

# BackPack Program

***"I like the Backpack Club because there is good food, healthy food, and something new every week. It helps Mom not have to worry about food."***

*-BackPack Program Participant*

## Program Description:

The Backpack Program is designed to meet the needs of hungry children on weekends when school breakfasts and lunches aren't available. The Program provides bags filled with food that is child-friendly, non-perishable and easily consumed. Bags are packed each week by school staff and discreetly distributed to participating children every Friday afternoon.

## Program at a Glance:

- Provides food that is easy for children to recognize and easy to prepare
- Operates for at least 30 weeks during the academic year
- Serves the children most in need as determined by school staff who know them best
- Is flexible in design based on each school's capacities and limitations
- Is locally supported by schools, their partners, and generous community members
- Backpack food is typically shared with the family, which helps meet the nutritional needs of the entire household
- Helps participating children learn, thrive, and grow



## 2021-2022 Program Impact



**185,000  
BackPacks  
provided**



**2 million  
meals  
distributed**



**100,000  
pounds of  
fresh produce  
provided**



**6,500 kids  
across 238  
partner  
schools**



**Average bag  
weighs 14lbs,  
containing food  
for 12 meals**

**Contact: Betsy Dickson at (518) 786-3691 x233  
965 Albany-Shaker Road, Latham, NY 12110  
regionalfoodbank.net**

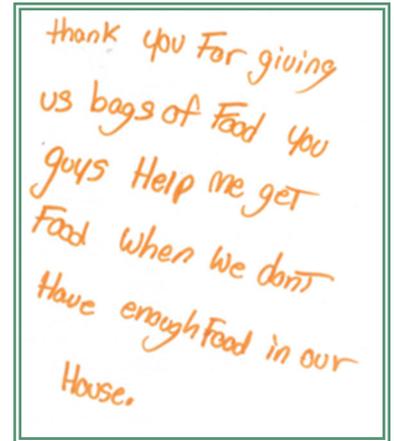


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## About the Meals:

Each week, participating students receive bags filled with nonperishable food as well as fresh bread and produce. A typical bag includes:

- 2+ breakfast items (cereal, oatmeal, graham crackers, granola bars)
- 3+ entrees (mac & cheese, PB & J, Spaghetti Os, tuna, soup, etc.)
- Milk card for a gallon of milk (every other week)
- Egg card for a dozen eggs (every other week)
- Loaf of bread or non-perishable grain option
- Fruit (fresh whenever possible)
- Canned vegetables once a month
- 2 snacks (cookies, popcorn, pudding)



### Fast Fact:

**Research has shown that a student's participation in the Backpack Program helps improve attendance and academic performance while reducing disciplinary actions.**

## Partnering with the Food Bank:

Partnering with the Regional Food Bank helps schools provide nourishing meals to their students most in need.

The Food Bank creates weekly menus for each school and provides administrative structure and support for the Program. Menus are drawn from the Food Bank's large inventory to provide diverse foods at low cost.

Schools partner with the Food Bank to pick up the food, pack the bags, distribute bags to students, and locally support the Program.

Partner schools work with businesses, individuals, and community and religious organizations to financially sustain the Program.

**\$228 supports one child for a year**

**\$3,420 supports 15 students for a year**

**\$6,840 supports 30 students for a year**

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