



The Almost Monthly Epic-Cure Newsletter

March 2023

Open Invitation – if you volunteer in St. Augustine, we'd love to have you join us in Palatka, and if you volunteer in Palatka, we'd love to have you join us in St. Augustine.

Epic-Cure's 2023 Capital Campaign

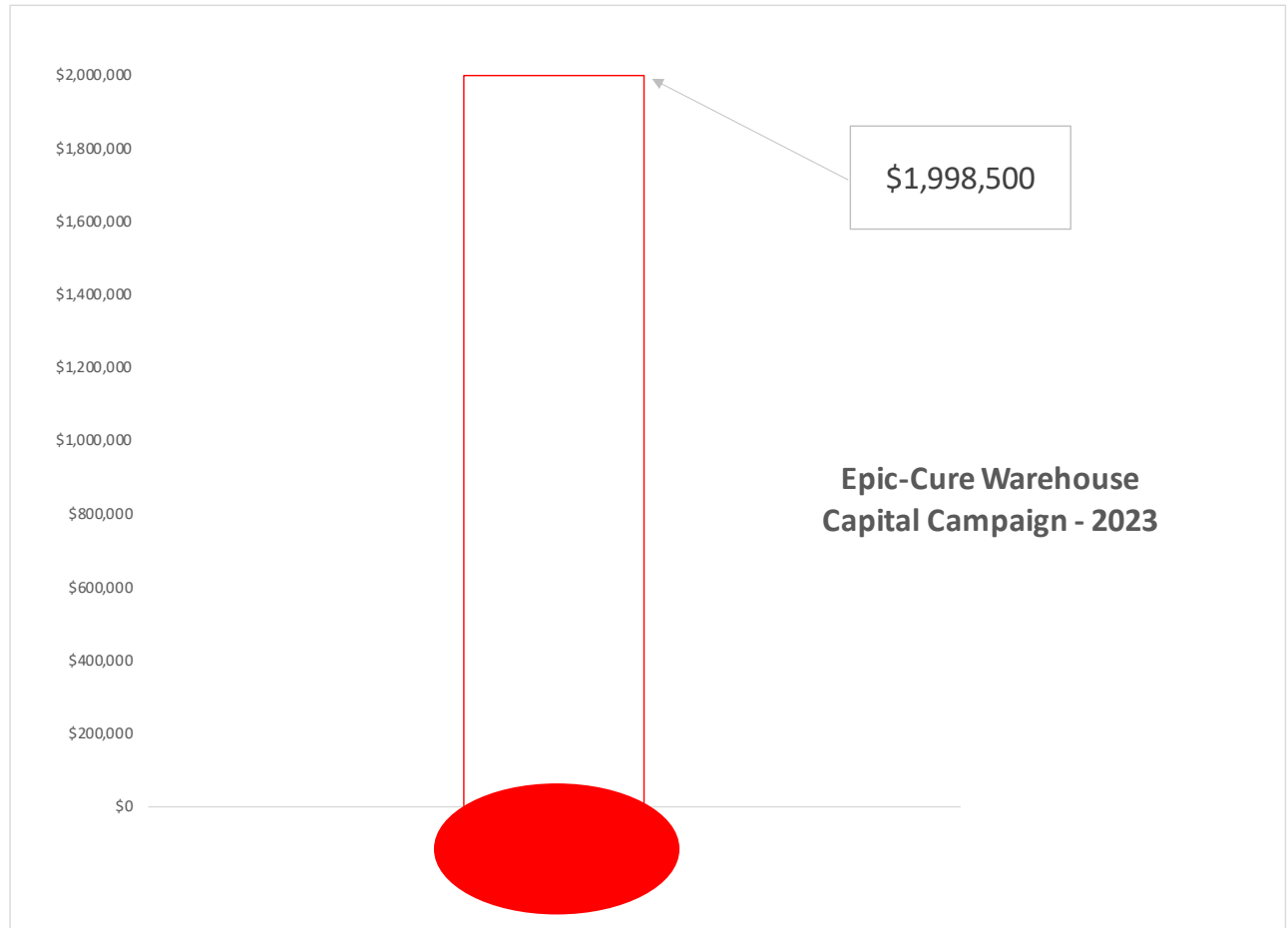
Building Acquisition: *To Create a permanent and sustainable presence in St. Johns County to help the most vulnerable in our community.*

We have identified a site and have negotiated with a builder that is willing to construct a 10,550 square foot warehouse with the required three-phase electrical capacity. This building will house Epic-Cure's St. Johns County operations as well as provide space for two fantastic charities, [Hopefull Handbags](#), and Sustain U.

