



Feed Fannin News

One Community, One Spirit

Feed Fannin, Inc. www.feedfannin.org 706-946-1001

Fall 2025

Holiday Meals Campaign 2025 Underway

Feed Fannin has reached the middle of its second annual Holiday Meals Campaign with the goal of providing hams and turkeys and all the trimmings for our neighbors in need as the last holidays of the year approach. We are pleased to report that the community response since the Sept. 1 launch of the campaign has been gratifying.

Feed Fannin is a 501(c)(3) all-volunteer organization and is 100% funded through private donations. Rising food costs strain the limited income of many seniors in our community, single parents with children, and the disabled, who struggle with impossible choices between purchasing food or paying for medicine, gas, utilities or rent. There is nothing to compare to creating special occasions like a small but heartwarming feast with family and/or friends.



With your support, Feed Fannin can continue to address our neighbors' basic need for food. A generous, anonymous donor has agreed to match all donations to Feed Fannin up to \$20,000 through Oct. 31. Donations from those new to Feed Fannin will

also be matched, up to an additional \$5,000.

We continue to partner with the Fannin County Family Connection to provide food for their food pantry. Feed Fannin pays for most of the food distributed by the pantry. In addition, we provide produce grown at our Ada Street farm and purchase additional produce from local farms. Feed Fannin collaborates with several other local charitable organizations to help distribute this food to even more hungry people in our community.

Please donate to help us bring the joy of sharing a holiday meal to our neighbors in need this holiday season. You can donate via Venmo by using the QR code at left, via credit card by visiting feedfannin.org or by mailing a check to Feed Fannin, P.O. Box 1085, Blue Ridge, GA 30513. Please indicate that your donation is for the Holiday Meals Campaign to distinguish it from general donations to Feed Fannin during this period. Thank you! ❀



Chair Ron Ciochon

Garden Challenges Met, the Fall Harvest Continues

Farm/Garden Report

By Kathy Beck, Farm & Facilities Manager
and Vice Chair of Ag Education

The Ada Street Garden had a productive growing season, despite facing several significant challenges. Groundhogs were especially problematic, burrowing beneath the fence and consuming much of the cantaloupe crop, as well as dozens of tomatoes, squash, and sweet potato vines. A malfunction in the electric fence also allowed deer to enter and eat all the pole beans. In

addition, powerful wind from storms knocked much of the corn crop onto the ground. Fortunately, many of the corn stalks survived and continued to mature, enabling volunteers to harvest corn from the fallen stalks for the first time. This innovative approach led to a yield of nearly 900 ears of corn, more than double the previous year's harvest.



Continued on p. 2



Farm/Garden Report continued

Despite these setbacks, the Ada Street and Research Gardens contributed approximately 3,100 lbs. of fresh produce — including tomatoes, corn, okra, green beans, squash, cucumbers, and cantaloupe — to the Fannin County Family Connection Food Pantry. Weekly purchases from Old Dial Road Farm further supplemented these donations, helping Feed Fannin provide over 6,100 lbs. of produce for the pantry this season.

To address these ongoing challenges, the electric fence has been replaced, and steps will be taken before next spring to better control the groundhog population. The Kubota riding mower required frequent maintenance, but thanks to dedicated volunteers who endured heat and humidity to assist with gardening, mowing, and trimming, these challenges were met. Feed Fannin sincerely appreciates the commitment of its volunteers, who are truly the heart of the organization and foster a strong sense of brand loyalty.

Summer Meals Program

Feed Fannin continued its partnership with Snack in a Backpack and other community organizations

for the fourth consecutive year to support the Summer Meals Program.

Through the purchase and donation of 6,411 lbs. of fresh produce,

170-175 families each week received produce during the eight weeks of summer break. Volunteers helped provide 35,000 meals and packed over 4,000 meal bags, ensuring that “Hunger Doesn’t Take a Vacation.”

Grant and Transportation Improvements

In the fall of 2024, Feed Fannin was awarded a \$30,000 grant from Impact100 Fannin County. With

these funds, the organization purchased a used 2020 Jeep Grand Cherokee in May 2025. Since then, the vehicle has transported over 11,000 lbs. of produce and canned goods to support various Feed Fannin projects (see p. 6 for photos) and will continue to be essential throughout the year.

