

Fauquier FISH

YEAR IN REVIEW

2024







Table of Contents

A Message from the Director ---- 1
At A Glance ---- 3

Our 6 Main Programs

Food Pantry ---- 4
Weekend Power Pack ---- 6
Senior Delivery ---- 8
Book Bags & School Supplies ---- 9
Farm Bucks ---- 10
Benevolent Fund ---- 10

Finances

2024 Projection ---- 11
Ways to Contribute ---- 12

A Message from the Director:

Charity Furness



Dear Friends of Fauquier FISH,

As I reflect on this year, my heart is filled with gratitude for all who make it possible for Fauquier FISH to be a lifeline in our community. In 2024, we proudly introduced a new brand identity: *Fauquier FISH – Feed. Inspire. Support. Health.* This transformation, from our previous name "For. Immediate. Sympathetic. Help.," represents more than just a change; it embodies our renewed mission to nourish bodies, uplift spirits, and foster hope for a brighter future together.

Guided by our core principles—*Feed*, *Inspire*, *Support*, and *Health*—we reached thousands of lives this year. Through our Food Pantry, 2,060 individuals accessed fresh, nutritious food, ensuring that no one had to go hungry. Our Weekend Power Pack Program helped 562 students bridge the hunger gap over the weekend, allowing them to return to school ready to learn. For 73 seniors facing isolation and food insecurity, our Senior Delivery program provided not just groceries but also the comfort of human connection.

Education and empowerment are also close to my heart. Through our Book Bag and School Supplies initiative, 1,331 students started the school year with the tools they needed to thrive. Our Farm Bucks program distributed $29,000 in gift cards to the local farmers market, empowering families to choose fresh food while supporting our local farmers. And for those in crisis, our Benevolent Fund has provided a crucial helping hand, proving that in times of hardship, we are all here for one another.

All of this impact is only possible because of your unwavering support. As we look ahead to 2025, I ask for your help once again. Every dollar you contribute provides life-changing assistance to families, children, and seniors in need. Your generosity not only sustains our programs but also expands our reach, ensuring that Fauquier FISH remains a beacon of hope for everyone who turns to us.

Thank you for being an integral part of our journey. Your support truly fuels our mission and brings to life the values that define *Fauquier FISH*. Together, we are creating a future where everyone in Fauquier County has a place to turn in a time of need.

With heartfelt gratitude,

Charity Furness

Charity Furness
Executive Director
charity@fauquierfish.org

Fauquier FISH

Feed. Inspire. Support. Health.

Our Mission

Neighbors helping neighbors with kindness and respect just as we would want to be treated in a time of need.



Our Vision

We envision Fauquier county as a place where no one goes hungry and anyone in need has a place to turn.

Founded in 1983 and a 501(c)(3) since 2000, Fauquier FISH is dedicated to serving Fauquier County residents. Our programs provide food, school supplies, and meals for children and seniors, while empowering individuals through education and volunteer opportunities. Together, we're building a stronger, healthier community.

Our Core Principles

Feed: Alleviating hunger through nutritious food options and essential resources to individuals, families, children, and seniors facing food insecurity.

Inspire: Empowering those in need to strive for a brighter future through support, encouragement, and opportunities for personal and collective growth.

Support: Strengthening the overall fabric of our community by collaborating with others to provide compassionate assistance and advocacy to our community's most vulnerable citizens.

Health: Promoting inclusive and equitable access to nutritious food while prioritizing physical, mental, and emotional well-being as integral components of a thriving community.

