

Foodfirst

Moving the Community from Hunger into Health
Spring 2020

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Covid-19: Your Foodbank Responds

In a few short weeks, the COVID-19 pandemic changed life as we know it in Santa Barbara County.

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COVID-19:
YOUR FOODBANK RESPONDS



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On the cover: National Guards delivered food to local seniors under stay-at-home orders. Photo: Jacqueline Pilar

Our vibrant tourism economy screeched to a halt practically overnight. State Street and Broadway are eerily quiet. Over 100,000 children are home, more than 40% of whom count on meals from school. Seniors are required to self-quarantine.

Precipitous job losses have left thousands of households facing food insecurity *for the first time*, and many struggle even more than usual to make ends meet. We’ve seen countless new visitors hesitate to receive food, saying, “I don’t want to take food from someone who needs it more.”

The most important thing the Foodbank wants our community to know is that **we are ready, and we are here for everyone.**

Our Disaster Feeding Plan is guiding the Foodbank’s strategic response to the Covid-19 crisis:

- We have **doubled our capacity** to store and distribute food;
- We have **launched a comprehensive SAFE Food Net program** and home delivery service for seniors;
- We are **providing safety training and PPE** to our volunteers and 300 partners.

More details can be found throughout this newsletter and at FoodbankSBC.org.

As this wave of uncertainty continues to sweep over our community, we are moved by the generosity and willingness to help from our community: individuals and local businesses.

Thank you for your participation to keep Santa Barbara County healthy.

Erik Talkin
CEO, Foodbank of Santa Barbara County
www.hungerintohealth.com



SAFE FOOD FOR ALL

How has the Foodbank been able to respond so effectively?

Disaster Feeding Plan — After hard lessons learned from recent disasters, the Foodbank spearheaded the creation of a countywide, collaborative Disaster Feeding Plan to ensure that everyone has access to healthy food during a disaster. It was published last November; training around it began in January.

SAFE Food Net — Safe Access to Food for Everyone
Safety is our primary concern. At our 50 SAFE food distributions, including 20 brand new, no-contact drive-thrus, those facing food insecurity can pick up healthy groceries and fresh produce at no cost. Volunteers and partners use PPE, safe food handling, and physical distancing.

Increased Need — Demand for food has more than doubled. At press time, the Foodbank has distributed 3 million lbs. of nutritious food during our Covid-19 response. We leased temporary warehouses in Santa Barbara and Santa Maria to store and process more food and to provide volunteers adequate space for safety.

A 65% increase in food donations and purchase of \$250,000 in healthy groceries means fresh fruit and veggies still make up half the food we distribute. We had 20 National Guard troops helping us for over a month!



“I’ll pack up the kids and drive through. We really appreciate this—my husband’s hours got cut and one of my jobs laid me off. Thank you from the bottom of my heart.”

— A local mom after calling 211 to find food for her family

TIMELINE: FOODBANK RESPONDS TO COVID-19



15th: First case of COVID-19 in Santa Barbara County

19th: Statewide shelter-in-place order

23rd: Foodbank purchases \$100,000 in emergency food

26th: 50 SAFE Food Net locations; 20 with no-contact drive-thru

31st: 1.2 million lbs of food distributed in March

10th: Food purchase for Covid response to date: \$250,000

15th: 5,500 senior home deliveries completed

20th: Chef’s Kitchen restaurant meal program launches

24th: 7,600 senior home deliveries completed

MARCH

APRIL

MAY

16th: Countywide school closures

20th: Foodbank launches SAFE Food Net; secures additional 32,000 sq ft warehouse space

25th: 2-1-1 hotline launches

27th: National Guard deploys 3,000 food deliveries to seniors completed



3rd: Volunteers pack 4,000 food boxes/week

13th: National Guard deployment extended to May 4

17th: Volunteers pack 5,900 food boxes per week
Mask drive begins

21st: 2 million lbs of food distributed, 50% fresh produce

1st: Text-to-Find-Food program launches
2.7 million lbs of food distributed

STAR VOLUNTEER: TARA MACHIN NORTH COUNTY



Tara Machin has been volunteering with the Foodbank of Santa Barbara County for 10 years, since her son Simon was six years old. She wanted to teach her son about community service and helping people in need, so the two began volunteering at our Saturday Family Days. Tara also works for Cambria Winery and has helped coordinate her team to volunteer at Picnic in the Park and our warehouse. She recently also completed the Foodbank's Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) training, becoming a member of our first disaster-trained volunteer cohort.

STAR VOLUNTEER: GERRY GABOWITZ SOUTH COUNTY



A Massachusetts native, Gerry has been living in Santa Barbara for the last 10 years. He started volunteering at the Foodbank 6 years ago at one of our Postal Food Drive events. He was looking for ways to get involved and help the community and loved what the Foodbank was doing. Soon after, he started volunteering with our Brown Bag Program and has been a lead volunteer at our Presidio Springs Brown Bag distribution ever since. Gerry's commitment to our programs and organization is so greatly appreciated—we couldn't do what we do without him!

IN THE WORKS

Bilingual Text Program: People can text "FOOD" or "COMIDA" to (877) FOOD-801, enter their ZIP code and find 3 nearby SAFE food distributions, providing access for those without smartphones or WiFi.

Chef's Kitchen: The Foodbank piloted a restaurant meals delivery program. Chefs from The Lark and Loquita create delicious meals which, through community partners, we delivered to neighbors in need. We're proud to support local economic health and provide quarantined seniors with chef-made dinners at the same time.



WAYS TO HELP

SHARE WITH LOVED ONES
that there is enough food for everyone

SUGGEST CALLING 2-1-1
to seniors who need home delivery and anyone with questions about where to get food

SHARE OUR UPDATES
on social media so people who need food can find us.

DONATE FUNDS
to help us purchase and distribute healthy food

DONATE YOUR TIME
as a volunteer. Sign up at foodbanksbc.org

START A FUNDRAISER
To get started, visit foodbanksbc.org/disasterrelief

GLEAN YOUR TREES
Drop off bags or boxes of homegrown produce at our warehouse

HOST A MINI FOOD DRIVE
in your neighborhood

MAKE MASKS
Drop off CDC-recommended homemade masks for staff and volunteers at warehouses listed below

Foodbank of Santa Barbara County

Donate • Volunteer • Get Help

(805) 967-5741 • www.foodbanksbc.org

Blog with recipes and nutrition tips: bit.ly/2v0rEqx



Santa Barbara Warehouse
4554 Hollister Avenue
Santa Barbara, CA 93110

Santa Maria Warehouse
490 W. Foster Road
Santa Maria, CA 93455

Education & Administration Center
1525 State. St., Ste. 100
Santa Barbara, CA 93101

