

OZARKS FOOD HARVEST

VOLUNTEER HANDBOOK

Thank you for volunteering with us! We're grateful
you're helping us *Transform Hunger into Hope*
for our neighbors in need.



**OZARKS
FOOD
HARVEST**

THE FOOD BANK

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ALL ABOUT THE FOOD BANK

Ozarks Food Harvest was founded in 1983 and is now the Feeding America food bank for southwest Missouri.

With the stated mission of *Transforming Hunger into Hope*, The Food Bank provides more than 20 million meals annually, distributes food to 270 community and faith-based partner charities, and distributes food directly to people through the *Weekend Backpack Program*, *Mobile Food Pantries*, *After-School & Summer Food Programs*, and the *Senior Food Programs*.

In 2021, Ozarks Food Harvest received its tenth consecutive Four-Star Charity Navigator rating. Our facility, the O'Reilly Center for Hunger Relief, has also received “superior” American Institute of Baking International (AIB) food safety certifications.





VOLUNTEERING AT OZARKS FOOD HARVEST

Your gift of time makes an enormous difference—one volunteer hour is the equivalent of 105 meals! We have different programs you can sign up to support, but all of them ultimately get meals to people facing hunger.





*ALLERGEN NOTICE: Please be advised The Food Bank works with the following allergens: milk, eggs, soybeans, wheat, peanuts, tree nuts, fish, and shellfish.

VOLUNTEER SESSIONS

There are a variety of projects that we do during our volunteer sessions to help us fight hunger in the Ozarks.



Pack backpacks for the *Weekend Backpack Program*

The *Weekend Backpack Program* provides 58,000 bags of nutritious, child-friendly food to children who take them home over the weekend.



Assemble *Senior Food boxes*

The *Senior Food* program provides more than 4,100 eligible seniors a year with healthy food through senior centers, churches, and pantries.



Sort and pack donated food

Volunteers sort and pack more than 100,000 pounds of donations from food drives, local retailers, and distributors each week. This food has to be inspected, sorted, and boxed before it is distributed to our hunger-relief partners within our 28-county service area.*



Harvest fruits and veggies with *The Glean Team*

Ozarks Food Harvest's Glean Team harvests almost 90,000 pounds of produce a year and helps provide fresh produce to local feeding sites. They harvest from our home garden in Rogersville and also from area farms that have an excess of crops. Sessions include harvesting, planting, and maintaining beds and high tunnels.



VOLUNTEER AT THE WAREHOUSE

Schedule a session at the warehouse!

- Each session lasts 3 hours and includes a 15-minute break with drinks and snacks.
- Most projects require standing for the entire session.

Session Times

Mornings

Monday-Friday, 9:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m.

Afternoons

Monday-Thursday, 1:00-4:00 p.m.

Evenings

Tuesday, 6:00-9:00 p.m.

Saturdays

9:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m. and
1:00-4:00 p.m.
(After Labor Day-March)

Please refer to the website for the most accurate session listings.





Who can volunteer at the O'Reilly Center of Hunger Relief?

- Volunteers MUST be at least 12 years old.
- Youth volunteers aged 12-15 must be accompanied by a parent or guardian.
- If part of a group, the adult-to-youth ratio is 1:5 minimum.

When you arrive

Arrival Time

- Arrive at the Volunteer Entrance in the northwest corner of the building.
- Arrive no earlier than 15 minutes prior to the start time of your session.
- When you arrive, wash your hands and sign in to the volunteer management system (CERVIS) 5 minutes before your session begins.
- Please be mindful of social distancing while working with the other volunteers. Wearing a mask is at your personal discretion EXCEPT in projects where food safety requires it.

Phones

Volunteers are asked to not wear headphones or air pods during volunteer shifts and refrain from using cellphones except in designated areas.



Photos

When taking group photos, please wait until a break or the end of the shift. A Volunteer Coach will be happy to assist if needed.

