



## OPERATION FOOD SEARCH

**The mission of Operation Food Search is to nourish and educate our neighbors in need to heal the hurt of hunger.**

**What does this mean?**

Operation Food Search works tirelessly to fight hunger in more ways than one. While we are a leader at collecting and distributing food throughout the bi-state region, we go beyond just supplying agencies with free food. With comprehensive nutrition education programs, an innovative weekend backpack program, environmentally-friendly green initiatives, and our partnership with the No Kid Hungry initiative, **Operation Food Search fights hunger with knowledge, empowerment, and hope.**

Established in 1981 to tackle the growing problem of hunger, Operation Food Search is a St. Louis area **food bank that distributes food - free of charge - to feed the poor and hungry.**

**Each month**, Operation Food Search distributes more than **2.8 million pounds** of food and necessities to **250** food pantries, soup kitchens, and homeless shelters **in 28 St. Louis-area counties** of Missouri and Illinois.

Food close to sell-by dates that is pulled from grocery store shelves is recycled to feed the hungry. Professionally prepared food that is not served is also reclaimed to feed the hungry. We work with major grocery stores, food manufacturers/distributors, major venues, area farmers, professional sports teams, universities, hospitals, corporate food service and caterers **to save nutritious food from our area landfills, and instead feed the hungry here in our community.**

Operation Food Search feeds nearly **200,000 people every single month** – more than 70,000 of these recipients are **children.**

Through our nutrition education programs, including Cooking Matters and Cooking Matters at the Store, we connected with over 10,000 individuals last year to teach those struggling with hunger **how to shop for and prepare nutritious, delicious meals on a budget.**

We are **privately funded.** Food and funds are provided by individuals, businesses and organizations here in our St. Louis area community. We do not receive any United Way funds or government food stuffs. Last year we distributed over **34,000,000 pounds of food and services.**

Without this private support, our mission to feed the poor and hungry could not be achieved. Quite simply, **we are people helping people** – and to this end, we are building a healthier, more vibrant St. Louis region.

*Together, we **unite.***  
*Together, we **shine our light** on poverty.*  
*Together, we **heal the hurt** of hunger.*

**For more information about Operation Food Search's work:** [www.operationfoodsearch.org](http://www.operationfoodsearch.org)