The site is located on Inman Road in St. Augustine, just off SR-16 near I-95 (exit 318) and is ideally situated for logistics – ready access by trucks for food and household goods collection as well as safe access by surface roads (35 mph) for staff, volunteers, and patrons (recipients).

The building will cost \$1,998,500 (includes construction and build-out costs) and will take approximately six to eight months to construct once some additional permitting has been achieved.

To date, we have raised \$5,750 towards our goal. Our next big push will be for Giving Day which is on 24 hour online from 12pm May 3rd to 11:59am on May 4th, 2023. This event helps build awareness and support for nonprofits through a unique partnership. To reach our goal of raising \$50,000, we are going to need a lot of help. If you are interested in joining the planning and marketing team, please contact us at support@epic-cure.org.



Don't be discouraged by this graphic. We have only just begun this undertaking and expect to demonstrate progress before the next AMEC Newsletter!



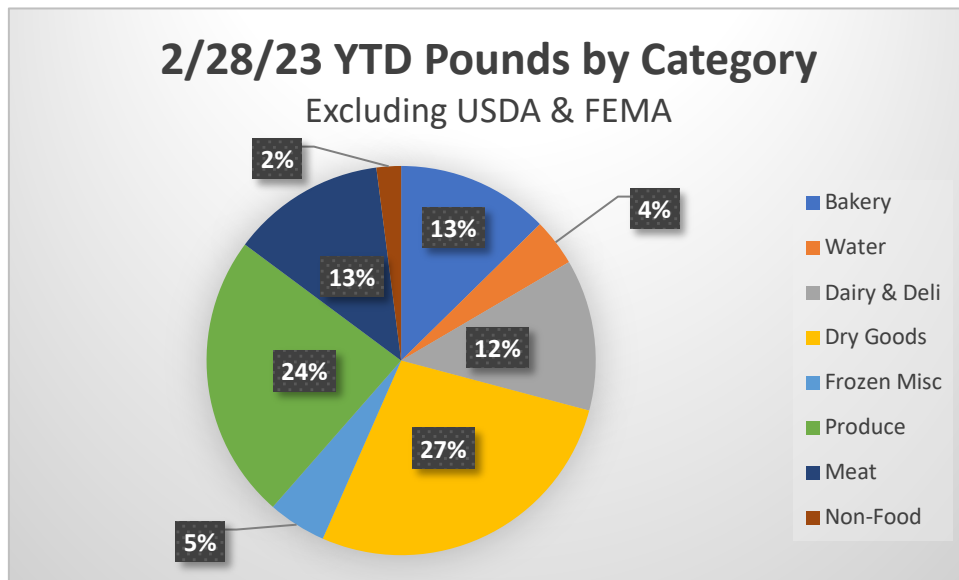
Thank you!!

A big thank you to Jeremy and Wendy for making their wedding a fundraising event for Epic-Cure and Hope for Haiti. Rather than accepting gifts, they asked the family and friends to donate instead. Did you know... you can claim expenses as donations up to the amount raised in that case? (Note: There are a few rules around correct processes so consult a tax professional if you are interested in learning more.)



Operations

People ask us all the time what types of products we get, and the answer is almost everything you see at every grocery store comes through our warehouses. This chart shows the percentage of overall pounds we process by category. In this edition of the newsletter, we are going to focus on meat, and you will not be happy with what you learn.



Before we take our deep dive, let's discuss the condition of meat and the way we receive and distribute it.

When meat approaches its sell-by date, stores will remove it from the displays and freeze it.

According to the USDA, the best-by and sell-by dates indicate when a food product will have the best flavor or quality. Best-by dates are recommendations for enjoying the food product when quality is at its peak, meaning the flavor and texture will be optimal when consumed within and by these dates. It is not a purchase-by or safety date.

When stores have excess inventory of meat, it is already being stored frozen. Here are some examples:

- After Thanksgiving, excess turkey inventory,
- After Easter excess ham inventory, or
- Overestimating demand, resulting in overordering.

