



2026

Partner Agency Manual



Nourishing Communities, One Pantry at a Time

Since 1982, when Second Harvest Food Bank of East Tennessee (**SHFB-ETN**) first opened our doors, we and our partner agencies have been working hard to better meet the needs of our neighbors.

As we begin another year of service in East Tennessee, our Agency Relations Team wants to take a moment to acknowledge our Partner Agencies for the vital role you play in fighting hunger across our 18-county service area.

Partner Agencies

1,498,125

neighbors served FY'25

Overall Food Distributed

27,351,022

pounds

In Fiscal Year 2025, **Partner Agencies served 1,498,125 neighbors**. **SHFB-ETN** along with the help of our community partners distributed **27,351,022 pounds** of food. We are proud to serve alongside organizations that are committed to helping their communities. Thank you for being a valued part of **SHFB-ETN's** network.

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Please return attached pages 1a through 5a of this Contract agreement by February 27, 2026, by mail or email submission to your Agency Relations Team.

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Food Banking 101

Feeding America Network

Feeding America is a nationwide network of over 200 regional food banks that provide food and services to people each year. Each county in the United States assigned to a regional food bank—like Second Harvest Food Bank of East TN—that then partners with local pantries and meal programs to distribute food to those who need it.

As a member of Feeding America, **SHFB-ETN** subscribes to its contract, pays membership fees, and adheres to Feeding America’s prescribed best practices for food banking. In return, Feeding America helps **SHFB-ETN** raise funds, source food, strengthen our advocacy efforts, and better understand hunger, root causes, and economic trends.

SHFB of East TN

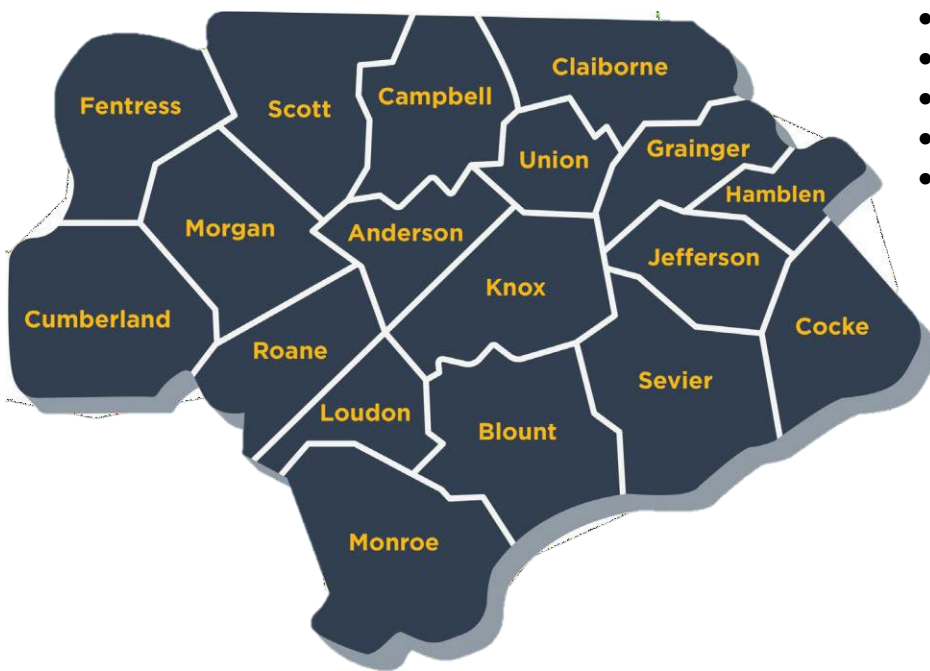
Our Mission: Second Harvest Food Bank of East TN is leading the community in the fight against hunger.

Our Vision: Adequate nutrition for a healthy life for adults, seniors, and children in the 18 counties of East Tennessee.

Our Values: Integrity, community, collaboration, accountability, and respect

Our Service Area: 18 counties, covering 7,700 square miles. Partner agencies include:

- Food pantries
- Soup kitchens
- Homeless shelters
- Residential treatment programs
- Halfway houses
- Youth programs
- Senior service agencies
- Disaster relief agencies
- Group homes
- Other non-profit agencies



SHFB-ETN Programs

In addition to Partner agencies, **SHFB-ETN** operates several programs to increase the distribution of fresh, nutritious foods and reaches populations particularly vulnerable to food insecurity.

Food for Kids: Our “backpack” program coordinates with hundreds of East Tennessee schools to provide weekly food for children who may be missing meals on a regular basis.

Food Rescue: The Food Rescue program gathers surplus and time-sensitive food from restaurants, grocery stores, produce markets and the hospitality industry. This product is then delivered free of charge directly to, or picked up by, local agency partners who can immediately use the product.

Mobile Pantry: Second Harvest Mobile Pantries are mobile distributions where nutritious, fresh foods are distributed alongside a variety of shelf-stable foods in a direct-to-neighbor, drive-thru style model.

Food as Medicine: In partnership with healthcare organizations, **SHFB-ETN** provides medically tailored food boxes to their patients at risk of food insecurity.

Path of Hope: Path of Hope is a case-management-style program that collaborates with participants to become financially self-sufficient. During their time in the program, **SHFB-ETN** supplies participants with two weeks of food at each of their biweekly sessions.

Community Health Partnerships: Through Community Health Partnerships, **SHFB-ETN** works to bridge the gap between neighbors and community health partners in support of nutrition education, food access, and wellness initiatives.

Senior Outreach: Through coordination with local Senior Centers who are focused on the needs of our senior population, Senior Outreach serves homebound seniors a monthly box of dry staples and fresh produce. Referrals to this program are not made through the Food Bank; instead, all client referrals originate from within the local partners administering the program.

