



Press Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
October 23, 2013

Contact: Julie Braley  
Marketing and Business Relations Director  
Foodbank of Southeastern Virginia  
(o)757-314-4570 (c)703-673-6373

## Grant from Hampton Roads Community Foundation to Support the Healthy Mobile Pantry Program in Suffolk

**Norfolk, VA** – The Healthy Mobile Pantry Program operated by the Foodbank of Southeastern Virginia and the Eastern Shore has been awarded a three-year, \$50,000 grant to feed the hungry and improve the health of individuals in Suffolk. The grant, from the Hampton Roads Community Foundation, will support this innovative food distribution and nutrition initiative designed to deliver fresh produce plus low-sodium, low-sugar, healthy foods to a population facing a greater risk for diet-related health concerns.

“We know that hunger and health risks go hand-in-hand,” said Marianne Smith Vargas, Chief Philanthropy Officer of the Foodbank. “In a recent survey, of those receiving assistance through the Healthy Mobile Pantry, 65% reported that someone in their household had been diagnosed with diabetes, high blood pressure or heart disease, and 94% reported a need for themselves and/or their household to eat more nutritious food more often.”

The Healthy Mobile Pantry program represents a strategic commitment by the Foodbank to increase access to foods that meaningfully contribute to positive health outcomes. There is, however, a higher cost for the Foodbank in distributing these more nutritious foods, which is why funding from the Foundation is so critical. Whereas those served through Foodbank programs receive food at no charge to them, the Foodbank typically spends about \$7 per household on its regular Mobile Pantry products. With the increased nutritional quality of the Healthy Mobile Pantry foods, the Foodbank cost is a little over \$17 per household. Serving approximately 275 families each month, the program also includes quarterly tastings, recipe sharing, and dialogue with customers to encourage healthier choices.

### About the Foodbank of Southeastern Virginia

The Foodbank of Southeastern Virginia and the Eastern Shore, a member of Feeding America® and the Federation of Virginia Food Banks, has been providing food for those facing hunger since 1981. To date, we have distributed over 215 million meals throughout our service area, which includes the cities of Norfolk, Portsmouth, Chesapeake, Suffolk, Franklin, and Virginia Beach as well as the counties of Southampton, Northampton, Sussex, Isle of Wight, and Accomack. For up-to-date information on the Foodbank, you can find us online at [www.foodbankonline.org](http://www.foodbankonline.org).

The Foodbank of Southeastern Virginia and the Eastern Shore is a proud member of:



**About the Hampton Roads Community Foundation**

The Hampton Roads Community Foundation connects individuals with charitable causes to improve life in our region. The Foundation manages permanent funds created by people from all walks of life and invests their gifts to grow over time, while awarding grants to nonprofit organizations and scholarships to students. Their mission is to inspire philanthropy and transform the quality of life in southeastern Virginia. For more about the Hampton Roads Community Foundation, visit <http://www.hamptonroadscf.org>.

**PHOTO:**



A volunteer distributes healthy recipe samples to a Healthy Mobile Pantry customer.

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