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Food for People's Eureka Choice Pantry is moving to Cooper Gulch. More on page 2.
Our Eureka Choice Pantry is Moving!
And Updates on our Facility Rebuild

Notes from the Executive Director

We’re coming up on the two-year anniversary of the sewer disaster that severely damaged Food for People’s flagship facility, and as much as I’d like to be sending you all an invitation to our grand opening celebration, the reality is that we aren’t quite there yet. As anyone who has been following this long saga knows, the city sewer inundation of February 2020 forced us to move out and demolish the building, and it also ramped up the timeline for developing design plans for the rebuild. It’s been a long haul but we are finally very close to breaking ground and starting foundation work with an estimated 8-9 month timeline for construction. I know we’re all anxious to see some action at the site!

In the meantime, staff and program operations continue to be spread amongst five locations, including the Eureka Choice Pantry which has been operating out of the old Chamber of Commerce building at 2112 Broadway. We appreciate the City’s offer of the Broadway location to house Eureka pantry services over the past two years, which was especially important as all the disruptions from the pandemic unfolded and many community members found themselves out of work and struggling to survive financially. We never anticipated being there this long, and neither did the City, so we now find ourselves having to move the Pantry to a new location so that the plans for the Broadway property that were in place before we moved to the site can proceed.

But the good news is that with the City’s help we have found a site and will be relocating the Eureka Choice Pantry to Cooper Gulch! The City offered us the use of the Parks & Rec building there until our rebuild at the 14th St. site has been completed. The address is 1720 10th St. and we’re pleased that the new location is close to a bus stop as well as the Burre Center and Open Door’s Eureka location.

The days and hours of operation will be the same (Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays 11am-3pm), and we look forward to serving more than 1,000 households per month. Once we’re moved in, we’re also excited to pilot the use of a special “Order Ahead” online app that was developed specifically for food banks by Feeding America! We’ve learned a lot about how to adapt to challenging circumstances over the past two years and hope that this new app will provide an additional option for households to access food assistance that makes the process as safe and easy as possible.

“One more move” before returning to our permanent home base at 14th St. was not part of the plan when all this unfolded two years ago, but has been necessitated by numerous delays in accessing construction materials. The pandemic has played havoc with many aspects of “business as usual” on a global scale, and it has definitely had a major impact on the timeline for our rebuild. Supply chain issues (the biggest one being the steel building) and a dramatic increase in costs have plagued us since day one. But, after all of the delays, the materials and the permits have been secured and construction of our new food bank is slated to begin in the next month!

We thank everyone who continues to support our efforts and check in on our progress. We are definitely eager to get everyone back under one roof, including a permanent home for our Eureka Choice Pantry! We’ll provide updates as things move forward and hope you will follow our progress!

With gratitude,

Anne Holcomb, Executive Director

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Continued on Pg. 3

Donate online | www.foodforpeople.org
Responding to Crisis

Winter Storms Affect Humboldt County
By Robert Sataua, Emergency Response Coordinator

Just as we all began to move forward from wildfire season, Mother Nature reminded us that summer is not the only time to worry about natural disasters. The December snow storm that thrashed Humboldt County’s infrastructure, including highways and power lines, triggered a local emergency declaration and left hundreds of residents without power or worse, trapped in their homes. Having close communication with our established partner agencies during fire season allowed us to respond quickly. As the Red Cross moved in to set up a shelter, they called on Food for People to provide food to supplement basic meals. Pay it Forward Humboldt was able to respond to food needs from the supplies we provided them, and the Hoopa Tribal TANF program received what it was able to respond to food needs from the supplies we provided, and the Hoopa Tribal TANF program received all the help of volunteers.

We were lucky to have such dedicated volunteers that showed up early to pre-bag items and stayed late to clean up. Each volunteer was committed to make it a pleasant experience for participants and were above and beyond what they would expect. Some people waited up to 45 minutes in a long snaking line that circled the north parking lot of the mall, and we were lucky to have UPLIFT Eureka to support us by keeping a very organized traffic system. In total we served about 160 households, and we will be looking at future opportunities to host a similar event. Stay tuned to participate or get involved.

The partnership with Humboldt Cider will cut down on food waste and save Food for People garage fees.

Humboldt Cider Partnership
Food for People’s Work to go Zero Waste
By Allison Kenney, Local Food Resources Coordinator

Every year an estimated 10.1 million tons of produce remains unharvested in farm fields and orchards across America, and an additional 52.4 million tons of food ends up in the landfill. At the same time, about 1 in 7 Americans is considered food insecure. Food for People has long been committed to bridging that gap through our Gleaning Program. We work with local farms, ranchers, orchards, and backyard gardeners to secure donations of fresh produce and meat that might otherwise remain unsold or unharvested, and we distribute it to the households we serve through our programs.