SNAP Outreach: Our SNAP Coordinator helps walk clients through each step of the SNAP (aka “food stamp”) application process. To maximize use of resources and reduce duplication of effort, please contact **SHFB-ETN** if you are currently or intend to operate similar programs; this will allow **SHFB-ETN** and your agency to support one another through sharing resources and best practices!

Eligibility to Partner with Second Harvest

Tax Status

To be eligible for partnership with Second Harvest Food Bank of East TN (**SHFB-ETN**), an agency must be classified by the IRS as a 501(c)(3) that is *not* a private foundation and incorporated to serve the needy, ill, and/or infants/children or must comply with the IRS's definition of a house of worship (also known as the "14 Points Test"). It is the agency's responsibility to maintain eligibility to receive donated products under IRS code, section 170(e)(3). Should the agency lose their 501(c)(3) or house of worship status, the partnership with SHFB-ETN will be terminated.

Use of Product

Partner agencies must be incorporated or utilize their partnership to serve the ill, needy, and/or children, and only distribute food to those who meet these parameters. Someone who qualifies as an ill person may be:

- Suffering from a physical injury
- Suffering from malnutrition
- Suffering from illness or infection that significantly impairs physical health
- Have an existing handicap
- Be partially or incapable of self-care (including due to age)

A needy person is someone who lacks the necessities of life, including physical, mental, or emotional well-being because of poverty or other distressing life events.

This means that **SHFB-ETN** products may not be used for:

- fundraising programs
- events
- church functions
- dinners/potlucks
- staff/volunteer personal use (unless that individual meets the same criteria and follows the same procedures to receive food as other clients.)
- Unmonitored and Unsecured Blessing Boxes/Self-service pantries. (They do not meet the requirements of the IRS 170e3 regulations or Feeding America standards for Food Safety and handling guidelines.)

Donated products may not lawfully be used to "pay" or "thank" staff or volunteers. Volunteers cannot be given special treatment at distributions or allowed to have the first choice of product.

Please note: You may only use SHFB-ETN product for programs described in your application. For example, items received for a church-run emergency food box program cannot be used for the church's soup kitchen to feed the homeless, unless this program has been added to the current application by contacting your Agency Relations Coordinator.

Distribution Frequency and Location

Your agency must distribute food at least six times per year, and may only have distribution locations within **SHFB-ETN's** 18 county service area

SHFB-ETN reserves the right to prioritize partnerships with agencies reaching underserved areas or populations, and with organizations that intend to provide frequent, regular, and long-term service to their community.

Non-Discrimination: No partner agency or organization may deny access of **SHFB-ETN** products based on race, creed, national origin, religious affiliation, sex, sexual orientation, age, ancestry, marital status, disability, gender identity, unfavorable discharge from the military, status as a protected veteran, or citizenship.

Faith-based agencies cannot require clients to proselytize or pray to obtain food.

Food Supply

SHFB-ETN has four streams of food available to partner agencies. **SHFB-ETN** does not hold food back for any agency.

1. **Cost-Shared Food** **SHFB-ETN** works to always keep certain inventory in stock. These items are frequently requested by partner agencies and the neighbors they serve, with an emphasis on foods with higher nutritional value. **SHFB-ETN** purchases these items at bulk rates from local, regional and national brokers, suppliers, manufacturers and wholesalers. These items are available to partners at **SHFB-ETN's** purchase cost.
2. **Donated** **SHFB-ETN** receives a wide variety of donated food and non-food items. Most items are donated by the food industry, ranging from local groceries to nationally known food manufacturers. These food products are edible, usable items, but for a variety of reasons stores cannot sell them.

To ensure proper safety, we use the ServSafe Guidelines to evaluate products. We inspect all items before they can be distributed from our facility. Loose donated items, such as from food drives, are processed through our salvage area. Donated products are inspected and packaged for distribution, usually in boxes that consist of the same product, but in assorted sizes and brands. Donated products are available at no cost to **SHFB- ETN** partner agencies.



Non-food items: The partner agency may utilize non-food items provided by **SHFB-ETN** to reduce operational expenses (e.g., cleaning supplies, etc.), provided the agency does not deny clients access to these products.

3. **Produce** **SHFB-ETN** receives produce through both purchases and donations. We strive to make fresh, nutritious foods as accessible as possible to all partner agencies by having all produce at no cost to you.

4. **USDA Commodities (TEFAP) Qualifying** Partner agencies may receive USDA commodities at no cost. These items are selected by and allocated by the Tennessee Department of Agriculture, and participating agencies must submit a monthly inventory report through Primarius. If you are interested in receiving the USDA product, contact your Agency Relations Coordinator.

Procedure for Prioritized Programs: **SHFB-ETN** asks our partner agencies to understand our efforts to be fair in product distribution. The key here is “sharing” the products available. Just remember, if you take more than your fair share, another partner agency that is also doing magnificent work will have less to provide for their neighbors.

From time to time, donated inventory may be in short supply. When shortages occur, restrictions will be placed on some items. When restrictions are in effect, please do not ask us to make exceptions. If your program has an emergency, please contact your Agency Relations Coordinator.

When an emergency condition and/or product shortage occurs, **SHFB-ETN** will use the following priority system for distribution.

- 1st Active Emergency Pantries / Shelters
- 2nd Soup Kitchens
- 3rd Residential / group homes
- 4th All other approved program

Ordering Food

Each partner agency places orders for their agency through our online inventory system, Primarius. All new partner agencies will complete ordering and pick-up training as part of their onboarding with **SHFB-ETN**.

