



**Rachel's  
TABLE**  
Feeding Western Massachusetts  
Reduce Waste. Relieve Hunger.

# Highlights of the Month

## June/July Issue 2023

### Dear Friends

As summer is in full bloom and so is stepping into our nonprofit status, we remain thankful for all you do to help our neighbors stay healthy and fed! As you may have already noticed, this issue of Highlights of the Month looks a little different in your inbox. Along with the name change, this issue is coming to you via our enhanced email manager. Make sure to check your spam folder for messages from us!

### Where is Rachel's Table right now?

Please thank anyone you might know at Sinai Temple, as our offices are there for the summer while we wait to move back to our own space at the JCC! Sinai has been so wonderfully welcoming, and we are so very appreciative of their hospitality. And, while our numbers are the same, our emails and website have changed. To reach us please visit our website here: [www.feedwma.org](http://www.feedwma.org) or call our office at 413-733-0084.

To reach our staff directly via email, please see the following updated contact information:

**Jodi Falk**, Executive Director: [jfalk@feedwma.org](mailto:jfalk@feedwma.org)

**Jay Levine**, Operations Manager: [jlevine@feedwma.org](mailto:jlevine@feedwma.org)

**Cara Michelle Silverberg**, Director of Intercultural Learning and Land-Based Programs: [csilverberg@feedwma.org](mailto:csilverberg@feedwma.org)

**Chana Laila**, Office Manager and Development Assistant: [claila@feedwma.org](mailto:claila@feedwma.org)

**Sarah Bate**, Teen Board and Visual Design Coordinator: [sbate@feedwma.org](mailto:sbate@feedwma.org)

While we are now our own nonprofit entity - Rachel's Table of Western Massachusetts - we are still the same Rachel's Table, thanks to all of you. Our operations remain the same and have even grown – doubled in Hampshire County alone! We continue to be on the move to meet the need!

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### Upcoming Events

**Ongoing** - Gleaning

**Aug. 17** - Growing Gardens Summer Training

**Sept 27.** -Volunteer Appreciation

**Sept. 10** Holyoke Backpack program

**Oct. 15** - Ride to Provide

## June/July Food Stats

Since Jan 2023, RT has rescued **337,903.3 lbs** of food.

A combined total of **12,335.3 lbs** was donated through 3 of our purchase programs: Lily's Fruit, Kalicka Milk and ESSEN-tials.

### RT Van

On July 12, Rachel's Table Van started a new route that picks up food from the Big Y's in Northampton and Amherst and the Aldi's in Hadley. These donations are being delivered to the Northampton & Amherst Survival Centers and Not Bread Alone, a Community Meal program in Amherst.



Photo: Bob Stover who Runs Not Bread Alone and volunteers Debbie, Mike & Jess.  
**211 lbs of produce delivered!**

### New Volunteers

We're not just growing vegetables; we've had a bumper crop of new volunteers join the Rachel's Table team over the last two months. Welcome [Peter Benjamin](#), [Kevin Jocelyn](#), [Cindy Zitka](#), [Bari Demichele](#) and her son/Eagle Scout candidate [William](#). Also, bolstering our Hampshire County contingent and Gleaning Team are [David Sharken](#), [Steve Colicelli](#), & [Sam Gladstone](#). We also have a number of others who are still being trained.

### New Food Donors

And we're growing Food Donors too. We've added [Brookfield Farm](#) and [Astarte Farm](#) as well as [Nosh Restaurant](#), [Mi Tierra Tortillas](#), the [Starbucks in Chicopee](#), the [Aldi's in Hadley](#) and the [Big Y's in Northampton and Amherst](#). The final three donors are through our partnership with the Food Bank of Western Mass. This brings the number of food donors we've added in 2023 to 12. We've also collected food from a number of recent food drives, including two In Honor of the Bar Mitzvah of Jackson Bassell and the 1st Birthday of Fred Bednaz.

## Volunteer Appreciation - Save the Date

Volunteer Appreciation will be Wednesday, September 27th at Sinai Temple. Mark your calendars! We want to appreciate you!!! A free event to share our appreciation- an invite will be coming shortly - keep an eye out!

### Growing Gardens

The gardens are popping! Two cohorts' (8 agencies) gardens are now in full bloom. In August, we will come together for a summer training focusing on Food is Medicine, including cooking and food preservation stations led by Growing Gardens constituents, and a session on how/where to utilize HIP (Healthy Incentive Program) benefits and access mobile markets. Knowing that transportation and childcare can be barriers for people to access healthy food as well as attend Growing Gardens events, we will provide transportation and a children's program.



Photos: See the growth progress at the garden at the Gray House!

First row : zucchini and pumpkins.  
Second Row marigolds, zinnia, tomatoes



**We are in need of a volunteer photographer to help us document the Growing Gardens Summer Training on August 17 from 3:00-5:30pm in Chicopee. This could be a professional or someone with a great camera phone who really knows how to use it. Contact Cara at [csilverberg@feedwma.org](mailto:csilverberg@feedwma.org) if this is you!**

## Gleaning

Get ready to glean! There are gleans all across Hampshire, Hampden, and Franklin counties from now through November. People of all ages and abilities can help. We appreciate delivery drivers as well as field pickers. To get involved:

- Bookmark the [Gleaning Calendar](#) (regularly updated with new gleans);
- [Opt in to receive gleaning alerts](#) via email;
- Sign up to glean or deliver [here!](#)

Also, many farmers in the region are experiencing significant impacts from recent flooding. If you are in a position to purchase directly from farms, please support them by patronizing farm stores and farmers markets. Farmers who use sustainable and regenerative practices are stewards of our food supply. Let's support food security by supporting local growers and farmworkers! [Click here](#) to view a compilation of resources put out by CISA (Communities Involved in Sustaining Agriculture) with ways you can support local farms today.

