

**Hays County Food Bank  
Status of the Food Bank - 2009**

December 9, 2009



Dear Friend of the Food Bank:

Non-profits all over the county are struggling in the face of the current economic slowdown. I feel it's important to bring you up to date on the status of the Food Bank and our plans to meet the challenges of the coming year.

In 2009 we've experienced a dramatic, twenty percent increase in the number of people needing food, compared to 2008. More people are asking for emergency help and even more are coming for the first time. Last year, we helped 1,376 families in San Marcos, Kyle, Buda, Wimberley, and outlying areas with a turkey box at Thanksgiving. This year, 1,517 families received a box, thanks to the generous help from the community who donated through the "Turkeys Tackling Hunger" fundraiser.

We are thankful that donations of food and money from individuals, churches, and schools remain strong compared to last year, although we have seen a decrease in the amount of corporate and social/civic club contributions by 81% and 42% respectively. To weather this economic storm, our board and staff continue to keep a close eye on spending, while increasing our efforts to educate the community about the plight of hungry people in Hays County. As a donor, you can be confident in the financial stability of our organization and our commitment to the long-term success of the Food Bank.

As Hays County has grown, so have the needs of hungry people. We distribute more than half a million pounds of food annually to our growing roster of hungry families and individuals. One of our greatest challenges is how to receive, move, weigh, inspect, stack, and store food for distribution to clients. We are housed in a mere 2,250 square of warehouse and office space. Those who have visited us know how little space we have for processing and storing food. If it were not for CenturyLink (formerly CenturyTel), which has provided the use of a warehouse nearby, we would not have adequate space to store our food. We give thanks for good neighbors!

We also wish to thank our partner agencies, churches, schools and others, who distribute more than 250,000 pounds of food for us annually. Without the help of these wonderful organizations we would not be able to serve as many people as we do.

Our option to increase the size of the Herndon Street facility is limited by the lot size. The HCFB Board of Directors and I have spent many hours researching possibilities for expansion on a short-term basis of 5 to 6 years. While our permanent home will be at the Village of San Marcos located on Hunter Road, raising money to build a new food bank will be a challenge in this economic climate. In light of that, the board would like to lease a facility that will meet the increased need for our services. Ideally, such a facility would be located near IH-35, have sufficient warehouse and office space, and be affordable. Should you know of a facility that would be available for at least 5 years, please give me a call.

In every challenge there is opportunity. This economic climate has allowed us to bring our mission into sharper focus and realize that our agency exists because of the good will and generosity of this community. We are stewards of our mission to feed hungry people, and we know this task is crucial to the well-being and quality of life for many people living in Hays County.

Thank you for partnering with us. Together, we make a difference in our community.

Happy Holidays,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jerry Gracy". The signature is written in a cursive style.

Jerry Gracy  
Executive Director  
Hays County Food Bank