

# 4-H Food drive - Caring heart, Helping Hands



**Scott Enroughty**

We are all guilty of standing in front of the refrigerator, while there is an abundance of food - we struggle to decide what to eat. The simple act of eating has become a luxury, which many of us take for granted. Something as simple as grabbing food from the kitchen or ordering takeout is not an option for families facing hunger. We do not realize the agony these families face with regard to putting food on the table. There are many ways we can help combat hunger. Now through Wednesday, March 31, the New Hanover County 4-H program is finding a way to help by initiating the 4-H Food Drive Caring Hearts, Helping Hands community service project benefiting the Food Bank of Central and Eastern North Carolina. These familiar phrases taken from the 4-H pledge, "...my heart to greater loyalty...my hands to larger service..." are key to supporting our neighbors during this time.

As we experience the ongoing ripple effect that the pandemic has created (school closures, job disruptions, lack of paid sick leave and the coronavirus's disproportionate effect on older adults and low-income families), our communities are now looking towards food banks for assistance more than ever.

Every day hunger disrupts the lives of 1 in 5 children and more than 756,000 residents across central and eastern North Carolina. In 2020, over 76 million meals were distributed to residents across the thirty-four counties, which comprise these regions.

Between March and June 2020, roughly 4 out of 10 people visited food banks that had never received food assistance before the pandemic.

As a community we can lend our "hands to larger service" by helping support our neighbors through this 4-H initiative in the following two ways. First by donating items at one of our 10 designated drop off locations around New



**New Hanover County 4-H program will be collecting canned food now through Wednesday, March 31 at the Arboretum.** [CONTRIBUTED PHOTO]



**The New Hanover County Farm Bureau's Independence office is also accepting canned foods for the 4-H food drive.** [CONTRIBUTED PHOTO]

Hanover County. Second is through our online monetary donations located at [www.newhanover.ces.ncsu.edu](http://www.newhanover.ces.ncsu.edu). All online donations are directed to the Food Bank. For every \$1 donated, the Food Bank provides FIVE meals.

As an added bonus, every person making a cash donation over \$100 directly to the Food Bank will receive a free family membership (\$50 value) to the Friends of the New Hanover County Arboretum.

We are excited to have the following partners participating as drop off locations for our food drive. Farmers Supply, Transplanted Gardens, New Hanover County Farm Bureau (Independence and Mayfaire offices), Cape Fear Academy, UNCW's College of Health and Human Services (McNeil and Veterans Halls), New Hanover County Public Library

(Pleasure Island branch), New Hanover County Cooperative Extension, and Port City Community Church (PC3).

Four-H is founded on the belief that when youth and adults are empowered to pursue their passions and chart their own course, their skills grow and take shape, helping them to become true leaders in their lives, and communities. With your help during our Caring Hearts, Helping Hands community service initiative, we can foster respect for others, promote civic responsibility and strengthen our communities.

*Scott Enroughty is the 4-H Youth Development agent for NC Cooperative Extension New Hanover County center at the Arboretum. The grounds are free and open daily from 8 a.m. - 5 p.m. The lobby is open 10 a.m. - 2 p.m. for food drive donations.*