Footwear and Apparel

Volunteers are required to wear closed-toe/closed-heel footwear. Please dress in comfortable clothing, seasonally appropriate. Please do not wear clothing with obscene or controversial messages. We do ask that tops cover your midriff and that shorts are an appropriate length.

Personal Belongings

Volunteers are asked to leave all personal belongings behind. We have limited storage for items available inside the facility. We are not responsible for damaged or stolen personal property.

After your volunteer session

Service Verification

Our volunteer management system (CERVIS) allows each person to run their own reports for service hour verification. You have the ability to share a link from your volunteer profile that will provide proof of your hours of service. We ask all volunteers requiring signatures, or service letters to please email their forms/requests to volunteer@ozarksfoodharvest.org, two days in advance.



Inclement weather at the Warehouse

Please choose the safest option for you when deciding to attend a volunteer session. For the most up-to-date information, please opt in for text alerts in your volunteer profile.

Weekdays/Weekends

Ozarks Food Harvest will make a decision and send an email alert to those registered by 7:45 am if the morning session is canceled. An email alert will be sent out by 11 am if the afternoon session is canceled.

Tuesday Evenings

An email alert will be sent out by 3:30 p.m.

NOTE: We encourage everyone scheduled on wintry weather days to enter through the east gate off Packer Road and travel slowly through our parking lot to the volunteer parking area. Please be mindful of semi-traffic and walking from your car to the entrance as areas could be slick.



VOLUNTEER AT THE GARDEN

Schedule a session at the garden!

- Most sessions last 2 hours and involve standing, kneeling, carrying, and lifting. There are breaks which include drinks and snacks.
- If your group is interested in volunteering at the garden, please fill out a [Group Request](#) and note that in the additional comments section of the form.
- In addition to regular pop-up sessions, the Garden Team can provide educational opportunities. These can also be requested by submitting a [Group Request](#).

Session Times

Mornings

Monday, 9:00–11:00 a.m. (March 15–May 23)

Afternoons/Evenings

Monday, 2:00–4:00 p.m.
(February 7–March 7)

Thursday, 2:00–4:00 p.m. and
5:00–7:00 p.m. (March–September)

Pop-up gleans (as requested)





Who can volunteer at the Full Circle garden?

- There is not an age limit for volunteers at the garden, however, volunteers bringing children (12 or under) must accompany them at all times.
- Please notify the garden team in advance that you're bringing children by emailing, volunteer@ozarksfoodharvest.org so that fun, age-appropriate activities can be planned with them in mind.

When you arrive

Arrival Time

- Arrive at 2835 S. Farm Rd. 227, Rogersville, MO 65742, no earlier than 15 minutes before the start time of your session.
- Wash your hands in the restroom at the end of the red building on your left.
- Staff will greet you at the red building on your right, and help you get signed in.
- No need to sign in to Cervis on your phone, as we use paper sign-in sheets at the farm.

Phones

Volunteers are asked to not wear headphones or air pods during volunteer shifts and refrain from using cellphones except in designated areas.



Photos

When taking group photos, please wait until a break or the end of the shift. A garden team member will be happy to assist if needed.

Footwear and Apparel

Volunteers are required to wear closed-toe/closed-heel footwear. Please dress in comfortable clothing, seasonally appropriate. Please do not wear clothing with obscene or controversial messages. We do ask that tops cover your midriff and that shorts are an appropriate length. We provide sunscreen, bug spray, gloves, drinks, and snacks for our volunteers.

Volunteers need to dress for the weather and consider a hat and/or cooling towel in the warm season and layer appropriately in the cooler seasons.

After your volunteer session

Service Verification

Our volunteer management system (CERVIS) allows each person to run their own reports for service hour verification. You have the ability to share a link from your volunteer profile that will provide proof of your hours of service. We ask all volunteers requiring signatures, or service letters to please email their forms/requests to volunteer@ozarksfoodharvest.org, two days in advance.



