

Press Release

MIDWEST FOOD BANK HOSTS ANNUAL BACKPACK PROGRAM MEETING

Date: August 12, 2019

Normal, IL – Midwest Food Bank

Midwest Food Bank Bloomington-Normal hosted its annual Backpack Program today at 10:30 a.m. at their location in Normal, Il. 43 schools were represented. The Backpack Program provides weekend food to children in need (often those who participate in the government's free or reduced lunch program).

On Fridays during the school year, shelf-stable, child-friendly foods are sent home to ensure that local children do not suffer from food insecurity. Midwest Food Bank is increasing the number of schools supported from 35 to at least 43 this school year. Junior and senior high school students are being added to those receiving help. It is hoped that more than 3500 students will receive the help this year. The schools are all within a 70-mile radius of Bloomington-Normal.

Midwest Food Bank's cost to feed a child throughout the school year is about \$60. This provides over \$540 worth of food to a student.

"We are happy to be able to help children through the weekend," say Tara Ingham, Midwest Food Bank Bloomington-Normal's Executive Director. "the key pieces to make this happen are volunteers, financial donations, and relationships with food manufacturers who provide food donations.?"

is the regular recipient of donated foods from Dot Foods, headquartered in Mount Sterling, IL. Dot Foods has provided over \$3.5 million in food to Midwest Food Bank in 2019. Midwest Food Bank then distributes the food from their Normal, Morton and Peoria divisions. The food is freely given to over 650 nonprofit agencies from more than 70 counties across the state of Illinois.

Midwest Food Bank has 10 locations in the United States, Africa and Haiti. Their mission is to alleviate hunger by gathering and distributing food donations to not-for-profits and disaster sites at no cost to the recipients.

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