Winter 2026

the Harvester



A Market Full of Possibility

Before the doors open at the Southeast Steuben County Library's Kids' Farmers Market, the lobby is already buzzing. Families arrive on foot and by car, gathering for story time and activities that enrich the trip for everyone.

Inside, the large room is filled with color — tables piled high with corn, plums, potatoes, and squash, delivered just that morning. The air smells faintly of fresh produce and cool cucumbers. Teen volunteers keep the tables stocked and lend a hand to little ones who need it, while parents can be heard counting, "One, two,

"Fruits can be scarce with our grocery budget. This is a great pick-me-up in the middle of the week."

- Julie

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The Helper on Both Sides of the Table

For Angela, the holidays take shape around a table filled with family and familiar dishes. As her children return home — now bringing children of their own — collard greens and yams are always part of the celebration.

“Those are our absolute favorites,” she shares.

For years, Angela and her husband were comfortable providing for their family of five. But when their 30-year marriage ended, with three children in college, Angela found her resources stretched thin.

A natural helper, Angela had long volunteered at the Ithaca Kitchen Cupboard at The Salvation Army. She was accustomed to standing on the “helper” side of the table. Receiving food herself required a new perspective.

“I asked myself, ‘Why am I living so thinly? Why am I reluctant to use the pantry?’” Angela recalls. “I realized it’s a service I should receive as well.”

Angela continued volunteering while becoming a pantry guest — both receiving support and sharing her own time and talents.

“The holidays are usually a time when I find myself running short,” she explains. “When the children come home, you stretch what you have — and you want to have a nice holiday meal. Everyone chips in, but at the same time, you want to provide.”



Access to traditional foods — including a Thanksgiving turkey — helps Angela fill her holiday table while continuing to do what she has always done: care for her family and care for her community.

You help make moments like these possible because you care about your neighbors. Your support helps families gather around tables filled with nourishment, tradition, and belonging.

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three," as small hands fill bags — some nearly as big as the kids carrying them.

Watching Julie and her three daughters, ages 4, 6, and 8, move through the market is like watching a joyful little parade. The girls dart from table to table like the other children around them, smiling and helping each other decide what to pick next.

"Watermelon!" "Plums!" "Cucumbers!" the girls call out when asked about their favorites. Recently, they have found all three at the market.

Julie's family has visited the market regularly for several years. After a recent pay increase made them ineligible for WIC (Women, Infants, and Children nutrition program), their grocery budget remains stretched. "Fruits can be scarce with our grocery budget," Julie shares. "This is a great pick-me-up in the middle of the week."

Thank you for believing children deserve nourishing food, meaningful choices, and opportunities to thrive. With your help, Julie's daughters leave the market carrying more than fresh produce. They carry joy, confidence and the knowledge that their community is cheering them on.

A Place at the Table:
Sharing Holiday Meals



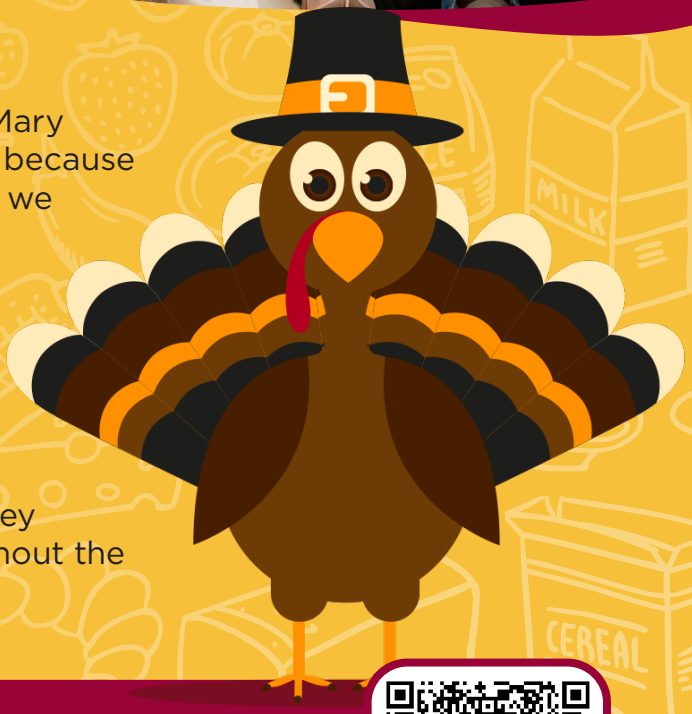
The 17th annual Virtual Turkey Drive is underway through midnight on Thanksgiving Day. Thanks to a generous match from Tioga Downs Casino Resort, every gift will be doubled — helping to provide twice as many holiday meals.

For Mary, receiving a Thanksgiving basket from Valley Food Pantry in Waverly meant she could welcome others to her table.

"The basket had everything you would need for a Thanksgiving dinner, with the turkey, of course," Mary shares. "One of my grandson's friends came over because his family was not having Thanksgiving dinner, so we got to share with him. I have a neighbor who is homebound, and I brought a plate to him, too."

Mary's story shows how far one meal can reach — offering comfort, preserving traditions and helping neighbors care for one another.

Last year, your support provided more than 8,314 whole turkeys, along with 6,000 hams, 2,726 turkey breasts, and traditional fixings, to families throughout the Food Bank's network.



Visit foodbankst.org/turkeydrive or scan the QR code to give today. Together, we can help more neighbors experience the comfort and connection of a shared holiday meal.

foodbank of the Southern Tier

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Working together to build and sustain hunger-free communities throughout the Southern Tier.

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