

Meijer Grows its Seed Donation Program, Supporting More Communities with Fresh Food Options

From what started as a [regional project in 2023](#), Meijer has expanded its seed donation program across its six-state footprint, reaching more communities in need. The evolution of this project has streamlined operations, moving from individual store requests to a structured approach involving major seed companies. Organizations like Greater Lansing Food Bank (GLFB) continue to lead the charge in providing resources to families across the Midwest. Mike Tosto, GLFB's garden project resource specialist, shared insights into their transformative journey.

"The seed donations from Meijer have enabled us to serve over 800 unique individuals per season," he emphasized, highlighting the program's profound impact on GLFB's community outreach efforts.

This year, the nonprofit's focus extends to distributing full seed racks to partner agencies, ensuring seeds are readily accessible in local communities. Garden-to-Go kits, featuring organic seeds from Meijer and Burpee, further enhance their initiative, empowering individuals to cultivate their own produce from home.

In 2024, GLFB's Garden Project distributed 16,200 seed packets at their Resource Center in Lansing — an increase from nearly 11,600 packets in 2023. Additionally, this spring, 42,000 seed packets will be provided through their Garden-to-Go kit program, up from 36,000 packets last year. These kits will reach many mid-Michigan communities, including Clare, Charlotte, Harrison, Ovid/Elsie, and more.

Beyond their Resource Center, Garden Project's outreach spans across 80 community gardens, touching lives through partnerships with organizations like the Refugee Development Center and Cristo Rey food pantry. The impact of the seed donation program continues to grow — just two months ago, Forgotten Harvest, a fellow Feeding America food bank, picked up two pallets of seed racks from GLFB to distribute in Detroit and the metro area. Garden Project is actively reaching out to additional organizations to partner with to distribute seeds and will provide updates as the season progresses.

The reach of this program is substantial, with an estimated 8,200 families in GLFB's service district benefiting. With the expansion of seed rack donations this year, 2025's impact is expected to be even greater, with more precise numbers available after a fall data analysis.


Meanwhile, in their South Lansing greenhouse, Garden Project has grown approximately 43,000 plants, many originating from Burpee seed packets. Volunteers have played a crucial role in sustaining these efforts, dedicating over 500 hours to sorting seeds, assembling Garden-to-Go kits, and building seed libraries for the donation program.

Tomatoes, cucumbers, and squash reign as garden favorites, with GLFB promoting direct seeding for beginners and urban gardeners alike.

"It's incredible to see how something as simple as a seed packet can bring a community together," Mike said, reflecting on the program's widespread impact.

Looking ahead, their vision includes broader seed distribution efforts, ensuring more individuals and agencies benefit from the partnership with Meijer.

In essence, our commitment to hunger relief and community sustainability shines brightly through initiatives like the seed donation program. Together with GLFB, this program cultivates not just gardens, but hope and resilience across Lansing and beyond.

Additional assets available online:  [Photos](#) (4)

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