Once you place your order, there are several ways to obtain a product:

Picking up at Second Harvest

Pick-up orders must be placed *at least two business days prior to pick-up*. Please note that partner agency representatives are not permitted to pick up an agency's product without their agency ID card. To schedule training for new volunteers, please contact your Agency Relations Coordinator.

When picking up, agency representatives must comply with our warehouse's safety rules:

- While in the warehouse, stay within the loading dock area. For your safety we have created a safe zone marked with yellow lines in the loading area. Please do not go beyond the yellow lines.
- Be alert, aware, and careful. There are forklifts, cars and trucks operating in the distribution and parking areas.
- To maintain a safe environment, **SHFB-ETN** would prefer not to have toddlers and young children in the warehouse. **SHFB-ETN** also recognizes that it is not always possible; therefore, we respectfully request that no children be left unattended and prefer the children to be in strollers.
- No running in the warehouse.
- If you pick up an item that is leaking, please notify the staff person immediately.
- Open drinks and food are not permitted in the warehouse.
- If you must eat or drink, please utilize the break room where we have provided vending machines for your convenience. Please be sure to clean up after yourself.
- **SHFB-ETN** is a tobacco-free facility.
- No weapons of any kind are allowed on **SHFB-ETN** property.
- You must wear closed-toe shoes when picking up food.



Loading and Transportation: All orders must be picked up in a clean and safe truck, trailer, van, etc. Product is not permitted to be picked up in any vehicle that is contaminated with animal feces, mulch, etc. It is your responsibility to make sure your vehicle is within its weight limits when picking up an order. This information can be found in your vehicle's operating manual, or you may find [this article](#) on payload capacity helpful.

Please show up at your scheduled pick-up time to prevent overcrowding at the checkout area. Agencies will not be loaded on a first-come, first-serve basis. If an issue occurs with your scheduled pick-up time, please contact your Agency Relations Coordinator to schedule a new time.

Before loading your order, check and verify all products. If you find a mistake or unsatisfactory product, alert a **SHFB-ETN** staff member immediately. We cannot issue refunds for missing items that have been signed for pick-up. Your agency is responsible for loading and stacking all products in your pick-up vehicle. All items must be loaded to ensure safe transportation of the products. **SHFB-ETN requires all open bed pickup trucks and open trailers to have tie downs, ropes, tarps, etc. to help secure your load for the safety of all commuters.**

Passive cooling – such as thermal blankets, insulated coolers/bags, ice or Cambro's must be used to transport frozen or refrigerated items if an agency does not have a refrigerated van/truck. **(Changes in the Food Safety Program require passive cooling for all pickup orders regardless of the transport time.)**

Route Delivery

SHFB-ETN delivers products to partner agencies via scheduled recurring routes, especially in outlying areas. Partner agencies order products using online product listing. Products are loaded onto one of our vehicles and delivered to partner agencies according to the established schedule. Partner agencies **may place orders one to three weeks before scheduled delivery**. **Route Delivery orders MUST BE in the system a minimum of 7 days prior to delivery**. However, we are unable to guarantee delivery at a specific time. The driver will call when they are on their way.

Upon arrival at a partner agency, if **SHFB-ETN** staff feel there is not sufficient storage to safely keep products, they will keep products on the vehicle and return them to **SHFB-ETN**. If this occurs, **SHFB-ETN** may place restrictions on the partner agency's ability to order.

Route Delivery Fee: There is a delivery fee of \$0.07 per pound associated with Route Delivery, with a minimum fee of \$75.00 and a maximum fee of \$175.00 per delivery. If an agency does *not* plan to utilize their scheduled delivery truck, they must provide **SHFB-ETN with two weeks' notice** or the agency is charged the \$75.00 minimum delivery fee. This allows **SHFB-ETN** to offer that delivery time to another partner.

Order Additions

When possible, the Agency Relations team will make additions to existing orders so long as requests are submitted **at least two business days prior to pick-up or delivery date.**

Agencies Distributing to Other Agencies (Redistribution)

SHFB-ETN may permit partner agencies to distribute products obtained from, or enabled by, **SHFB-ETN** to other approved agencies if the following conditions are met: The agency agrees to obtain approval from **SHFB-ETN** before each redistribution.

- **SHFB-ETN** food being redistributed must not cross the county lines.
- Products can only be redistributed to approved agencies that are in good standing with **SHFB-ETN**.
- Products may only be redistributed one time.
- Redistributed products may only be used to serve the ill, needy, or children.
- The agency redistributing products must maintain accurate records which include recipient agency, date of redistribution, product description, and weight to facilitate trace and recall procedures.
- No fees can be charged in relation to redistributions (e.g., VAP, handling fees, delivery, transfer, referral or any other fees paid to the redistributing organization).
- Redistribution is rare and is not relied upon for safe storage of products.
- **SHFB-ETN products may not be traded, bartered, or sold.**

Nutrition and Client Choice

Nutrition: We understand that simply providing food is not enough in our fight against hunger. **SHFB-ETN** prioritizes nutrition in our purchasing and distributing foods that align with our neighbors' preferences and nourish their physical, mental, and spiritual well-being.

When placing your orders online, you will notice the products are ranked we ask ("green" = often; "yellow" = sometimes; "red" = rarely). This nutrition ranking system is designed to provide information to partner agencies regarding the amount of saturated fat, added sugar, and sodium in food items. This ranking system does not consider other nutrients or food-related health conditions, like food allergies. Additionally, it does not consider social aspects of food, like the neighbors' living conditions (e.g., Are they unhoused? Do they have storage? Do they have a way to safely prepare food?), and cultural and traditional context.

If you would like more details about the nutrition ranking system, our Nutrition Philosophy, printed recipes, or other nutrition-related resources, please reach out to the Agency Relations team. Additionally, when neighbors provide feedback about food options at your pantry, please let your Agency Relations Coordinator know.