Depending on the volume each source donates, Epic-Cure sends volunteers to pick up the donated meat, each using personal vehicles with insulating blankets or one of our refrigerated trucks to safely transport the meat. Once the meat arrives, each package is inspected for quality and package integrity. Any meat that is deemed not suitable for people (happily, unsuitable meat represents less than 1% of what we receive) is sent to the farms to feed livestock. We store the meat frozen and then distribute it while still frozen.



The Feeding America safety guidelines for freezing and storing meat are below, we never store it for more than a week or two. Food does no one anyone good if we are storing it.

- Ground Meats that have been frozen can be kept for three to four months past expiration.
- Muscle cuts that have been frozen can be kept for 12 months past expiration.
- Frozen Hot Dogs, Frozen Deli Meats, Bacon, and TV Dinners can be kept for one to two months past expiration.

In January and February of 2023, excluding USDA and FEMA, we rescued 662,307 pounds of food. Of that rescue total, 84,840 pounds were meat – 12.8% of all pounds rescued. In 2022 we rescued over 545,000 pounds of meat.

We are just one food bank rescuing food from 12 sources in NE Florida (we have more than 12 food sources, but only 12 provide us meat). Now, let's get to the shameful big picture.

Beef is segregated for a reason which we will get to. Livestock commodities include Beef, Cattle, Goats, Grease, Hogs, Lamb & Mutton, Lard, Meal, Mohair, Pork, Red Meat, Sheep, Tallow, Veal, and Wool.

USDA National Agriculture Statistics Service			
Slaughter - Production Measured in Pounds	2020	2019	2018
National Statistics for Beef Commodities	27,242,900,000	27,224,300,000	26,938,700,000
National Statistics for Hog Commodities	40,500,333,000	42,196,603,000	38,498,011,000
National Livestock Commodities	86,970,000,000	86,609,000,000	84,175,000,000

https://www.nass.usda.gov/Statistics_by_Subject/index.php?sector=ANIMALS%20&%20PRODUCTS

Currently, about 12% of beef, 16% of pork, and 17% of dairy products go uneaten.

- At 12% of beef, that is 3,150,084,000 pounds wasted in 2020. Yes, that is more than three billion one hundred and fifty million pounds of beef. Say that number out loud and let it really sink in.
- At 16% of pork, that is 6,480,053,280 that went to waste in 2020. Using words again, that is more than six billion four hundred and eighty million discarded pounds of pork.
- Together, that is 9.63 billion pounds of meat wasted.
- So, about 29 pounds of beef and pork could have been given to every man, woman, and child in the United States (US Census: US population at July, 2021 was 333,287,557).



Last year, the Feeding America network and our partners rescued 3.6 billion pounds of groceries. That is down from the 4 billion they reported rescuing in 2020 and 4.7 billion in 2021. (Read more about that in the February newsletter). There is so much more that needs to be done.

Beyond landfill methane, reducing the amount of meat and dairy wasted could also serve to reduce livestock-related methane emissions. Together, enteric fermentation and manure management made up 36% of US methane emissions, making agriculture the largest contributing sector. Reducing the waste of these products could reduce demand pressures, ultimately leading to less overproduction and lower methane emissions.

<https://refed.org/food-waste/climate-and-resources/>

And then there is the wasted water...

Groundwater is a valuable resource both in the United States and throughout the world. Where surface water, such as lakes and rivers, are scarce or inaccessible, groundwater supplies much of the hydrologic needs of people everywhere. In the United States, it is the source of drinking water for about half the total population and nearly all the rural population. And, it provides over 50 billion gallons per day for agricultural needs. Groundwater depletion, a term often defined as long-term water-level declines caused by sustained groundwater pumping, is a key issue associated with groundwater use. Many areas of the United States are experiencing groundwater depletion.