Inclement weather at the Garden

Full Circle Gardens volunteer sessions may be canceled or rescheduled due to inclement weather. This includes extreme cold, extreme heat, winter weather, lightning and thunderstorms or threat of severe storms. If cancellation or rescheduling needs to occur, you will be emailed as soon as possible. If there are last minute changes to the schedule (within 4 hours of the session), you will also be notified via phone/voicemail, if possible. Texts may also be sent as an additional way to make contact for last minute changes. You will need to enable text alerts in your profile.

If volunteers are on site and the weather suddenly becomes hazardous, volunteer sessions may be ended early in an effort to keep everyone safe. If hazardous weather is predicted to be brief (a quick pop-up thunderstorm), volunteers may seek shelter in their vehicles for safety while the weather passes or they may leave the session early. If a sudden tornado warning is issued, all will seek shelter inside the living quarters of the barn (adjacent to the bathrooms).

The Full Circle Gardens Team monitors the weather closely and attempts to make schedule changes in order to avoid severe weather risks.



**SCHEDULE
A GROUP**

Scheduling a group

- To request a group session, fill out a Group Request form [here](#).
- Youth groups require an adult-to-youth ratio of 1:5 minimum for (ages 12-15).
- Should anyone in your group be unable to attend, they can cancel their own reservation by following the link in the email sent out before their scheduled session or call a member of the Volunteer Engagement team at (417) 865-3411. If the entire group needs to cancel, please call or email volunteer@ozarksfoodharvest.org as soon as possible.



READY TO SCHEDULE A VOLUNTEER SESSION?

REGISTER NOW

Before your session, please watch our [Volunteer Orientation video](#). It will give you a preview of what to expect while you're with us!

If you schedule a session:

- Please arrive on time.
- Stay for the full scheduled session, or alert a staff member if you can't stay until the end of the session before leaving.
- If you are unable to attend, you can cancel your reservation by either following the instructions from the link in your pre-session email or emailing a member of the Volunteer Engagement team at volunteer@ozarksfoodharvest.org.



OUR POLICIES

- Anyone under the influence of drugs and/or alcohol will not be permitted to volunteer.
- Smoking is allowed in designated areas only.
- Absolutely NO donated items may be taken by volunteers.
- Only Ozarks Food Harvest staff work with warehouse equipment and pallets.
- Running, shouting, horseplay (tossing food, etc.) or foul language is not allowed.
- Harassment of any kind is not tolerated by volunteers or staff.
- Any injuries, possible hazards or unsafe activities must be reported to staff immediately.

SIGNS OF ILLNESS

Volunteers displaying any signs of illness (including a persistent cough, fever, or shortness of breath) are asked to reschedule their session for when they are well. Please notify Ozarks Food Harvest immediately so that we may plan for your absence.



YOU MEAN SO MUCH TO US. THANK YOU!

Sustained Volunteering

Every hour you volunteer equals 105 meals which make a measurable impact in fighting hunger in southwest Missouri, and regular sustained volunteering even more - as it helps us know we have the capacity to process the ever-increasing food donations from our local retail partners.

Spread the Message

Please help us share the message of volunteering when you're on social media by using these hashtags with your pictures: #hungerhero, #ozarksfoodharvest, #transforminghungerinto hope, and #springfieldmo.

Become a monthly sustainer

When you join Harvest Circle, a community of monthly sustainers that supports The Food Bank, you'll help provide a steady source of funds that allow Ozarks Food Harvest to respond immediately when needs arise. You can help bring hope to families across the Ozarks!

Sign up by visiting ozarksfoodharvest.org/donate and checking the "Would you like to make this a monthly donation?" box. Or, contact Micah Rudd at 417-865-3411 x 121 or mrudd@ozarksfoodharvest.org.





Learn more or sign up to volunteer at ozarksfoodharvest.org/volunteer