



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

Contact: Chelsea Gillespie  
chelsea@bountyandsoul.org  
540-250-2508

## **Bounty & Soul Closes on New 6,000-Square-Foot Food Hub to Meet Surging Community Need**

### **Expansion Funded by Major Philanthropic Partners Will Double Food Storage Capacity and Strengthen Regional Disaster Resilience**

**BLACK MOUNTAIN, NC - April 30, 2026** - Bounty & Soul, a community-driven food and health equity organization serving Western North Carolina, today announced the closing on a 6,000-square-foot facility located at 1035 Old US Hwy 70 W in Black Mountain, directly across the street from its current Food, Education and Volunteer Hub. The expansion addresses a critical surge in food insecurity following Hurricane Helene and shrinking federal safety nets, with demand skyrocketing as the organization now serves more than 27,500 individuals monthly, nearly triple pre-Helene levels.

The building purchase and upfit was made possible through the generous support of the Wanda & Jim Moran Foundation, Publix Super Markets Charities, Glass Foundation, Cannon Foundation, Quility, Swannanoa Valley Medical Center Foundation, Forvis Mazars Foundation, Gerald and Susan Kirksey, and additional private donors.

"We are proud to provide funding for Bounty & Soul's expansion through the acquisition of this new building," said Tom Blanton, Executive Director of the Wanda and Jim Moran Foundation. "This investment will yield positive returns for the community as Bounty & Soul increases their capacity to meet the growing need for fresh, healthy food."

"This expansion represents more than additional square footage. It's a commitment to our community's long-term health, resilience, and dignity," said Ali Casparian, Founder and Executive Director of Bounty & Soul. "Before Hurricane Helene, we operated 5 weekly markets. Today, we run 10 weekly community markets across Buncombe County, all located in areas with critical need for fresh food access, meeting unprecedented community demand. In the wake of Helene, Swannanoa became a food desert, and we became the only reliable weekly source of fresh food for thousands of families. This new facility will allow us to dramatically increase our capacity while maintaining the trauma-informed, community-centered approach that defines our work. We believe food is a human right. Food is love. Food is medicine. Food is justice. We are deeply grateful to our philanthropic partners who share our vision of a region where everyone has the right and opportunity to eat well, be nourished, and thrive."

The expansion comes at a pivotal moment. The 6,000-square-foot facility will dramatically expand refrigeration and storage capacity, increasing the organization's ability to receive more donated food to offset increasing food costs while remaining steadfastly committed to supporting the regional and local food system. The combined 16,800-square-foot food hub campus will be the first of its kind in Buncombe County. Partnerships are already underway to solarize both buildings, ensuring the facility can function as a critical resource during future emergencies.

The organization has stretched mightily to meet growing community needs precipitated by the storm and rising costs. This strategic expansion provides Bounty & Soul with the infrastructure needed to sustain its expanded level of service.

Meredith Ellison of Quility noted, "The opening of this new space for Bounty & Soul is deeply symbolic of the role they already play in our community. This building is more than a structure, it is a container for nourishment, connection, dignity, and healing. Through fresh, whole foods, cooking education, and intentional community-building, Bounty & Soul reminds us that food is not just sustenance; it is care, belonging, and a pathway to well-being."

In 2025, Bounty & Soul served 289,562 individuals from 87,807 households, distributed over 2 million pounds of produce, and invested \$1.08 million in the regional food economy through partnerships with 65 local farms and businesses. The organization delivered 4,744 healthy food boxes to homebound individuals and offered 202 health and wellness classes alongside 42 cooking classes.

Renovations are expected to begin in summer 2026, with the facility becoming fully operational by winter. The expanded campus will feature drive-in refrigeration, commercial-grade equipment, and enhanced space for education programs and volunteer coordination.

### **About Bounty & Soul**

Bounty & Soul is a community-driven food and health equity organization serving Buncombe County in Western North Carolina. Since 2014, Bounty & Soul has worked at the intersection of food, farms, and health to improve food and nutrition security, sustain the local food and farming system, and advance health and wellbeing. Through its Produce to the People™, Rooted in Health™, and Farmers Alliance™ programs, Bounty & Soul provides trauma-informed, dignified support to individuals and families experiencing food insecurity. The organization operates 10 weekly no-cost community markets and partners with more than 65 local farms to strengthen the regional food system. Bounty & Soul's mission is to provide access to fresh produce and wellness education for everyone. Together, we connect, share and celebrate nutritious food, education and community. For more information, visit [bountyandsoul.org](https://bountyandsoul.org).

