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COMMUNITY FOODBANK OF NEW JERSEY DISTRIBUTES ITS ONE BILLIONTH MEAL
State's largest food bank acknowledges outpouring of need and support, sets sights on increasing food access

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The Community FoodBank of New Jersey (CFBNJ), the state's largest food bank, announced today that it recently surpassed the one billion meal mark for meals distributed to neighbors in need across its 15-county service area.

For 49 years, CFBNJ has provided food, help, and hope, building and supporting a network of more than 800 local food assistance organizations, including food pantries, soup kitchens, child and senior nutrition programs, and more. Recently, rising prices of food and other necessities, stagnant wages, and the end of pandemic-related federal safety nets have made the need for food assistance even greater than it was at the height of the pandemic. Last year, CFBNJ's average monthly food distribution was about 46% higher than in it was early 2020.

"Surpassing the one billion meal mark is a proud moment for us at CFBNJ, but it also speaks to the challenges that too many of our neighbors have faced in being able to afford nutritious food for themselves and their families," said Elizabeth McCarthy, President & CEO of the Community FoodBank of New Jersey. "More than 725,000 people in New Jersey are food insecure. About 530,000 of them live in CFBNJ's service area. But where we've seen heartbreaking need, we've also seen incredible generosity. This milestone was possible thanks to members of the community who have given food, funds, time, and their voices to help improve access to healthy food for their neighbors."

CFBNJ was founded in 1975 by Kathleen DiChiara, who started out by giving food to those in need from the back of her station wagon. In 1982, when it was officially incorporated, the organization provided enough food for 125,000 meals. Last year, it distributed food to support more than 90 million meals.

Over the years, CFBNJ has not only grown in capacity but has also greatly improved the type of food it provides. Highly nutritious "foods to encourage," including lean proteins, fruits and vegetables, whole grains, and dairy products, now comprise 76% of the total food it distributes. As CFBNJ looks to the future, the organization has a bold goal of reducing food insecurity in its service area by 50% by the year 2030, not just by distributing food, but also through long-term supportive solutions designed to shorten food pantry lines by providing job training, hygiene products, nutrition education, SNAP application assistance, and health-targeted services like diabetes screenings.

"Our ultimate goal is to put ourselves out of business by eliminating food insecurity in New Jersey entirely," McCarthy added. "It will take the collaboration of all sectors of society to accomplish such a vision. Together with our network of community partners, corporate funders, government allies, and countless individual supporters, we know that it's achievable."

[The Community FoodBank of New Jersey \(CFBNJ\)](#), a member of Feeding America® and the state's largest anti-hunger organization, has been delivering food, help, and hope across the Garden State for nearly 50 years. Last year, CFBNJ provided nutritious food for over 90 million meals through its network of more than 800 community partners, including food pantries, soup kitchens, shelters, child and senior nutrition programs, and more, serving 11 New Jersey counties directly and four in partnership with affiliate food banks. It also addresses the root causes of food insecurity with supportive services like nutrition education, job training, SNAP outreach, and hygiene product distribution. By delivering neighbor-centered solutions and collaborating with all sectors of society, CFBNJ believes that food insecurity is a solvable problem.