

SHE'S A HUGGER

Six-year-old Kendra is known for her big ole hugs. “Everyone at the market knows her, and loves her,” says mom, Phelisha.

And that’s important because sometimes Phelisha, Kendra and her younger sister Mackenzie visit Feed More’s School Market at Radcliffe Elementary in eastern Henrico for help.

Henrico now has a food insecurity rate of 9.3%; this means that 1 in 11 residents don’t have enough income to cover groceries and other basic needs. And with the rising cost of living, this market is a much-needed resource for students and their families. “Rent, groceries, gas — everything’s gone up,” said Phelisha, who works in business administration. “This helps provide what they need and it’s healthy. They love coming here.”

But this market, and the kind folks at Radcliffe Elementary, provide more than just a safe way to get food to children who need it most. It’s a place of hope and the promise of a better day. Phelisha uses two words to describe it all, “happiness and community.”

“It’s a blessing” she shared. “And I’m so very grateful. I really am.”



Bulk fruit and veggies are a staple at our School Market distributions and our team rotates produce based on seasonality.



FOOD *for* THOUGHT

From urban to rural, young families to older adults, food insecurity touches every corner of Central Virginia.

Many of the neighbors you help are employed, but an unexpected medical bill or car repair can force them to make tough choices between food and rent. For others, factors like age, health and mobility play a big role in what’s in their pantry.

Understanding neighbor need is a never-ending learning journey. So, we’re constantly analyzing economic, state and Central Virginia-specific statistics, and tracking factors like Gross Domestic Product, regional employment and housing costs. This helps us respond to need and get in front of burgeoning demand.

Income alone doesn’t tell the whole story. We pay attention to food prices, for sourcing and as a predictor for neighbor need. And our data tells us that the rising cost of essentials like eggs, milk and produce tracks to a 56% increase in neighbor call volume over time. That’s a strong signal that inflation, especially in food, is a driver of community need.

Grocery prices can be a slow-burning stressor. When prices go up, neighbors may initially cut back, rely on savings or seek help from family before turning to resources like our Help Line. By tracking these costs today, we can better forecast when call volume may increase three to six months from now. That allows for more efficient resource allocation and outreach during high-demand periods.

By taking this approach, we’re responding effectively today and building resilience for tomorrow.

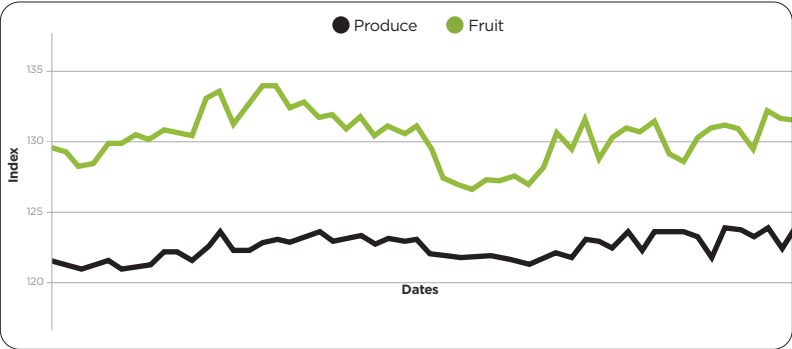
Get hands-on with how much things cost with these easy-to-use simulators.

Grocery Price Index
Using data collected from over 150,000 stores and over 30,000 zip codes, this Datassembly tool measures weekly changes in pricing for grocery products like fruits, vegetables, meats, dairy, frozen foods and more.

Elder Index
Want to know what it costs to age in place, at a county level? The University of Massachusetts Boston’s Elder Index shows how much older adults need to meet basic needs like housing, health care, transportation and food.

Grocery Price Index

Check out how fruit prices, in context with overall produce costs, have changed over the last 12 months.



datassembly.com/grocery-price-index

Elder Index

It’s easy to learn about projected expenses right where you live.

