

FOOD For THOUGHT



FALL NEWSLETTER 2021

FIND's Mobile Markets Relieve Hunger for Kids and Families through the Summer

Summer is the most challenging season for families struggling with hunger. Many of the people who lost their jobs last year are still continuing to recover. The rising costs of groceries make it even harder for families to get by, and kids, who are home all-day during summer break, aren't able to get enough of the fresh and nutritious food they need.

"We depend on these food distributions. If you got rid of them we don't know what we would do," shares Blanca Herrera, mother of Joban. Since the pandemic began, Blanca visits our mobile market at Coachella Valley High School to supplement their family's meals and she does not see her financial struggle going away any time soon.

When families like Blanca's are already struggling, summer break adds an additional challenge when kids are home and not receiving meals at school. In our region, 8 out of 10 local school children qualify for school-based meals through the Free and Reduced-Price Meal Program, which often provides lunch and snacks as well as breakfast each day.



It's important for FIND to ensure every child who struggles with food insecurity has the opportunity to receive healthy meals from easily accessible locations throughout the valley. We are thankful that we are able to continue to distribute food at 12 school sites across the Desert Region in partnership with all three of our school districts through the summer months and into the fall. In addition to these 12, we also have 31 additional pantries to ensure easy access in case the school sites are difficult to attend.

We can't fuel local kids with the food they love without YOU! Your gift of time and financial support provides healthy food to kids and their families throughout the year. To register to volunteer or give online, visit findfoodbank.org.

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Message From CEO Debbie Espinosa

California remains in the worst hunger crisis in modern history. Almost one in four people in California are food insecure — roughly 10 million people — with communities of color experiencing disproportionate rates and impacts of hunger. FIND Food Bank continues to serve over 150,000 people on average every month.

Unfortunately, these astonishing rates of hunger will not be decreasing any time soon. Growing financial disparities continue to prevent families from reaching the resources they need. That's why we will continue to operate our free Community Mobile Market Distributions at 44 locations each month through the end of 2021. We also will keep providing baby diapers alongside food at specific sites. In June, we launched Mercado Campesinos — food distributions to farmworkers. (Please read more about this new program on page 3 of this newsletter.)

FIND and our community partners continue to respond to a historic hunger crisis in the Desert, and we have not done it alone. We want to thank YOU — our amazing community of supporters — for helping provide nourishing meals to those in need in our region.

Debbie Espinosa,
President & CEO



September is Hunger Action Month

Hunger in this country existed long before COVID-19, but the pandemic has thrust more and more of our neighbors into food insecurity, and food banks like ours are responding to a sustained, increased demand. Faced with an impossible choice between a meal, shelter, and medicine, people experiencing food insecurity don't get to choose what to eat for dinner.

FIND Food Bank joins Feeding America food banks nationwide this September to take part in Hunger Action Month and inspire people to take action and bring attention to the reality of food insecurity in America. Hunger Action Month is your opportunity to join a movement that has a real and lasting impact on our effort to feed more people than ever before.



How will you choose to end hunger? Get involved: advocate, donate, volunteer.

Together, with support of the community, we can end hunger one helping at a time.

Market for Farmworkers:

Remedy for Food Insecurity Among Agricultural Abundance

As we continue to face unprecedented rates of hunger, FIND has been looking for ways to support our community. Currently, over 12,000 agricultural workers reside in the Eastern Coachella Valley. In June, we kicked off Mercado Campesinos: our direct distribution to farmworkers to increase access to healthy, fresh food in our rural deserts.

According to a survey of local farmworkers conducted by the California Foundation: 62% of farmworkers cited experiencing food insecurity one month prior to the survey date.

Farmworkers in the Eastern Coachella Valley face a multitude of unique challenges to accessing fresh, culturally appropriate foods. Not only is adequate transportation an obstacle to reaching grocery stores miles away, but financial insecurity is common during extended off-seasons and temperature extremes, especially through the hardships brought on by the COVID-19 pandemic.



Farmers participating in Mercado Campesinos receive a prepackaged box filled with canned goods, rice, beans, oil, tomato sauce, soup, and pasta. FIND also supplements the “combo boxes” with a bag of fresh seasonal produce. The food lasts about 3-5 days, depending on family/household size.

Through Growing Coachella Valley, we have established partnerships with eight growing companies to distribute fresh food boxes directly to the farmworkers’ workplaces. FIND has worked with some of these growers for years, rescuing the fresh produce that helps feed the food-insecure populations across the Desert Region.

We are so grateful for all of the organizations who helped supply 400-750 farmworkers with food for their families every other week throughout the summer months.

Check out our new website!

New Website Brings FIND One Step Closer to Ending Hunger

This fall, we're excited to share our new website! FIND's new website will help us better tell the story of food insecurity in the Desert and share how together we can help fight hunger.

- FIND's **new food map uses GPS** to make it easier than ever for clients to find food near them. Users simply input their address to locate any of FIND's mobile markets and agency food distribution partner's sites.
- Non-English speaking clients and volunteers no longer face language barriers to accessing critical

information on our site thanks to the new embedded **google translate** function!

- FIND's **new blog, Dig In**, will showcase stories from the front lines of our mobile markets, agency partners, and the research paving the way for a hunger-free future in the Desert Region.

Take a look around the new website and let us know what you think: **findfoodbank.org**.

Integrate Giving Back into Your Daily Routine.

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 at no extra cost to you.

On your first visit to Amazon Smile you need to **select Food In Need of Distribution, Inc.** from the list. Then shop as usual. You use the same account for Amazon.com and AmazonSmile.

Your shopping cart, wish list, wedding and baby registry, and other account settings are also the same.

Be sure to fight hunger next time you shop at Amazon at www.smile.amazon.com.

amazonsmile
You shop. Amazon gives.

Link to Community Programs to Support FIND Food Bank!

Relieve hunger for local families when you grocery shop at your local **Ralphs** or **Food4Less**. You must pre-register your club cards in order for funds to be donated to FIND Food Bank.

Register for a Ralph's Rewards Card:

Visit **ralphs.com**, click on 'Create an Account,' and follow the five easy steps to create an online account.

After you confirm your online account, return to **ralphs.com** and click on 'my account'.

Once you register, or if you already have a registered Ralph's Reward Card, link your card to FIND by clicking on:

- Community Rewards
- Edit My Community Contribution and follow the instructions
- Remember to click on the circle to the left of your organization's name – FIND Food Bank

Now every time you shop, a portion will go directly to feeding food-insecure families throughout the Desert!



Support FIND Food Bank and you too can help the 150,000 adults, children, and seniors we provide with food assistance across the Coachella Valley every month

Join us on:   

FINDFoodBank.org

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