Our Values



Advocacy



Collaboration



Humility



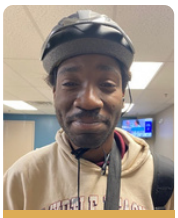
Nutrition



Integrity



Respect



Empowerment

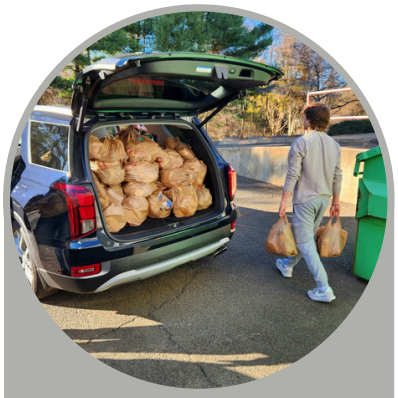


Mission



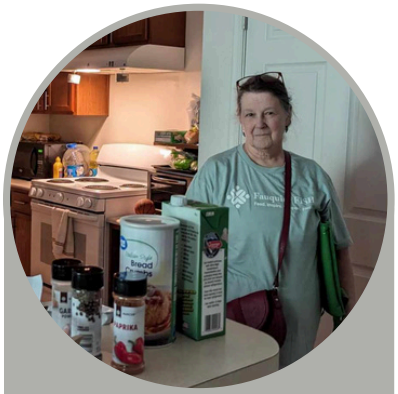
Food Pantry

2022	2024	2023
1399 People Served	2060 People Served	1821 People Served



Weekend Power Pack

2022	2024	2023
349 students	561 students	450 students



Senior Supplemental Nutrition Program

2022	2024	2023
44 seniors	73 seniors	60 monthly

6 Initiatives Changing Lives



Book Bags & School Supplies

2022	2024	2023
918 students	1331 students	1215 students



Farm Bucks

2022	2024	2023
445 families	377 families	358 families



Benevolent Funds

∞

Food Pantry



Nutrition and More

Fauquier FISH is committed to helping our neighbors in need. We know that asking for help can be difficult. We make the process as easy and as confidential as possible.

In numbers

2022
1,399
people served

2023
1,821
people served

2024
2,060
people served

FISH's food pantry provides residents with a week's worth of food, once per month. The only qualification for receiving services is Fauquier residency.

Many of those who turn to FISH are living "on the margins" of poverty—earning too much to qualify for social services but not enough to make ends meet. We believe no one should have to choose between paying bills and putting food on the table. That's why we make it easy for neighbors to access the help they need, when they need it.

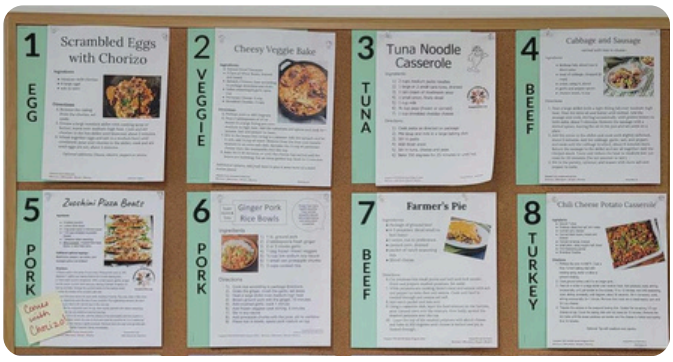
An essential part of our mission is to improve the nutritional quality of the food we provide. ***We are deeply committed to this powerful truth: "The most economically poor are often the most nutritionally poor."*** By prioritizing fresh, healthy foods, we're helping to nourish our community in every sense of the word—providing not just sustenance, but the foundation for a healthier, more hopeful future.

Poverty and poor nutrition are deeply connected, often leading to serious health issues like heart disease, diabetes, and obesity—problems that disproportionately affect children and the elderly, the two most vulnerable groups we serve.

At FISH, we go beyond meeting basic food needs. We believe families deserve more than just inexpensive, processed foods. That's why we focus on providing nutritious, balanced options that support long-term health.

We developed our DASH Meals (Delicious, Affordable, Simple, and Healthy), program to provide families with meal kits designed to help answer that universal question: "What's for dinner?" These kits not only promote healthier, more affordable eating but also make it easier for families to prepare nourishing meals at home.





DASH Meals

Our DASH program is what makes FISH's food pantry unique. The program truly helps us achieve our mission of "neighbors helping neighbors with kindness and respect just as we would want to be treated in a time of need." We respect our clients, care about their health, and want them to take home food they can feel good about.



Our Delicious, Affordable, Simple, and Healthy meals offers more than just ingredients—it's a way for families to enjoy wholesome, home-cooked meals together. Each DASH kit comes with recipes, spices, and all the food items needed to create a complete meal. Families leave the pantry with multiple kits for dinner and lunch, empowering them to prepare nutritious, balanced meals on their own.

