



**Contact:**  
Amanda Allen  
Marketing and Communications Coordinator  
(540) 444-2942 (direct)  
(540) 537-8984 (cell)  
[aallen@faswva.org](mailto:aallen@faswva.org)  
Salem, VA

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### FEEDING AMERICA SOUTHWEST VIRGINIA ASKS REGION'S RESIDENTS TO TAKE ACTION TO END HUNGER

#### *Feeding America Southwest Virginia promotes Hunger Action Month™*

**Salem, VA – September 8, 2016** – This month, Feeding America Southwest Virginia, together with the Feeding America nationwide network of food banks, will mobilize across all 50 states in an effort to bring an end to hunger. Hunger Action Month is designed to inspire people to take action and raise awareness of the fact that 48 million Americans, including 15 million children, are food insecure, according to the USDA.

In Southwest Virginia, more than 154,500 people struggle with hunger and may not know where they'll find their next meal. That number includes one in five kids who may not have enough to eat.

September marks the ninth year the Feeding America network of food banks has organized this annual call to action and Feeding America Southwest Virginia has participated in the Hunger Action Month movement since its inception. This year the campaign will focus on the strong connections between hunger and health.

The Hunger Action Month 2016 campaign asks people to consider how it must feel to live with an empty stomach, which puts a healthy life and a promising future at risk.

"Everyone needs access to enough healthy food to reach their full potential," says Feeding America Southwest Virginia president and CEO Pamela Irvine. "This is especially the case for the nearly 50,000 children in Southwest Virginia who face the prospect of empty stomachs. They need consistent access to enough healthy food to grow, learn and succeed."

According to the Feeding America study, *Hunger in America 2014*, nearly half of households served by the Feeding America network include someone that is in either fair or poor health.

"I've spent many days on the road this past year, visiting food banks, food pantries, and meal programs and meeting people who are facing hunger," said Diana Aviv, CEO of Feeding America. "I've seen firsthand the anguish that food insecurity and hunger can cause. It is always

heartbreaking to meet a mother or father who fears that they will not be able to feed their children. They know that their children cannot reach their full potential if they don't have enough to eat.”

Hunger Action Day®, the second Thursday in September, is a day where efforts across the country are focused for greater impact.

This year, throughout the month of September, Feeding America Southwest Virginia asks supporters to share what they couldn't do without adequate nutrition by writing on an empty plate, “On an empty stomach I can't \_\_\_\_\_,” and filling in the blank with something they couldn't achieve without the nutrition we need to thrive.

These photos can be posted to social media with #HungerActionMonth, @FASWVA and @FeedingAmerica to join the conversation.

Feeding America has several activities planned to engage the community in hunger relief and awareness building, including:

- September 10-11: Strike Out Hunger Softball Tournament/Food Drive at Moyer Sports Complex and Northside High School
- September 20: Food Lion Feeds “Great Pantry Makeover” at Ecumenical Faith in Action Food Pantry in Abingdon
- September 26: AARP/Feeding America Southwest Virginia Food Drive Event at the Roanoke Pinball Museum

To learn more about Feeding America Southwest Virginia and other ways you can get involved for Hunger Action Month in Southwest Virginia, please visit <http://www.faswva.org> or [HungerActionMonth.org](http://www.faswva.org).

###

### **About Feeding America Southwest Virginia**

Feeding America Southwest Virginia was founded in 1981 and proudly commemorates 35 years of fighting hunger and changing lives through community partnerships. The Food Bank is an affiliate member of Feeding America. For the last three and a half decades, the Food Bank's ultimate mission has remained the same: eliminate hunger in the region. The primary function of the Food Bank is to secure and distribute large quantities of food for the hungry. Approximately \$34 million worth of food and grocery related products are channeled annually through a network of more than 370 partner feeding programs in our 26-county, 9-city region that provide food or meals to those in need. Visit [www.faswva.org](http://www.faswva.org) for more information or like us on Facebook.

### **About Feeding America®**

Feeding America is the nationwide network of 200 food banks that leads the fight against hunger in the United States. Together, we provide food to more than 46 million people through 60,000 food pantries and meal programs in communities across America. Feeding America also supports programs that improve food security among the people we serve; educates the public about the problem of hunger; and advocates for legislation that protects people from going hungry. Individuals, charities, businesses and government all have a role in ending hunger. Donate. Volunteer. Advocate. Educate. Together we can solve hunger. Visit [www.feedingamerica.org](http://www.feedingamerica.org), find us on [Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/feedingamerica) or follow us on [Twitter](https://twitter.com/feedingamerica).