



EST. 2015

FOODSHARE
feeding a need in our community.

IMPACT REPORT 2024

A Program of



**School of Medicine
Columbia**

UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH CAROLINA

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Our Vision

All South Carolinians have access to healthy, fresh produce in their community.

Our Mission

To improve the well-being of South Carolinians by partnering with communities as they work to create opportunities that strengthen access to healthy, fresh produce.

Our Values

FOOD

Everyone deserves the opportunity to feed themselves, their families, and their communities with dignity and respect - food is deeply personal, cultural, and relational.

EQUITY

Understanding historical and current root causes of inequities and marginalization, working toward equitable outcomes and access, fostering relationships, and ensuring representation.

HEALTH & WELL-BEING

Good food is critical for good health.

RELATIONSHIPS & COMMUNITY

Building community, both locally and across the state, is critical in achieving our vision - it is imperative that we center the leadership of communities, especially those most marginalized by our current food system, in our efforts.

INNOVATION & CREATIVITY

We can create opportunity when we allow space for creativity and innovation - we grow by taking chances, learning from and nurturing the shared wisdom of our network and partners.



FOODSHARE fresh food box

it's more than just a box of food.

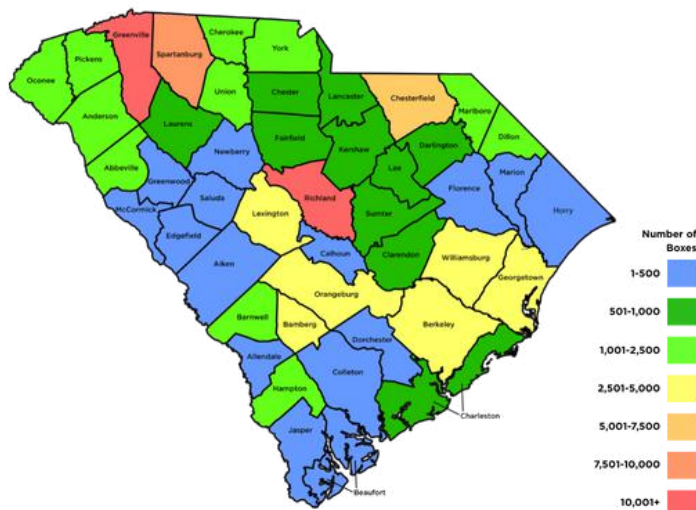


Many communities in South Carolina do not have access or financial resources to eat healthy on a daily basis. Barriers include where people live, age, income, and whether reliable transportation exists. **Without healthy options, health risks increase.** New research shows that chronic diseases, such as **heart disease and diabetes** can be prevented and managed through changes in nutrition. Bringing fresh produce into our communities is a form of food equity and a primary tenant of our mission.

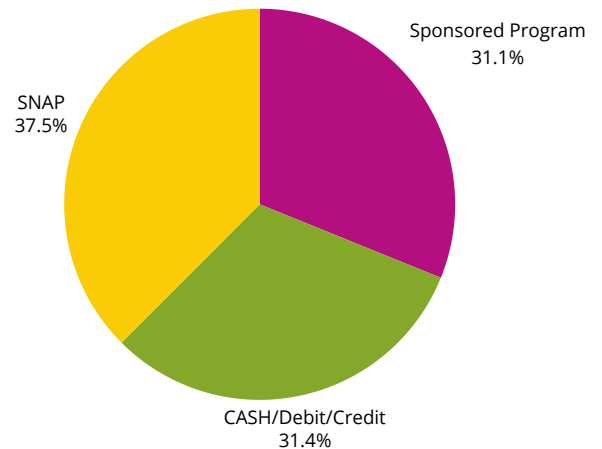
OUR STATE-WIDE IMPACT IN 2024

96,301 boxes
11,974 participants

The Fresh Food Box, is filled with 9-11 varieties of top quality fruits and vegetables. Unique recipes, tips and nutrition notes are included in every box to provide the encouragement, knowledge and skills to prepare nutritious, tasty meals.



