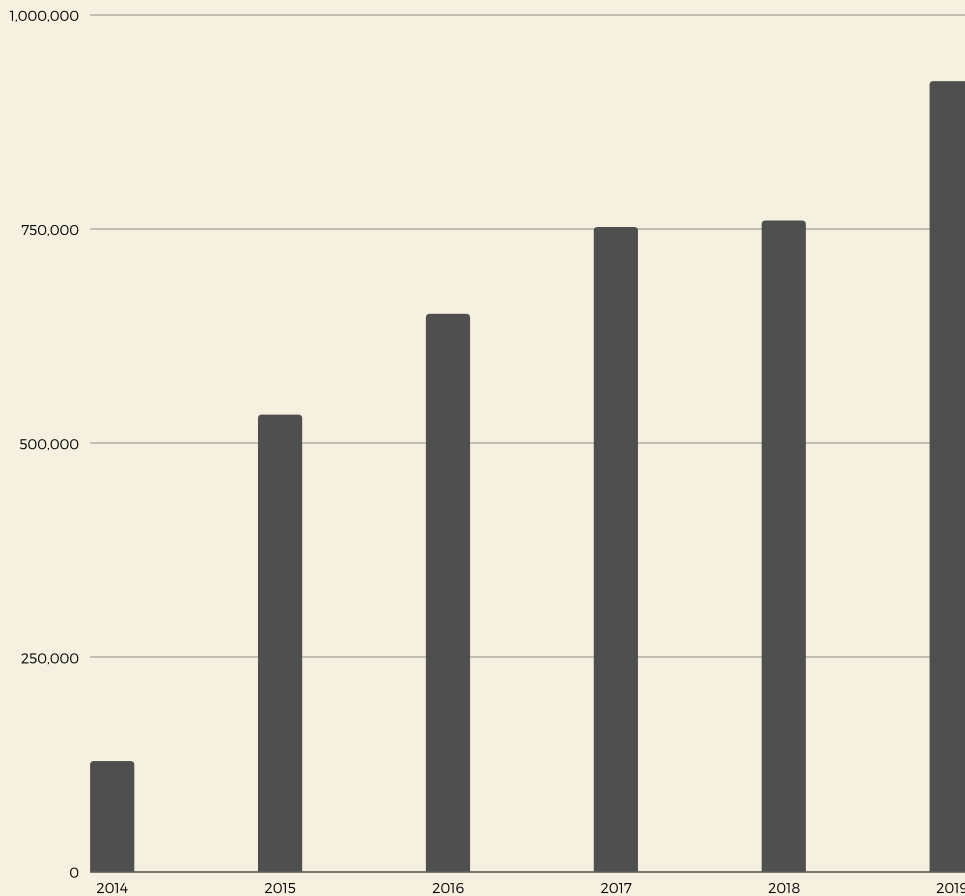


“I am one of those that utilized you today and I am blown away by the assistance you provided for my family. We have more than we could have hoped for and it is good quality food. The volunteers were so happy, kind and willing and I didn't feel judged or uncomfortable. I am so grateful for you. Thank you so very much.”

- Just Food Client

FOOD RECOVERY

TOTAL POUNDS



40%

OF ALL FOOD
GROWN IN AMERICA
GOES WASTED

Annually, Just Food picks up 2,000-3,000 pounds of food per day that would have otherwise been thrown away.

618%

INCREASE IN FOOD
RECOVERED

Over the past 5 years, Just Food has grown food recovery efforts by 618%





EMILY HARTFORD, JUST FOOD CLIENT

"Each week my daughters (ages four and five) wait patiently for our number to be called. We hear a beep, we check in at the counter, and our weekly shopping begins. They help me choose fresh fruits and veggies, learning and calling each by name, taking turns with others, and sharing their preferences. "Cooking" in the play kitchen while I finish, the girls join me for our point tally, chat with volunteers, and grocery bagging. We leave Just Food with a van full of food that will not only feed, but also delight our family of six.

A few months ago, this wasn't our story. We were struggling to make ends meet.

Our family has a single income, and our grocery list was getting shorter and shorter as prices increased. A dear friend suggested going to Just Food, but to be honest, I was unsure. Being just over the income limit for SNAP benefits, we had been unable to access food assistance. She assured me we would qualify, and much to my delight, my husband and I left Just Food that week empowered and excited for the impact this food would have on our daily lives."

