



New York Regional Food Bank Serves the Less Fortunate

Uses Fleet of Trucks to Cover 41 Percent of the State

LATHAM, N.Y. – Hunger in the United States is a daunting problem – more than 42 million live in food ‘insecure’ households. That means about 13 percent of households have trouble putting food on the table, and nearly half of those experience severe need.

Making a difference in the state of New York is the Regional Food Bank of Northeastern New York, based in Latham. It’s part of the Feeding America Network, which consists of 200 food banks and 60,000 food pantries that dot the United States. The network provides food to one in seven Americans.

In 2016, the Regional Food Bank distributed more than 36 million pounds of food to more than 1,000 agencies in 23 New York counties. That’s up from 35 million pounds in 2015. “The need doesn’t go away and the need is great,” said Mark Quandt, who has been executive of the food bank since 1984. “We currently operate six Class 8 tractors, five of which are Kenworths, and 16 Class 7 straight trucks – the latest being Kenworth T370s. We cover 41 percent of the landmass in New York.” The Kenworth trucks were purchased through Kenworth Northeast Group – Albany.



Heading the transportation department is Shane Clute, who has been with the food bank for 23 years. “Reliable trucks are vital to our operation,” said Clute. “The straight trucks (24- to 28-foot boxes with reefer units) go out to eight- to 12 supermarkets each day, all within a 70-mile radius of our distribution centers. Once the donated food is collected and brought back, volunteers sort through the food and log what’s available on our web site.”



According to Quandt, agencies working with the food bank can range from food pantries to homeless shelters, to food programs for kids and the elderly. “Our inventory of food is listed, then agencies can place orders off the web site and either come pick it up if they’re within a 45-mile radius, or meet us at designated locations.”

Those locations can be up to 200 miles to the north, 120 miles to the south, or 60 miles to the west. “Once orders are placed, we’ll put the food parcels in trailers and our Class 8 Kenworths will take them to a central location,” said Clute. “There, the agencies will come and pick up their orders – some of the larger agencies might take up to eight pallets of food.”

Once the trailer is empty, the return trip often includes stops at farms or other locations where donated produce and vegetables are loaded and brought back to the food bank’s main distribution center – a 62,000-square-foot building in Latham, or the food bank’s 55,000-square-foot warehouse in Orange County.

Prior to working with Kenworth, Clute said the food bank used various truck makes and models. “But we didn’t have much success since breakdowns were frequent,” he said. “We tried our first Kenworth in 2009. We loved that truck from day one. That led us to purchasing the Kenworth T370s. I’m a driver too, and I like the ride and handle of the trucks. They’re very comfortable. And, they’ve been very reliable – we plan to hold on to the trucks for about 10 years before replacement.”

(continued)

(continued)

The Kenworth T370s are spec'd with the PACCAR PX-7 rated at 300-hp, and driven through Allison automatics. They also feature locking differentials to ensure better traction in icy conditions.



According to Clute, keeping transportation costs down is vital. “We’re a non-profit agency so we do everything we can to corral expenses and put our energy toward serving the communities of New York. Running with Kenworth has been a smart business decision for us – they do the job comfortably for us, while being dependable and affordable to maintain.”

Kenworth is the driver’s truck. See what drivers are saying at www.kenworth.com/drivers.

Kenworth Truck Company is the manufacturer of The World’s Best® heavy and medium duty trucks. Kenworth's Internet home page is at www.kenworth.com. Kenworth is a PACCAR company.