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More than 4.1 million pounds of food delivered to community amid COVID-19

COVID-19 response results in million pound increase in food distributed
New distribution method brings food to the doorstep of homebound neighbors

DUQUESNE, PA (April 28, 2020) – In its 40-year history, Greater Pittsburgh Community Food Bank (the Food Bank) has never seen a need as large as during its current COVID-19 response. From March 18 to April 24, together with its network of 365 agencies, partners and programs spanning 11 counties of southwestern Pennsylvania, the organization has provided more than 4.1 million pounds of food, enough food for more than 3.4 million meals to individuals facing food insecurity.

This is a million pound increase from a typical month and includes food distributed through a variety of sources, the largest of which include:

- Twelve drive-up food distributions serving nearly 12,000 vehicles, accounting for nearly 600,000 pounds of food.
- More than 100,000 pounds to nearly 1,800 people through its emergency food assistance program at its warehouse.
- More than 56,000 pounds (2,250 food boxes) to 30 new partner agencies designed specifically to respond to this ongoing crisis.

The Food Bank's network of food pantries and hot meal programs have provided more than 3 million pounds of food to the community.

In addition to these direct food assistance methods, the Food Bank's SNAP Team has assisted 342 people with completing SNAP applications resulting in an estimated 340,000 meals (one meal equals 1.2 pounds of food), more than 1 million dollars in SNAP benefits and an economic impact of almost 1.6 million dollars to the local economy.

Finally, the organization has worked with school districts and community organizations to ensure children have access to approximately 25,000 Grab and Go meals while school has not been in session.

"The need in our region right now is unlike anything we've seen before," said Lisa Scales, president and CEO of the Food Bank. "Many of those who we are serving recently lost their jobs and are new to needing food assistance. We remain committed to fulfilling our mission and ensuring that all of our neighbors have enough to eat."

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In the past six weeks the organization has had nearly 17,000 visits to its 'Get Help' webpage. In comparison, a typical six week span would result in about 1,100 visits to the same webpage. Additionally, we have fielded more than 2,800 calls for food assistance, mostly from people who are newly unemployed.

What's next at the Food Bank

In 2019 the Food Bank started testing a home delivery program. Knowing the need is greater now than ever due to the COVID-19 crisis, the organization recently scaled up the program and delivered nearly 29,000 pounds of food to the doorstep of more than 1,100 individuals in our region. This program has been supported by volunteers, professional delivery services and several community partners including the United Way of Southwestern Pennsylvania, 412 Food Rescue, Alliance for Nonprofit Resources and Community Partnership, Inc. The Food Bank looks forward to continuing to ramp up and expand this program across southwestern Pennsylvania to better serve the needs of people who are homebound or have limited mobility.

Drive-up distributions for this week include:

Greene County Food Distribution, presented by Corner Cupboard Food Bank

Location: Greene County Fairgrounds
107 Fairgrounds Rd, Waynesburg, PA 15370

Date: Thursday, April 30, 2020

Time: 10 a.m. - noon

Capacity: 1,200 cars, no walk-ups permitted
One food share (two boxes) per car

Beaver County Food Distribution

Location: Pittsburgh International Race Complex
201 Penndale Road, Wampum, PA 16157

Date: Saturday, May 2, 2020

Time: 1 p.m. - 4 p.m.

Capacity: 2,000 cars, no walk-ups permitted
One food share (two boxes) per car

Additionally, while the Food Bank has always provided its network of agencies across southwestern Pennsylvania assistance with food, equipment, funding and administrative needs, thanks to the wonderful outpouring of support from the community, the organization is ramping up the aid it provides to our network throughout this crisis. The organization has been in touch with its agency network on a weekly basis to evaluate what support agencies need and is working directly with them to fulfill those needs. Any agency in need of support should contact the Food Bank directly to discuss its situation.

In these uncertain times, the Food Bank is committed to continuing its nearly 40-year mission of feeding people in need and mobilizing the community to eliminate hunger. The organization is continuously monitoring this ever-changing situation and evaluating the best way to provide assistance to individuals and families in need of food assistance.

A full schedule of upcoming distributions; information on volunteer opportunities; and a comprehensive list and map of what schools and community organizations are doing to feed children while schools are closed are available on the Food Bank's website at pittsburghfoodbank.org/covid19.

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Greater Pittsburgh Community Food Bank is a nonprofit organization that distributes more than 35.5 million meals annually across 11 counties in southwestern Pennsylvania through a network of 365 agencies, partners and programs. The Food Bank was founded in 1980 and is a member of Feeding America, the leading domestic hunger-relief charity in the U.S. For more information on hunger in our region or how to get involved, visit pittsburghfoodbank.org.