"Going to Just Food this year means that we can breathe. It means that my husband and I can afford to seek out medical care for the first time in nearly a decade. It meant that I could get new glasses when mine broke unexpectedly. It means that we have more fruits and vegetables than ever before, many of them local and organic. It means that we could take out a very small loan to ensure that we have a vehicle suitable for traveling. It means that my kids are excited to cook and explore new foods. It means that my grocery budget has been cut to less than half. Going to Just Food has opened up a world of possibilities for our family.

While my experiences at Just Food have been phenomenal, sharing about my experience hasn't always been received warmly. I am tired of and saddened by people's judgements. Someone said to me recently, 'Well, sometimes you just have to make those tough decisions and give things up.' I could list out the things that we have cut out or given up, but that won't change a mind that's already decided that it must be our poor management of resources. It isn't, but what if it was? What if food insecurity happened because someone wasn't ever educated on financial management? Or what if they made a mistake somewhere along the way? Or had an emergency? Or work a full time job and still doesn't have enough to keep the lights on and food on the table? There is absolutely no reason to judge. And the folks at Just Food never judge.

In a world that seems obsessed with binary thinking - have/have not, right/wrong, earned/taken - Just Food continually breaks down barriers. They work to uphold and promote the worth of all persons, going above and beyond with programming, the pantry, and education. Whether you find yourself in a season of need or abundance, this place, and these people will welcome you with open arms and open hearts. Come, and be fed. Your heart, soul, and belly will be better for it."

JUST BASICS

BECAME A MEMBER OF THE
NATIONAL DIAPER BANK
NETWORK IN 2020

Each month, Just Food clients can
receive diapers along with the food
pantry services.

JUST COOK

PARTNERED WITH THE
LAWRENCE PUBLIC LIBRARY TO
GROW PROGRAMMING

This family-friendly hands-on cooking course
enables clients of all ages to learn the
importance of nutrition on a budget.



OUR PROGRAMS

Just Food operates five key programs: Just Cook, Just Grow, KitchenWorks, Pots and Pan-try and Just Basics.

Just Cook is a five-week program that teaches families and children how to cook healthy food under \$2/serving.

Just Grow connects families with the Just Food community garden, and teaches families how to grow their own food at home. In 2019, Just Food worked with One Heart Farm and distributed over 1,500 fruit and vegetable plants.

KitchenWorks is a professional, industry-inspired culinary class designed to give students the skills to gain employment in a restaurant or food service institution. Students receive training in knife skills, cooking methods, and food safety. Upon course completion, they receive job-placement assistance.

Pots and Pan-try provides Douglas County families with quality kitchenware and supplies to assist them in cooking low-cost meals at home.

Just Basics provides families in our community with the basics they need to live happy and healthy lives including diapers and menstrual support products.



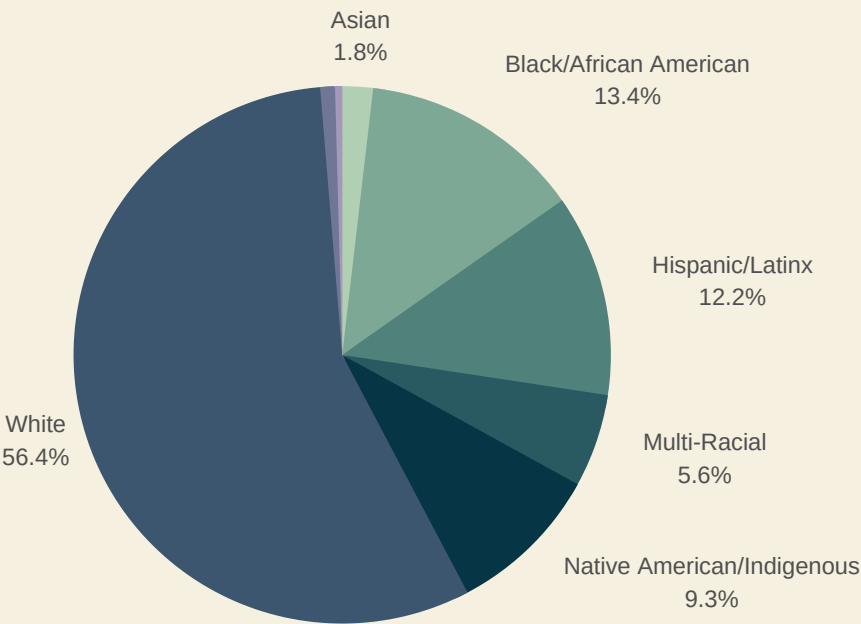
"I'm a cancer patient and have to be extra careful since the pandemic. Even with the great system you have put into action to avoid crowding, I just really can't chance going inside public buildings. I so appreciate the delivery boxes, though! You all are life-savers."

