



## White River Valley Electric Cooperative News Release

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*CAPTION: The Ava Office accepts their trophy as 2020's food drive champions.*

### **WRVEC virtual drive raises nearly \$26,000 for local food pantries**

**Branson, Missouri** – In the face of a global health pandemic, White River Valley Electric Cooperative's Power to Turn Hunger into Hope went virtual – becoming the Cooperative's most successful fundraiser for local food pantries to date. The month-long food drive collected a record-breaking \$25,974 which can provide up to 103,896 nutritious meals to families in need within WRVEC's five-county service territory.

Power to Turn Hunger into Hope has provided community food pantries with essential funding and assistance since 2014. In prior years, a large emphasis was placed on donating material goods. However,

WRVEC's new partnership with Ozarks Food Harvest has been utilized for greater impact. Every dollar now donated provides four meals.

"We are grateful to belong to a community that cares so deeply for its members, especially in an area heavily impacted by the pandemic", said WRVEC Community Coordinator Nathan Stearns.

In Southwest Missouri, 15% of the population is food insecure and 67% of households are served by food pantries in the OFH network. One out of every five children within our local communities goes without food on a regular basis.

Community donations were combined with employee paycheck donations, \$10,000 from WRVEC and a \$10,000 matching Sharing Success grant from CoBank, a cooperative bank serving vital industries across rural America.

"Our combined efforts made a big impact within our community. I'm proud of what we accomplished," said Stearns.

The five WRVEC offices partook in a friendly competition to raise money for the campaign. The Ava office took home the trophy with the highest average donated per employee.

To learn more about Power to Turn Hunger into Hope, visit <https://www.whiteriver.org/community/food-drive/>

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[White River Valley Electric Cooperative](#) is a [Touchstone Energy Cooperative](#) dedicated to ensuring our members receive safe and reliable service in their homes and businesses across five southwest Missouri counties including Ozark, Taney, Stone, Christian and Douglas.