



**DARDEN RESTAURANTS HELPS FEEDING AMERICA® EXPAND IMPACT IN THE MOVEMENT TO END HUNGER WITH FOOD TRUCK DONATIONS FOR THE FOURTH CONSECUTIVE YEAR**

*10 Refrigerated Trucks to Strengthen 10 More Food Distribution Programs Nationwide*

*45 Trucks Have Been Provided to 45 Food Banks Across 21 States Since January 2021*

**ORLANDO, Fla. (September 25, 2024)** – For the fourth consecutive year, Darden Restaurants is partnering with Feeding America® to ensure food reaches people facing hunger. Through a \$2 million grant from the Darden Restaurants, Inc. Foundation and support from Penske Truck Leasing, 26-foot refrigerated trucks are being donated to 10 additional Feeding America member food banks. Each truck, with a capacity of up to 12,000 pounds, will support food distribution and mobile pantry programs at food banks serving communities experiencing the highest need.

Food banks receiving a truck this year include:

- Central California Food Bank (Fresno, Calif.)
- Coastal Bend Food Bank (Corpus Christi, Texas)
- Feeding America, Kentucky's Heartland (Elizabethtown, Ky.)
- Harvest Hope Food Bank (Columbia, S.C.)
- Inter-Faith Food Shuttle (Raleigh, N.C.)
- Middle Georgia Community Food Bank (Macon, Ga.)
- Second Harvest of the Greater Valley (Manteca, Calif.)
- South Texas Food Bank (Laredo, Texas)
- Three Square Food Bank (Las Vegas, Nev.)
- United Food Bank (Mesa, Ariz.)

"Darden is uniquely positioned to make a meaningful impact in the movement to end hunger," said Rick Cardenas, President and CEO of Darden Restaurants. "Through our ongoing partnership with Feeding America and our Harvest food donation program, we leverage our resources to help combat food insecurity, ensuring nutritious meals reach families who need them most."

### **The Need**

The [U.S. Department of Agriculture](#) (USDA) reports that 13.5% of households experienced food insecurity in 2023, an increase from 12.8% in 2022. Consequently, the USDA estimates that approximately [47 million people](#) in the U.S. face hunger. Ensuring food banks have reliable transportation is essential, as it directly impacts their ability to deliver food efficiently and prevent waste.

"Hunger exists in every zip code in the U.S., and it can affect anyone. Basic costs like housing – or an unexpected expense – are breaking budgets across the country," said Claire Babineaux-Fontenot, CEO of Feeding America. "We are deeply grateful for the continued partnership with Darden and Penske. Their support helps strengthen our efforts to ensure food reaches communities where it is needed most and to enable food banks to share fresh, healthy food like produce and dairy with people facing hunger."

### **Responding to the Need**

For 14 years, Darden and the Darden Restaurants, Inc. Foundation have worked with Feeding America to tackle food insecurity. Since January 2021, this partnership has delivered 45 refrigerated trucks and operational funding to 45 food banks across 21 states.

Simultaneously, Darden's Harvest food donation program has been serving communities for over two decades by channeling surplus, nutritious food from its restaurants to local nonprofits. With [food waste](#) being a major issue in the U.S., where 92 billion pounds of food are discarded annually, Darden's efforts are crucial. Over this period, Darden has

donated more than 140 million pounds of food, translating to over 118 million meals\* for people experiencing hunger, helping to reduce the impact of food waste and supporting individuals across the country.

\*According to the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), one meal is equal to 1.2 pounds of food.

#### **About Darden Restaurants and the Darden Restaurants, Inc. Foundation**

Darden's family of restaurants features some of the most recognizable and successful brands in full-service dining — Olive Garden, LongHorn Steakhouse, Yard House, Ruth's Chris Steak House, Cheddar's Scratch Kitchen, The Capital Grille, Seasons 52, Eddie V's and Bahama Breeze. For more information, visit [www.darden.com](http://www.darden.com).

The Darden Restaurants, Inc. Foundation works to bring to life our spirit of service through its philanthropic support of charitable organizations across the country. Since 1995, the Darden Restaurants, Inc. Foundation has awarded more than \$110 million in grants to non-profit organizations such as Feeding America, National Restaurant Association Educational Foundation (NRAEF) and American Red Cross.

#### **About Feeding America**

Feeding America is committed to an America where no one is hungry. We support tens of millions of people who experience food insecurity to get the food and resources they say they need to thrive as part of a nationwide network of food banks, statewide food bank associations, food pantries and meal programs. We also invest in innovative solutions to increase equitable access to nutritious food, advocate for legislation that improves food security and work to address factors that impact food security, such as health, cost of living and employment.

We partner with people experiencing food insecurity, policymakers, organizations, and supporters, united with them in a movement to end hunger. Visit [FeedingAmerica.org](http://FeedingAmerica.org) to learn more.

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