In June, Kathy Beck and Jane Kimzey of Feed Fannin attended the Impact100 Big Reveal Meeting at Old Toccoa Farms, where it was announced that over \$188,000 in grants would be distributed in 2025. During the event, Kathy expressed gratitude for the grant Feed Fannin received and highlighted the importance of the vehicle in furthering Feed Fannin’s mission.



Kathy Beck (with mic) addresses attendees at Impact100 Fannin's Big Reveal Meeting

Farm Projects and Volunteer Contributions

Feed Fannin regularly welcomes volunteer groups to assist with farm chores and projects. This spring, **Steve Stacy Roofing** generously donated and installed a new roof for the farmhouse and shed, which was featured in the Spring 2025 newsletter.

In July, the **North Georgia Mission Lodge** and Jeff Milway hosted a group of eight middle school students and four adults for a workday at the Feed Fannin Farm, where they helped with a variety of farm tasks and observed the bee hives.



A member of the North Georgia Mission Lodge harvests cucumbers

Recently, eight volunteers from **Suntory Global Spirits** contributed their time to cut, trim, and pack Meals on Wheels boxes. Suntory’s commitment to “give back one million volunteer hours to our local communities”



Suntory volunteers at the farm

Continued on. p. 5

Feed Fannin Supplies an Estimated 190,900 Meals

Food Pantry Report

By Priscilla Cashman,
Vice Chair, Food Pantry & Community Outreach

From Jan. 1 to Aug. 31, 2025, Feed Fannin has purchased or procured, on behalf of the Fannin County Family Connection Food Pantry 229,076 lbs. of staple and canned goods, frozen food items, meats and Easter holiday hams, the equivalent of 190,897 meals to feed the hungry in our community.

Feed Fannin has ordered 7,198.50 lbs. of food direct from Chattanooga Food Bank in 2025. We plan to order another 2,801.50 lbs. this year to meet the 10,000 lbs. requirement set by the Food Bank to remain a partner.

Also, Feed Fannin has so far in 2025 provided funds to Family Connection to purchase 5,307 gallons of milk, and 4,470 dozen eggs, which were delivered to families in need. ❀



Andy Livingston, Feed Fannin member and food pantry volunteer, delivers a full cart of food staples, plus meats, eggs, milk, and produce to a family at the pantry

Community Outreach Efforts Continue

So far, in 2025, Feed Fannin has packed 105 large staple boxes, weighing approximately 30 lbs. each, for senior-citizen and disabled residents of North Court Apartments, low-income housing in Blue Ridge with a lot of senior citizens. These boxes are delivered by the St. Luke's Episcopal Church Men's Group.

In addition, in 2025, Feed Fannin has packed 452 supplemental staple boxes for Fannin County Meals on Wheels. These boxes are delivered by Senior Center volunteers to those of limited means who can't make the trip to the food pantry. ❀



Vicci Lefort selects produce to pack for North Court Apartments



Left to right, Jim Hatten, Holly Monahan, Peggy Caldwell, Andy Livingston and Jim Monahan with supplemental boxes packed for delivery to qualified community residents by Meals on Wheels



Kathy Beck and Jon Whitmer of the BRMC Men's Group

In September, the men's group at Blue Ridge Methodist Church held its annual spaghetti dinner and donated a portion of the proceeds, \$1,000, to Feed Fannin. The church also collected 85 pounds of staple goods from its congregation, which Kathy Beck (farm and facilities manager) picked up and delivered to the food pantry.

Farewell and Best Wishes to Two Longtime Volunteers

Longtime Feed Fannin volunteers Steve and Kathy Corey bid farewell to active involvement in the organization in August as they left the mountains to move closer to family in the Atlanta area.

"My heart is heavy having to say goodbye.... You have always been welcoming to myself and all the volunteers who pass through this place," Kathy wrote to the Feed Fannin leadership. "Working with you has been so rewarding. I will always consider this time one of the best periods of my life."



