



VERTICAL  
HARVEST

**FOOD BANK**  
OF WYOMING™

**Food Bank of Wyoming and Vertical Harvest  
Partner to Expand Access to Fresh Produce Across Wyoming**



**Sept 15, 2023 [JACKSON, WY]** - [Vertical Harvest](#), a WY-headquartered indoor farming company focused on Competitive Integrated Employment (CIE) for people with disabilities, along with the [Food Bank of Wyoming](#), the largest hunger-relief organization in the state, has announced a successful pilot and program expansion sending fresh greens to Wyoming Hunger Relief Partners.

Jon Hume, Vertical Harvest's Chief Commercial Officer, who is overseeing Vertical Harvest's expansion into new markets, like Maine and Michigan, is also helping to realign the company's

commercial efforts in Jackson, WY to include more low income and low access (LILA) channels. With its “feed locals first” philosophy, Vertical Harvest continues to prioritize local and state distribution of their produce, and offering preference to local and regional distributors, as well as community organizations like Food Bank of Wyoming.

“Our aim is to see the entire community-as-our-customer,” Jon said. “We want to be on shelf for all our neighbors in the retail setting and we love working with the local culinary community, but we also want to make sure we’re helping to drive availability, accessibility, and affordability for everyone. And so seeing the first Food Bank of Wyoming truck pull away from the farm loaded with freshly harvested produce was one of the highlights of my career.”

Though Food Bank of Wyoming currently works with more than 150 Hunger Relief Partners, 19 Mobile Rural Pantries, and multiple food rescue programs, the partnership with Vertical Harvest pilot program initially focused on one monthly pick-up and delivery to the [Lander Share and Care Food Bank](#). Through that experience, Stacey Stebner shared that, “the greens sent from Vertical Harvest are just incredible - what a treat to be able to provide our community with such a nutritional powerhouse.” She went on to explain that “we typically have quite a bit of fresh produce, but most of it is not local and we rarely have greens... and when the volunteers and I checked out Vertical Harvest as a company, we were so impressed with Grow Well, their inclusive employment program, we hope this can be a blueprint for other growers in the region.” Through the pilot, greens arrive fresh within a day of harvest and with recipe and educational materials from [Cent\\$ible](#) Nutrition Program, Wyoming’s SNAP-Ed and TEFAP Programs. Cent\$ible educators live in communities across the state and teach free classes about healthy lifestyles (and cooking!) as well as work with community partners on projects at gardens, food pantries, and schools.

To date the Lander pantry has absorbed 225 lbs of greens delivered over the partnership’s first 3 months of operation, but the team is poised to expand access further across the state with the addition of a second pick-up and delivery route. Funds have been earmarked for the effort thanks to the [Bank of Jackson Hole](#) and the [Federal Home Loan Bank of Des Moines’s](#) Member Impact Fund, and the Fresh Food Center in Casper is next on the list, but expansion depends upon finding a qualified CDL driver willing to take the part-time position. If any qualified drivers are interested, please contact Tim Smith at Food Bank of Wyoming, who noted that “helping our neighbors access nutritious meals so that they can thrive is at the heart of what Food Bank of Wyoming does to serve the state and we’re looking for drivers who are open to work and are excited by the mission.”

Co-founder and CEO Nona Yehia also remarked that, “Vertical Harvest is a home-grown Wyoming company focused on creating the future we want from the food we need, and the opportunity to see more of our product reach more Wyomingites, especially those folks facing real hunger - that’s why we’re here.” While the start-up is currently in the middle of their Series B raise, she also noted that original investments from the [Wyoming Business Council](#) and a partnership with the [town of Jackson](#) made the enterprise possible. “Public-private partnerships like this realize their full potential when state and local initiatives can also be addressed, because businesses that are designed into the fabric of their communities have a unique opportunity to impact beyond just economics.”

Both organizations are excited for the next phase of their partnership, and to begin thinking even bigger about how they can join forces to mobilize Wyoming’s “community of the willing” to address food security in new and innovative ways across the state.

For additional information, please visit: [VerticalHarvestFarms.com](#) as well as <https://wyomingfoodbank.org/> and follow @verticalharvestfarms and @wyomingfoodbank on socials.

### **About Vertical Harvest**

Vertical Harvest is a hydroponic, vertical farming company dedicated to community-oriented farms, food and futures. In addition to their passion for local, healthy food grown sustainably, Vertical Harvest also operates on an inclusive employment model with farms designed for accessibility and staffed via hiring practices developed to support meaningful employment for people with disabilities. With a mission to energize local food economies by using food as a medium for meaningful change, the company is bringing food production back to the city and partnering with civic leaders and local developers to co-locate farms with essential civic infrastructure, bolster local green energy efforts, keep dollars in-community longer and reestablish people's connection to their farmers and the fresh, flavorful, food they grow.

For more information visit [verticalharvestfarms.com](#) and sign up for the newsletter and follow them on [LinkedIn](#), [Instagram](#), [TikTok](#), [Twitter](#) and [Facebook](#) at @verticalharvestfarms.

## **About Food Bank of Wyoming**

*Food Bank of Wyoming is the largest hunger-relief organization in Wyoming and provides food and essentials directly to people facing hunger and through more than 150 Hunger Relief Partners and 19 Mobile Pantries across the state. We've put the power of community to work for our neighbors in need. We serve as the Wyoming Distribution Center of Food Bank of the Rockies, which is a proud member of the Feeding America network. Everything we do is fueled by the support of our community and donors, and every dollar raised in Wyoming stays in Wyoming. For more information, visit [wyomingfoodbank.org](https://wyomingfoodbank.org).*

For more information visit <https://wyomingfoodbank.org/>, sign up for their newsletter and follow them on social media on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), [Instagram](#), and [YouTube](#).