



## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

September 14, 2023

**For more information:**  
Vickie Snyder, Executive Director  
Cell: 651.666.8408  
ExecDir@basicneedsmn.org

### **BASIC NEEDS COMBATS FOOD INSECURITY WITH A COMMUNITY FOOD PANTRY THAT OPERATES AS A GROCERY MARKET OFFERING A WALK-IN, DIGNITY-BASED SHOPPING EXPERIENCE FOR THOSE IN NEED.**

COTTAGE GROVE, MINNESOTA - Basic Needs (BN) combats food insecurity with a walk-in, welcoming, dignity-based, choice-focused food market, 4,100 sq. ft. facility, including well-stocked grocery staples, a consistent supply of fresh fruits and vegetables, and an anonymity and convenience-based shopping experience designed for clients hesitant to engage with the hunger relief sector.

**Name of Event:** Grand Opening of the Basic Needs Food Market

**Date and Time:** Thursday, September 14, 2023

**Where:** 8475 East Point Douglas Road, Suite 106, Cottage Grove, MN 55016

**Ribbon Cutting Ceremony:** Wednesday, October 11, 2023, at 3 p.m.

**Press Visits:** Out of respect for clientele's anonymity, we invite the press to visit before the market opens between 7 a.m. and 10:30 a.m. [Contact us](#) to schedule your visit!

"Food is a basic right and need for all. Our intention is for our clientele to have the opportunity to shop for their foods of choice, including an abundance of fresh produce and culturally specific food options," said Vickie Snyder, executive director of Basic Needs. "Basic Needs focuses on dignity, respect, and reducing food waste. Bringing healthier food to those needing it means building a healthier community."

The Basic Needs Food Market is supplemental, as 80% of the food is rescued from local businesses. No eligibility requirements exist, so anyone can access the market once daily. Upon check-out and voluntarily, a person's phone number, zip code, household size, and household age(s) will be requested. The market offers convenient hours of Monday – Friday, 11 a.m. to 6 p.m., and Saturdays, 10 a.m. – 2 p.m.

Our food stock is derived from various sources, including:

- BN Food Rescue Program (61,000 lbs. in 2022) On average, 3,500 lbs. of food per day is rescued by BN staff and volunteers from Aldi, Cub, Hy-Vee, Target, and Walmart, as well as others such as restaurants, catering businesses, mini-marts, coffee houses, and gas stations, with more businesses joining us every day.
- BN/Newport Collision Center Community Garden (800 lbs. of food grown in 2022).
- Independent food, toiletries, and financial donations.

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- In partnership with Second Harvest Heartland Food Bank, one of the nation's largest, most effective, and most innovative hunger relief organizations, BN can purchase food in bulk.
- In partnership with The Food Group, a nonprofit that works at the intersection of equity and access to fresh, sustainable foods from farming to distribution, BN can offer culturally specific foods.

“We’ve gotten creative and fostered some great relationships with a network of food-supplying streams that reflects the unique backgrounds and experiences of the individuals and families that frequent the market,” Ms. Snyder continued. “We’re always looking for new partnerships and financial donations to not only fund the steady stream of food but provide legacy opportunities for individuals and businesses in purchasing and dedicating market supplies like coolers, freezers, shopping carts, and baskets, as well as front and back doors and a sink. We welcome the community to reach out to work with us!”

For more information regarding this fresh take on the food pantry, please get in touch with Vickie Snyder, Executive Director of Basic Needs, at 651.666.8408 or [ExecDir@basicneedsmn.org](mailto:ExecDir@basicneedsmn.org).

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*Basic Needs, a nonprofit organization founded in 1996, formerly known as Stone Soup, uplifts those in the community who have encountered hardship by providing barrier-free access to basic needs via our nutritious and fresh food market, affordable and high-quality thrift shop, a voucher system, and social services referral network to build a stronger community focused on equity, inclusion, and sustainability. Learn more at [basicneedsmn.org](http://basicneedsmn.org).*