Client Choice: To reduce food waste and increase the dignity of the client experience, we encourage partner agencies to implement client choice—where clients choose what and how much food they and their families need. Client choice does not require any additional space, and agencies who have made the switch emphasize what a positive impact client choice has on the pantry environment and on relationships with clients. For methods specific to your pantry, talk to your Agency Relations Coordinator.

Food Safety

Keeping food fresh and wholesome requires attention to proper food safety rules at each stage of transportation, storage, and preparation. Because some of the products donated to the Food Bank are near the end of their best-use period, it is critical that we all take steps to maximize the length of time the product lasts.

To ensure food safety, each partner agency must have one representative during each distribution to maintain a current SHFB-ETN approved food safety training certificate.

These include:

- ServSafe Food Handler Online Course and Assessment
- [Knox County Health Department](#) (**free and online!**)
- Your local health department's training option
- In-person class at Second Harvest (**free**; contact your Agency Relations Coordinator for details and to RSVP)

General Storage Requirements

- Have storage space solely specified for food and/or hygiene products.
- Store food in a clean, dry area.
- Store food items at least 6 inches off the floor.
- Store cleaning products, personal care items, and health and beauty items separately from food items; and in areas not accessible to children.
- Store product at the location on file for the Agency.
- Maintain a working fire extinguisher near or in the food storage area.
- Must provide proof of regular pest control such as provided by a professional pest control service. Pest control must include protection from rodents, insects, etc.
- Keep non-canned foods (flour, rice, cereal, pasta, produce, etc.) in rodent-proof containers with a tight lid.
- Maintain a food storage area with no leaks, holes, or separation in the ceiling or foundation.

- Maintain a food storage area with good ventilation and proper heating and air conditioning.
- There is no smell or foul odor or chemicals in or around storage area.
- Have no mold or other fungus in or around storage area.
- Have locks on all doors to the pantry and food storage areas
- Store products in designated areas that have been approved by **SHFB-ETN**. Any changes in storage (facility, refrigeration, etc.) must be approved by **SHFB-ETN**.
- Food may not be stored in residential homes, unless it is a documented or licensed group home.
- Place thermometers in refrigerators (40 degrees or below) and freezers (0 degrees or below) and record those temperatures once a week or whenever fridge or freezer has been frequently opened, whichever is more often.
- Defrost freezers on a regular basis.
- Post temperature logs for each refrigerator/ freezer. Temperature logs must be kept for 5 years.
- Keep prepared foods above 140 degrees F until served to neighbors.
- Inspect all food before distributing to neighbors. **SHFB-ETN** inspects all products before they leave our warehouse, but agencies must make final determination as to the integrity of the product.
- Be a cooking agency or certified as a repacking facility to receive bulk products.
- Store, manage, and distribute products consistent with all local, state, and Federal regulations, and any regulations that follow.

In the event of a food recall, SHFB-ETN will contact your agency and inform you of the appropriate steps to take, including how to contact and alert clients who may have been affected.

Finally, there is wisdom in **“When in doubt, throw it out.”** Feel free to contact your Agency Relations team if you have any food safety-related questions.

Record Keeping

Partner agencies must keep records accurately reflecting the total number of products received and distributed; a description of the products and the date of their receipt; invoices; and client logs. In addition to clearly outlining procedures for determining need and client eligibility, agencies that distribute food to entire households (such as food pantries) should collect clients:

- Name
- Address (when available)
- Phone number (to inform of potential food recalls)
- Household size
- Number of household members who are children (aged 17 and under); adults (age 18-59); and seniors (60+)
- Partner agencies should never ask for a client's social security number**

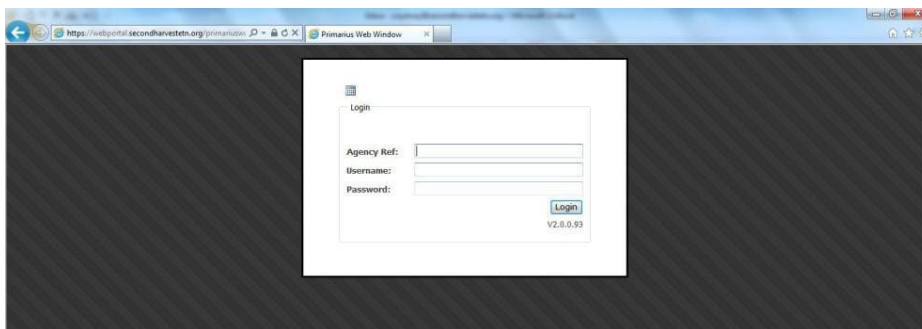
Remember, the fewer questions asked, the less uncomfortable clients feel. We recommend *not* requiring ID or proof of address, as it is just one more hoop for clients to jump through.

Soup kitchens do not need to collect any personal identifying information.

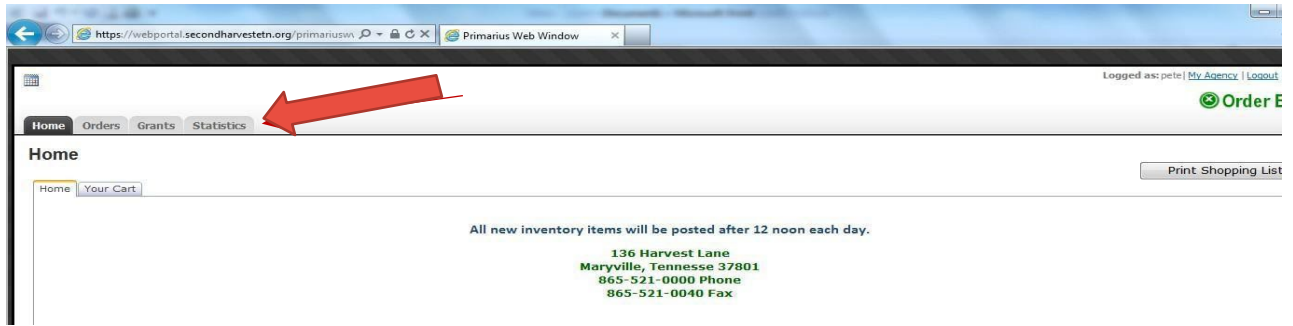
Entering Statistics (ALL Partner Agencies)

Each month, the total number of people served, categorized by age group, must be submitted to **SHFB-ETN**. These statistics are due by the first of the following month (e.g., the May statistics are due June 1).

