FOODBANK 2020

We have spent the past several years at the Foodbank meeting our goals and getting better at what we do while serving more families than ever before. We are proud of what we have achieved but we know that hunger is a complex issue that cannot be solved by one organization, and so we are moving forward in developing a strategic plan that will engage a wide spectrum of stakeholders to address how we can shift the way in which we address hunger in our service area. This strategy planning process is based on the development of a core planning team who will be the key link in shifting our thinking about food insecurity and our relationships to the communities we serve. The planning team is comprised of a group of Foodbank board members, staff, community leaders and member agencies who will guide the development of a strategic plan for the organization through the year 2020.

We will kick off with the planning team going out into communities and interviewing a variety of stakeholders - clients, partner agencies and organizations, funders, Foodbank board members and staff. Through these interviews, we will gain a deeper understanding of hunger, and explore what is possible for the future. At key points in the planning process, we will engage in a series of community conversations with member agencies and community leaders to explore ideas about the future of the organization and the issues. We cannot do this in isolation, so we will invite the community in with us! Stay tuned for updates throughout the next seven months.

SNAP ALL STAR AGENCIES

This year, the Foodbank has been dedicated to expanding our SNAP outreach efforts by utilizing our member agency network. The SNAP Referral system is simple: agencies complete a one-page form with clients interested in receiving benefits, and the Foodbank staff calls the client to complete the application over the phone. The new referral system has resulted in more than 200 applications completed by our staff, which ultimately means more meals for community members in need.

AGENCY ANNOUNCEMENTS

• There will be no order pick-ups on the following days:
  Nov 27-28        Foodbank Closed
  Dec 24-26        Foodbank Closed
  Dec 30-31        Inventory - No Order Pick-ups
  January 1        Foodbank Closed
  January 2        Inventory - No Order Pick-ups

• Thank you for completing the 2014 Agency Satisfaction Survey! Results will be shared soon.
COUNTY LEVEL DATA

The Hunger in America 2014 study was released in August of 2014. It is the most comprehensive study on charitable food assistance in the United States. In addition to a report about our eight county service area, which can be found on the Foodbank website, we have access to county specific information for the first time. Due to sampling size and response rates, some information may not be available on the county level.

This information will be shared with each county in the coming months via county specific fact sheets. Fact sheets will focus on information from the client survey, which will give agencies and communities a better idea of the struggles facing individuals and families utilizing our network of food programs. Our hope is that agencies will use this information to improve services to clients, and more importantly, have a more complete understanding of how hunger affects their clients.

As an example, the survey asked clients what, if any, health related issues their household is facing. The most common response in six of eight counties was high blood pressure. However, in Tuscarawas and Summit counties, the most common health-related issue was unpaid medical bills. Blood pressure can be affected by diet, and so agencies may want to consider having more fresh fruits and vegetables available, as well as no salt added or low sodium canned goods.

More information from the Hunger in America 2014 county level data will be made available soon. If you have questions, please contact Katie Carver, Programs Coordinator, at kcarver@acrfb.org or 330.777.7577.

HOLIDAY DISTRIBUTIONS

The holiday season is fast upon us. For many agencies, this means planning for special holiday baskets and meals for clients. Agencies planning a special holiday distribution using Foodbank products should notify the Member Services department.

Agencies are able to use Foodbank food for holiday distributions, but there are a few restrictions. Follow these general guidelines to make sure your agency stays in compliance throughout the holiday season.

1. Emergency feeding programs are required to be open to the public. Foodbank food cannot be used to support a closed program, such as a holiday meal only for church members.

2. Emergency feeding programs are required to be open once a month. If your agency plans to close for a month, you must notify the Member Services department.

3. Foodbank food can only be used to support the program type listed on the agency account. For example, a food pantry account cannot use Foodbank food to operate a hot meal for the holiday.

4. All policies governing your normal food program also apply to your holiday program. There are no exceptions.

If you have compliance questions, contact Gary G. Green, Manager, Member Services at ggreen@acrfb.org or 330.777.7575.