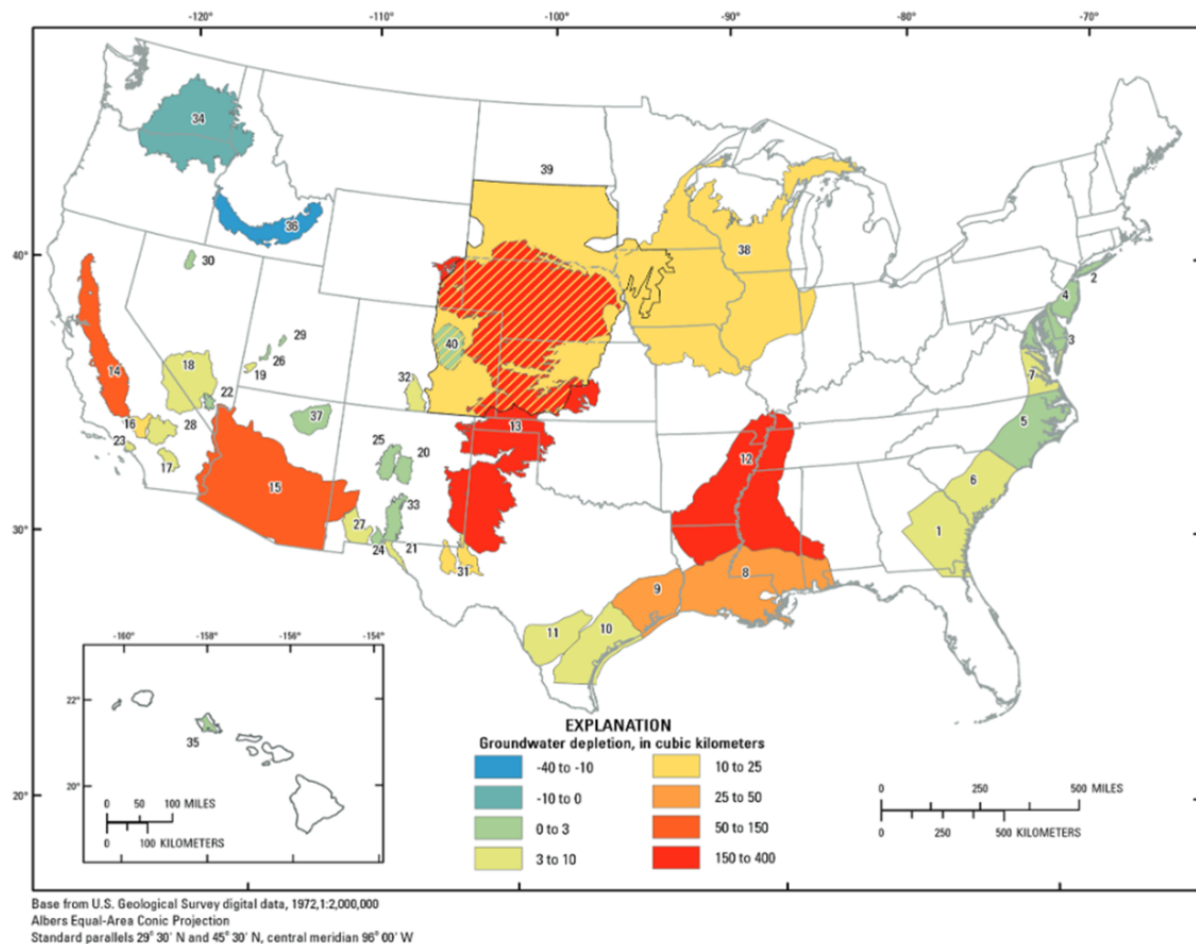
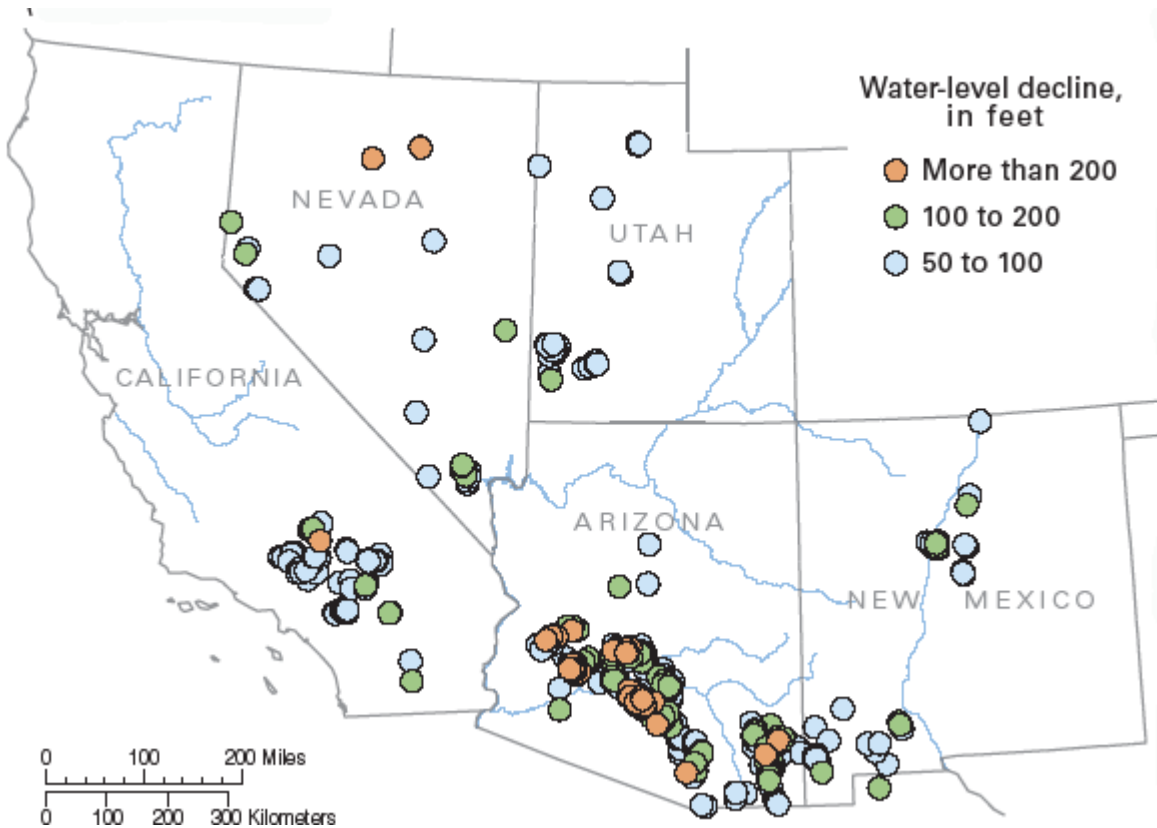
