



## NEWS RELEASE



### Help Sandhills Food Bank Stop Summer Hunger for 23,000 Children

**SOUTHERN PINES, NC (June 1, 2016)** – As the school year nears its end, the Food Bank of Central & Eastern North Carolina at Sandhills is announcing the 9<sup>th</sup> Annual **STOP SUMMER HUNGER** Campaign, presented by BASF and NetApp, has officially launched.

For many of us, summer means vacations with family or cookouts with friends. Imagine instead of deciding on where to go on a trip, having to decide on whether or not to put gas in the car to go to work or feed your children a healthy meal. Most of us are able to plan summer activities that focus on fun and relaxation. **But there are 23,000 children in the Sandhills service area that will only be able to focus on one thing: an empty stomach.**

The Stop Summer Hunger campaign focuses on raising food, funds, and awareness at a time when school cafeterias are closed to 300,000 children across the Food Bank's 34-county service area who rely on the free and reduced-cost meal program. The campaign will continue until July 31 throughout the Food Bank's 34 counties. The goal this year is to raise enough food and funds to provide 3.3 million meals to children and families this summer. For more information visit [stopsummerhunger.org](http://stopsummerhunger.org).

The Sandhills Branch will hold a kickoff event in partnership with Star 102.5 on June 3. From 7am-6pm, Star 102.5 will be broadcasting live from Honeybaked Ham, 11088 US Highway 15/501 in Aberdeen. The Food Bank will be collecting food and fund donations in support of Stop Summer Hunger.

The Food Bank will also serve these children by sponsoring the Kids Summer Meals Program (also known as the Summer Food Service Program). Children can visit select Food Bank partner sites to receive breakfast and lunch meals at no cost. The Food Bank will sponsor 160 sites in the 34-county service area with a goal of feeding 6,000 children.

The Stop Summer Hunger campaign is supported locally in the Sandhills service area by Food Lion, Kiwanis Club of the Sandhills, and First Bank.

Nearly 44,000 individuals are food insecure in the four counties served by the Sandhills Branch. Food insecurity is the state of being unable to consistently access nutritious and adequate amounts of food necessary for an active and healthy life. The households we serve experience limited or uncertain access to food, at times unsure of where they will find their next meal.

## **Media Contacts:**

Michael Cotten (**local**)  
Sandhills Branch Director  
(910) 692-5959 x2401 (office)  
(910) 494-0155 (mobile)  
[mcotten@foodbankcenc.org](mailto:mcotten@foodbankcenc.org)  
Twitter: @FoodBankSHills

Jennifer M. Caslin  
Public Relations and Marketing Specialist  
(919) 865-3063 (office)  
(910) 508-0547 (mobile)  
[jcaslin@foodbankcenc.org](mailto:jcaslin@foodbankcenc.org)  
Twitter: @JenniferMCaslin

## **About the Food Bank of Central & Eastern North Carolina**

The Food Bank of Central & Eastern North Carolina is a nonprofit organization that has provided food for people at risk of hunger in 34 counties in central and eastern North Carolina for more than 30 years. The Food Bank serves a network of more than 800 partner agencies such as soup kitchens, food pantries, shelters, and programs for children and adults through warehouses in Durham, Greenville, New Bern, Raleigh, the Sandhills (Southern Pines), and Wilmington. In fiscal year 2014-2015, the Food Bank distributed more than 57 million pounds of food and non-food essentials through these agencies. Sadly, hunger remains a serious problem in central and eastern North Carolina. In these counties, nearly 650,000 people struggle to access nutritious and adequate amounts of food necessary for an active and healthy life. [foodbankcenc.org](http://foodbankcenc.org).

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