- 1.) Choose your county, state or metro area
- 2.) Apply your filters (household, housing status and health status)
- 3.) See your projected breakdown

Amelia County Couple Homeowner with mortgage Excellent health			
The Elder Index is: \$42,504/year <small>This is 86% of the national average of \$49,368</small>	Miscellaneous (Couple) \$493	Food (Couple) \$595	
	Transportation (Couple) \$393	Excellent health \$802	
	Housing (Owner, mortgage) \$1,259	Monthly Total \$3,542	

Chesterfield County Single Renter Good health			
The Elder Index is: \$30,168/year <small>This is 98% of the national average of \$30,792</small>	Miscellaneous (Single) \$324	Food (Single) \$324	
	Transportation (Single) \$256	Good health \$451	
	Housing (Renter) \$1,159	Monthly Total \$2,514	

New Kent County Couple Homeowner, no mortgage Poor health			
The Elder Index is: \$42,828/year <small>This is 99% of the national average of \$43,056</small>	Miscellaneous (Couple) \$533	Food (Couple) \$595	
	Transportation (Couple) \$393	Poor health \$1,454	
	Housing (Owner, no mortgage) \$594	Monthly Total \$3,569	



elderindex.org/explore



GARDENING FOR GOOD

Lewis Ginter Botanical Garden, in Richmond, is one of the top botanical gardens in the nation. But this 80+ acre green space is far more than a destination for over 450,000 families, plant enthusiasts, concert buffs and holiday light seekers each year. It's also a meaningful source of fresh produce for Central Virginia neighbors who are food insecure.

Nestled behind a 63-foot glass conservatory, famous for its orchids and tropical plants, is the Kroger Community Kitchen Garden. It's here that the team at Lewis Ginter, and their dedicated volunteers, have planted rows of tender seedlings and grown bushels and bushels of colorful peppers, juicy tomatoes, leafy greens and fresh fruit. Thanks to these kind folks and their many years of support, our neighbors and our Bayard Community Kitchen have received more than 70,000 pounds of fresh seasonal fruits and veggies.

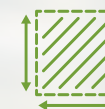
TJ Oliver, lead horticulturalist at the Kitchen Garden explains why this collaboration matters. "The motivation behind the work is to feed kids and adults who need food - and wouldn't be able to get it without what we're doing here. I really believe in our mission."

Recent garden additions like new fencing and a polyhouse ensure TJ and team can grow throughout the year - increasing donated produce and eliminating weather-related crop loss. And thanks to the Lewis Ginter expansion campaign, the Kroger Community Kitchen Garden is set for a major upgrade that includes the addition of fruit trees and berry bushes.

If you haven't had a chance to visit Lewis Ginter, this treasure is open all year round. When you do get there, be sure to stop by and say hello to TJ. And get a glimpse of the good this Kroger Community Kitchen Garden grows! And if you want to cook these veggies up and deliver them to our neighbors, go to **FeedMore.org/volunteer**.

How the Garden Grows

We're beyond thankful for community partners like TJ and Lewis Ginter, and love incorporating these fresh ingredients into our made-from-scratch meals!



How big is the garden?

The production area of the Kroger Community Kitchen Garden spans approximately 260 feet by 80 feet. That's nearly half an acre of fresh, nutritious produce grown to help nourish your neighbors in need!



Produce that grows well in Spring vs. Fall

SPRING	FALL
tomatoes	beets
peppers	broccoli
beans	cabbage
cucumbers	carrots
lettuce & greens	lettuce
radishes	mustard
carrots	onions
squash	radishes
zucchini	spinach
herbs	turnips

ROLL UP YOUR SLEEVES AND MAKE A DIFFERENCE BY VISITING

**FeedMore.org/
GardeningForGood**

DIFFERENT STORIES. SAME MISSION.

