



## MEND Debuts The Green Bean

### New Mobile Pantry Focuses on Fresh and Healthy Food

The Green Bean, MEND's new food collection vehicle and mobile food pantry, is complete - and ready to hit the streets distributing more fresh and healthy foods to underserved communities in Essex County!

Adorned with colorful artwork featuring a variety of fresh produce, shelf-stable milk, and cans of tuna, MEND unveiled The Green Bean's new look at the East Orange YMCA's Healthy Kids Day last weekend.

Volunteers from The Junior League of the Oranges and Short Hills, who partnered with MEND on the project, purchased and distributed 75 bags of fresh produce to participants at the event.

Watch a video of The Green Bean's transformation:





[Read more about the Debut!](#)

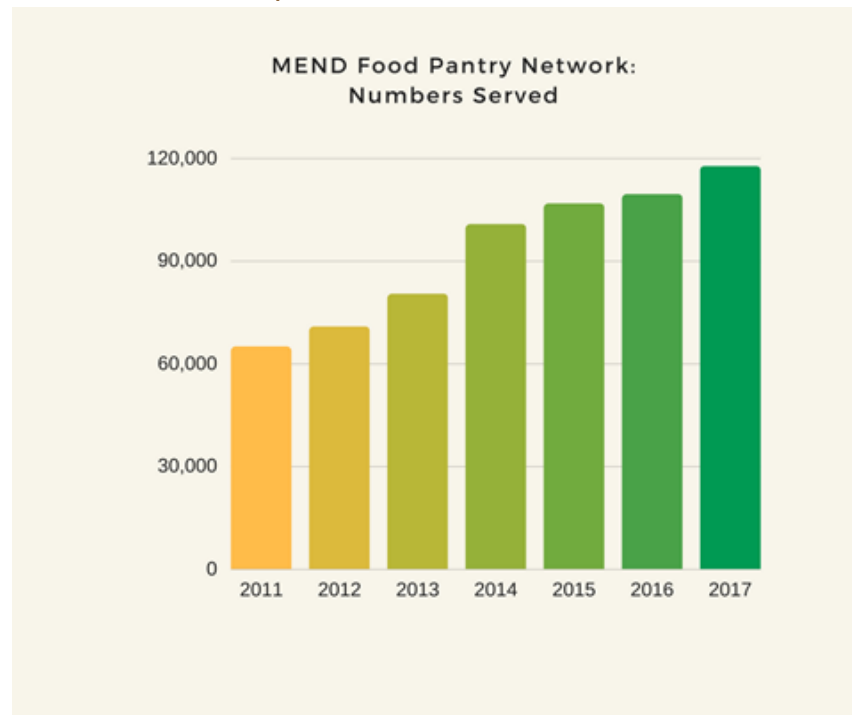
## Why Do We Need The Green Bean?