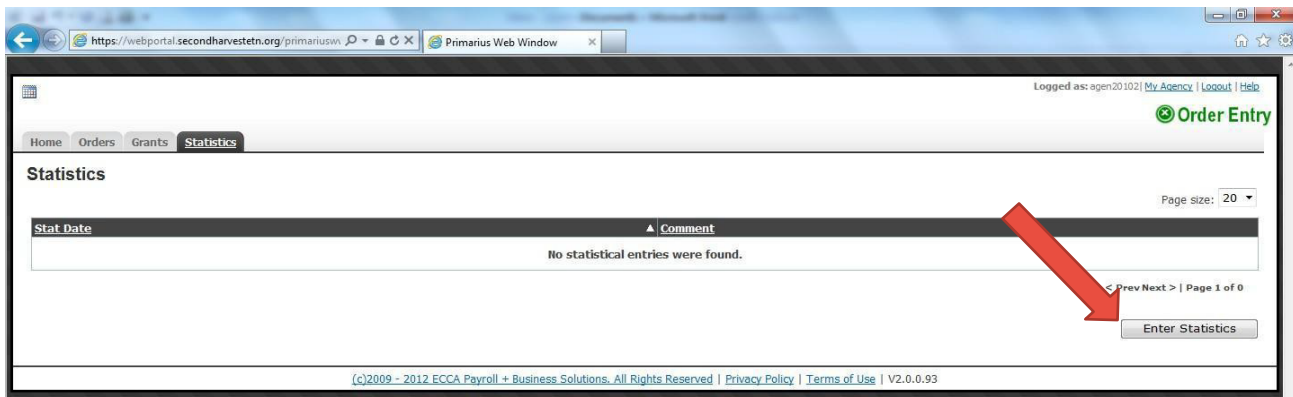
1. Go to Primarius and log into your account



- Click on the Statistics Tab in the top left corner.



- Click Enter Statistics in the bottom right of the page.



- Enter the appropriate month and year.

Enter Statistics

Effective Date: **Month:** **Year:**

Meals: **People:**

Comments:

Category	Quantity	Comment
1-Adults age 18 thru 59	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
2-Children age 17 and under	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
3-Seniors age 60 and above	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
4-Total of All People Served	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
7- USDA Household Totals	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
8- Clients who've lost SNAP benefits	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Total Households Served	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

5a. **COOKING AGENCIES ONLY**-- In the “meals” box, enter the total number of plates served for the month. Then click “submit” in the bottom right corner.

Home Orders **Statistics** Inventory My Docs

Enter Statistics

Effective Date: Month: Year:

Meals: **People:** **Males:**

Comments:

Category

- 1-Adults age 18 thru 59
- 2-Children age 17 and under
- 3-Seniors age 60 and above
- 4-Total of All People Served

5b. **PANTRY AGENCIES ONLY** (agencies providing food for someone to take home and prepare themselves; this includes bags for those experiencing homelessness):

DO NOT enter anything in the top boxes (meals, people). Only enter the appropriate numbers in boxes 1-4, and “total households served”.

If you are an agency that receives USDA food, you must also provide the number of people that receive USDA food over the course of the month. Then click “submit” in the bottom right-hand corner.

Agency Statistics

Save and Close Delete

Agency: [Redacted] Entered: 7/31/2025 Phone: [Redacted]

Effective Date: 7/31/2025 Meals: 0 People: 0 Males: 0 Females: 0

Comment: food was shared with Campbell county Joey St.John and John Stout. Submitted by Agency via Primarius Web Window at 8/8/2025 6:29 AM

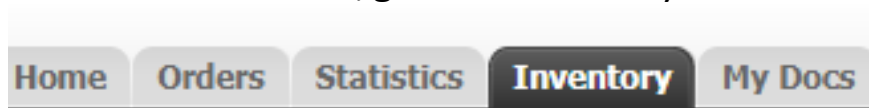
Category	Quantity	Comment	StatGroup
1-Adults age 18 thru 59	875		Original
2-Children age 17 and under	767		Original
3-Seniors age 60 and above	544		Original
4-Total of All People Served	2186		Original
7- USDA People Totals	2186		Original
Total Households Served	639		Original

5c. **PARTNER AGENCIES THAT PROVIDE BOTH PANTRY AND HOT MEALS:** Follow the procedures above. Do not combine the number of people served hot meals with the number of people served by your pantry. The number of hot meals should be entered in the meals box.

Entering Inventory (USDA Agencies Only)

Agencies participating in The Emergency Food Assistance Program must agree to follow all guidelines provided by the Tennessee Department of Agriculture as found in the TEFAP Manual. Agencies must have a designated person who has attended training provided by SHFBETN. Trained volunteers/staff will be responsible for following storage requirements, distribution guidelines and completing accurate reports. The agency agrees to submit TEFAP monthly reports by the first day of each month.



