FOOD FOR THOUGHT

SPRING 2021

Food Bank's One-Year Anniversary COVID-19 Food Distribution Statistics Show Skyrocketing Demand for Help





Carlsbad up 161%, Vista up 343%, La Mesa up 106%, Lemon Grove up 110%, El Cajon up 62%, San Diego up 60%.

One year after the COVID-19 pandemic reached our region, the Food Bank released statistics charting the impact of the pandemic and the alarming increase in our food distribution programs to key cities throughout San Diego County over the past year.

The Food Bank's year-over-year distribution statistics compare March 2019 to March 2020 with March 2020 to March 2021. In the period March 2019 to March 2020, the Food Bank distributed 37.7 million pounds of food. In the period March 2020 to March 2021, the Food Bank distributed 57.4 million pounds of food, the equivalent of 48 million meals and an increase of 20 million pounds.

In the city of San Diego alone, the San Diego Food Bank increased our distribution of food from 14 million pounds to nearly 23 million pounds over the course of the pandemic year. In addition, Lemon Grove increased from 3 million pounds to 6.2 million pounds, and El Cajon increased from 1.4 million pounds to 2.3 million pounds.

Due to the impact of the pandemic, the Food Bank's year-over-year food distribution increased by a staggering 54% countywide. The Food Bank went from distributing, on average, 725,000 pounds of food per week to 1.2 million pounds of food per week — roughly 5 million pounds per month.

And the number of people served by the San Diego Food Bank nearly doubled since the start of the pandemic. Before the COVID-19 pandemic reached the San Diego region, the Food Bank provided food assistance to 350,000 people per month — about 11% of the county's population.

Since March 2020, when the county declared a state of emergency, the Food Bank has served, on average,

CONTINUED ON PAGE 3

IN THIS ISSUE

PAGE 1 and 3

Food Bank's One-Year Anniversary COVID-19 Food Distribution Statistics Show Skyrocketing Demand for Help PAGE 4

Support the School's Out, Hunger's Not COVID-19 Summer Food Drive PAGE 5

Neighbors Helping Neighbors One-Day Food Drive Raises More than 100,000 Pounds of Food





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LETTER FROM THE CEO Thanks for your support!

We have passed the one-year anniversary of the COVID-19 pandemic that has drastically changed all of our lives since it reached our region last March.



The year-over-year statistics in the lead story on page one illustrate the incredible increase in need for our services over the course of the pandemic and how we have pivoted to meet that need. Overall, our distribution increased by more than half and in some areas it doubled!

As we slowly reopen our economy, I find myself reminding supporters that we are still in an economic recession. We anticipate heightened food insecurity to remain for the foreseeable future, but thanks to your continued support, the Food Bank will continue to provide expanded food assistance programs to families impacted by the crisis.

Below, are a few news items and ways you can support our mission over the coming months.

Thank you to everyone who made last month's virtual Chefs, Cork & Craft Gala — A Return to Old Hollywood such a huge success! This year's gala was an entirely virtual event that was broadcast live online from the Food Bank's warehouse in Miramar. The evening benefited our vital hunger-relief programs that are on the frontlines of the county's response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The gala included a behind-the-scenes tour of the Food Bank's warehouse facility, a program highlighting our work over the course of the pandemic, a paddle raise, and a live musical performance. Special thanks to our sponsors, including our Presenting Sponsors R&R Construction and Walmart, our gala committee, and our volunteers and supporters who made the evening possible. And congratulations to this year's 2021 Community Hero Award, Albertsons Vons, for their amazing support for our vital mission. Make sure to mark your calendars for next year's gala that will be held on Saturday, April 30, 2022!

Please support our School's Out, Hunger's Not — COVID-19 Summer Food Drive taking place throughout the month of June. Supporters can visit any San Diego County Albertsons and Vons supermarket and donate a \$5 pre-filled bag of food. We are also encouraging the community to host a virtual food drive to support the campaign. All donations will help the Food Bank feed families impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic and local children living in poverty. For more information visit: SanDiegoFoodBank.org/Summer.

Sign up for our North County Golf Classic benefiting our North County Food Bank chapter taking place on Monday, July 26, 2021 at Shadowridge Golf Club in Vista! It will be an exciting day on the links for a great cause! Visit NorthCountyFoodBank.org/Golf to register!

On behalf of the Food Bank's staff and family of volunteers, we thank you for your continued support during this heightened time of need. Please know that you are at the heart of our mission, making what we do possible every day.

With gratitude,



CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

between 550,000 to 600,000 people per month due to business and school closures coupled with soaring unemployment in hard-hit industries such as retail and hospitality which employ a significant number of lowerwage workers.

In order to keep up with the exponential increase in demand for food assistance, the Food Bank has purchased more than \$11 million worth of food on the wholesale food market over the course of the year. This is thanks entirely to our donors for making this possible.

In a typical year, the Food Bank spends a total of \$1 million on food purchases. Since the start of the pandemic, the Food Bank has spent \$10 million more than we would have in a normal year due to skyrocketing demand caused by the pandemic's vicelike grip on the region's local economy.

The chart on the right illustrates the year-over-year distribution increases in key cities served by the San Diego Food Bank and our North County Food Bank chapter throughout the county. For a full list of cities, visit SanDiegoFoodBank.org/News.

In order to meet the increased demand for food assistance and to serve Food Bank clients more quickly, safely, and efficiently, the Food Bank launched our Super Pantry Program in July. Currently, thirty-five Super Pantries, strategically located throughout San Diego County, are operating as high-volume distribution hubs, open throughout the week for families to receive food assistance with little or no wait times to ensure client dignity.