This program has been so successful, that FISH also offers clients a kid-friendly spin-off, our Kids in the Kitchen (KitK) program. KitK meals are simple enough to be prepared and enjoyed together by children and their caregivers. Not only does this program provide extra food for families with kids, but it also encourages families to cook and share meals together, fostering connection, health, and joy around the dinner table.



> *Our food pantry is more than a place to receive groceries—it's a lifeline for families in need. By providing essentials, building connections, and offering hope, we help strengthen our entire community.*
>
> Charity Furness, Executive Director

Beyond Food

At the Fauquier FISH food pantry, clients receive more than just food—they receive comprehensive support for daily living. Along with nutritious groceries, we provide hygiene products, cleaning supplies, diapers, and pet food, addressing a wide range of needs. Our team builds relationships with clients, offering personalized care and connecting them with other community resources. In 2024, we launched the FISH NETwork - a pilot program, helping little free pantries across the county stay stocked with food. During the holidays, we provide families a wonderful Christmas meal, to include DASH kits for creatively using leftover ham and turkey.



Weekend Power Pack

Bridging the Gap

When children are hungry, their ability to grow, learn, and thrive is compromised. The Weekend Power Pack program provides critical support to food-insecure students on weekends and school holidays.

In numbers

2022
349
Students

2023
450
Students

2024
561
Students



For 10 years, Fauquier FISH's Weekend Power Pack (WPP) program has been a lifeline for children in our community. What started in 2014 with 36 kids has grown to serve over 560 students each week, providing food and hope to Fauquier children who need it most.

When children have the nutrition they need, they are able to thrive—personally, emotionally, and academically—empowering them to succeed and build a brighter future. The WPP program makes this possible.

Each Thursday, 25-30 volunteers pack and deliver bags filled with meals for the weekend. For extended breaks like Thanksgiving and Winter holidays, the bags are packed with even more food, ensuring children don't go without.



In the summer, FISH partners with Fauquier Reaches for Excellence in School Health (FRESH), Fauquier Community Child Care (FCCC), and Fauquier County Public Schools' summer program to continue supporting children during the critical 10-week break.

From preschoolers to high school seniors, every child in need in our community is supported over the course of the year.







What's inside a power pack?

Power Packs contain breakfast, lunch, dinner and snack items. Examples of what you might find in a Power Pack include cereal, peanut butter, spaghetti & sauce, granola bars, an apple, and other healthy options. Following the food pantry's model, we attempt to include at least one DASH (Delicious, Affordable, Simple and Healthy) meal that come with a recipe and non-perishable ingredients to make a wholesome meal for the child's household.



> *If a student is hungry, they can exhibit distracting or rule-breaking behavior because education is not their priority – hunger is. This program helps meet the basic needs of our kids, which in turn helps them experience more effective learning.*
>
> Katie Compton, Teacher, Fauquier County Public Schools



Senior Supplemental Nutrition

Designed to provide homebound seniors with the food and support they need to stay healthy & independent, this program also offers this vulnerable population a chance to forge connections, and combat loneliness.



In Numbers

2022

44

Seniors Served

2023

60

Seniors Served

2024

73

Seniors Served

During 2021, in response to the economic toll of COVID-19 on vulnerable populations (particularly seniors), Fauquier FISH launched the Senior Supplemental Nutrition Program (SSNP).

Collaborating with Aging Together, the Department of Social Services (DSS), and Warrenton Community Center, FISH identifies seniors facing food insecurity but unable to access services due to mobility, medical, or transportation issues.

Each month FISH volunteers pack and deliver a week's worth of food to clients' homes. Every delivery includes nourishing meals carefully chosen to meet unique dietary needs, with heart-healthy, low-sodium options, along with fresh produce and pantry staples.

These deliveries are about more than just food—they offer nourishment while forging a sense of connection for seniors who might otherwise go without or feel overlooked, and unseen by their community.



