

# West Virginia Volunteer Organizations Help Put Food on the Table

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Charleston, WV -- With joblessness up in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic, increased demand has overwhelmed West Virginia's food pantries. This week, volunteer groups, the nation's largest food service distribution company and a popular rideshare app teamed up to offer some relief.

On Tuesday, three truckloads of donated food made stops in Belle, W.Va., at a distribution center set up by West Virginia Volunteer Organizations Active in Disaster (WV VOAD). Later this week, representatives from area food pantries will pick up more than 35,000 pounds of shelf-stable goods.

"The pandemic has affected millions of Americans across our region. Partnerships like this are critical in our fight against COVID-19 and exemplify the American spirit and affirm our commitment of helping our fellow neighbors," said MaryAnn Tierney, regional administrator, FEMA Region 3. "We're grateful for the work of Dot Foods, Uber, and West Virginia VOAD. Responding to emergencies is a team sport and the entire FEMA team along with our state, private sector and nonprofit partners banded together to make this happen. Thanks to everyone's efforts, a lot of families in need will be able to put food on the table."

Staffers from WV VOAD spent Tuesday unloading pallets of boxes of items ranging from breakfast cereal and sandwich buns to juice and nachos. On Wednesday, a group of AmeriCorps volunteers based in Richwood worked with the staff to break down the donations into shipments for pick-up by dozens of food pantries.

Frank Miller, director of operations at Parchment Valley Conference Center with the West Virginia Baptist Convention in Ripley, was among the first to pick up supplies.

"In these perilous times, it's a miracle how these donations feed children and adults in rural areas," Miller said. "It's an honor to serve them."



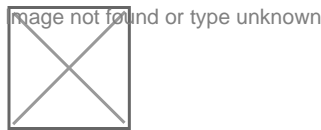
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The donation was the result of efforts by food service distributor Dot Foods, based in Mount Sterling, Ill., which supplied the more than 16 tons of food; Uber Freight, the trucking arm of the rideshare app, Uber, which facilitated transportation; and West Virginia VOAD, the state branch of a national coalition of volunteer agencies.

In the wake of financial hardship brought on by the pandemic, food pantries are still facing great demands with limited resources. Contact your local food pantry or go to [www.feedingamerica.org](http://www.feedingamerica.org) to learn more about how you can help. Learn more about volunteering in West Virginia at [wvvoad.org](http://wvvoad.org) or nationally at [www.nvoad.org](http://www.nvoad.org).

If you have any questions, please contact FEMA Region 3 Office of External Affairs at (215) 931-5597 or at [femar3newsdesk@fema.dhs.gov](mailto:femar3newsdesk@fema.dhs.gov).



Caption: John Vannoy, with Parchment Valley Conference Center in Ripley, W.Va., works with AmeriCorps volunteers to pick up a load of donations from Dot Foods of Mount Sterling, Ill., at the West Virginia Volunteer Organizations Active in Disaster (WV VOAD) distribution center in Belle, W.Va., on Oct. 28, 2020 (Philip Maramba/FEMA)



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