- Just Food Client

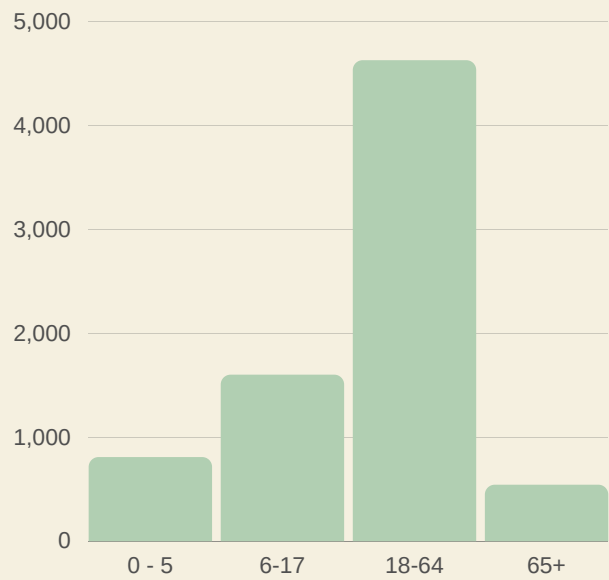


DEMOGRAPHICS

ETHNICITY



AGES





“The staff and volunteers at Just Food are remarkable people who have really put themselves out there to help those of us in need. Twice now, first when I became sick with pneumonia, and now, when I am quarantined after my COVID-19 testing, they have delivered supplies to my home for me and my son. They are truly God's Angels here on earth! They make certain no one goes hungry, during this extremely difficult time.”