**FRESH FOOD BOX
DISTRIBUTION IN 2024**



**FRESH FOOD BOX PAYMENT
METHODS IN 2024**

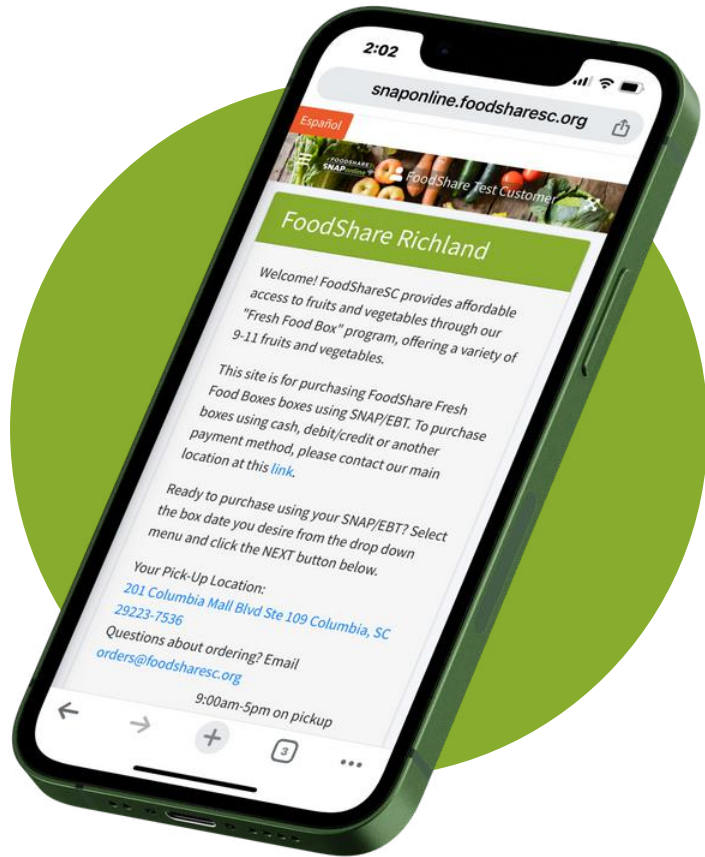
SNAPonline: Increasing Access

The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)

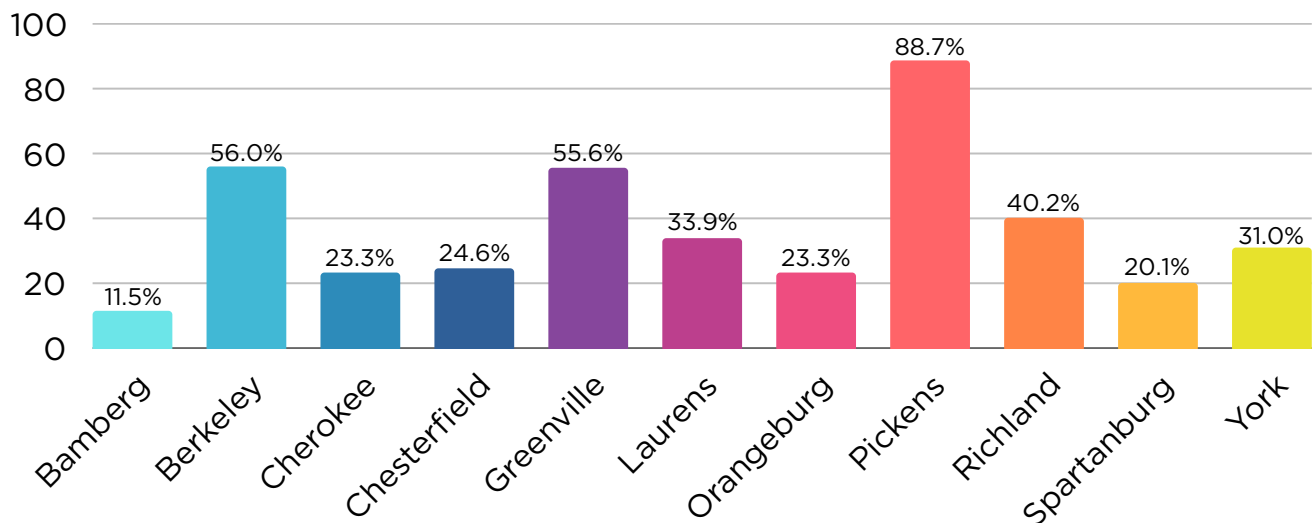
provides nutrition assistance to eligible, low-income individuals and households via a monthly benefit on an Electronic Benefits Transfer (EBT) card, similar to a debit card,

