



FERN – Food Exchange Resource Network

Together we can serve more

Thank you for considering FERN as a recipient of food and financial donations for your Feeding 5000 outreach.

Vision

The Vision of FERN is a collaborative, coordinated hunger relief system that supplies those in need with adequate, timely and healthy supplies of food. FERN began in 2011 as the result of a collaborative grant funded by the Denver Foundation.

Mission

The Mission of FERN is to increase the volume and quality of food offered to hunger-relief organizations through collective food acquisition, coordinated and streamlined food delivery and storage, collaborative programming and services, a shared commitment to promoting best practices and to building more effective systems that reduce waste.

Core Values

- Adequate Scale. FERN members are committed to ensuring all who are hungry have access to healthy food sources and the collaborative is committed to maintaining a scale of donations adequate to meet demand.
- Collaboration. Collaborative networks of hunger-relief organizations will accomplish more than could be achieved independently.
- Transparency, Democracy and Shared Risk. The power is in the collective and no one member will have more power or a louder voice than another. Decisions are made collaboratively, collectively and transparently. Members share risks and have shared ownership of positive and negative financial results.
- Best Practices. Members are committed to sharing best practices and to supporting each other in their adoption.
- Staple Foods. Hunger-relief organizations should consistently provide staple foods to their clients, including fresh fruits and vegetables and dairy products.
- Advocacy. As a collaborative our voice is amplified, and we are committed to using this voice to influence local and statewide policy to the benefit of our constituents.

Structure

The structure of FERN consists of two levels, partners and members.

Partners act as the board of directors for FERN and pay a monthly fee for reserved warehouse space and freezer space. Members pay a minimal monthly fee and have access to shared food items in the walk-in fridge, freezer and dry storage areas.

Because FERN is a collaboration, it functions under the fiscal sponsorship and 501(c)3 for Rocky Mountain Research and Prevention Institute. The warehouse at 2830 S. Zuni is sub-leased from Transdev.

2830 S. Zuni St., Englewood, CO 80110 www.fernfoodbank.org
Rocky Mountain Research and Prevention Institute Tax ID #68-0517749



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Fern Partners

- Colorado Feeding Kids
- Colorado Pet Pantry
- Community Ministry of Southwest Denver
- Denver Metro Ministry
- St. Mary's Parish
- Metro Caring

Members

- Brentwood United Methodist Church
- Crossroads of the Rockies
- Edgewater Plaza
- Our Lady of Mt. Carmel Parish
- Open Arms
- Sharing with Sheridan
- St. Anthony of Padua Parish

Impact

In 2017, the combined efforts of the food pantries supplied 165,991 individuals with fresh produce, dairy, meat, bakery items as well as non-perishable goods.

The mission of Colorado Feeding Kids is to significantly reduce the number of hungry children in Colorado and to feed starving children throughout the world by packing nutritious meals that are reconstituted with water. These meals are used locally, nationally and internationally. In 2017, 605,000 meals were packed and distributed.

The Colorado Pet Pantry mission is to temporarily feed Colorado pets, allowing families to increase their ability to care for pets with the goal of keeping the pets out of shelters and with their families. They accomplish this by distributing food through human food pantries. The Colorado Pet Pantry, in partnership with the Dumb Friends League, launched the Animal Welfare Share Program in 2017. The goal of the Animal Welfare Share Program is to help participating rescues and shelters save money on crucial supplies while increasing efficiency in the use of items donated by the community. FERN is the centralized location for shelters in the Denver metro area to share donated resources like pet food, medical supplies (excluding prescription drugs), collars, leashes, pet beds, crates, and other pet-related items. Participating rescues and shelters can pick up items they need and drop off surplus items for other rescues to utilize. In 2017, 4,489 families with 13,333 pets were helped through the pet pantry.

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Resources

In 2017, FERN received 218,766 pounds of food which included perishable and non-perishable items. These came from the Food Bank of the Rockies grocery rescue program, Farmers Markets, Little Sisters of the Poor, the postal service “Stamp Out Hunger” food drive, Feeding 5000 and the food pantries donating their excess to the shared areas. Occasionally, a donation is received from a trucking company that was refused by a local retail store. Unused and/or spoiled food is given to a pig farmer.

Needs

FERN has a variety of needs that, although not glamorous, are necessary to function. These include

- A new or better food-warehouse-safe forklift
- Security and Access System
- General operation funds - mostly utilities, repairs, transportation and supplies

Volunteer Opportunities

- Individuals to regularly sort incoming perishable and non-perishable food
- Drivers to pick up and sort for special food drives such as the Stamp Out Hunger Drive in May, turkey pick up in November and December and the Feeding 5000 sort.
- Regular maintenance of the facility
- Colorado Feeding Kids has monthly pack days
- Colorado Pet Pantry also has an ongoing need for food sorting

Our commitment to Feeding 5,000

- Provide volunteers for the 5k walk in October
- Continue to provide food to those we impact through our partner and member organizations
- Expand our collaboration to meet the needs of more individuals
- Provide volunteer opportunities