



NEWS FROM  
**ULSTER COUNTY**  
County Executive Jen Metzger

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## **Ulster County and Community Foundations of the Hudson Valley Distribute \$130,000 to 32 Local Food Pantries Through Food Access Fund**

**KINGSTON, NY** - Ulster County Executive Jen Metzger and Community Foundations of the Hudson Valley (CFHV) announced today the distribution of \$130,000 in funding to 32 nonprofit organizations and food assistance providers through the [Ulster Food Access Fund](#), a collaborative initiative launched by County Executive Metzger to address growing food insecurity amid federal funding uncertainty.

The grants support food pantries, meal programs, and community-based organizations working across the County to ensure residents have consistent access to nutritious food. Funding will help expand food purchasing capacity, strengthen distribution networks, and sustain essential services for individuals and families facing increased need.

Grant recipients include Angel Food East in Kingston; Catholic Charities of Orange, Sullivan and Ulster; Church of St. Mary & St. Andrew in Ellenville; Family Outreach Food Pantry in Highland; Good Neighbor Food Pantry of Woodstock; Happy to Help Food Pantry in Kingston; Helping Hands Food Pantry in Gardiner; Hudson Valley National Center for Veteran Reintegration; Kingston Emergency Food Collaborative; Loaves & Fishes Food Pantry at the Wallkill Reformed Church; Olivebridge Food Pantry; Rochester Food Pantry; Rosendale Food Pantry; SUNY New Paltz; the Salvation Army of Greater New York; Woodstock Meals, and more. In total, 32 food pantries received support, with individual awards ranging from \$1,500 to \$10,000.

“Food insecurity is one of the most urgent issues facing our communities, and I am deeply grateful to every donor who stepped up to help following federal cuts to emergency food

programs,” **said County Executive Jen Metzger.** “We’re lucky to live in a community that really steps up for those in need, and I want to thank Community Foundations of the Hudson Valley for partnering with us on this life-saving endeavor.”

“Too many Ulster County residents are struggling to keep nutritious food on the table every day,” **said Laura Washington, president and CEO of CFHV.** “This fund is about meeting that need with urgency and dignity. Partnering with Ulster County through the Ulster Food Access Fund is one meaningful way we are helping address this challenge. This collaboration demonstrates what’s possible when local government and philanthropy come together to respond to urgent needs.”

The Ulster Food Access Fund was launched in October 2025 by County Executive Metzger, in partnership with CFHV, to support frontline hunger-relief organizations who were struggling to meet demand during a period of heightened uncertainty surrounding the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), and following major federal cuts to the emergency food system. This effort builds on the \$350,000 in County funds County Executive Metzger dispersed earlier this fall to meet emergency food needs when federal SNAP benefits were halted during the government shutdown.

The Fund mobilized public-private partnerships between CFHV and the County to provide timely, flexible support. Thanks to the generosity of donors — including a combined \$20,000 contribution from O’Connor and Partners and the NYS Trial Academy — along with many heartfelt donations from community members, the fund is delivering essential support to help ensure families have reliable access to food.

“With all the financial pressures folks are facing with food insecurity and housing insecurity, we thought it was certainly important that we give back to the community and try to ease those pressures in any way we can,” **said Joe O’Connor, CEO and attorney at O’Connor and Partners.**

“Funds from the grant will give our organization resources to accept more homebound, isolated, food-insecure elderly people than we’ve ever been able to accommodate before,” **said Gail Bradney, co-director of Woodstock Meals.** “Woodstock Meals is here to meet the increasing demand we see all around us. This grant will make a real difference to many hungry, homebound neighbors.”

“We are grateful for this generous grant that will help Rochester Food Pantry put food on the tables of families who are struggling now more than ever, where no family should have to

choose between paying a bill or putting food on the table,” **said June Atherton, chairperson of the Rochester Food Pantry.** “Based on an analysis of our food costs in 2025, we spend about \$0.95 per meal equivalent provided to our clients. Using this metric, the \$8,500 grant will provide for almost 9,000 meals.”

Ulster County and CFHV will continue to work together to monitor community needs and identify opportunities for sustained investment in food access initiatives.

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