



Thursday, October 3

Welcome and Introduction

Matt King, CEO, Hunger Task Force

Member Highlight: Central Rivers Farmshed

Ann Vang, Sib Pab Director, Central Rivers Farmshed

Based in Stevens Point, Central Rivers Farmshed focuses on growing a resilient local food economy. Their organization partners with family and cooperatively owned farms and local food businesses throughout the region to expand programs, ensuring the choice for healthy, locally grown foods, and that more farm-to-table farms and small food-based businesses thrive in central Wisconsin. Ann Vang, Sib Pab Director, will share about Central Rivers Farmshed in this compelling opening presentation for the Summit.

Presentation: The Federation and the Road Ahead

Brandon Savage, Hunger Relief Federation Manager

Mark Lisowski, Hunger Relief Federation Organizer

Join us for an in-depth presentation showcasing the impactful work of the Hunger Relief Federation of Wisconsin over the past two years and our strategic vision for the future. As a coalition of anti-hunger organizations committed to ending hunger in Wisconsin, we've engaged in grassroots advocacy, and spearheaded lobbying efforts to influence state policy. This session will highlight our legislative agenda, emphasizing key victories and ongoing campaigns. We will also discuss how we continue to support our membership through resource sharing and collaborative initiatives. This presentation aims to inspire and empower pantry coordinators and volunteers by sharing best practices, innovative strategies, and a unified vision for a hunger-free Wisconsin.

Panel: Building Stronger Nutrition Policy

Donna Ambrose, Executive Director, The Neighbors' Place

Monica Clare, Executive Director, St. Joseph Food Program

Pasua Chang, Community Dietitian, Hunger Task Force

In this dynamic and insightful panel, we will explore the critical role of nutrition policy in enhancing the effectiveness of food pantries. Our expert panelists will address key issues, including how food pantries can ensure that culturally diverse communities receive foods that meet their dietary preferences and needs. We will also delve into successful examples of food pantries and organizations that have implemented effective nutrition policies, highlighting lessons learned and best practices.

Panel: Stories from Around the State

Sharon Pomaville, Executive Director, Sharing Center

Bill Grammer, Pantry Director, Northwoods Community Food Pantry

Shelly Fortner, Executive Director, The Hunger Task Force of La Crosse

Discover inspiring stories and practical insights from pantry directors who have successfully advanced their programs and missions. This panel will delve into the strategies and practices that have enabled food pantries to thrive and make a significant impact in their communities. Designed for pantry coordinators and volunteers, this session will offer valuable lessons and actionable takeaways.

Speaker: What We're Hungry For A Conversation with Jim Winship

Jim Winship has focused his filmmaking largely on the stories of rural communities. His film, What We're Hungry For, is no exception. Documenting the response of five local Wisconsin food pantries to the unprecedented needs created by the coronavirus pandemic, the film tells the story of the hard work, ingenuity, and compassion of these organizations while also exploring the complex and longstanding challenges of fighting hunger in rural America. Jim Winship joins the Hunger Relief Federation to share the process in documenting this story, share clips with Summit attendees, and discuss with participants the lessons we learned during the pandemic.

Panel: Beyond the Food Box: Resources and Services

Amber Daus, CEO & Founder, Grow It Forward

Liz Kroll, Senior Director of Programs and Community Impact, Sheboygan County Food Bank

Michael Jonas, Food Bank Director, Hunger Task Force

This panel discussion will focus on the vital role of food pantries in addressing the broader needs of clients beyond food insecurity. Our expert panelists will share their experiences and strategies for identifying specific needs and connecting clients with essential resources such as housing, employment, healthcare, and more. Designed for pantry coordinators and volunteers, this session aims to enhance your ability to provide holistic support to those you serve.