This past year, Food for People’s gleaning program brought in more than 16,000 lbs of apples from various trees and orchards across Humboldt County. The majority of these locally harvested apples go to Food for People’s programs—serving children, seniors, and families across Humboldt County. However, at some point the abundance becomes an overabundance, and we have more apples than we can give away for eating. No one wants the excess apples to go to waste. That’s when the idea of partnering with Humboldt Cider Company was born. They launched a new cider craft made from these locally gleaned apples, which would have otherwise taken too long to distribute before going bad. This year’s “Cider for People” was canned and sold at local grocery stores including Eureka Natural Foods, Wildberries, and the Northcoast Co-Op under the Humboldt Cider Company’s “Limited Release” label. A dollar from every pint sold comes back to bridge the gap between local food surplus and food insecurity.

Even with Food for People’s varied efforts to divert food from the waste stream, there is inevitably some that is either not fit to distribute or in excess of what clients can use in a reasonable time. This partnership with Humboldt Cider Company is a step forward in Food for People’s efforts to keep food out of the landfill and move towards zero waste.

Donate online

foodforpeople.org
Food for People had a hugely successful 29th annual Holiday Spirit Food and Fund drive. Together, our local stores and schools allowed Food for People to provide more than 25,000 pounds of food and $38,000! Hunger Fighter teams were able to purchase food to add to our warehouse to unload more than 1,000 lbs of nonperishable food donations.

Word Humboldt held its annual holiday poetry show at Northtown Coffee in Arcata and collected donations for Food for People. In exchange for donations, donors were entered into a raffle giveaway.ber. They raised an impressive amount of donations for Food for People, and we are thankful for their yearly support. Par Inrity held its annual ice Bowl disc golf tournament at Sequoia Park in Eureka. The Eureka Police Department (EPD) organized a new holiday food drive event called “Cram the Cruiser” at Grocery Outlet in Eureka. Shoppers had the opportunity to purchase food to cram into a police cruiser on standby. At the end of this food drive event, EPD officers drove the donations over to our warehouse to unload more than 1,000 lbs of nonperishable food donations.

Senator Mike McGuire worked with students from several local high schools for a successful Humboldt Holiday Food Drive event. In addition, the KHUM radio team and its listeners, plus many other generous community members, all pulled together to help benefit Food for People this holiday season. Financial and food donations will help Food for People tremendously in the coming months, as we continue to meet the increasing need for food assistance due to the long lasting economic repercussions of the pandemic and the 2021 wildfire season.

Once again, the Redwood Unit of the Backcountry Horsemen of California kicked off our holiday season with their annual Cowboy Canned Food Convoy in mid-November. Horses and their riders paraded through Old Town Eureka with saddlebags full of nonperishable food to be donated to the food bank, collecting donations from onlookers and passersby and spreading joy throughout the community.

This holiday season we brought back the highly anticipated week of KHUM radio on-air food and fund drive in person. Food for People staff joined our enthusiastic and fun-loving KHUM DJs of live broadcasts at various locations throughout the county to highlight our programs and meet community needs, while offering an opportunity for community members to stop by with donations and meet some of the Food for People program coordinators and KHUM DJs. After a bit of distance and a distanced approach in 2020, it was great to back in person and interacting with our community. We kicked it off at the Northcoast Co-op in Eureka, and then went on to visit Eureka Natural Foods, Proper Wellness, and Wildberries. The week concluded with the,a successful Humboldt Holiday Food Drive event at Safeway in Eureka. DJs Greta and Midge brought the tunes and the laughter; and the community brought the support—bringing in thousands of dollars and pounds of food to support Food for People’s work this year.

Senator McGuire and his staff coordinated the large-scale 6th annual Humboldt Holiday Food Drive Show Down in partnership with Eureka High School, Arcata High School, McKinleyville High School, Fortuna High School, Ferndale High School, St. Bernard’s Academy, and Eureka Safeway for one of our biggest and best years yet. This year we raised more than 17,000 pounds of food— which is almost double last year’s total! McKinleyville High School lead the pack with the incredible total of more than 7,000 lbs of food! More than $33,000 was also raised through the weeklong food & fund drive, which will be such an amazing help for Food for People in the coming months.

The Eureka Police Department (EPD) organized a new holiday food drive event called “Cram the Cruiser” at Grocery Outlet in Eureka. Shoppers had the opportunity to purchase food to cram into a police cruiser on standby. At the end of this food drive event, EPD officers drove the donations over to our warehouse to unload more than 1,000 lbs of nonperishable food donations.