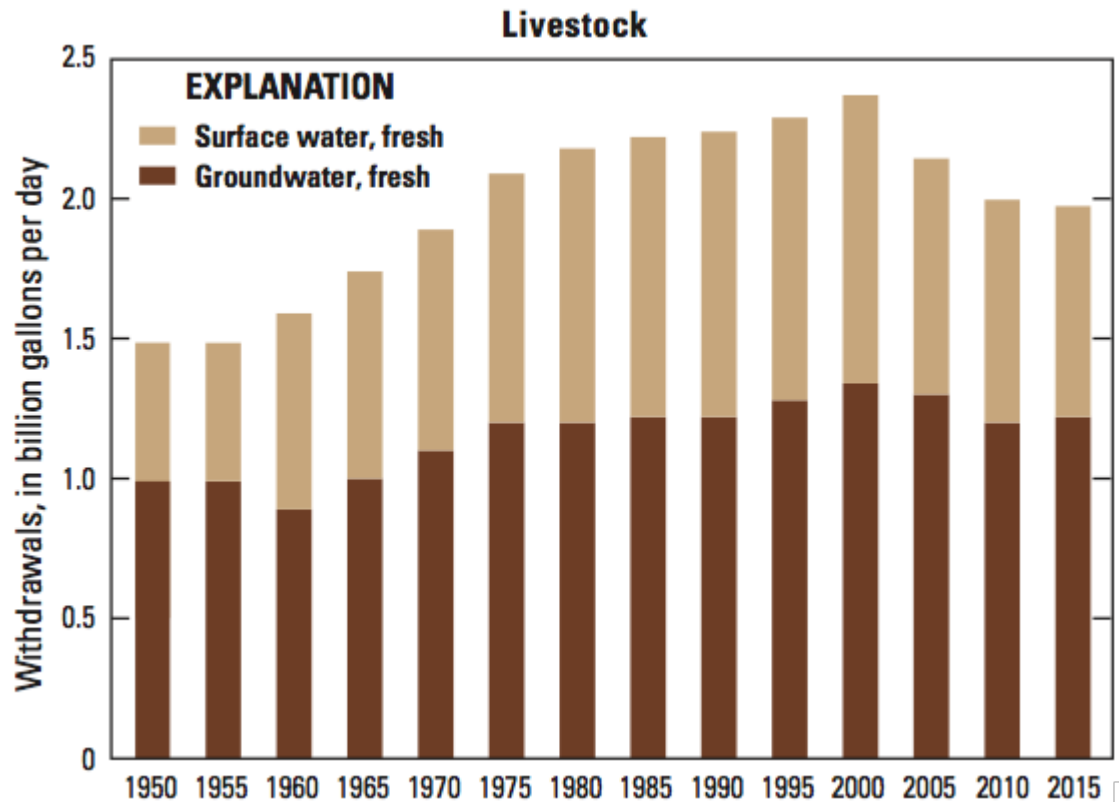


