

FOOD For THOUGHT



FALL NEWSLETTER 2020

Helping Families Through the Pandemic

Our community is facing a truly unprecedented challenge this year due to COVID-19, but our supporters, like you, have responded yet again in an absolutely remarkable way.

Amid the pandemic, your generosity has made it possible for hundreds of thousands of families to put food on their tables, including one family of five who recently found themselves at a food distribution.

The family was already struggling, living paycheck to paycheck when they found themselves in dire need of food assistance.

The single mother of four kids was laid off from her resort hotel job due to the economic impact COVID-19 has had on the hospitality industry. She had been waiting to receive unemployment benefits for weeks. For the single mother, things got even harder when school was let out, and she had to find a way to feed her children on no income!

A friend told her about a FIND Food Bank distribution. When she went to get food for her family, she was connected to one of our CalFresh Outreach staff members, Mina, who helped her apply for CalFresh benefits.

This mom also talked to Melissa, our community health worker, who provided her with other resources such as rental and utility assistance.

Not only was FIND able to provide her the emergency food assistance for her immediate need, but we were also able to provide alternative resources such as CalFresh to help stretch her already tight food budget.

Thanks to your contributions we are meeting this challenge head-on and helping feed families. Together, we can make a life-changing difference.



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Message From CEO

At the start of the pandemic, calls rolled in from many people whose hours had been significantly cut, people who had lost their jobs, people who now needed unemployment benefits to survive. These are our neighbors, and they called us scared, wondering how they were going to make ends meet.

FIND Food Bank is grateful to have had the support of the County Supervisors who helped provide FIND with the National Guard who became our volunteer corps. The food bank staff worked tirelessly to get the food sorted and make bags for distribution. The FIND Food Bank Board of Directors were dedicated to providing assistance in their fields of expertise.

And then, there was YOU, the FIND donors. You heard our call and you responded. Thank you for your generosity at this uncertain time of great need. You have my deepest appreciation because with your assistance we were able to ramp up our efforts and create an additional 22 Mobile Rapid Response Markets. We were able to distribute 2 million pounds of food per month, more food than FIND has ever distributed before. We are serving more people monthly than during The Great Recession.

It is gratifying to see the community coming together in order to make sure everyone gets what they need to survive in the time of COVID.

To everyone in the FIND Food Bank Family, THANK YOU!

Debbie Espinosa,
President & CEO



FIND Food Bank is Feeding Kids and Families While Schools are Closed

As fall approaches and the COVID-19 pandemic continues, school districts are making plans for distance learning in the new school year, and parents are wondering where their children's meals will come from.

Children who normally eat free or reduced-price meals at school may not have access to that healthy food if schools remain closed. And that's a lot of kids: 1 in 7 children in our Coachella Valley desert region struggle with hunger. **No child should go hungry – now or ever** – and FIND Food Bank is responding to help fill the gap. We're working to ensure children and their parents have meals during this unprecedented situation.



How is FIND responding?

To feed children and their families while school is out, to keep everyone safe, and continue social distancing, we have been working with school districts to host drive-thru food distributions at schools that are closed. These distributions include an emergency food box and fresh produce.

Rapid Response to COVID-19

Under normal circumstances, kids would be in school and parents would be working, but now, due to COVID-19, they are in line for food. Tens of thousands of families in the desert saw their income evaporate as the tourism industry and all businesses shut down practically overnight. We are seeing long lines of cars and the faces of countless children waiting in line for healthy meals. In fact, one in seven American children are not getting enough to eat.

FIND Food Bank has experienced a 110% monthly increase in people waiting in line for food since the start of the pandemic. This is the devastating economic impact of COVID-19. In order to meet this increased demand, we have made changes to our warehouse systems. We have been distributing 2 million pounds of food per month versus 1 million pounds in a typical month just one year ago. Also, due to the increasing demand, we expanded our mobile markets by creating pop-up grocery stores where we distribute free nutritious food. We are purchasing more food than ever before.

This food means people don't have to spend as much on groceries, and instead can spend the money they saved on other essential expenses, such as rent.



If you've been concerned about hungry kids, families, and seniors, and wondering how you can help them, there are many ways you can make a meaningful impact.

Your donation can help ensure kids and families don't have to go without food. For people looking to donate food, we could use shelf-stable protein like tuna, canned chicken, and creamy peanut butter.

Long-term effects mean we have to keep serving families until the economy is revived. FIND Food Bank CEO Debbie Espinosa said it best, stating: **"When I see the faces of children in the car knowing what their families are going through, I think to myself, we can't stop."**

We won't stop and together we will feed our community.

With schools closed, FIND has made it a priority to focus on children. We have shifted our Kids' Summer Club Program model to offer additional food for kids and their families. **This program provides healthy, kid-friendly food and snacks to over 6,000 children and their families** every week in 42 different locations by providing a Farmers' Market atmosphere with fresh produce.

How can you help?

- Follow FIND Food Bank on social media to learn how we are continuing to respond to the pandemic in your community.
- If you are healthy and able, volunteer. We need help at a variety of locations. Face coverings and social distancing is required at all times. For more information or to register, please visit www.findfoodbank.volunteerhub.com or email elucas@findfoodbank.org.
- Support our efforts as we feed children and families in need by donating to FIND at www.findfoodbank.org/donate.





Integrate Giving Back Into Your Daily Routine

amazonsmile
You shop. Amazon gives.

AmazonSmile is a simple and automatic way for you to support FIND Food Bank every time you shop. **When you shop at smile.amazon.com**, you will find the exact same low prices, vast selection, and convenient shopping experience as Amazon.com. **The bonus is that Amazon will donate a portion of the purchase price to FIND.**

Once you log into AmazonSmile, it will ask you to pick your charity. *Select Food In Need of Distribution, Inc. to receive donations from eligible purchases.* You use the same account on Amazon.com and AmazonSmile. Your shopping cart, wish list, wedding and baby registry, and other account settings are also the same.

Hunger Action Month



This September, we can all do our part to end hunger during Hunger Action Month — a yearly initiative from Feeding America. It's a time when we come together with food banks from across the country to bring attention to the problem of hunger in America.

Hunger Action Month is your opportunity to join a movement that has a real and lasting impact on our collective effort to end hunger. This movement is needed now more than ever as unemployment is at its highest since The Great Depression. You can make a difference — whether it's by advocating and raising awareness, donating, or volunteering, you can find a way to get involved that works for you.

THANK YOU for taking action to fight hunger this September and all year long. Call FIND at 760-775-3663 for more information, and follow us on **Facebook** for ways to take action and more **Facebook.com/FINDFoodBank**.

Support FIND Food Bank and you too can help the 190,000 adults, children, and seniors we provide food assistance to across the Coachella Valley every month.

Join us on:   



FINDFoodBank.org

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