



Maria Fruci  
Manager of External Communications  
774-512-5961  
[mfruci@bjs.com](mailto:mfruci@bjs.com)

Mark Cherrington  
Director of Communications  
860-286-9999  
[mcherrington@foodshare.org](mailto:mcherrington@foodshare.org)

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## **Foodshare Helps Feed More Community Members in Need Thanks to \$30,000 Grant from BJ's Charitable Foundation**

*Local Hunger-Relief Organization Receives Grant to Better Support Feeding Agencies*

Bloomfield, CT (October 5, 2015) – Foodshare has been awarded a \$30,000 grant from BJ's Charitable Foundation to support agency capacity building and provide more meals for the 137,000 community members in need. After helping to expand capacity in 2014 for more than 400 feeding pantries and programs that resulted in over 10 million more pounds of food being donated, BJ's Charitable Foundation will invest additional funding this year to further prevent a bottleneck in the supply chain for food distribution to Americans facing hunger.

This will be the second agency capacity-building grant awarded to Foodshare, which works with 300 local agencies (food pantries, shelters and meal programs) that help distribute groceries and meals to the 1 in 8 residents who struggle with hunger. Those same local hunger agencies, however, are often limited by a lack of equipment to move donations and provide safe storage for perishable items. Many agencies also encounter limited staff availability and training to support more high-functioning operations. The BJ's Charitable Foundation grant will help those local agencies safely pick up more donated product from local supporters and distribute more perishable foods to community members in need – a crucial component in the fight to solve hunger.

“We collaborate with our partner agencies to get food to our neighbors in need on a daily basis. They're often the final stage within our network to reach individuals who struggle with hunger,” said James Arena-DeRosa, president of Foodshare. “With this grant from BJ's Charitable Foundation, we are able to continue to address what we can do to help enable these organizations to be more efficient and effective, and in turn help more people facing hunger.”

BJ's Wholesale Clubs has supported the Feeding America nationwide network of food banks since 2011. Each of their 208 clubs has contributed perishable food totaling nearly 35 million pounds, which is the equivalent of 28 million meals.

“At BJ's, we're always looking for new ways to partner with food banks and local organizations to help solve hunger in our communities,” said Jeremy Zitofsky, Assistant Vice President of Regional Operations at BJ's Wholesale Club. “Through this grant, equipment from refrigerated vehicles to coolers as well as food safety training and other costs related to agency success will result in more nutritious food getting to the people who need it most.”

BJ's Wholesale Club distributed grants to 20 additional Feeding America® food banks to enhance these organizations' agency capacity building. Each agency-capacity grant provided by BJ's Charitable Foundation will be supplied in September, in honor of Hunger Action Month™.

\* According to the U.S Department of Agriculture, one meal is the equivalent of 1.2 pounds

Throughout Hunger Action Month, Foodshare and the Feeding America nation-wide network of food banks will rally the country to engage in the fight to end hunger in America. Learn more about Hunger Action Month and how you can get involved at [www.hungeractionmonth.org](http://www.hungeractionmonth.org).

### **About Foodshare**

Recognized as one of the most innovative, progressive, and efficient food banks in the country, Foodshare serves Hartford and Tolland counties and since 1982, has sought to solve the problem of hunger in the region. Last year, Foodshare provided enough food for 12 million meals to 300 partner programs, including food pantries, community kitchens, and homeless shelters, and through its Mobile Foodshare program. Despite that significant effort, another 24 million meals worth of food would be required to fully meet the need. In order to bridge this gap, the organization is involving the entire community to increase the amount of food available from all sources while also helping individuals to achieve self-sufficiency. Looking beyond the immediate lack of food, Foodshare will address the chronic underlying causes of why there is still hunger in America, stemming from poverty and the lack of access to resources.

Working in partnership with other community leaders such as the United Way, End Hunger Connecticut! and 211 Infoline, Foodshare has the experience and is building the networks necessary to help make this vision a reality.

### **About BJ's Wholesale Club**

Headquartered in Westborough, Massachusetts, BJ's is a leading operator of membership warehouse clubs in the Eastern United States. The company currently operates 208 clubs in 15 states.

BJ's provides a one-stop shopping destination filled with more top-quality, leading brands including its exclusive Wellsley Farms and Berkley Jensen brands, which are all backed by BJ's 100% money-back guarantee; more fresh foods from USDA Choice meats to premium produce to delicious organics in many supermarket sizes; and more great value and amazing savings every day. BJ's is also the only membership club to accept all manufacturers' coupons and for greater convenience offers the most payment options.

Giving back has always been at the very core of BJ's culture. Through local clubs, volunteerism, BJ's Feeding Communities, Adopt-A-School Program, BJ's Charitable Foundation, and many more, the company supports and enhances programs that provide vital services within each community it serves. To learn more, visit [www.bjs.com/community](http://www.bjs.com/community).

To check out all the MORE BJ's has to offer, visit <http://www.BJs.com> and for exclusive content find us on Facebook, Twitter and Pinterest.

### **About BJ's Charitable Foundation®**

BJ's Charitable Foundation was established with the mission to enrich every community BJ's Wholesale Clubs serve. The Foundation supports nonprofit organizations that primarily benefit the underprivileged in the areas of hunger prevention and education. For more information about BJ's Charitable Foundation, please visit, [www.bjs.com/charity](http://www.bjs.com/charity).