Combining the power of SNAP with **South Carolina's "Healthy Bucks"** program which allows SNAP recipients to obtain additional fresh fruits and vegetables when they use their SNAP benefits, we have provided thousands of families and individuals with increased access to nutritious food.

This access increased in 2024 as we expanded our USDA-approved Internet Retailer platform, **SNAPonline**, to serve **eleven counties** in our state.



% of Overall SNAP Transactions that were Completed Online



Hub Highlights



In April 2024, **Trident United Way**, the operator of **FoodShare Berkeley County** received a gift of \$75,000 annually for three consecutive years. This gift was generously provided by **Nucor Steel Berkeley** to cover the full operating costs of FoodShare Berkeley County distributed 5,306 boxes since their launch in June 2023, that's over 86,000 lbs. of produce!



AIM Interfaith Ministries has operated a food pantry since **1990** and joined the FoodShare network in 2024. Seeing FoodShare as a way to address food insecurity in a healthy way, AIM also embraces the opportunity to foster a cycle of giving and receiving within the community.



Updating Our State-Wide Distribution Model

As The Fresh Food Box program continues to grow across the state, the need for more statewide network partners grows with it. In 2024, we increased the points of entry for community organizations wanting to be part of the FoodShare Network across the state.

01

Regional Hub

Regional hubs facilitate orders from the various County Hubs and Partner Sites and order the produce to fulfill Fresh Food Box orders. These facilities often have loading docks, space to pack, and cold storage.



02

County Hub

County hubs create and maintain a Partner Site Network within their county. They facilitate pick up and drop off of boxes within the county.



03

Partner Site

Partner Sites are community organizations that offer the Fresh Food Box and act as a storefront for their community. They facilitate payment and box distribution directly to participants.



04

NeighborShare

Within a community, selected homebound individuals are able to participate in the NeighborShare program. Volunteers pickup and deliver boxes to help with transportation barriers.



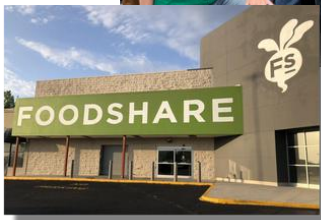
Volunteer Superstars

In 2024, across our twenty county-based hubs, FoodShare South Carolina packed and distributed **over 96,000 Fresh Food Boxes** to community members facing food insecurity. The only way we are able to get this job done is to rely on the generous support of a **strong volunteer force**. In 2024, volunteers contributed **over 6,600 hours** to FoodShare across the state. We thank each one of them for supporting their communities.



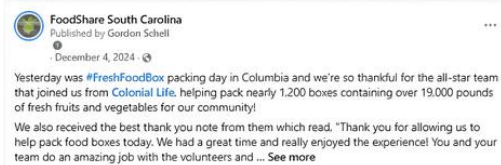
AGFIRST
FARM CREDIT BANK

In 2024, **AgFirst Farm Credit Bank** employees volunteered at 8 box packing days and several packing day prep sessions for a total of 280 hours. AgFirst also provided FoodShare with a generous donation that was used to add our name and logo to the exterior of the building.



In 2024, **Commercial Metals Company (CMC)** employees volunteered at 11 box packing days for a total of 360 hours. They also provided funding for us to furnish the FoodShare conference room with tables, chairs and credenzas.







Culinary medicine combines basic **nutrition science** with practical **cooking skills**, offering a powerful approach to improving health outcomes through realistic lifestyle modifications. This emerging discipline bridges the gap between medical advice and real-world food preparation to promote self-efficacy in **managing and preventing chronic diseases**.