Collectively, the Food Bank's thirty-five Super Pantries are serving thousands of people daily. Since July, the Super Pantry Program alone has distributed nearly 10 million pounds of food to families in need. Super Pantries feature contactless food distributions with 'drive-thru' lanes and 'walk-up' kiosks. With longer service hours on multiple days every week, the Food Bank is serving thousands of households more quickly, safely, and efficiently.

The Food Bank anticipates heightened food insecurity to remain for the foreseeable future due to the pandemic's lasting impact on our local economy. Several of our community's hardest-hit industries; retail, tourism, and hospitality, will take significant time to recover. In addition, many families now find themselves saddled with crushing debt and rent repayments due on the horizon.

While we see a light at the end of the tunnel with mass vaccinations underway, the San Diego Food Bank and our North County Food Bank chapter will continue to provide



City	Pounds of Food Distributed 3/19 to 3/20	Pounds of Food Distributed 3/20 to 3/21	% Increase
Carlsbad *	468,350	1,223,306	161%
Chula Vista	3,054,985	4,076,961	33%
El Cajon	1,434,507	2,323,769	62%
Escondido	1,379,201	1,915,872	39%
Fallbrook	608,928	836,582	37%
Julian	280,332	505,906	80%
La Mesa	549,132	1,129,367	106%
Lemon Grove	2,954,841	6,206,028	110%
Oceanside	1,238,273	1,679,482	36%
Poway	757,328	1,076,115	42%
San Diego	14,336,055	22,910,137	60%
San Marcos	709,491	1,055,491	49%
Vista *	562,479	2,494,313	343%

^{*} These cities also served as distribution hubs for North County communities.

enhanced services to families impacted by the pandemicinduced recession in communities throughout the county.

The Food Bank extends our deepest gratitude to our donors whose generous donations make our COVID-19 Hunger-Relief Response Programs possible.

Support the School's Out, Hunger's Not COVID-19 Summer Food Drive



Help the Food Bank feed children living in poverty and families impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic by supporting our *School's Out*, *Hunger's Not COVID-19*Summer Food Drive.

This June, you can support the food drive by visiting your local Albertsons and Vons supermarkets and purchasing a pre-filled \$5 bag containing our most-needed food items.

Food Bank supporters can also donate food virtually online via the Food Bank's Virtual Food Drive (see below for more information).

Your donations will help the Food Bank provide vital food assistance to children in need and families struggling to put food on the table due to the COVID-19 crisis.

Thank you for helping us feed children in need this summer! For more information visit, SanDiegoFoodBank.org/Summer.

THANK YOU TO OUR SUMMER FOOD DRIVE SPONSORS





THANK YOU TO OUR SUPERMARKET PARTNERS





Host a Virtual Food Drive this Summer

Host a Virtual Food Drive this summer, and help the Food Bank feed children and families impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Food Bank's Virtual Food Drive is an easy way for our supporters to donate food to families facing food insecurity. Simply visit the Food Bank's website, and select and pay for food items with your credit card securely online using a smartphone, tablet, or computer.

The Food Bank is encouraging businesses, civic groups, schools, and faith-based groups to host Virtual Food Drives during our *School's Out*, *Hunger's Not COVID-19 Summer Food Drive*

The Food Bank can customize a Virtual Food Drive with your organization's logo, set up internal competitions between departments, classes, and groups while giving food drive leaders the ability to monitor your organization's progress.



Check out our Virtual Food Drive online. Visit: SanDiegoFoodBank.org/Virtual





Neighbors Helping Neighbors One-Day Food Drive Raises More than 100,000 Pounds of Food

Dozens of community volunteers and local Boy Scout troops came together for a one-day drive-thru food drive on Saturday, March 20 in support of the San Diego Food Bank's COVID-19 Response Programs.

Fifteen designated food collection sites were open throughout the county to accept donations of nonperishable food items to help local families in need. From Julian to Mira Mesa, sites had Scouts from local "packs" standing by to help unload the donations from the trunks of cars, including sixth-grader Robert Thomas of Cub Scout Pack 12 of the North Park and Golden Hill area. "It makes me feel good to actually know that I am helping people in need," said Thomas.

Thank you to the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Boy Scouts of America San Diego-Imperial Council, La Mesa Police Department, San Diego Police Department, and all who donated to the Food Bank!



Join us for the North County Food Bank's Drive Out Hunger Golf Classic

Monday, July 26, 2021

The North County Food Bank invites you to join us for our annual Drive Out Hunger Golf Classic taking place at the Shadowridge Golf Club in Vista on Monday, July 26, 2021!

The Shadowridge Golf Club is located in the beautiful rural foothills of North County. A golf experience at Shadowridge means the opportunity to golf on one of the most critically acclaimed championship courses in San Diego County.

All proceeds from the tournament will benefit the North County Food Bank's COVID-19 Response Programs.

To register, visit NorthCountyFoodBank.org/Golf.



Join the Food Bank's Monthly Meals Club

You can help the Food Bank feed those facing hunger every day, all year long.

As a member of the Monthly Meals Club, you will provide food to our neighbors in need every month of the year through automatic donations.

A monthly gift of \$10 will provide a hungry individual at least one healthy meal every day, every month, for the entire year. A monthly gift of \$30 will provide three meals a day, every day, for the entire year.

Joining our Monthly Meals Club is one of the easiest ways to make a commitment to end hunger. Your gift is debited automatically and securely from your bank account or credit card.

To sign up, visit SanDiegoFoodBank.org/Donate/Monthly.

Special Thanks

Our gratitude goes to the following corporations, foundations and organizations for their generous support received between December 2020 and March 2021.

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