

# PRESS RELEASE

## For Immediate Release

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## **Feeding the Gulf Coast Receives \$75,000 Grant from the Walmart Foundation to Fund Infrastructure and Equipment Needed for Handling Fresh Food**

**Theodore, AL – January 7, 2019** – Feeding the Gulf Coast today announced a \$75,000 grant from the Walmart Foundation to fund the infrastructure that will ultimately help the food bank’s partner agencies secure and distribute more nutritious food to families in need. The grant will allow Feeding the Gulf Coast to invest in equipment to preserve food quality, such as; refrigerated vehicles, coolers and freezers, thermometers, temperature calibration devices and other items.

“One in six people struggle with hunger along the Central Gulf Coast, including one in four children,” said Cathy Pope, Feeding the Gulf Coast President & CEO. “It is important for Feeding the Gulf Coast to provide the Central Gulf Coast with healthy food, and we are thankful to the Walmart Foundation for helping arm us with the equipment we need to ensure that people who struggle with hunger have access to nutrient-rich options.”

Feeding the Gulf Coast secures fresh, perishable food from retailers across the Central Gulf Coast. The Retail Store Level Pickup Program gives the food bank and its agencies access to a variety of food items including fresh foods such as produce, dairy, meat, and bread. The program partners them with retail grocery chains. When stores have product that is nearing its expiration date, they pull it from the shelves and instead of disposing it, they donate it to the food bank.

The Walmart Foundation has been instrumental in helping food banks rescue and distribute more perishable food from retailers across the United States in a sustainable, cost-effective way. This grant is a part of Walmart and the Walmart Foundation’s ongoing commitment to helping families who struggle with hunger by providing four billion meals to people in need in the U.S. by 2020.

Since 2009, the Walmart Foundation has been a leading supporter of infrastructure grants to Feeding America food banks and their member agencies. Walmart and the Walmart Foundation provide donations of both food and funds to the Feeding America nationwide network of 200 food banks. Locally, Walmart is the biggest contributor to Feeding the Gulf Coast, giving \$227,000 in grants in 2017 through Walmart Foundation grants made available through Feeding America. In addition, area Walmart stores donated more than 6,205,000 pounds of food to Feeding the Gulf Coast in 2018, providing over 5,171,000 meals to families in need along the Central Gulf Coast.

With food insecurity remaining high throughout the country, the ability to distribute more food is critical for food banks. According to the USDA, more than 41 million people nationwide are food insecure, which means that they may not know where they will find their next meal. Along the Gulf Coast, one in six residents is food insecure. To learn more about what Feeding the Gulf Coast is doing to fight hunger, visit [www.feedingthegulfcoast.org](http://www.feedingthegulfcoast.org).

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**About Feeding the Gulf Coast:**

Feeding the Gulf Coast, formerly Bay Area Food Bank, serves a 24-county area spanning south Alabama, south Mississippi and the Panhandle of Florida. In 2017, the food bank distributed over 19 million meals to over 400 church pantries, soup kitchens and other nonprofit organizations throughout its service area. The food bank also operates multiple hunger-relief and nutrition programs, including Summer Meals, Afterschool Meal, Backpack, Disaster Relief, Mobile Pantry and Produce Drop Distributions, Nutrition Education, and SNAP Outreach. Feeding the Gulf Coast is a United Way member agency and a member of Feeding America. For more information, visit [www.feedingthegulfcoast.org](http://www.feedingthegulfcoast.org).

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