Figure 2. Map of the United States (excluding Alaska) showing cumulative groundwater depletion, 1900 through 2008, in 40 assessed aquifer systems or subareas. Index numbers are defined in table 1. Colors are hatched in the Dakota aquifer (area 39) where the aquifer overlaps with other aquifers having different values of depletion.

<https://www.usgs.gov/special-topics/water-science-school/science/groundwater-decline-and-depletion>



<https://pubs.usgs.gov/fs/fs-103-03/#pdf>



If you take the low end percentage of unconsumed beef at 12% (pork was at 17%) and use that to calculate groundwater usage that could be prevented, the 1.2 billions of gallons consumed each day by livestock in 2015 equates to 144,000,000 which equates to 52,416,000,000 gallons each year. That's just groundwater, not freshwater.

<https://www.usgs.gov/mission-areas/water-resources/science/livestock-water-use>

And then there are the chemicals...

All Cattle: Agricultural producers applied 2.16 million pounds of insecticides to beef and dairy cattle in 1999. Applications made to beef cattle accounted for 72 percent of the total while insecticide use on dairy cattle accounted for 28 percent. Xylene was the top active ingredient in total quantity used at 459,700 pounds followed by tetrachlorvinphos at 287,300 pounds and piperonyl butoxide at 154,300 pounds. These three active ingredients accounted for 42 percent of the U.S. total. Of the total chemical applications made to cattle in 1999, the method of application was 37 percent by spray, 28 percent by pour-on, 9 percent by rubbing device, 9 percent by dust and 7 percent by injectable shot. All other methods (dip, mineral block, pill, ear tags, and other) accounted for the remaining 10 percent of applications.



Beef Cattle: A total of 1.55 million pounds of insecticides was applied to beef cattle in 1999. The top active ingredients in total pounds used on beef cattle were xylene, at 452,400 pounds, tetrachlorvinphos at 219,300 pounds, malathion at 140,900 pounds and famphur at 129,200 pounds. Of the total chemical applications made to beef cattle in 1999, the method of application was 39 percent by pour-on, 18 percent by spray, and 11 percent by injectable shot. All other methods (dip, dust, mineral block, rubbing device, pill, ear tags, and other) accounted for the remaining 32 percent of applications.

All Cattle Facilities: A total of 354,400 pounds of insecticides was applied to cattle facilities in 1999. Tetrachlorvinphos had the highest quantity used at 125,200 pounds. Dimethoate had the second highest quantity used at 98,700 pounds followed by diazinon with 39,300 pounds. Beef Cattle Facilities: A total of 148,400 pounds of insecticides was used to treat beef cattle facilities in 1999. Diazinon was the predominant active ingredient in treating beef cattle facilities with 39,300 pounds used. Malathion had the second highest quantity used at 15,100 pounds followed by dichlorvos with 14,600 pounds.

