



Photo: Tracy Devenport, volunteer at Enfield Food Pantry, distributes produce from Healthy Food For All farms to over 500 families every week (photo credit Claire Concepcion)

Farm-to-Pantry

Sharing our local harvest—Healthy Food For All

“Fresh from the farm!” Enfield Food Pantry volunteer Tracy Davenport shares enthusiastically. Tracy’s warmth and infectious smile draws clients to the produce table at the end of the winding pantry line and invites everyone to fill their carts with fresh veggies, fruit, herbs and seedling plants, donated by Healthy Food for All (HFFA).

Tracy is a generous individual who admits she uses her sick days to volunteer. For two years now, she has joined the dedicated and passionate team of pantry volunteers and founder Pastor Jean Owens every Sunday and Monday at the Enfield Food Pantry to serve over 500 food-insecure families. The Enfield Pantry distributes over **30,000 pounds of food weekly** and welcomes **anyone in need**. Despite the pandemic seemingly coming to an end, they continue to serve double their pre-COVID volume according to Pastor Owens and plan to expand to meet the community’s growing and shifting needs.

On this day—thanks to HFFA—pantry clients can take freshly harvested greens, vibrant red radishes, sweet strawberries, aromatic herbs including mint, cilantro, garlic, and rosemary, and seedling plants of organic basil, tomato and kale to grow at home and eat all summer. Another special item are the fresh-baked breads made with locally grown grains, donated from Wide Awake Bakery.



“I wish that I was able to record the ooohs, ahhhhs and wows!” Tracy said, “Our clients are very appreciative.” The farm-fresh produce is a welcome sight and addition to the typical food available at pantries.

The Farm-to-Pantry project was started during the pandemic by Liz Karabinakis, Director of Healthy Food For All at Cooperative Extension, in response to the increased need for fresh nutritious food for hunger relief efforts. By leveraging support from local farms and partners, over 16,000 pounds of high quality locally grown fruits and vegetables has been distributed to date, and *the hope is to continue—from pantries and farmers alike.*

“Although the funding for Farm-to-Pantry has been exhausted, it feels morally wrong to stop providing fresh local food for hunger relief. Our farm fields are bursting with nutritious food so there is no acceptable explanation why children’s bellies are empty” states Liz as she helps harvest strawberries for distribution this week. “But relying solely on our family farms to donate would put them out of business, so that’s not the solution.”

Fortunately, many—including dedicated volunteers, public officials and community partners—share Liz’s sentiments and are helping to secure resources to keep the project going. A case study soon to be published highlights the success of local Farm-to-Pantry efforts and presents Tompkins County as a best practice model for New York.

“On behalf of the Enfield Food Pantry, I want to thank you for the beautiful, fresh produce that you provide every week! We know what kind of blood, sweat and tears goes into a project of this type so when we say thank you, it is from the bottom of our hearts,” expressed Tracy who loves to give back to her community and those in need. “Volunteering fulfills me, and I love helping my community.” Please join Tracy in supporting Healthy Food For All!

Donate to the Farm-to-Pantry Project

Make checks payable to “Center for Transformative Action/HFFA”

Please note “HFFA” in the memo line

Mail to Center for Transformative Action, P.O. Box 760, Ithaca NY 14851

Donate online at HealthyFoodForAll.org/donate