1. In Primarius Online, go to the inventory tab.



Agency Inventory

Enter Inventory

Select Product Category:

Begin Date:  Ending Date: 

[\(c\)2009 - 2021 ECCA Payroll + Busine](#)

2. Select "USDA" from the category dropdown and the start and end days of the report month.

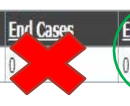
- Verify the USDA items you distributed that month, including the beginning units and number of cases received. Then enter end units ONLY and submit report.

Inventory for Period 2/1/2021 - 2/28/2021

Begin Date: 2/1/2021 End Date: 2/28/2021 Report Date: 3/12/2021 10:44:00 AM Date Submitted: 3/12/2021 10:45:00 AM
 Product Category: USDA Product UserName: exithere Phone: Signed By:

Comment:

Product Ref	Product Name	Packing	Begin Cases	Begin Units	Cases Received	End Cases	End Units	Damaged	Comment
706076	USDA, DRIED SPLIT PEAS	12/2 LB BAGS	0	1	0	0	0	0	



Accounting

Partner agencies will receive an invoice every time food is picked up at our warehouse or when products are delivered on Rural Routes. These individual invoices will not be emailed or mailed.

Monthly statements will be mailed to the agency’s chosen mailing address once a month. Payments for food/services must be made by agency check only (no cash, personal checks, or credit cards) and the agency number must be noted on the check, along with the Agency name. We also recommend that the invoice number(s) being paid is noted on the memo line of remittance check. If an agency has been overcharged for any reason, a credit will be applied to their account to go towards the next month’s statement. Remittance should be mailed to Second Harvest Food Bank of East TN, 136 Harvest Lane, Maryville, TN 37801.

A late fee may be assessed for any monthly statement not paid within 30 days. If an agency balance is left unpaid for 3 months, the agency will be suspended until the account is paid in full or a payment plan is in effect.

Volunteering

Volunteers are the heart of the Second Harvest Food Bank. SHFB-ETN depends on volunteers to help conduct many of the critical activities of the Food Bank. If you would like to volunteer at SHFB-ETN please sign up using this link:

<https://secondharvestetn.org/volunteer/>

Credit for volunteering: Anyone interested in volunteering can earn \$ 1.00 credit per hour, per person, for any partner agency of their choice, which they indicate at the time of signing up to volunteer. The maximum amount of credit per agency is \$100.00 per month. All credits will be applied to the agency’s account on a quarterly basis.

Marketing and Advertising

Every partner agency should post its operating days and times in an area visible to the public. **SHFB-ETN** will publicize this information on its website, along with a working agency phone number. When advertising your distributions, if you have the neighbors drive through your parking lot and load their vehicle with food, please advertise it as a “Drive Thru Distribution.” (This way it distinguishes the difference between a “Mobile Pantry” that moves locations within the 18 counties we serve.)

SHFB-ETN will provide all partner agencies with signs, window clings or magnets to be posted when you are distributing products purchased or donated from SHFB-ETN.

If you want to advertise your event on a flyer or on a website as a partner of Second Harvest of East Tennessee, please reach out to the Agency Relations Team. Agency Relations will request the use of our logo. We will get the correct items you need from the Marketing Team.

If you advertise the distribution of products sourced through **SHFB-ETN**, please include us as a positive partner in the activity. Appropriate ways to do this:

- Include the **SHFB-ETN** Logo alongside other partners or with your logo.
- Include the text “**A partner of Second Harvest Food Bank of East Tennessee**” in the ad.
- Describe our partnership and the positive impact it has on your food access mission.

The partner agency will make no claim as to operating a “Food Bank” and shall not use this term in any of the agency’s identification, publication, advertising or marketing endeavor. Instead, another descriptor should be used. The partner agency agrees to never negatively portray **SHFB-ETN**, a partnering agency or a **SHFB-ETN** program in the public eye.

Follow us!

For news about events, fundraisers, and distribution sites, as well as recipes, training resources, and client stories, keep up with our:

- Website (secondharvestetn.org)
- Facebook (facebook.com/Second.Harvest.ETN)
- Instagram (<https://www.instagram.com/secondharvestetn/>)
- YouTube (https://www.youtube.com/channel/UChTC6YxRC-EIKYBG_PILUXQ)

Monitoring

SHFB-ETN wants monitoring visits to be an opportunity for better communication and positive interaction between the Food Bank and the partner agency. In addition to ensuring compliance with **SHFB-ETN** requirements and food safety, these visits are an opportunity for agencies to highlight their work; brainstorm with **SHFB-ETN**; and

discuss capacity building options.

If possible, monitoring will take place during a partner agency's operating hours. In addition to reviewing a partner's file for tax-exempt status, up-to-date food safety certificates, up-to-date reporting and invoices, staff will be looking at the following:

If there are any signs of pests (holes, droppings, casings, insect eggs, and chewed packaging)



- proof of monthly pest control
- Compliance with all dry storage guidelines set out in this manual
- Compliance with all cold storage guidelines, including temperature logs checked at least once per week
- Client records, including current intake sheet, from the last five years
- SHFB-ETN** manual accessible to volunteers
- Compliance with USDA requirements, if participating in that program
- Signage including days and hours of operation
- Compliance with all the other requirements of **SHFB-ETN** (e.g., no charge for food)

If there is a need for corrective action, your AR Coordinator will work with your agency to draw up a plan and timeline for correction and schedule a time to monitor the facility. Unless pantry conditions endanger clients or an intentional breach of contract, a pantry will not be suspended due to the need for corrective action. Our goal is to collaborate with you on providing a safe, respectful environment for people who need assistance rather than to be punitive.

Expansion: The partner agency should notify **SHFB-ETN** in writing of any program expansion beyond what is included in the agency application. Inspections must take place with any location change prior to first food distribution.