<https://usda.library.cornell.edu/concern/publications/w6634361c?locale=en>

This is worth a read:

<https://www.meetingsnet.com/meeting-planning-toolbox/liability-law-loosened-surplus-food-distribution>

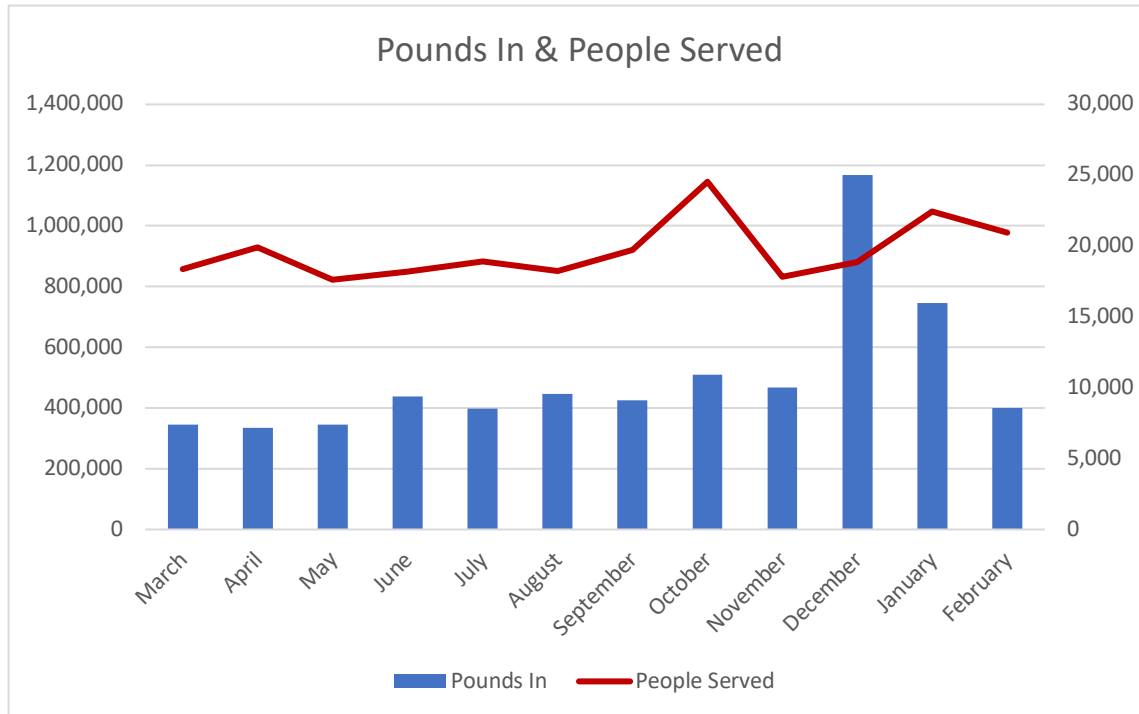
We are starting conversations to see how we can connect in the events space. If anyone knows Shad Khan please give him a call and tell him about us. Hey, you never know until you ask.

In the first few weeks of having bins at a few Love's truck stops, a group of MBA students from UNF collected over 10,000 plastic bags and dropped them off on 3/3. The students also started a Facebook page – Curing Jax. The page description is:

Started by five MBA students at the University of North Florida, Curing Jax is seeking your help to raise awareness about food waste and how it contributes to food insecurity and carbon emissions in Northeast Florida. We are partnering with Epic Cure, a nonprofit organization that is looking for volunteers and donations to help the cause. Be on the lookout for our posts about this issue as well as information on how you can help us make a difference.



Here is our PIPS (Pounds In & People Served) graph



Notes on the graph:

FEMA December 605,728

FEMA January 302,390

FEMA February 21,000

FEMA is finally winding down (for now – there are rumors of more to come). The only things we have left, and are struggling to move, are pallets of individual hand sanitizing wipes, hand sanitizer, and disposable coveralls.

February was a very difficult month in the food rescue world. We don't know the reason, but with the exception of Waste Not Florida, all our "regular" sources were down almost 20% in food donations from the prior month. See the table on the next page.



Source	Month	Sum of Total
0002 Winn Dixie 210	January	4,939
	February	4,819
0077 Winn Dixie 207	January	6,040
	February	5,104
0112 Winn Dixie Shores	January	5,665
	February	3,408
0129 Winn Dixie A1A	January	12,834
	February	9,119
0182 Winn Dixie 16	January	6,593
	February	5,036
16265 Dollar General Stokes Landing	February	119
18356 Dollar General WGV	January	79
21874 Dollar General #1935	January	1,047
	February	589
7692 Dollar General 302 SR16	January	89
	February	0
Amazon	January	3,214
Big Lots	January	1,078
	February	536
Costco	January	7,325
	February	6,228
Dollar General	January	632
	February	230
Farm Share	January	72,528
	February	51,096
Feeding Northeast Florida	January	116,061
	February	112,428
Kehe	January	23,525
	February	19,382
Pepperidge Farm	January	120
	February	93
SEFB	January	58,706
	February	42,302
St. Francis House	January	3,154
	February	2,467
USDA	January	84,815
	February	75,913
Waste Not Want Not	January	3,232
	February	4,628

As always, we work non-stop to connect to new sources.



