

The East Texas Food Bank (ETFB) exists to fight hunger and feed hope in East Texas, and since 1988 we've been pursuing our vision of a hunger-free East Texas. ETFB distributes food to a hunger relief network of more than 200 partner food pantries and feeding programs throughout a 26-county service area.

According to the recent Feeding America study *Map the Meal Gap 2024*, approximately 16% of Rusk County residents, including more than 24% of children, are food-insecure, and at risk of hunger. ETFB serves more than 4,300 low-income households each month through the following programs and initiatives:

Partner Food Pantries are the heart of our hunger relief network. We currently partner with seven food pantries in Rusk County, including three food pantries in Henderson, two food pantries in Mt. Enterprise, one pantry in New London, and one pantry in Tatum.

BackPack Program helps close the “hunger gap” for children who participate in free and reduced-price school meal programs during the week, but are at-risk of hunger on weekends. In the 2023-2024 school year, the BackPack Program served approximately 200 children across five school districts in Rusk County, providing approximately 2,000 backpacks.

Senior Box Program provides boxes of food each month to low-income seniors. ETFB conducts direct distributions at some sites, and works with partner food pantries in other locations, which distribute the boxes to their elderly clients. The program serves more than 245 seniors in Rusk County.

Fresh Produce Program distributes fresh fruits and vegetables to low-income East Texans through partner food pantries and direct distributions. In fiscal year 2024, ETFB distributed approximately 468,000 pounds of produce in Rusk County.

Mobile Pantry Program distributes fresh produce and healthy proteins in underserved, high need communities. In fiscal year 2024, ETFB served more than 1,500 households in Rusk County.

Benefits Assistance Program helps eligible East Texans register for social service benefits, primarily through the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP). In fiscal year 2024, we helped approximately 20 Rusk County residents apply for SNAP resulting in more than 20,000 meals for families in need.

Nutrition Education Program provides low-income families with the cooking, nutrition, and food budgeting skills they need to eat healthy on a budget. In fiscal year 2024, approximately 20 Rusk County residents participated in direct nutrition education classes.

Partners In Health Program is partnership with local healthcare clinics designed to impact food-insecure individuals at their place of healthcare by providing healthy foods and nutrition counseling. In 2024, ETFB conducted this program at 1 location in Rusk County and served more than 200 low-income participants.

**Altogether in
fiscal year 2024,
ETFB provided
approximately
31 million meals,
including more
than 687,000
meals
in Rusk
County.**