Impact

For many of our senior clients, the monthly visit from familiar faces is just as meaningful as the food itself. Our volunteers go beyond simply delivering groceries—they take time to chat, put away food, and listen to the stories that our seniors love to share. For one client, these visits have become a reason to feel good about herself—she dresses up, does her hair and makeup, and puts in her dentures, treating each visit as a special occasion.

These small acts of kindness are a vital part of the SSNP program, ensuring our most vulnerable residents not only have enough to eat, but also feel seen, valued, and cared for.





Book Bag and School Supplies



In Numbers

2022

918

Students Annually

2023

1215

Students Annually

2024

1331

Students Annually



For over 20 years, FISH has partnered with the community to provide backpacks and supplies to those in need, ensuring every child starts the school year ready to succeed.

Each summer, Fauquier FISH partners with local organizations, businesses, and individuals to provide over 1,300 students in need with backpacks and school supplies. Community members play a vital role by sponsoring individual children and shopping for specific school supply lists, tailored to each grade level. This personalized approach ensures that every student receives exactly what they need to thrive in the classroom. By uniting together on this initiative, our community eases the financial burden on our most vulnerable families while helping to level the playing field for children in Fauquier County Public Schools. This collaborative effort empowers every child to start the school year with the confidence and resources necessary for success, reinforcing the community's commitment to creating opportunities for all children to excel.



Farm Bucks

The Farm Bucks program supports local farmers, educates food pantry clients, and provides equitable access to the Warrenton Farmers Market for everyone in our community, regardless of income.



In Numbers
2024
377
Households

Fauquier FISH strives to increase the food-security of households in Fauquier County while prioritizing access to food that is wholesome and nutritious. Under the Farm Bucks program, FISH food pantry clients are provided pre-loaded gift cards, or 'Farm Bucks' to use at the market. The value of cards range based on household size, ensuring families of all sizes are able to benefit from purchases at the market. Farm Bucks continue to be a wonderful way to promote equitable access to local markets, while improving market vitality for our local vendors. FISH is honored to continue our partnership with PATH as we promote equitable market access for all residents of Fauquier County.



> ***The Farm Bucks program is amazing. Not only does it increase our sales, we've noticed a more inclusive environment at the Warrenton Farmers Market.***
>
> **Alexis Russell, Farm Manager, American Heritage Family Farm**

Benevolent Fund

While each of the families we serve struggle to make ends meet, some face especially difficult moments of crisis. FISH's Benevolent Fund allows us to provide immediate, sympathetic help to these families.

When our staff and volunteers interact with families at the food pantry, we sometimes learn just how severe their struggles can be. To support those facing immediate, urgent needs, we maintain a small pool of Benevolent Funds. These funds are specifically set aside to help families in times of crisis, preventing situations from escalating into longer-term hardships, and greater financial strain.

Highlights of 2024 Benevolent Fund support include:

- Paying for bed-bug eradication for a client who was facing displacement due to infestation.
- Paying burial costs for a client who lost a family member to suicide.
- Helping a homeless senior with the down payment needed to move into rent-controlled housing.