- Just Food Client

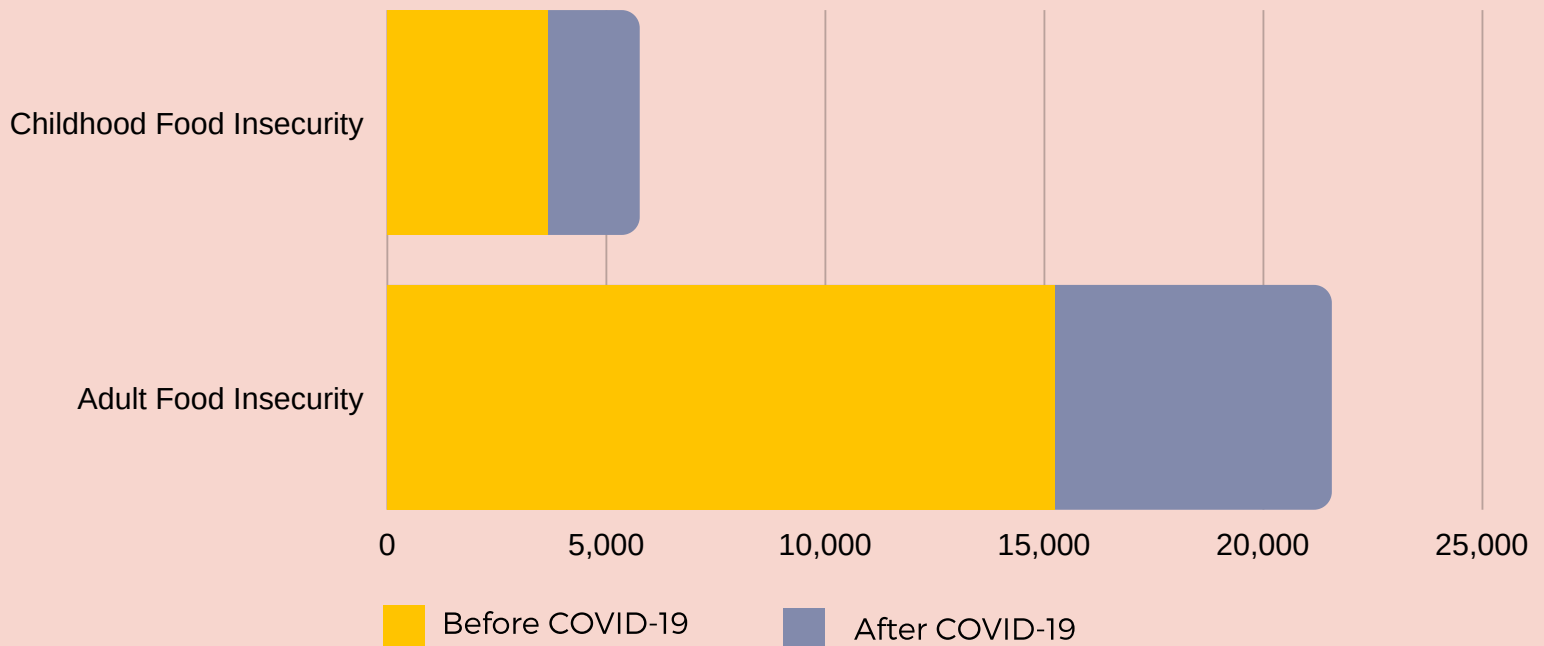


49%

INCREASE IN THE NUMBER OF NEW CLIENTS SERVED

More than 8,400 Douglas County residents became food insecure as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.

2020: COVID-19 IMPACT ON FOOD INSECURITY IN DOUGLAS COUNTY



PHASE 1

CURBSIDE DISTRIBUTION

Vehicles lined up down the road to receive grocery boxes. On any given day, Just Food distributed 300 to 500 boxes.



PHASE 2

REOPENING IN PERSON SHOPPING

Five shoppers at a time were allowed for in-person shopping.

HOME DELIVERY

IN APRIL 2020, JUST FOOD IMPLEMENTED HOME DELIVERY

Each week, Just Food distributes 100 to 150 grocery boxes to residents in Douglas County.

OUR RESPONSE

On March 14, 2020, Just Food announced its plan to enter Phase 1 of the organization's COVID-19 relief plan. This included shifting distribution to pre-packaged boxes of groceries for curbside pick-up in order to provide social distancing while still providing the food families need. In the first week, Just Food distributed over 50,000 pounds of food. More than half of the families that visited that week had never used Just Food's services before. Just Food continued this distribution until July 2020.

Clients who were medically quarantining or lacked access to transportation had difficulty accessing our curbside distribution. Just Food quickly implemented a home delivery program that is still be used each week.

On July 7th, Just Food began Phase 2 of the organization's COVID-19 response. This phase resumed in-person shopping, limiting it to five shoppers at a time. This process allowed shoppers to have a total choice shopping experience while still providing the space needed for social distancing.

The impacts of COVID-19 will last many months and years to come. Just Food is committed to addressing Douglas County's food needs no matter what lies ahead.



THE CARE CUPBOARD

September 19, 2019 - Just Food, Heartland Community Health Center, and Harvesters—The Community Food Network began a partnership to expand food pantry services at Heartland Community Health Center with the launch of the Care Cupboard. The Care Cupboard is an innovative pantry that addresses both food insecurity and healthcare needs. It serves to assist community members facing health concerns to access the healthy food they need to thrive and combat food-related illnesses.



66%

OF FOOD INSECURE
INDIVIDUALS
REPORTED
CHOOSING
BETWEEN FOOD
AND MEDICAL CARE

Many families experiencing food insecurity often have several health conditions and compounding factors which makes maintaining good health extremely difficult.

35%

OF FOOD INSECURE
DOUGLAS COUNTY
RESIDENTS LIVE IN A
FOOD DESERT

Research shows that increased distance to the nearest supermarket or other healthy food outlet is associated with decreased daily consumption of fruits and vegetables