Presentation: Food Sourcing and the Local Connection

Sarah Bressler, Farm Manager, Hunger Task Force

Kyle Buehner, Food Procurement Manager, Hunger Task Force

Discover the transformative power of partnering with local farms to enhance food distribution efforts and combat hunger in Wisconsin. This presentation will delve into the practicalities of working with local farms, setting realistic expectations, and creating mutually beneficial transactions. We will share insights from our own farm operations and highlight successful partnerships with other farms across the state. Additionally, we will explore effective distribution models and best practices for growing and distributing fresh produce.

Speaker: Anthem's Commitment to Ending Future Hunger

Tracy Watton, Medicare Territory Development Representative, Anthem Blue Cross and Blue Shield

Anthem, a signature sponsor of Hunger Task Force, will join the Federation Summit to share about their work, resources, and tools you can use to better serve your pantry guests. Anthem cares deeply about communities across Wisconsin and has for years partnered with Hunger Task Force to provide needed resources and leads in the commitment to ending future hunger.

Keynote Speaker with Q&A

Julie Lassa, State Director of Rural Development, United States Department of Agriculture

Julie Lassa grew up on her parents' small dairy farm in northern Portage County and most recently worked for a Wisconsin-based property and casualty insurance company. She represented a district in central Wisconsin in the state legislature for 18 years, both in the Assembly and Senate. In addition, Lassa served on the Board of Directors for the Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation where she focused on enhancing private-sector job creation and promoting small business. Julie authored the Green to Gold Fund to assist small and mid-sized businesses improve their energy efficiency and create new green energy products and services. Before being elected, she served as a Supervisor for the town of Dewey and as Executive Director for the Plover Area Business Association. - USDA

Evening Social Hour

Friday, October 4

Presentation: "From the Farm to the Fork: Nueske's Working with the Federation"

Panel: Strength and Sustainability: Growing and Adapting to Changing Needs

Patrick Boyle, Executive Director, Sheboygan County Food Bank

Hannah Hazelburg, Executive Director, Mukwonago Food Pantry

Mike Egly, Director of Program Services, The FOOD Pantry Serving Waukesha County

In this crucial panel discussion, we will explore strategies for enhancing the sustainability and strength of food pantries within our network. Our expert panelists will share innovative approaches and programs that have proven effective in increasing efficiency and effectiveness in serving communities. This session is designed for pantry directors, coordinators, and volunteers who are committed to ensuring the long-term success of their organizations.

Presentation: Recruitment and Growth: Best Practices in Fundraising, Development, and Volunteer Programming

Jonathan Hansen, Chief Strategy Officer, Hunger Task Force

Herb Reichelt, Giving Manager, Hunger Task Force

Unlock the secrets to effective fundraising, donor engagement, and volunteer management in this comprehensive presentation tailored for pantry coordinators and volunteers. Learn proven strategies for raising funds, targeting new and existing donors, and building lasting relationships with supporters. We will also explore best practices for recruiting, training, and retaining a dedicated volunteer base, including both individual and corporate volunteers. Additionally, discover how to harness the power of social media to promote your pantry's mission, recruit volunteers, and drive fundraising efforts.

Member Highlight: The Neighbors' Place

Donna Ambrose, Executive Director, The Neighbors' Place

Federation partner and Wausau-based The Neighbors' Place shares out about their primary goal: to be "People Helping People."

Founded in 1989 by a coalition of area church groups, The Neighbors' Place works to address food insecurity and poverty through their pantry, food deliveries, and Babies' Place, serving the families of hundreds of children. Join Executive Director Donna Ambrose for a compelling presentation about their work in Marathon County.

Closing Statements and the Agenda for Action and Adjournment

Brandon Savage, Hunger Relief Federation Manager

Reno Wright, Advocacy Director, Hunger Task Force

***Optional Tour of Central Rivers Farmshed in downtown Stevens Point**

We partner with family and cooperatively owned farms and local food businesses throughout the region to ensure everyone in our community can choose healthy and delicious food; Provide fun ways to enjoy food grown in central Wisconsin throughout the year; Demonstrate growing practices that are good for our water and soil; Launch new businesses and encourage all businesses to source ingredients locally." Join Federation members for a personal tour of one of our local members and see the work they're doing firsthand.