Thank you to everyone who joined us to fight local hunger and helped make our 2021 Holiday Food & Fund Drive a success!
CalFresh for College Students

Efforts to Expand Access
By Heidi McHugh, Community Education & Outreach Coordinator

We have all heard the phrase “starving students” to describe the tight budgeting demands of tuition, books, housing, healthcare, and food. It’s typically a somewhat lighthearted reference to a student’s tight budgeting demands of tuition, books, housing, healthcare, and food. It’s typically a somewhat lighthearted reference to the realities of some students, who often have to go without food in order to afford education.

There are students who attend college back in 1975 on a diet of frozen TV dinners and ramen noodles. But that's not so easy. College students have limited availability to work, and many have loans that must be paid back after graduation. They may find themselves needing more money than they have, and must go without food in order to make ends meet.

California Senator Nancy Skinner has authored Senate Bill 641 (SB641). SB 641 focuses on continuing to remove the barriers to college students seeking to access CalFresh food assistance. Specifically, SB 641 will enhance the ability of CalFresh to work with agencies and institutions to help college students access food assistance by establishing a new CalFresh enrollment process for college students.

The federal Ensuring Access to SNAP (EATS) Act effectively eliminated the rules that prevented college students from applying for SNAP benefits under current federal law.

More information about the Backpacks for Kids weekend hunger relief program can be found by contacting the Backpacks for Kids weekend hunger relief program at 707-445-3166 ext. 309 or cnsmh@foodforpeople.org for more information.
By Colby D’Onofrio, CalFresh Nutrition Education Coordinator

Food for People’s Cooking Classes go Virtual

Cooking with Colby expanded access to people all over the County, who might not have found it practical to be involved in person classes.

While the pandemic presented many obstacles, it has forced us to tap into our creative side and come up with innovative solutions. A Keystone of our Nutrition Education program has always been cooking classes, but as the world came to an abrupt halt in 2020, so did our in-person classes.

Our Nutrition Education program took some of its instruction work online through a video series titled Cooking with Colby. In these videos, we take viewers through the steps of creating simple, healthful meals using foods distributed from our programs and those that can be bought with CalFresh benefits. While demonstrating the recipes, we show cooking techniques, talk about food safety, and offer alternatives to ingredients so the recipes are effective, healthy meals for the whole family.

While the pandemic presented many obstacles, it has forced us to tap into our creative side and come up with innovative solutions. A Keystone of our Nutrition Education program has always been cooking classes, but as the world came to an abrupt halt in 2020, so did our in-person classes.

Although we are not able to cook together with our class participants at this time, moving our cooking lessons online creates a space for folks to continue learning in a safe and accessible to audiences that are as diverse as our clientele. In some videos, Colby is joined by Karina, our bilingual Cal Fresh Outreach Specialist, to demonstrate the recipes in Spanish.

Although we are not able to cook together with our class participants at this time, moving our cooking lessons online creates a space for folks to continue learning in a safe environment, until we are able to come together again and share the kitchen. We are also excited that by adding this online component to our Nutrition Education program, it has expanded access to people all over the County, who might not have found it practical to travel to our kitchen or to join us during the workday.

COOKING WITH COLBY

Food for People’s Cooking Classes go Virtual

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Thank you to our Volunteers!
By Julie Ryan, Volunteer & Direct Services Manager

Our family of dedicated volunteers made it possible for Food for People to have a safe and successful year. A monthly average of 231 volunteers donated more than 13,000 hours to sorting, packaging, and distributing food throughout Humboldt County last year. From students to seniors, volunteers of all backgrounds came together, week in and week out, to make sure that healthy nutritious food was available to the people who need it. In addition to supporting programs with their efforts, volunteers bring joy, moral support, and a variety of skills to share.

The compassion and kindness our volunteers show to program participants is an act of creating a caring interdependent community. A lot of our volunteers have said that it is rewarding to do something tangible to help others because, they see how many people are struggling. To paraphrase the sentiment so many have shared, “Taking time to be in the community, doing something hands on to help others, feels good. Sometimes the world is overwhelming, and volunteering at Food for People is fulfilling and grounding.” Many volunteers have said that working with fellow volunteers makes them feel hopeful and that they want to cause a positive ripple in the community.

The positive ripple is that our treasured volunteers have a big impact on people’s lives. We deeply appreciate that our volunteers are part of the web of support that people can lean into when they need it. This is what community is about, and nothing says love like sharing food.

Thank you to our Sponsors!