We all have a shared commitment to strengthening this community. And these fine folks work behind the scenes at Feed More every day to make a difference in the lives of the neighbors they serve. Hope you enjoy hearing, in their words, their why.

“It’s been a great way to apply the skills I learned getting my graduate degree at VCU’s School of Social Work. And what haven’t I learned? At the end of the day, what I do is I actually go out and see people, neighbors, face to face. I connect with them. We spend one-on-one time together and I learn about where they’re at right now. They share their stories.”

“What inspires me is the relief I see when people realize they don’t have to struggle anymore to get food. And the joy I see when I tell them a kind Meals on Wheels volunteer will check in on them. It just lights people up.”

JanLou Lawson, *Meals on Wheels Case Manager*

A former intern with our Community Health and Resources team, JanLou is currently pursuing her graduate degree at the VCU School of Social Work. As a Meals on Wheels Case Manager, she visits homebound neighbors to assess their nutrition needs and determine the best path forward.

“The problem solving, the tightening of the screws and finding ways to make it better. I’ve spent most of my time at Feed More dealing with the people and the community, which I love, but I also know that it’s my responsibility to help Feed More become better, and I felt like I could help that process as the Inventory Control Manager.”

“My grandfather was a farmer but he also worked overnight as a janitor. He was the type of guy in the neighborhood that we were proud to say, ‘that’s our granddad.’ A lot of the people that I grew up with didn’t have an opportunity to say this about their fathers, but my kids, they go to school and talk about what their dad does. So that’s what I’m most proud of, that my kids are proud of me.”

Tobarrus Hollingsworth, *Inventory Control Manager*

With more than six years at Feed More in various Operations roles, Tobarrus coordinates efforts to maintain a steady supply of food to our nonprofit partners, programs and distribution sites.

“I’ve always had a heart for empowering people to be as independent as they can, so that part of the Meals on Wheels mission really appeals to me – especially for older adults.”

“I think the opportunity to serve in a meaningful way, that’s my priority. Everyone at Feed More is committed to ensuring access to nutritious food – so that people can live a full life. And what’s exciting to me is there aren’t competing missions. There is one mission and people are genuinely committed to it.”

Lisa Webb, *Senior Manager, Meals on Wheels Case Management and Client Services*

With a background in vocational rehabilitation at VCU Health Sciences and the Virginia Department for Aging and Rehabilitative Services, Lisa is deeply committed to helping our most vulnerable neighbors thrive.

Kitchen Wise

Fresh, fast and full of flavor, refrigerator pickles are an easy way to stretch fresh produce, reduce waste and add a little crunch to your meals. And the best part, no canning required! Works for veggies like cucumbers, onions, carrots, radishes, green beans and peppers.

Make the brine

1 cup vinegar
1 cup water
1 tablespoon sugar

1 tablespoon salt
Heat until dissolved, then cool

Prep the veggies

Wash and cut (slices, spears, coins)
Pack tightly into a clean jar

Add flavor

Garlic cloves, peppercorns, dill, chili flakes,
mustard seeds, bay leaf

Pour cooled brine over veggies

Make sure everything is submerged

Cover and refrigerate

Let sit at least 2 hours, but better after 24 hours
Use within 2-3 weeks



KINSALE CARES, A WHOLE BUNCH

When a community partner shows up with energy, generosity and compassion, we take notice – and Kinsale Insurance has done just that. This RVA-based company recently organized a canned food drive and donated funds to help us provide 80,000 meals to our Central Virginia neighbors.

But their impact didn't stop there.

More than 20 Kinsale team members volunteered to write heartfelt thank you cards to the caring donors who support our mission. These personal touches mean the world to us and we're humbled to work alongside such a thoughtful and engaged partner.



SUMMER FUN!

Sometimes a joke and a smile can lift your day. Here are some of our favorite food puns:

- You're bacon me crazy!
- Time fries when we ketchup.
- We're egg-stra grateful!
- Kale yeah, we care!
- You're a real pizza work.