Sustain U.

We wrapped up our Winter session of classes at the Boys and Girls Club, Woodlawn Terrace Apartments, and Steve A Cohen Military Family Clinic on 3/2. Next session begins on 3/20. In the meantime, we are planning on taking our Woodlawn Terrace students on field trips over spring break to tour local restaurant kitchens. They will get a chance to see what those look like in operation and sample some food. Our friends at Asado Life and Fish Camp jumped right onboard to allowing us to visit. First Coast Technical College is also going to offer a tour of their teaching kitchens and talk about their culinary education programs. If any other restaurants would like to join the tour the week of 3/13 to 3/17, please contact support@epic-cure.org.

We love it when the neighborhood kids stop by to see what's cooking and sample the food.





Volunteer Spotlight



Eric Bierman

Imagine this scenario: Nineteen-year-old arrives in New York City with \$150 in his pocket, a refugee fleeing communism in Prague. His hope was to be a rock star, finding his buddy and again forming the band that the girls liked so well. That does not happen. But he is driven, has a great work ethic, and intelligence. This is Eric Bierman's story.

His initiative helped him develop the successful company he now owns, Cool Transport Jax, "Managing and Solving Your Freight and Handling Needs".

It was by chance that he happened to meet Sunny Mulford. She needed a refrigerated room in the Palatka warehouse. When Eric heard what she had been quoted, he said he could do it for half that amount. That room, for those of you who haven't seen it, is roughly 60' x 80'. That was really good news for Epic-Cure! Since then, he has helped with providing the three independent freezer containers adjacent to the Palatka warehouse, and plans are in the works to install or build another refrigerator in the St. Augustine warehouse.

Eric's motto is "Do good to make all feel better." He has been helped as he created his business, and he believes in passing it on. As a result, he helps the Girl Scouts, the Jacksonville Zoo, and he sponsors foreign students and their families. He was on the board of Rutgers University and the Channel 13 patron board and gets into politics to support responsible leaders.

For the future of Epic-Cure, he would like to see the St. Augustine facility expand into a new, permanent home. He knows Sunny as a "firecracker, good with people, ready to kiss or kick your pants as the need arises." And he finds Ken thoughtful, intelligent, and supportive. He would like all supporters to step up to the plate, do the right thing, and look for expansion opportunities.

Of the latest fund raiser at the Treasury, he said it was elegant and fun, and he would like to go to another one and "dance with Sunny again." Eric, your help has been invaluable to the cause of Epic-Cure, and we thank you for your continued support and friendship. "Doing good makes you feel good!" - Eric Bierman



Awareness:



We all love food. As a society, we devour countless cooking shows, culinary magazines, and foodie blogs. So how could we possibly be throwing nearly 40% of it in the trash? Filmmakers and food lovers Jen and Grant dive into the issue of waste from farm, through retail, all the way to the back of their own fridge. After catching a glimpse of the billions of dollars of good food that is tossed each year in North America, they pledge to quit grocery shopping and survive only on discarded food. What they find is truly shocking.

After the movie, Ken and Sunny Mulford will be on a Q&A panel to discuss their experience rescuing food from grocery stores, wholesale distributors, farms, and trucking companies. In just under 4 years, Epic-Cure and its volunteers have rescued and distributed 14.7 million pounds of food. We hope to see you there!



This is large and bold for a reason...

An easy, impactful way that you can help us is to please ...

Save And Drop Off Your Grocery Store Plastic Bags.

You will help reduce waste by allowing us to re-use them.

You will save us money by reducing the number we have to purchase.

Transparency:

Anyone who wishes to see ***Epic-Cure's financial statements*** need only ask.

- Our CPA-Audited fiscal year 2021 financial statements have been released and are available upon request.
- Please email your requests to Sunny Mulford: sunny.mulford@epic-cure.org