FoodShare's Culinary Medicine program at the University of South Carolina Columbia's School of Medicine educates future healthcare professionals in **food safety, nutrition access, health equity**, and **patient counseling** through class discussions, guest lectures, and interactive culinary activities in our 3,000 square foot teaching kitchen.

STUDENT TESTIMONIALS

"Low-stress and very fun! A great mix of hands-on and virtual learning. Great for all cooking experience levels."

"Our time in the...kitchen with Chef Kelly was delightful. [She] bolstered our confidence to make more nutritious modifications to meals in a way that would be approachable for patients."

"Great lessons on food insecurity and ways to combat that with patients; excellent opportunities to collaborate with peers"

"Very fun class that provides the opportunity to learn how to help patients aside from pharmacologic or procedural interventions."



CULINARY MEDICINE HIGHLIGHTS

CULINARY MEDICINE TEACHING KITCHEN

- All renovations complete
- Staff ServSafe Food Handler certification
- South Carolina Department of Agriculture certification

THREE ROTATIONS OF CULINARY MEDICINE ELECTIVE IN 2024

- Total of 30 students, 72 kitchen hours

UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH CAROLINA PARTNERSHIPS

- Arnold School of Public Health – Sports Nutrition and Dietetics Masters Program
- Guest lecture at College of Pharmacy

COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

- Department of Public Health SNAP-Ed
- Salvation Army Rapid Shelter
- Clemson University Learning Institute (CULI) SNAP-Ed
- Mental Illness Recovery Center, Inc. (MIRCI)
- Lexington Technical Center

NATIONAL PARTNERSHIPS

- Health Meets Food
- Teaching Kitchen Collaborative



Program Spotlight

VeggieRx is a **fruit and vegetable prescription program** designed to increase the intake of fresh produce for patients with diabetes and prediabetes to improve health outcomes (reducing A1C, blood pressure and weight). Participating physicians prescribe patients fresh fruits and vegetables that they receive from FoodShare's Fresh Food Box Program. The long-term goals are to **reduce food insecurity, increase positive health outcomes** and **decrease health care costs**.



IN 2024:

7 clinics
535 patient referrals
3,939 boxes

Clinics

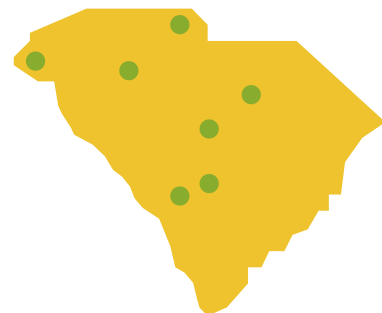
Our program has ongoing partnerships with

- **Affinity Health Center**-York County
- **Bamberg Family Practice**-Bamberg County.
- **Clemson Rural Health**-Walhalla, Oconee County,
- **CareSouth Carolina**-Lee County
- **Family Health Center**-Orangeburg County
- **Free Medical Clinic**-Richland County
- **Good Shepherd Free Clinic**-Laurens County

VeggieRx Results

Analysis of 339 VeggieRx patients revealed*:

- **Systolic Blood Pressure decreased** from 134.8 to 132.4
- **Diastolic Blood Pressure decreased** from 81.9 to 80.1
- **A1C decreased** from 8.3 to 7.6
- **Weight decreased** by 1.9 lbs.



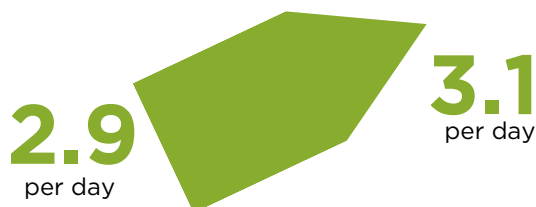
**Data evaluated by Diabetes Free SC.*

Proven Impact

In the first 6 months of 2024*

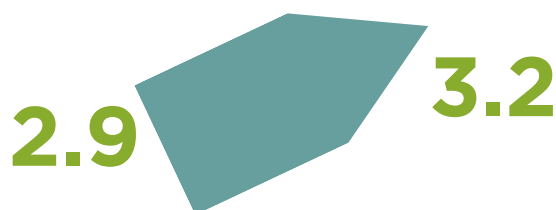
Daily Fruit and Vegetable Intake

Program participants increased their **average daily cup equivalents of fruits and vegetables** intake.



