Addressing Hunger, Promoting Health

More than 1 million people in New Jersey face hunger, many of them living with the double burden of food insecurity and poor health. They struggle to provide healthy food for themselves and their families, often choosing less nutritious and inexpensive options to cope. Their lack of access to good food choices leaves them vulnerable to high blood pressure, onset diabetes and obesity.

This link between hunger and health has serious consequences for children. According to the American Academy of Pediatrics, children who live in food insecure households get sick more often and recover more slowly, tend to be malnourished, and have higher levels of behavioral and emotional problems. The professional association of pediatricians recommends that doctors screen patients for food insecurity because of its short- and long-term health effects.

Among people we serve:

75% purchase inexpensive, unhealthy food to get by.
57% have a household member with high blood pressure.
28% have a household member with diabetes.

Source: Hunger in America 2014

The Community FoodBank of New Jersey also addresses hunger as a health issue, prioritizing the distribution of healthy food and providing nutrition education. Our warehouses are fully stocked with seasonal produce, dairy, protein and grains, all of which reach people in need through our community partners and feeding programs. Here are some of the ways we do this...

Kids Cafes: At more than 35 sites across New Jersey, we serve healthy after-school meals to make sure children have something to eat before bed. These Kids Cafes also incorporate nutrition education, teaching children the importance of healthy eating.

Family Packs: To fill the gap many food insecure households face over the weekend, the FoodBank provides bags of supplemental food for schools to distribute on Friday. (More on page 3)

Mobile Pantries: Our mobile pantries reach people in areas where there are not enough resources to address the need. Many of the people who visit the pantries are referred by physicians who give a “prescription” for healthy food.

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Food Service Training Academy:
Students of our free, 16-week culinary and life skills program learn about nutrition and how to prepare healthy food. Our own Executive Chef Paul Kapner shares his favorite heart-healthy recipes with his students and us. (Recipe on page 4)

Nutrition has implications for physical and mental well-being. Together, we can break the cycle of hunger and poor health.
Dear FoodBank Friends,

We can all relate to the feeling of hunger. You skip breakfast because you need to run to work or you forget your lunch on the kitchen counter. Imagine missing more than one meal every day.

Put yourself in the shoes of a child sitting in class on an empty stomach. All this child can think about is how loud his stomach is growling and when or if he will have something to eat. This is a reality for the almost 340,000 hungry children in New Jersey. Food insecure children are more vulnerable to health and behavioral issues; they need nutritious food to fuel their futures.

With the start of a new year, our 2017 priorities include expanding our reach across the state – with a heightened focus on access to healthy food. I say all the time that “food is a prescription.” We source and distribute nearly 9 million pounds of fruits and vegetables for the people we serve – making fresh produce accessible even in these cold months. This is something that many of us take for granted, but we see it is not affordable for those who struggle to make the choice between heat and food, including seniors who have an especially hard time during this season. The funding you provide for the FoodBank’s Fresh Produce Initiative and Retail Gleaning Program allows us to bridge the gap between hunger and health.

In addition, we are launching a new pilot program with Summit Medical Group Foundation to address the prevalence of diabetes among people we serve. And, we will continue to invest in reaching greater numbers of our most vulnerable population – children – by actively working to improve knowledge, change diets and encourage healthy choices via our Kids Cafe after-school program.

We want to thank you – our donors, volunteers and hunger-fighting advocates! We know times are tough and temperatures are cold, but people are relying on us and on your generosity. We depend on your continued support to fill the need for men, women and children across New Jersey with healthy food year-round. Thank you for all that you do to make this possible!

With much gratitude,

Debra DiZio

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**A Lasting Legacy**

Planned giving is one of the most powerful ways you can support the Community FoodBank of New Jersey. Your gift will help us carry on our mission and strengthen our work to fight hunger and poverty in the state. To learn more about planned giving, go to cfbnj.org/plannedgiving or contact Rachel Laibson, Major Gifts Officer, at 908-355-3663 ext. 253 or rlaibson@cfbnj.org.

**Gifts That Give Back**

Searching for a meaningful gift for someone special? Look no further than the Community FoodBank of New Jersey’s store, where you can find everything from branded totes to aprons. Shop at cfbnj.org/store for the perfect gift that gives back.

**YOU Helped Brighten The Holidays**

We wanted to make sure every New Jersey family shared in a special holiday meal. For Thanksgiving, we distributed nearly 23,000 turkeys among households we serve – and thousands of those came from our annual Turkey Drive, where people like you dropped off frozen turkeys and all the fixings. This is just one example of how your support allows us to provide food, help and hope to our neighbors in need. Thank you!
Feeding Families Over The Weekend

Nearly one in five New Jersey children goes hungry. If it were not for meals during school and food after school at our Kids Cafes, these children might not have something healthy to eat. What happens over the weekend?

Teachers have told us that students living in food insecure households demonstrate signs of hunger when they return to school on Monday.

“They are not able to concentrate when they’re hungry and you see them looking for food,” said Stacy Greene, Coordinator for the Family Success Center in Plainfield. “You see the behavior that shows that they deal with food insecurity.”

To address this need, the Community FoodBank of New Jersey began the Backpack Program to provide students with food for the weekend. These bags contain single-serve items, like a cereal bowl and a box of shelf-stable milk, but teachers recognized that students were sharing this food with members of their family and it was not nearly enough for all of them. That’s when the FoodBank decided to expand the program to serve households – known as the Family Pack Program.

“Before it was just for that student,” said Yesi Alejo, who coordinates the program for Full Service Community School in Paterson. “For households with more than one child, now they have enough for the siblings and the parents.”

