

**Rhineland Area Food Bank
Annual Report for 2025
Prepared December 30, 2025**

Since the inception of the Rhineland Area Food Bank in May of 1997, it had been located in the South Wing of the Altona Bergthaler Church. Beginning early in 2022, we moved to a new location, provided for us by Sun Valley Coop. With the expansion at Sun Valley Coop we again needed to relocate. Our new home will be the Altona United Church education wing. We are currently completing some renovations to accommodate the Food Bank's needs (opening doorways and walls, new wiring for freezers and cooler, painting, etc.) We will require a ramp for grocery delivery and are looking to have that completed in Spring of 2026. The United Church has adequate parking and a lift for clients who cannot manage the stairs. We will be moving to our new location sometime in January of 2026.

Our core of volunteers is ready to serve clients every Monday from 10 till 11 in the morning, and from 7 pm to 8 pm in the evening. We appreciate their dedication, as well as the dedication of the volunteers who unpack the groceries, stock the shelves and clean the facility. Additional volunteers are encouraged.

There were 3,304 client visits in the past year, an approximate increase of 9.4% as compared to 2024. This was an average of 64 client visits per week. Of the 163 open client files, 73 of these are new clients in 2025. Because the grocery costs continue to climb, the average cost per client has also increased considerably. Not counting donated food items, the average cost per food hamper is approximately \$35.50 (excluding donated goods). Fall food drives coordinated by FCC and various youth groups and schools in the community, with vegetables, potatoes and dry beans being donated by local producers, have helped keep our shelves filled. Those donations have also kept the cost spent per client down. The response as usual, in terms of cash donations, time volunteered, and food items provided, has been overwhelming and we are incredibly grateful.

We continue to focus on providing essential and healthy foods, such as basic canned meats, fish, fruit, vegetables, beans, and soups, as well as peanut butter, non-sugared cereals and oatmeal, pasta, pasta sauces, rice, and powdered juices. Health Department regulations prohibit us from distributing stale-dated, opened, or homemade items. 'Extras', baby food, or items needing refrigeration are not encouraged. We have two freezers in which to store bread and extra items, and have one industrial freezer in which to store meat.

The Board for the 2025-2026 year is as follows: Angelika Stoesz, Chair; Alvin Ginter, Treasurer; Ruth Friesen, Secretary; Members-at-large: Lori Dueck, Cornelius Goertzen, Lin Loewen, Dusty Braun, Margarita Friesen and Sharleen Thiessen. Hilda Klassen continues to coordinate the volunteer schedules and organize the files. The Food Bank phone number is 431 733-9146 where a caller can leave a message.

We encourage all interested parties to attend the 2026 Annual Meeting which will be advertised at a later date.

Respectfully submitted by

Ruth Friesen, Secretary for the Rhineland Area Food Bank