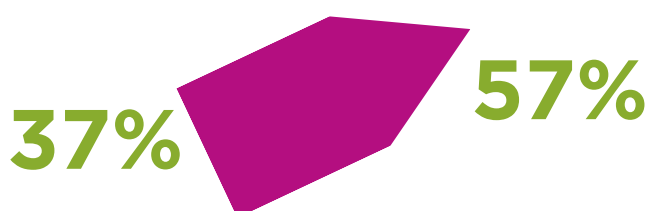
Nutrition Security Score

Program participants' score **increased** on this scale that assesses their ability to obtain foods which meet their nutritional, health and dietary needs.



Patient's Perceived Health Status

Percentage of Veggie Rx participants self-reporting to be in good health **increased**.



Food Insecurity

Food insecurity was evaluated using the US Household Food Security Survey six-point scale. **A lower score is preferred** and **program participant score on this scale decreased**.



"I remember my provider telling me that she wanted me to speak with the diabetes educator, that day changed my outlook on food. I was introduced to the VeggieRX program that helped transform my life. The VeggieRX program helped me to lose 40 lbs by implementing healthy eating habits. Before receiving the VeggieRX box, I was depressed and felt sick and tired. During the 6 months, I had to change my mindset. It was a choice for me to stay there or do something about it. I will be forever grateful for this program."

- Veggie Rx Program Participant

*Data evaluated by SNAP-Ed.

FoodShare Richland County

In 2024, FoodShare Richland County distributed more than **24,000 Fresh Food Boxes** to over **3,100 households** in Richland and Lexington Counties. That's almost 400,000 pounds of affordable, fresh produce into households, helping our community eat more healthily. In addition to individuals purchasing boxes using SNAP, other sponsored programs are serving vulnerable individuals by providing boxes at no cost to the recipient. These programs include VeggieRx, grants, donations, and giveaways. Combining these various programs together, **67% of boxes are reaching our primary goal of serving marginalized communities.**



The **NeighborShare** program at the FoodShare Richland County Hub is a **community initiative** that aims to ensure access to fresh, affordable food for those who face difficulties in making it to one of our pickup locations. The program serves individuals in the greater Columbia area who need assistance in ordering their Fresh Food Boxes or having boxes delivered to them by volunteers.

NeighborShare is a vital program that is a part of FoodShare's mission to make it easier for families in South Carolina to enjoy fresh fruits and vegetables on a regular basis.

NEIGHBORSHARE 2024

149 participants
40 volunteer drivers
2,103 Fresh Food Boxes
89% SNAP/EBT



FoodShare Open House

After several years of renovations, we held an open house and ribbon cutting for our new FoodShare South Carolina location in 2024. We are so grateful for the support of so many organizations and individuals who have contributed to this milestone achievement!



Rep. Leon Howard cutting the ribbon at the Open House with FoodShare staff, volunteers, and other attendees and guests.



Dean Gerald Harmon, University of South Carolina School of Medicine Columbia



Open House attendees touring the Teaching Kitchen



Councilwoman Gretchen Barron, Richland County District 7



Carolyn Thompson, President South Carolina AARP Chapter 753 and long-time FoodShare volunteer



Bishop Eric Freeman, The Meeting Place Church

Advocacy



FoodShare South Carolina is committed to working in every way we can to address food insecurity in our community, which includes working with our coalition partners to improve the policy landscape in our state and county. We do this in many ways, from public education on the structure of our food system to amplifying the voices of our participants. This advocacy work is only possible through our strong coalitions, such as the **South Carolina Anti-Hunger Advocacy Coalition**, the **Food is Medicine Coalition**, the **Columbia Food Policy Committee (CFPC)**, and the emerging **South Carolina Food Systems Network**.