The partner agency agrees that it will only receive, store, prepare, and distribute products from **SHFB-ETN** at multiple locations if **ALL** locations:

- Have been inspected and approved by **SHFB-ETN** prior to receiving, storing, preparing, or distributing food.
- Individually meet the requirements of this agreement.
- **Single-family residences are not approved locations for receiving, storing, preparing, or distributing SHFB-ETN products.**

Grievance Procedure

SHFB-ETN recognizes that challenges may arise that require special handling. Therefore, should any partner agency encounter a challenge such as suspension, termination, poor customer service, financial restrictions, etc., **SHFB-ETN** has instituted the following grievance procedure. We ask that you follow this procedure and allow us the opportunity to resolve the problem with you.

- Inform the Agency Relations Manager of the situation.
- The Agency Relations Department will meet and discuss the situation with the appropriate staff for their resolution.
- If a resolution cannot be achieved, Agency Relations Manager will report on the situation to the Director of Operations and the Executive Director.
- If no resolution is reached, the matter will be forwarded to the **SHFB-ETN** Board of Directors for final resolution.

Your program has 30 days since the date of the incident to file a formal grievance with the Agency Relations Department.

Probation, Suspension, Termination and Inactivation Policies

SHFB-ETN will conduct an on-site visit of each partner agency prior to partnership approval. Once approved, each Partner Agency's Representative and Partner Agency Board President will sign "**Receipt of Partner Agency Manual and Contract Agreement.**" The partner agency contract agreement is intended to maintain the safety, equitability, and integrity of food distributions through our partner agencies. These guidelines are the best practices according to **Feeding America** and must be followed to remain in good standing with **SHFB-ETN** as a partner. Failure to comply with any of the requirements set forth in the Partner agency manual may result in disciplinary action by **SHFB-ETN**.

Violations of the partner agency contract could lead to probation, suspension, or termination of partner agency status.

Violations include, but are not limited to:

- Exchanging **SHFB-ETN** donated food or other products for money, property or services.
- Removal of **SHFB-ETN** donated food or other products from an on-site program for private use.
- Using **SHFB-ETN** donated food or other products in a manner that is not related to the exempt purposes of the Partner Agency.
- Donated food or other products are improperly stockpiled, stored, refrigerated or transported.
- Partner agency is in violation of any state or local statute, ordinance, code or regulation.
- Public disparaging of **SHFB-ETN** or another member of **SHFB-ETN** network.
- Required reporting is not being done correctly or on time.
- A partner agency is delinquent in the payment of invoices. (Due within 30 days.)
- Current contract and program information is not maintained at the program site.
- Partner agency has remodeled or moved locations without giving notice to **SHFB-ETN**. (Partner agency did not have food storage areas approved by **SHFB-ETN** agency relations staff.)
- Partner agency has key staff that have not completed the required training and orientation.
- Inability to provide food safety training of staff or volunteers.
- Incomplete or inaccurate record keeping or reporting.

- Any discrimination of services based on age, disability, gender, race, religion, or political affiliation.

When violations occur, there are three actions that **SHFB-ETN** could take: place a partner agency on Probation, Suspension, or discontinue partnership with Termination status.

Probation

The purpose of the probationary period is to place a Partner Agency on notice that it must bring its program into compliance, or it will be suspended. During the probationary period, the Partner Agency retains all rights and privileges. Probation is used when there is a violation of the Partner Agency Manual and Contract Agreement. The following are guidelines of the probation procedure:

- a) Partner Agency may be placed on probation for a period not to exceed three months for violations listed in the Partner Agency Manual and Contract Agreement.
- b) Notification must be in writing to the Agency Representative and Agency Board of Directors.
- c) The Agency Relations Manager will collaborate with the Director of Operations and Development Team to craft the letter to the Agency. Once the letter has been completed, the Director of Operations will inform the **SHFB-ETN** Chief Operating Officer (COO) and Chief Executive Officer (CEO) by providing them with a copy of the letter.
- d) The notification to the Partner Agency will be sent by USPS Certified Mail with return receipt.
- e) If the violation is not rectified by the end of the probationary period, the Partner Agency will be placed on suspension. A Partner Agency may be removed from probation status if, at the end of the designated probation period, the agency has satisfied **SHFB-ETN** Director of Operations and the Agency Relations Manager with appropriate corrective actions.

Suspension

The purpose of a suspension is to discontinue a Partner Agency's use of **SHFB-ETN** for a specific amount of time due to violation of the Partner Agency Manual and Contract Agreement. A suspended agency loses all the rights and privileges of a Partner Agency as well as its status as such. The following are guidelines of the suspension procedure:

- a) A Partner Agency may be suspended without being placed on probation for violations listed in the Partner Agency Manual and Contract Agreement.
- b) A suspension shall not last more than six months. Notifications must be made in writing to the Partner Agency Representative and the Board of Directors.
- c) The Agency Relations Manager will collaborate with the Director of Operations and Development Team to craft the letter to the Agency. Once the letter has been completed, the Director of Operations will inform the **SHFB-ETN** Chief Operating Officer

- (COO) and Chief Executive Officer (CEO) by providing them with a copy of the letter.
- d) The notification to the Partner Agency will be sent by USPS Certified Mail with return receipt. (If necessary, this letter could potentially be released to the media for transparency from **SHFB-ETN**.)
 - e) A Partner Agency may be removed from suspension status if, at the end of the designated suspension period, the agency has satisfied **SHFB-ETN** Director of Operations and the Agency Relations Manager with appropriate corrective actions.
 - f) If the Partner Agency has not rectified the violation(s) by the end of the suspension period, **SHFB-ETN** reserves the right to terminate the contract with the partner agency.