### Introducing Sarah Bluestein

Sarah Bluestein (they/she) is our new gleaning assistant! After moving to the area four years ago to work in immigration legal aid, Sarah spent two years helping clients access local resources while navigating their legal cases. Following that, Sarah has also spent time working in the local farm and food world. This role feels like a combination of those two areas, and Sarah is excited to continue learning about food systems and redistribution efforts in the valley. Sarah is excited to bring people together to do this important work and will be helping to co-ordinate logistics for weekly gleans as we increase our gleaning program this year.

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## Ride to Provide

This Fall, the Jewish community will join together for the Ride to Provide 2023, a family-friendly bike ride and walk/run fundraiser, organized by the Jewish Federation of Western Massachusetts. The Ride to Provide will take place on Sunday, October 15, 2023, and start and end at UMass Hillel in Amherst. The Ride to Provide was created by Rabbi Saul Perlmutter of UMass Hillel and ran from 2007 to 2016. The Federation is bringing the Ride to Provide back with hopes of more than 360 participants from organizations such as day schools, synagogues, and other area non-profits. Rachel's Table will be one of the nonprofits benefited – join the team!!! You help us by registering and then donating – 30% of your donation comes to us! The Ride will offer multiple bike route options, a 5K walk/run, and a NEW option to participate as a Virtual Rider.



Join the Jewish Federation of Western Mass., community members, and Jewish organization to support our community's needs!

36 MILE  
18 MILE  
9 MILE  
5K  
VIRTUAL RIDE

**SUNDAY**  
15 OCTOBER 2023  
FIRST RIDE AT 9 A.M.

**RIDE TO PROVIDE 2023**  
Jewish Federation  
of Western Massachusetts

MEETING POINT:  
**UMASS HILLEL**  
388 N. PLEASANT STREET  
AMHERST, MA

- REGISTER
- VOLUNTEER
- SPONSOR

SPONSORED BY:

City Republican, POPA, ROBERTS, webb's, ross, grinnell, countrybank, CLARK, J&J LIFE CARE, Barry & Julie Federman, Bank, WY, CLARK, J&J LIFE CARE, K&N

WWW.JEWISHWESTERNMASS.ORG/RIDETOPROVIDE23

**Rachel's Table has created a team for the event. By joining the team and making a donation beyond your registration, you'll be raising money for Rachel's Table. To join the Rachel's Table team, use the following link:**

<https://jewishwesternmass.crowdchange.co/33430/team/44499>

The event includes 9, 18, and 36-mile bike options in addition to the 5K walk/run on UMass Amherst's campus. If you cannot attend the day of the Ride (Sunday, October 15, 2023), you can still participate on Rachel's Table's team as a Virtual Rider. Also, there will be fun activities for kids and a community fair after the ride with lunch and opportunities to connect with other local organizations.

### To Register and Donate

1) Use the following link to go to the **RT Team page**;

<https://jewishwesternmass.crowdchange.co/33430/team/44499>

2) Click on the "Register" button

3) Click in the "+ Register" box

4) This brings you to the "Registrant Details" page. Fill out the information in the various sections on the page.

- If you are doing a Family Registration you are asked to "indicate the total number of family members who will be participating". You enter this info in the "Additional Information" section which appears after you choose your registration type.

5) The "Personal Fundraising Page" is used for making contributions above the registration fee. 30% of these donations will be assigned to Rachel's Table. Also, people who aren't participating in the event can go to your page and contribute money in your name, 30% of which comes to Rachel's Table.

**RT is looking for a team leader!** Could it be you? Please contact Jay at [jlevine@feedwma.org](mailto:jlevine@feedwma.org)

### **Early Bird Registration Discount**

There are Early Bird discounts for Students, Individuals and/or Families who register by August 15, 2023. The discount is roughly 15%. You enter the Early Bird Code (listed below) when you Checkout.

Student participant early bird code: **EBSTUDENT2023**

Individual or Virtual participant early bird code: **EBINDIVIDUAL2023**

Family participant early bird code: **EBFAMILY2023**

### **Teen Board**

The Rachel's Table Teen Board is getting ready to start up for the 2023-2024 school year. The officers are hard at work planning the year's meetings and community service events. Do you know a teen that is passionate about food security, their local Western Mass community, or community service? Email Sarah at [sbate@feedwma.org](mailto:sbate@feedwma.org) to be put on the email list for the teen board and make sure to follow us on Instagram at @rachelstableteens!

**Save the date for these upcoming Teen Board Events – more info coming soon!**

**9/10/23 - Holyoke Backpack Program**

**10/15/23 - October New Members Meeting**  
(does not overlap with Ride to Provide!)

**10/22/23 - Western Mass Teen Glean**

### **Kalicka Milk**

In June, the Teen Board delivered **300 cases of shelf-stable milk (7,750 lbs)** to 18 Agencies in the Springfield area. The teens had a blast at this event delivering milk, chatting with folks at the agencies and playing milk bingo! Dairy products are some of the most requested by RT partner agencies, the Kalicka Milk Project allows these agencies to have nutritious milk without worrying about it going bad!



Photo: Teen Board members delivering milk

**Warm regards,  
Jodi, Jay, Chana Laila, Cara & Sarah**