2024 Advocacy Highlights

- Addressing the ‘benefits’ gap in our work, by joining the ALICE Index Research Advisory Committee. The ALICE Index addresses challenges by citizens who make just too much to qualify for SNAP or other assistance, but are unable to make ends meet
- Despite South Carolina not opting into the Summer EBT program, the CFPC facilitated a fundraiser called Cola Eats to provide low income families with grocery cards for their kids over the summer
- FoodShare SC joined the Opt-In coalition in South Carolina, facilitated by Foster America, that builds on data, community insight and the perspectives of people with lived experience to create alternatives to the child welfare system for families
- The Columbia Mobile market hit the road in March 2024! The CFPC had been advocating for a few years for the city to allocate funding for fresh food options in neighborhoods without a grocery store
- The Carolinas College SNAP Workgroup launched in 2024, bringing together Basic Needs providers at Universities and Colleges, and food access organizations across the Carolinas to advocate for increased SNAP access for college and university students

Financial Impact

Through our various programs, FoodShare South Carolina **makes a big impact on our local economy**, from supporting our local farmers, to the packaging and transportation industry, to grocery stores and local community organizations.

In 2024, FoodShare spent over \$1.5 million in the local economy:

- Produce: \$1,376,350
 - \$165,857 (13%) of produce sourced from local farmers
- Cardboard Boxes: \$138,029
- Transportation/Delivery, Printing, Office Expenses: \$242,180

At FoodShare South Carolina, **38% of our Fresh Food Boxes are purchased using SNAP**. These sales take advantage of Healthy Bucks, a South Carolina SNAP incentive program and anti-poverty initiative that triples the purchasing power of SNAP dollars when used to purchase fresh fruit and vegetables.



SNAP is one of the fastest and most effective forms of economic stimulation, something we need now more than ever. SNAP quickly injects money into the economy because low-income individuals generally spend all their income on daily needs such as housing and transportation. Additionally, every new SNAP dollar spent increases the GDP by almost \$1.50 during a weak economy.*

Even more encouraging is the multiplier effect of Healthy Bucks to the local economy. A 2021 study of SNAP incentives across the country, like Healthy Bucks, found that the national average multiplier is 2.3, that means for every \$1 of Healthy Bucks spent, \$2.30 circulates in the local economy.*



***Sources:**

<https://www.cbpp.org/research/food-assistance/the-case-for-boosting-snap-benefits-in-next-major-economic-response>

<https://www.spur.org/publications/research/2021-02-04/economic-contributions-expanding-healthy-food-incentives>

Press

As our program has grown and expanded, we have been fortunate to leverage coverage from various media outlets.

Our website contains links to the press coverage and is continually updated.

<https://foodsharesc.org/news>



NEWS

FoodShare South Carolina Open House

MARCH 29, 2024

FoodShare South Carolina hosted an open house and ribbon cutting for its new Teaching Kitchen and Richland County Distribution Hub on Feb. 15, 2024. Over 150 supporters, funders and local officials attended the event and had the opportunity to tour the new facility located at 201 Columbia Mall Blvd., Ste. 109 in Columbia.

The facility is already in use for FoodShare SC's packing and distribution operations for Richland and Lexington counties. The Teaching Kitchen is expected to be fully functional for community cooking classes in the Summer of 2024 and will provide the space for the Culinary Medicine course for University of South Carolina Columbia medical students in the Fall of 2024.

Richland County · Follow
February 16, 2024 · 📍

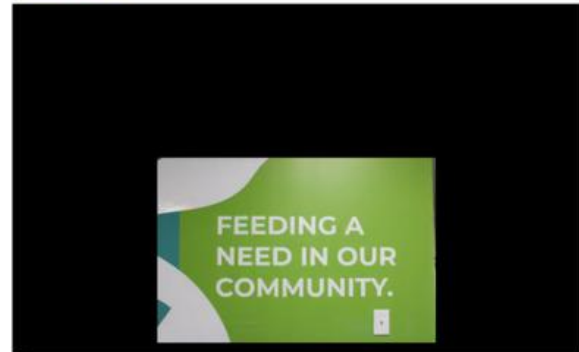
On Thursday, **FoodShare South Carolina**, an organization committed to eliminating food insecurity and increasing access to healthy food options 🥗🥦, unveiled its new teaching kitchen with a ribbon-cutting 🎊 at the new facility off Columbia Mall Boulevard.

