

On Nutrition: Gifts that keep giving

December 9 2022, by Barbara Intermill



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According to a Gallup poll, each of us Americans expects to spend an average of \$932 on Christmas gifts this year. I, for one, like practical gifts. (My daughter was thrilled last year when I told her I needed a new crockpot.)

This year, as I browsed through the mass of catalogs that hit our mailbox, a few caught my attention. Gifts from these organizations will

quite literally sustain the receiver long after the holiday is over.

Heifer International (heifer.org) reminded me that many [children](#) around the world are in desperate need of more than just toys and games. A heifer, by the way is a young female cow who has not yet given birth. The organization provides food in the form of animals and other [agricultural products](#) to struggling families in rural areas around the globe.

A single dairy cow, for example, makes more than four gallons of milk a day. Besides providing nourishment to children and families, it can be turned into cheese or yogurt and sold for income. And each year, a cow can produce a calf to sustain more people in a community.

Vision Trust (visiontrust.org), which serves children and families in our world's poorest countries, says "our most pressing need right now is food." When children in this program attend school, they receive a nourishing meal, easing the strain on families to feed their children. Well-fed kids can grow and learn better. And a child can be cared for for an entire month for about the price of a crockpot.

World Vision (worldvisiongifts.org) takes our monetary gifts and transfers them into an ongoing supply of food for hungry children and families. Eggs from chickens and ducks, for example, are packed with life-sustaining protein and other nutrients. Goats, sheep and [dairy cows](#) provide nourishing milk, cheese and yogurt. Clean water and [fruit trees](#) are also on the shopping list through this program.

On a local level, I have a personal tradition that gives me joy this time of year. Every time I see a red kettle rung by a Salvation Army volunteer, I dig in my purse to drop in some money. Just this year, I learned that all the donations stay within the community in which they are given. So it's a cool way to make a difference in the lives of our neighbors in need.

I'm going to take my grandkids to our local hardware store's Angel Tree this week. It's another Salvation Army project that allows us to "adopt" children in our community with gifts they want and need for Christmas.

Let's not forget that we nourish our own hearts when we help to feed others. That's the true meaning of this season.

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