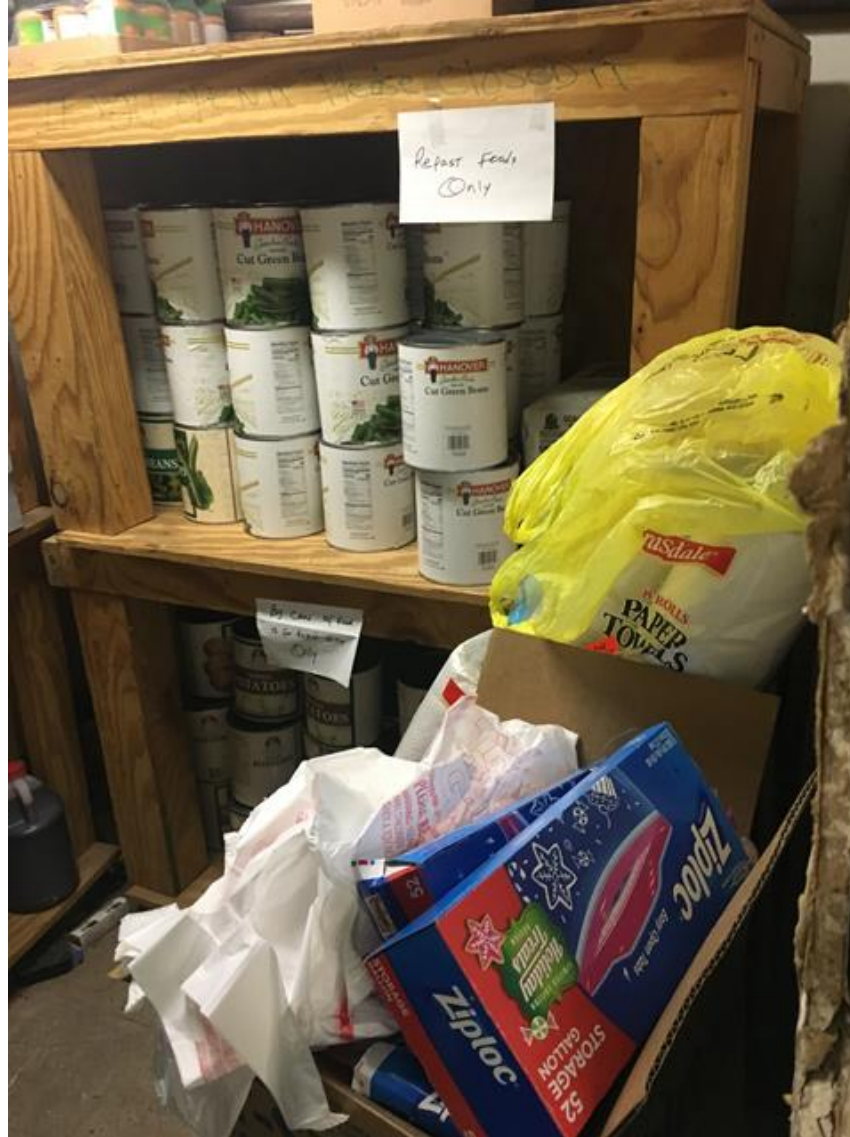
The number of people visiting MEND food pantries continues to rise; yet many of today's pantries are still based on an "emergency need" model, which anticipates occasional, rather than ongoing, use, and offers a limited amount of non-perishable foods to those in need.

Many pantries are also located in tight quarters, and may lack access to the

logistical, financial, and community resources needed to provide a regular supply of fresh and healthy food to their patrons.

As more of Essex County's most vulnerable residents look to food pantries for regular support, MEND is working to improve its food pantries' access to a greater variety of nutritious foods to meet their patrons' needs.





- *Essex County has the highest percentage of food insecure residents in the state (17%)*
- *37% of those served by MEND food pantries are children.*
- *Also, MEND serves many senior citizens and disabled patrons.*
- *In Newark, home to 8 MEND food pantries, heart disease, heart attacks, and diabetes are twice as prevalent as in Essex County overall*

## How The Green Bean Will Help

MEND food pantries have identified

specific types of nutritious foods they would most like to provide to their patrons.

Many of the requested foods are expensive for the pantries to purchase, difficult to store, and may not be included in what they typically receive from traditional food drives.

"The clients would most likely want the fresh produce and tuna fish, since that's something that we rarely have...Anything that you're able to supply would be greatly appreciated."

- MEND food pantry volunteer East  
Orange, NJ

MEND is now recruiting hosts and sponsors for The Green Bean, to fill it with nutritious food. Once "stuffed," MEND will distribute the food through its interfaith food pantry network and other sites.

[Get Involved with The Green Bean!](#)

We also welcome monetary donations to support our efforts!

- \$50 will buy 4 more milk crates for our shelves;
- \$100 will keep gas in the tank; and
- \$250 will buy nearly 800 pounds of onions - an often-requested item!

Help us hit the road with The Green Bean this summer - and get more healthy food to all!

[Donate Now!](#)







Want to know more? Visit  
the MEND website, follow  
The Green Bean on  
Instagram, and like MEND  
on Facebook!

The Green Bean school bus conversion project was made possible by financial and in-kind support from our generous friends at Group One Investments, G-1 Graphics, The Hyde & Watson Foundation, Kings Food Markets, Maaco, The Provident Bank Foundation, The Junior League of the Oranges and Short Hills, and Brinton Brosius, LLC.



MEND

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