

NEWS

April 2025

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IMPROVEMENTS UNDERWAY



Change can be hard.

Change, though, is an unmistakable part of Foodlink's DNA. I learned this from my mentor, Foodlink founder Tom Ferraro, more than 15 years ago — and

I see it carried out today through my colleagues who put in the work to fulfill our mission.

A visual representation of change is apparent to anyone who has entered our facility in the last year. We installed a new roof, broke ground on a soon-to-be-completed commercial cooler, and are in the midst of **major infrastructure improvements** to benefit our Curbside Market and Community Kitchen. Just down the road, our **Community Farm is undergoing a complete revitalization.**

You can read about each of these projects on the following pages and take comfort in knowing that despite these uncertain times, **Foodlink's commitment to our community has never been stronger.** You will also read

about how our donors and volunteers have been key catalysts for change, during a time when **visits to food pantries continue to rise.**

Getting food to our community often feels like tackling daily emergencies to meet the urgent needs of an ever-changing world around us. We are first responders, and can react quickly when called upon. We must, however, be intentional about problem-solving when faced with long-term challenges. A quote from a renowned sociologist resonated with me earlier this year: "*Urgent clouds the important.*"

It won't be easy ... but Foodlink *can be both* for our community. We can be agile and put food on a family's plate within hours. We can identify a problem and spend a few years figuring it out.

Change is hard, but it's well worth the wait.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Julia Tedesco".

Julia Tedesco
President & CEO



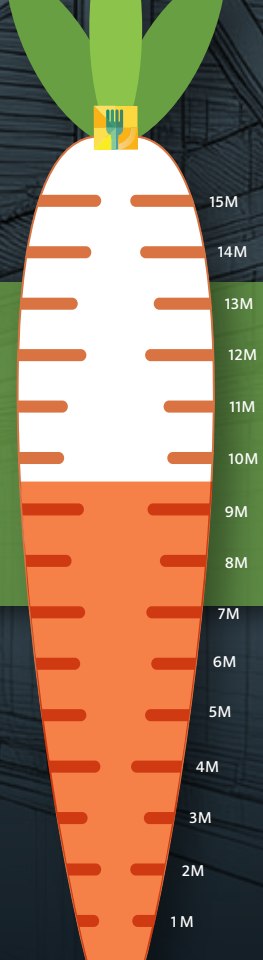
Milestone Construction leaders provided a tour to media and project partners when Foodlink publicly announced the project in January.



NOURISHING TOMORROW 2023 - 2027

Help us grow!

Read more about our infrastructure and capacity-building projects at Foodlinkny.org/Nourishing-Tomorrow or scan the QR code below.



Revitalization on Lexington Avenue

Signs of growth at the farm are rare in the winter. The vibrant colors and bountiful harvests of the summer and fall are distant memories, as Lexington Avenue is blanketed by layers of snow and ice. Despite this, something significant emerged from the soil in February.

The **foundation and framing of Foodlink's future Edible Education Center** brought some encouraging verticality to what had otherwise been a flat, barren construction site. The new structure is part of a **\$2 million farm expansion project to increase its footprint and serve more families**. Soon, the revitalized space will become a destination for school field trips, nutrition education workshops and other community events.

For more than a decade, Foodlink has invested in this formerly vacant lot to create a community garden for New American families in the Lyell-Otis and Edgerton neighborhoods — all while maintaining a commercial growing space to support several of its programs. Crops and honey are sold on the Curbside Market, while herbs and veggies are integrated into Summer Meals or Community Cafe menus. In the years ahead, the installation of more raised beds will allow more than **50 new families to join the farm**.

As far as that aforementioned “growth” protruding from the soil, the 2,800-square-foot facility also will feature a **3,000-square-foot greenhouse to enable year-round growing**.



While we're still about a month or two away from reliably green landscapes on the ground and blue skies overhead, the recent progress has helped inspire hope during the doldrums of winter.

“With the community’s input, we want to help make Northwest Rochester a better place for everyone — regardless of their background or circumstances,” said Frank Keophetlasy, Foodlink’s Community Farm Manager. **“We’re very excited for the future, and what this expansion means for our neighbors.”** 🍴



Journey from training to employment

While many are aware of Foodlink's culinary training workforce development program — the Foodlink Career Fellowship — we also connect people to promising careers in other ways.

Meet Will and Natshun, who participated in a **Forklift Training** as part of our ongoing partnership with the Young Adult Manufacturing Training Employment Program (YAMTEP). Their hard work was quickly noticed — not only for their technical ability, but for their strong commitment to safety.

And the best part? Will and Natshun were both offered jobs at the Genesee Brewery! This opportunity marks the beginning of an exciting new chapter for these two young

men, who have now taken their first step into long-term, sustainable careers.

This success story is just the beginning. Will and Natshun's journey are proof that with the right training and a path to new opportunities, career mobility is possible. 🍴



MORE EXPANSION

New cooler & more

This winter, Foodlink shared details about its **\$15 million, multi-year infrastructure and capacity-building project to address the increasing demand for food assistance in our region.** Over the next three years, we will make major upgrades to our Mt. Read Blvd. facility and community farm on Lexington Avenue. These enhancements will enable us to better serve the community, providing access to culturally diverse, nutritious food and reducing health disparities for our neighbors.

In addition to the farm expansion, key highlights include:

- **New commercial cooler:** A 69% increase in cold-storage space for fresh produce and dairy.
- **Curbside Market upgrade:** A new, larger loading dock and operating space to enhance efficiency and safety.
- **Kitchen expansion:** More dry-storage space and ovens to support increased production.

Visit FoodlinkNY.org/NourishingTomorrow to learn more. 🍴



“The Susan” oven

Special thanks to loyal donors Ken & Susan Parulski for their generous donation to celebrate Susan’s birthday. Their gift allowed our kitchen to purchase a new, state-of-the-art oven! We are grateful for all the delicious hot meals that “The Susan” will provide to our neighbors in need!

You, too, can help fund part of our critical infrastructure by making a donation or reaching out to learn more. Please contact Beth Hershel, VP of Development & Community Engagement (bhershel@foodlinkny.org), to learn more about our progress or request a tour of our facility. 🍴



Foodlink
NOURISHING LIVES

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