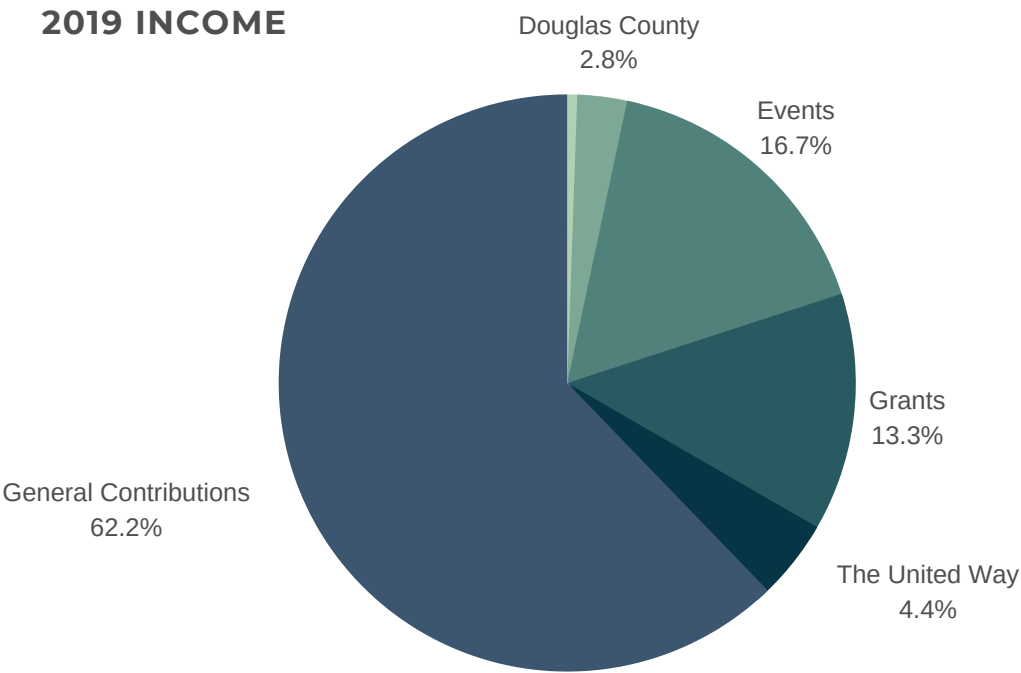
CRUISING CUPBOARD

In 2019, Just Food launched the Cruising Cupboard, a mobile food pantry that provides healthy food to low-income individuals lacking reliable transportation and/or access to healthy, affordable food. Weekly, the mobile pantry distributes healthy food to targeted demographics throughout Douglas County including Lecompton, Eudora, and Baldwin City.

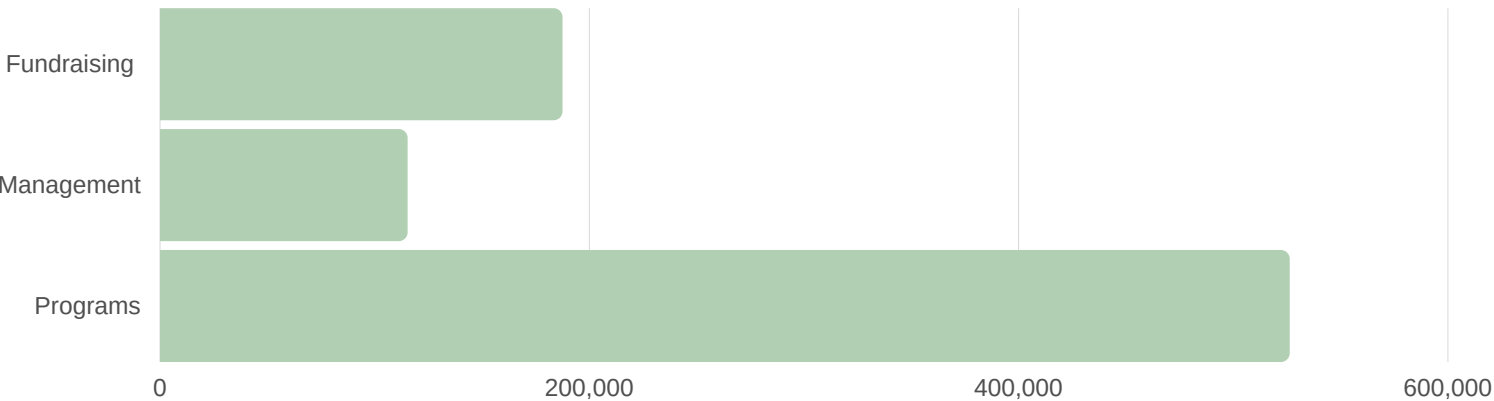


FINANCIALS

2019 INCOME



2019 EXPENSES





"Today I called Just Food. Within 5 minutes I received my online application and application for home delivery. Within 2 hours I received two boxes of food on my porch. Thank you to everyone in Lawrence who give of their time to donate food, work at the pantry and now provide delivery services at such a difficult time for so many. Your contributions, compassion, empathy and dedication to Lawrence, Kansas residents should be a model for other communities, cities and states. Thank you and God bless you all."

- Just Food Client



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