Steve Corey

"I first met Kathy at the downtown farmer's market on a Saturday morning in early summer of 2015 and recruited her to come work in the garden," recalls Kathy Beck, Feed Fannin's farm/facilities manager and vice chair of agricultural education. "She was there on Monday morning and almost every week she was in town until her recent health issues. She and Steve were always available



Kathy Corey

to help with whatever was needed and met every challenge with a great attitude. Whether as garden volunteers, groundskeepers, Bowls of Hope volunteers or pantry front desk volunteers, they could be counted on. More than all that, Kathy is a friend, and we will remain in touch. The Coreys will be greatly missed and hard to replace, but they will always be with us in spirit."

Kathy Corey served as secretary of the Feed Fannin Board of Directors' monthly meetings for several years and, more recently, as administrator of the non-profit's Facebook page. ❀



Fall on the Farm



Farm/Garden Report continued

exemplifies the spirit of service. Feed Fannin greatly appreciates the support of individuals from outside the community who embody our motto “one community, one spirit” and help fulfill the organization’s mission.

Agricultural Education Initiatives



Fannin County High School students learn about pollinators and beehives

On Sept. 3, two classes totaling 60 Fannin County High School agriculture students and their leaders visited the Feed Fannin Farm. Students observed the bee hives and pollinator gardens and attended a presentation on the importance of bees and pollinators and the workings of a beehive and colony. Six students from each class

donned bee suits for a close-up look, while all students watched as trays were removed from the boxes and the queen and drones were identified. The honey-making process was explained, and students helped with honey extraction and filtering.

Special thanks go to Tim Doherty of Doc’s Healing Hives for tending the hives and conducting the educational sessions. He told them that the average age of beekeepers is sixty, making it crucial for younger generations to develop an interest in beekeeping to ensure continued fruit and vegetable production. Those interested in learning more or purchasing local honey can contact Doc’s Healing Hives at info@docshealinghives.org.



Tim Doherty

The Feed Fannin Farm supports its bees by providing a variety of pollinator plants as a food source, helping maintain healthy colonies of over 60,000 bees on site.

Community Agriculture Events

Feed Fannin volunteers supported annual agricultural events this fall. On Aug. 28, we hosted and prepared a

hot dog lunch for approximately 300 third graders, leaders, and volunteers at AG Day at the Fannin County Ag Facility. Participants learned about the importance of agriculture and engaged with educational stations set up by community leaders.

On Sept. 9-10, all fourth graders and their leaders attended the Georgia Farm Bureau AG Experience at the Fannin County Ag Facility, participating in mobile-classroom activities led by local agricultural experts. Feed Fannin volunteers played an active role in leading these educational sessions.

As the growing season ends, only okra and peppers remain for harvest. Soon, cover crops will be planted, and the first frost will arrive. Garden volunteers will shift their focus to planning next year’s garden and the Holiday Meals Campaign, ensuring all preparations are made to support various partner groups during the Thanksgiving and Christmas seasons.

Feed Fannin extends its gratitude to the entire community, including those whose support may not be known directly. Special thanks go to the Fannin County Board of Education for allowing the organization to use their property for the farm and home base. Feed Fannin pledges continued support to “work together to educate and encourage our community towards self-sufficiency while providing food for those in need.” ❀



Known fondly among Feed Fannin’s garden volunteers as “The Okra Girls,” Diane Tortis (left) and Virginia Crowden (right) are shown harvesting okra, which almost requires a ladder at this point

In Case There's Any Doubt That We Needed a Dedicated Vehicle for Transporting Food...

Last fall, Impact100 of Fannin County, an organization of women who pool their money to help nonprofits in our county, awarded Feed Fannin a grant for the purchase of a dedicated vehicle to transport loads of food, plants, soil, tools, etc. The used Jeep Grand Cherokee we acquired in May has so far been used to haul more than 11,000 lbs. of produce and canned goods. Thank you, Impact100! ❀



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Feed Fannin, Inc.

Mail form and donation to:
Feed Fannin
PO Box 1085
Blue Ridge, GA 30513

Or donate online at www.feedfannin.org

Your gift is greatly appreciated!



Our Mission

Working together to educate and encourage our community towards self-sufficiency while providing food for those in need.