



Food Lion Feeds Partners with Meals on Wheels America and Donates \$450,000 to Provide Support to Seniors in Need in Local Communities

July 25, 2022

Working together to provide hope and nourishment to seniors

SALISBURY, N.C., July 25, 2022 (GLOBE NEWSWIRE) -- Food Lion Feeds has donated \$450,000 to Meals on Wheels America to support hunger-relief initiatives and expand senior nutrition services in 13 communities where Food Lion operates. The 13 local Meals on Wheels programs, which collectively serve 18,000 seniors annually, will be able to nourish more seniors in need because of these resources. Even before the COVID-19 pandemic, 1 in 8 seniors experienced food insecurity. Since the pandemic, 88% of local programs were affected by increases in meal production expenses and labor costs.

The \$450,000 in grant funds is in addition to \$50,000 Food Lion Feeds donated in March 2022 in recognition of the 50th anniversary of the Older Americans Act Nutrition Program, federal legislation that provides critical funding for nutrition services and helps support programs like Meals on Wheels.

"These meals will immediately impact seniors' lives and have a lasting result for the organizations at a time when the high demand for Meals on Wheels remains steady," said Kevin Durkee, Manager of Food Lion Feeds. "Through this partnership with Meals on Wheels America and these community-based programs, we will make a tangible impact to serve our aging neighbors in the towns and cities we serve. No senior should have to worry about where their next meal will come from."

In addition to providing seniors access to nutritional meals, the grant funds allow local programs to expand their operations for future sustainability.

"Across the 13 grantee programs, funds will be spent to build capacity through kitchen equipment, as well as marketing and outreach to seniors in hard-to-reach and underserved rural and immigrant communities, sustaining and expanding current meal delivery services, and ensuring future sustainability through staffing and technological investments," said Uche Akobundu, Senior Director, Nutrition Strategy at Meals on Wheels America. "We're incredibly grateful to Food Lion Feeds for its dedication to our mission and philanthropic commitment to our nation's seniors."

Accessibility to food resources and proper nutrition are vital services of these local programs serving seniors, all of which are struggling to meet increased demand.

"Our community, like all communities, has been challenged by COVID-19 and the increase in need for supportive services, particularly for older adults," said Rachel Bearman, Executive Director of Meals on Wheels Orange County, North Carolina, one of the grantees. "Within five months, from March-July 2020, our meal delivery service increased by 39%, and it has not decreased since. We have been laser-focused on sustainability to ensure we can meet the commitment to our recipients to keep knocking on their doors five days a week with a meal and a friendly smile. This funding will enable us to do even more by investing in our organizational capacity to broaden the array of services we offer and expand access to those services to underserved or unserved older adults."

Additionally, funding will support local Meals on Wheels programs in reaching older adults with a variety of chronic health conditions and other needs, as well as those who have historically been underserved.

"Our program has been challenged by COVID and inflation, and so many of our immunocompromised and elderly in our community have had difficulty accessing and buying food," said Robin Goldstein, Executive Director at Meals on Wheels of Charlottesville/Albemarle, another grantee. "This funding will allow us to eliminate our waitlist and serve more people who have trouble getting out of their homes, our community's hidden hungry."

The following local Meals on Wheels programs are receiving grants from Food Lion Feeds:

1. Albemarle Commission Senior Nutrition Program, Hertford, NC
 - o *The grantee will expand and add new delivery routes to serve seniors in more rural settings through nutritional services.*
2. Cherokee County Meals on Wheels, Gaffney, SC
 - o *This program will use the grant funding to support the increase of special diets for some seniors, including 39% of their diabetic client base.*
3. Council on Aging for Henderson County, Hendersonville, NC
 - o *Grant funds will allow the program to provide 24 more clients with hot meals, particularly those living in poverty in mountainous, rural areas.*

Meals on Wheels Ms. Betty



At home, Ms. Betty eagerly awaits a knock at the door from Meals on Wheels. This friendly visit may be the only human interaction she sees all day for seniors like her.

4. Fairfield County Council on Aging, Winnsboro, SC
 - *The funds will be used to implement the delivery of weekend meal kits.*
5. Feed More, Richmond, VA
 - *Grant funds allow the program to expand services, targeting growing immigrant communities across the region.*
6. MAC, Inc., Salisbury, MD
 - *The program will use funds to support the expansion of its services to reach a Haitian community with identified needs and purchase new equipment.*
7. Meals on Wheels of Charlottesville/Albemarle, Charlottesville, VA
 - *Grant funds will subsidize 36 current clients, slightly more than 10% of the existing client roster and all living at 50% below the poverty line.*
8. Meals on Wheels of Chesapeake, Chesapeake, VA
 - *The grantee will use funds to sustain basic operations by purchasing meal delivery equipment.*
9. Meals on Wheels of Durham, Durham, NC
 - *The funding will support two part-time drivers, vehicle maintenance and licensing for volunteer recruitment software.*
10. Meals on Wheels of Orange County, Chapel Hill, NC
 - *The grant allows the program to implement medically tailored and culturally relevant meals in partnership with local nursing homes.*
11. Meals on Wheels of Rowan County, Spencer, NC
 - *The funds allow the program to expand nutrition services and offer medically tailored meals.*
12. Meals on Wheels of Wake County, Raleigh, NC
 - *The grant will support an established Grab and Go meal program that is currently underfunded.*
13. Senior Citizens, Inc., Savannah, GA
 - *The grant supports at least 65 older adults as they are discharged from the hospital with a total of 1,500 meals and 130 hours of nutrition counseling.*

About Food Lion

Food Lion, based in Salisbury, N.C., since 1957, has more than 1,100 stores in 10 Southeastern and Mid-Atlantic states and employs more than 82,000 associates. By leveraging its longstanding heritage of low prices and convenient locations, Food Lion is working to own the easiest full shop grocery experience in the Southeast, anchored by a strong commitment to affordability, freshness and the communities it serves. Through Food Lion Feeds, the company has donated more than 970 million meals to individuals and families since 2014 and has committed to donate 1.5 billion meals by 2025. Food Lion is a company of Ahold Delhaize USA, the U.S. division of Zaandam-based Ahold Delhaize. For more information, visit www.foodlion.com or job applicants may visit www.foodlion.com/careers.

About Meals on Wheels America

Meals on Wheels America is the leadership organization supporting the more than 5,000 community-based programs across the country that are dedicated to addressing senior isolation and hunger. This network serves virtually every community in America and, along with an estimated two million staff and volunteers, delivers the nutritious meals, friendly visits and safety checks that enable America's seniors to live nourished lives with independence and dignity. By providing funding, leadership, education, research and advocacy support, Meals on Wheels America empowers its local member programs to strengthen their communities, one senior at a time.

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A photo accompanying this announcement is available at <https://www.globenewswire.com/NewsRoom/AttachmentNg/0ef5ce6f-96aa-4e95-9458-120122f4ea6c>