The kitchen is an essential component of FoodShare's culinary medicine 🥘 program, a partnership with the University of South Carolina School of Medicine.

Attendees at the grand opening included County Councilwoman **Gretchen D. Barron** (District 7), who expressed enthusiasm for the teaching kitchen's completion and emphasized the importance of County residents having access to nutritious food options to support healthy lifestyles 🥰.

To see a recap of the event and hear from Councilwoman Barron, check out the video below 📺.

#RichlandCountySC



Foodshare Spartanburg launches SNAPonline for residents in Spartanburg, SC

Foodshare Spartanburg recently launched SNAPonline, a convenient way for people who receive SNAP/EBT to order their food online.

Share

WYFF 4

Updated: 6:02 PM EDT Apr 29, 2024

Infinite Scroll Enabled

Taniqua Pennix
Reporter



People are talking about us!



[The] box last week was AWESOME!!! 😊 EVERYTHING WAS FRESH!!! Keep up the good work FoodShare! All the Residents were extremely happy with their [Fresh Food] boxes.

- Columbia Partner Site Coordinator



Z Copeland
Local Guide · 29 reviews · 2 photos



★★★★★ 7 months ago

The staff there are so nice and helping. You can purchase some FRESH boxes of fruits and veggies at a great price. You can either use your snap card or pay cash. It's definitely worth it because there are so many things in the box that you can choose from. I wasn't expecting how much was in the box. Thank you so much for your help .



Braelyn Hanenkratt
Local Guide · 18 reviews · 1 photo

★★★★★ 11 months ago

Amazing staff! Friendly and caring individuals. Fruits and veggies are fresh and delicious.



Like



Share

facebook



Bridges Clubhouse
November 13, 2024 · 🌐



Our intern Laura did an awesome job setting up today's resource fair. Thank you to Able South Carolina, Lexington Medical Center, FoodShare South Carolina, Harvest Hope Food Bank, Mental Illness Recovery Center, Inc. (MIRCI), Mental Health America of South Carolina, and Dart day-a-ride transit for attending our resource fair! Thank you for sharing all the helpful resources & information.



FoodShare SC Staff

Meet our staff in Columbia, SC that support the state-wide network and manage the Richland County hub.



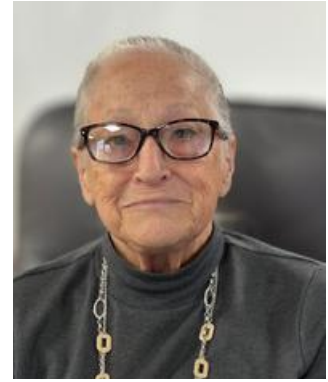
Adrian González
Network Outreach
Coordinator



Annette Duncan
Business Assistant



Gordon Schell
Director of Marketing
and Digital Strategies



Jacquie Russell
Program Assistant



Jessica Burnham
Hub Manager, Richland
County



Kelly Duane
Director of Culinary
Medicine



Kim Hollins
Veggie Rx Program
Manager



**Latifah "LT"
Muhammad**
Hub Manager, Richland
County



Lilly Allen
Community Program
Manager, Culinary
Medicine



Mark DiNovo
NeighborShare
Program Coordinator



Melissa Lewie
Business Director



**Omme-Salma
Rahemtullah**
Executive Director

We are so thankful!

2024 was filled with rewards and we could not have impacted the number of lives we did without the help and support of our partners. Thank you for believing in our mission.



**School of Medicine
Columbia**

UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH CAROLINA



**CENTER FOR RURAL AND
PRIMARY HEALTHCARE**



**SISTERS of CHARITY
FOUNDATION
OF SOUTH CAROLINA**

PRISMA HEALTH



**CENTRAL CAROLINA
COMMUNITY FOUNDATION**



AGFIRST
FARM CREDIT BANK



**SOUTH CAROLINA
SNAP-Ed** Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Education



FOODSHARE

feeding a need in our community.



@foodsharesc

A Program of



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UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH CAROLINA

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