Termination

The purpose of termination is to discontinue a Partner Agency's access to **SHFB-ETN** after a violation. Termination means that an agency loses all rights and privileges of a Partner Agency as well as its status as such.

- a) A Partner Agency may be terminated without being placed on probation or suspension for serious violations of the Partnership Contract Agreement of any other **SHFB-ETN** regulations outlined in the Partner Agency Manual and Contract Agreement.
- b) Notification must be in writing to the Partner Agency Representative and the Boards of Directors.
- c) The Agency Relations Manager will collaborate with the Director of Operations and Development Team to craft the letter to the Agency. Once the letter has been completed, the Director of Operations will inform the **SHFB-ETN** Chief Operating Officer (COO) and Chief Executive Officer (CEO) by providing them with a copy of the letter.
- d) The notification to the partner agency will be sent by USPS Certified Mail with return receipt. (If necessary, this letter could potentially be released to the media for transparency from **SHFB-ETN**.)
- e) If a partner agency has been placed on suspension two times, **SHFB-ETN** reserves the right to terminate the agency for its third violation.
- f) A Partner Agency may appeal its termination to the Chief Executive Officer by delivering the appeal in writing to the Director of Operations.
- g) The terminated Partner Agency may reapply to become a Partner Agency of **SHFB-ETN** by submitting their application no sooner than one year after termination. The Agency Relations Manager will consult with the Director of Operations, Development Team, Chief Operating Officer, and Chief Executive Officer to decide if **SHFB-ETN** will reinstate the partner agency.

Inactivation

If a Partner Agency or a program of a Partner Agency does not use **SHFB-ETN** for a period of 12 months, its Partner Agency status will be changed to inactive. Partnerships will be re-evaluated during the Partner Agency renewal period. This will happen at the end of the calendar year when the Partner Agencies are notified of the Partner Agency Contract Agreement. The Agency Relations Manager will collaborate with the Director of Operations and Development Team to craft the letter to the Agency about their change of status due to inactivity. Once the letter has been completed, the Director of Operations will inform the **SHFB-ETN** Chief Operating Officer (COO) and Chief Executive Officer (CEO) by providing them with a copy of the letter. The notification will be sent by USPS Certified letter with return receipt.

For a continued partnership with SHFB-ETN, the agency must:

- a) Set up a date and time for a monitoring visit with the Agency Relations Manager and Agency Relations Coordinator.
- b) Indicate Partner Agency changes in program services that will require or enable the Partner Agency to begin using the food from **SHFB-ETN**.
- c) If monitoring is all in order: the Agency will be asked to sign and complete the Partner Agency Manual and Contract Agreement. This agreement must be sent to the Agency Relations Manager. If everything is in order, the partner agency's status will return to active.

The following section of this contract agreement outlines the commitments and requirements of both **SHFB-ETN and the Partner Agency** to ensure advancement of our shared mission and compliance with the highest standards of food safety and operational integrity.

SHFB-ETN Commitments to Partner Agency:

- **SHFB-ETN** will acquire quality food and grocery items for distribution to the ill, needy, and/or infants/children.
- **SHFB-ETN** Agency Relations Manager or Coordinators will support the Partner Agency to build capacity and effective distributions of the Partner Agency.
- **SHFB-ETN** will inform the Partner Agency in advance of any changes in the delivery or pick-up schedule.
- **SHFB-ETN Agency** Relations Manager or Coordinators will conduct periodic site visits to ensure Partner Agency follows all commitments defined in this contract agreement.
- **SHFB-ETN** will provide new partner agency training, TEFAP/USDA training, Food safety training, and technical support for Primarius Online or Service Insights on Meal Connect (**SIMC**) at no cost to the Partner Agency.
- **SHFB-ETN** will provide timely information to the Partner Agency from the Agency

Relations team through e-mail updates, website materials, phone calls and through conference workshops.

- **SHFB-ETN** will display the Partner Agency's distribution days and times on the **SHFB- ETN** website to promote distributions.



Partner Agency Commitments to SHFB-ETN:

- Food Safety – The Partner Agency must ensure a minimum of one (1) key staff member or volunteer at each distribution is always certified for food safety handling. Agency must provide **SHFB-ETN** a copy of the food safety training for the Agency file.
- The Partner Agency agrees to the safe and proper handling of the donated, TEFAP/USDA or purchased product, which conforms to all local, state and Federal regulations.
- When transporting products, the Partner Agency will do so in a manner that prevents contamination and adulteration of the products.
- TCS foods must be staged, transported, and held at appropriate temperatures according to food safety standards. The partner agency should use an **active temperature retention system** (e.g., refrigerated vehicle) or a **passive temperature system** (e.g., insulated coolers, bags, thermal blankets, or Cambro's.)

- All vehicles transporting products must have clean food storage areas to prevent contamination of the transported product.
- The Partner Agency must maintain all freezers and coolers at the proper temperatures. There should be functioning thermometers in all freezers and coolers and keep temperature logs to document proper storage.
- The Partner Agency will have regular Pest Control and trash pickups.
- Violations of Food Safety regulations may result in suspension and follow-up monitoring.
- The Partner Agency must notify **SHFB-ETN** of the distribution days and times when they are changed so that the **SHFB-ETN** website can be updated as soon as possible.
- The Partner Agency may not store **SHFB-ETN** products in a private home or garage.
- The Partner Agency will report statistics by the first of the following month (e.g., May statistics are due June 1).
- The Partner Agency will report TEFAP/USDA Inventory by the first of the following month (e.g., May inventory is due June 1).
- The Partner Agency will report any loss of TEFAP/USDA products immediately so that **SHFB-ETN** can file the report as soon as possible to the Tennessee Department of Agriculture.