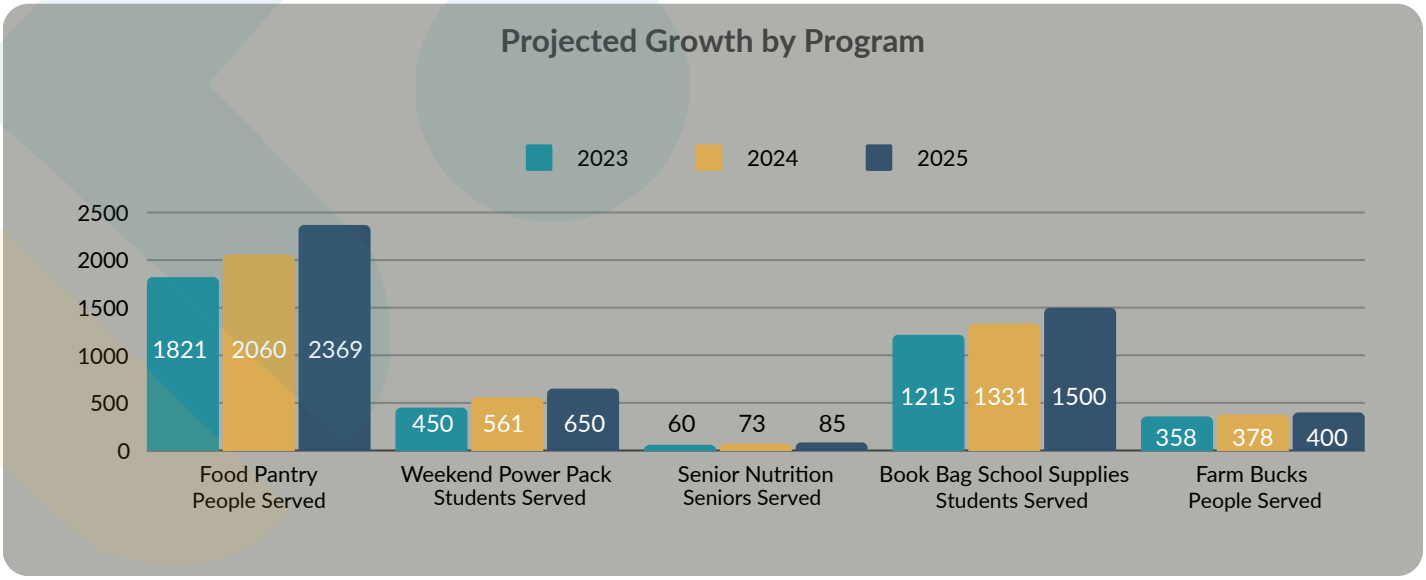


2025 Projection

In 2025, Fauquier FISH anticipates increased demand for services due to federal policy changes, rising food costs, and continued inflation. These factors may deepen food insecurity and stretch available resources. Programs like the FISH NETwork will become even more critical, ensuring vulnerable individuals and families continue to receive essential support as federal programs potentially face funding cuts. Meeting these challenges will require adaptability, creativity, and unwavering dedication to our mission.

Despite these challenges, Fauquier FISH remains steadfast in our mission, strengthened by the support of donors, volunteers, and community partners. Strategic grant management will ensure resources are effectively directed to address urgent needs, while collaborations with schools, businesses, and organizations will expand our impact. By leveraging these partnerships and remaining focused on our vision, we will continue to create meaningful change. As neighbors helping neighbors, we are committed to a future where no one in Fauquier County goes hungry, and everyone in need has a place to turn.

Fauquier FISH projects a 12% increase in the number of individuals served reaching an estimated 5004 individuals in 2025











Ways to Contribute

Give Funds

Your support today helps feed hundreds of our hungry neighbors. Fauquier FISH is a 501(c)(3) and as such, your donation may be tax deductible.

Donate Via Credit Card

Mail a Check

PO Box 891
Warrenton, VA
20188

Sponsor a Weekend Power Pack Student

Workplace Giving

Many employers will match tax-deductible charitable contributions made by their employees. Please check with your employer to see if they participate in such a program.

Donate Stocks

We are now able to accept long-term appreciated securities such as stock and bonds. Please send a message to treasurer@fauquierfish.org for our DTC number and brokerage account information.

Donate Food

Our most-needed food donations always include the following:

- Single-Serve Snacks
- Peanut Butter
- Jelly
- Boxed Pasta
- Pasta Sauce
- Boxed Cereal

Visit our food pantry Tuesdays/Saturdays from 9:30-12 or Thursdays from 6-7:30 to drop off in person, or drop off anytime in the box outside our front door at 680A Industrial Drive.



Do you know someone who is in need?

Fauquier FISH is committed to helping our neighbors in need. We know that asking for help can sometimes be difficult to do. We try to make the process as easy and as confidential as possible. If you or someone you care about are in need of food assistance, please contact us or visit us during the pantry hours below.

680A Industrial Road
Warrenton, VA 20186
info@fauquierfish.org
(540) 347-3474

Hours:
Tuesday 9:30 am – 12:00 pm
Thursday 6:00 pm – 7:30 pm
Saturday 9:30 am – 12:00 pm