Today, we reach more than 30 schools in high-need districts, distributing almost 1,300 Family Packs every Friday. These packs include 5 to 6 pounds of protein, carbohydrates and fresh produce.

“I do believe the Family Pack Program is instrumental because we don’t have hungry children in our building anymore,” said Carolyn Cottle, a teacher at Sussex Avenue Elementary School in Newark. “I love it because it guarantees that more people in the household eat.”

To find out how you can sponsor Family Packs, please contact Trista Kay, Major Gifts Specialist, at 908-355-3663 ext. 313 or tkay@cfbunj.org.

Students Unite To Fight Hunger

It inspires us to see youth come together to support our cause. Looking back to 2016, we saw many instances of students joining forces to help end hunger in New Jersey. Schools signed up for Students Change Hunger, the statewide competition that encourages students to organize food drives and fundraisers. Teens gathered at Seton Hall Prep for the annual Teen Hunger Summit, where they discussed the issue of hunger and how they can make an impact. We also partnered with the Union County Student Training and Enrichment Program, an initiative of the Union County Board of Freeholders that brought students from various schools together to create innovative ways to fight hunger.

Southern Branch Spotlight

Can’t Miss!

We’re hosting our first-ever Community FoodBank Chef Challenge on Thursday, April 20th, at our Southern Branch. Two acclaimed chefs will compete to create a delicious meal with a mystery basket of FoodBank ingredients. Get your tickets for an evening of fine foods and live entertainment, which will support our hunger-relief efforts. Sponsorship opportunities are also available. Visit cfbnj.org/chefchallenge to learn more.

Kids Cafes Reach South Jersey

The FoodBank provides healthy after-school meals for food insecure children, who might otherwise have something to eat until the next school day. The Kids Cafe Program expanded to our Southern Branch this school year to address the need in Atlantic, Cape May and Cumberland counties, where hundreds of children at more than five sites now have access to nourishing evening meals.
At the Community FoodBank of New Jersey, our hunger-fighting partners are the cornerstone of the work we do every day. Wakefern Food Corp. plays a major role in our efforts to provide food for our neighbors in need — and has since our incorporation in 1982.

“Wakefern sets the ‘gold standard’ in a corporate partner, contributing to all aspects of our operation by providing funds, food and volunteers,” said FoodBank President and CEO Debra Vizzi.

**Pasta With Fava Beans**

*Servings: 4*

*Ingredients:*
- 1 1/2 cups fava beans
- 6 oz. farfalle pasta
- 2 tbsp. extra virgin olive oil
- 6 strips bacon, cut into 1/2 in. pieces
- 1 1/2 cups sliced red onion
- 8 garlic cloves, sliced
- 3 oz. sliced white mushrooms
- 1 cup shelled English peas
- 2 tsp. fresh lemon juice
- 1/4 tsp. kosher salt
- 1 1/2 oz. shredded parmesan cheese
- 1/2 cup freshly cut basil

*Preparation:*
- Place fava beans in a large pot of boiling water and cook for 1 minute. Drain and then rinse with cold water. Remove tough outer skins from beans.
- Cook pasta according to package directions and drain.
- Heat a large nonstick skillet over medium-to-high heat. Add 1 tbsp. of oil to the pan.
- Add bacon and sauté for approximately 3 minutes or until bacon begins to brown. Add onion and garlic and sauté for approximately 3 minutes or until tender. Add mushrooms and sauté for approximately 3 minutes or until mushrooms begin to brown. Add fava beans and peas and sauté for approximately 2 minutes.
- Stir in remaining 1 tbsp. of oil, pasta, lemon juice and salt. Cook for approximately 2 minutes or until thoroughly heated.
- Remove the pan from the heat. Stir in 3 tbsp. of cheese.
- Top evenly with remaining 3 tbsp. of cheese and basil.
- Serve immediately in a hot dish or cool to serve as a salad.

*Follow CFBNJ on social for more recipes and videos from our Chef Paul!*

Through our Retail Gleaning Program, which reduces food waste and feeds hungry New Jerseyans, Wakefern donated 3.7 million pounds of food last year, of which nearly 38 percent were produce, making Wakefern CFBNJ’s largest single source of food donations.

Last year, Wakefern corporate employees dedicated more than 300 hours volunteering at the FoodBank, where the team assembled Family Packs to serve at-risk students’ households over the weekend, packed boxes of supplemental food for seniors and sorted through donated items. Wakefern also volunteers technical assistance on quality assurance efforts and other operational best practices.

A founding partner of Check-Out Hunger®, Wakefern has expanded the holiday campaign beyond its ShopRite brand to include its other banners, PriceRite and The Fresh Grocer. In 2015, Wakefern’s generous customers donated more than $1 million for the 3-month-long campaign. Among other charitable efforts, Wakefern fights hunger year-round through ShopRite Partners In Caring, which has donated more than $40 million to local food banks and their agency partners since 1999.

“We serve more than 8 million customers each year and we know that there are members of our community that struggle to provide wholesome food for themselves and their family,” said Karen Meleta, Wakefern Vice President of Consumer & Corporate Communications. “That’s why our partnership with the FoodBank and our commitment to fighting hunger is the focus of our giving.”

CFBNJ is honored that Wakefern chooses to align its brand and extraordinary corporate citizenship with our mission to rescue food and increase our services. Wakefern’s involvement has made a profound impact on our work to feed hungry New Jerseyans.

For more information on how your company can get involved, please contact Debby Scheinholtz, Director of Corporate Relations, at 908-242-3951 or dscheinholtz@cfbnj.org.