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Feeding With Thought

The Food Bank's Member Agency Newsletter

November 2020

Special Electronic Edition

Agency Updates

Upcoming Workshops

All in-person workshops both in Latham and the Hudson Valley are cancelled until further notice, we have gone virtual!

If you have any ideas for virtual agency trainings, please contact anyone in our Member Services Department. We'd love to hear from you!

The next scheduled workshops will be on Food Safety and Food Bank Orientation which will take place on January 7th. Postcards will be sent in the mail soon with the link to register, and will also be posted on our website [here](#).

Agency Spotlight: Mt. Ida Food Pantry



In this issue of Feeding With Thought, we would like to recognize the Mt. Ida Food Pantry in Rensselaer County! Mt. Ida Food Pantry has recently shared their ordering practices with the Regional Food Bank and our staff are excited to share what we learned with our other agencies this quarter!

With help from volunteers, Mt. Ida created a google form. A simple, free to use digital form that is available weekly to those they serve. Based on Mt. Ida's internal intake process they ask clients to share their name, address, household size, and other basic questions. Clients are then brought to a screen where the inventory for that week is listed in its appropriate category. Vegetables, fruits, meats, sauces/condiments, eggs and milk are displayed on the page with specific availability of product listed below. To select what they would like for the week, clients click the check box beside each product they need, indicating to volunteers that that items should be included in that person's bag.

Clients can access this form on the Food Pantry's Facebook page and once submitted the client just sits back and waits until the designated distribution day! On the day(s) of distribution, clients come to Mt. Ida and inform the volunteer on shift that they placed an online order. The bags are prepacked so the line moves quickly!

All of the information submitted through google forms is able to be made into a simple spreadsheet. Mt. Ida Food Pantry uses their spreadsheet to look at the products that were popular and should be reordered. They also can alter their ordering to remove items that perhaps weren't as popular.

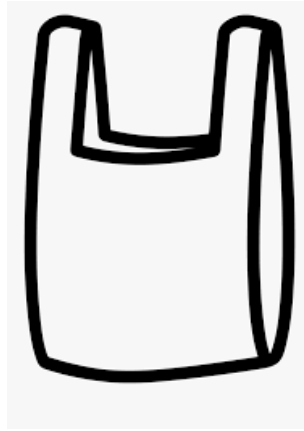
By implementing this practice at Mt. Ida, Denise Dunham, the Pantry's fearless leader is using client choice for those served and uses best practices for ordering from the Regional Food Bank. We are thrilled to see this innovative work being done and applaud Mt. Ida Food Pantry!

Do you want to create your own google form? Click the button below for a how-to video!

[Click to learn how to create a google form](#)

While we recognize that the plastic bag ban in NY is once again being enforced, and agree with the negative impact plastic bags have on the environment, food pantries and soup kitchens are not prohibited from using the bags. These agencies may find that the available supply of donations to be dwindled, but they can still be purchased and used. As the pandemic continues, many agencies are now prepacking food pantry packages to maintain social distance and reduce contact. You can now find plastic bags in COOP at both warehouses, item #1580!

NEW ITEM ALERT
COOP PLASTIC BAGS #1580



Webinar Recordings

We have been adding to our list of pre-recorded webinars that you can listen to at your convenience. They are now located on our website under the Agency tab.

Check out the newest addition that explains the newly revised Nutrition Facts Labels to better educate both you and your clients.

Coming soon—watch for the pre-recorded 3 hour **Food Safety** training that is required by HPNAP for emergency feeding programs!!

[Click to access our recorded webinars](#)

Agency Policy Reminders!

Per Food Bank policy, each member agency is required to use their own agency reference number.

Member agencies are not permitted to use any other number than the one they were assigned.

If you are affiliated with an organization that would like another program to partner with the Regional Food Bank,

that program is required to contact the Food Bank for eligibility screening, complete an application, and be approved for their own account.

If you have questions, please contact the member services department.

Thank you for you partnership!

Access our policies [here](#)

The Regional Food Bank's Relief Activities

since March, 2019!

- Provided 107% more food (2,258,166 pounds) to 235 of its school Backpack Programs and including meat, juice, eggs, and milk for sites that can safely store and distribute perishables
- Provided 519,385 pounds of food (432,820 meals) to 8,200 seniors living in senior housing sites
- Shipped 4,560,914 pounds of food (3,800,760 meals) for special distributions in Albany, Columbia, Delaware, Dutchess, Essex, Fulton, Greene, Montgomery, Orange, Otsego, Putnam, Rensselaer, Rockland, Saratoga, Schenectady, Schoharie, Sullivan, Ulster, Warren, and Washington Counties
- Provided 33.5 million pounds of food (27.9 million meals) through daily distributions to partner agencies to help them serve the growing number of people seeking assistance, a 41% increase over the same time period last year
- Provided 41,123 pounds of food (34,300 meals) for restaurant/hospitality workers who have been especially hard hit by mandated business closings
- Opened a second warehouse to safely host volunteers to sort donations and maintain social distancing protocols
- Hired eight temporary warehouse staff
- Built a temporary cooler for additional storage

PWW Update

DID YOU KNOW THAT YOU CAN CHECK YOUR CURRENT GRANT STATUS AS WELL AS WHO ATTENDED THE LAST FOOD SAFETY TRAINING AND WHEN, ONLINE?

If you have received PWW (Primarius Web Windows) training, which is our online ordering software, and have been assigned login information, you have access to your program's grant information. Log on to the online ordering portal (PWW) on our website at www.regionalfoodbank.net, click on **Online Ordering** then enter your login information. Click on the **Grants** tab under our logo and voilà, your active grant balances are displayed!

To view who last attended Regional Food Bank Food Safety Training and when they attended, visit our website at www.regionalfoodbank.net click **Online Ordering** then enter your login information. Click on **My Agency** in the upper right corner, click on **Contacts** in the subtab below and your Food Safety information will be displayed.

If you have questions regarding the above or would like to know more about Primarius Web Windows (PWW) training, please contact an employee of the Member Services Department.

Join us in congratulating our new staff member!

Kayla Sweet
Agency Services Coordinator
Regional Food Bank of Northeastern New York



Agency Advisory Council - October Meeting Minutes

[Here](#) you can find the minutes to the October Agency Advisory Council meeting. The purpose of the Agency Advisory Council is to provide guidance regarding Food Bank operations and policies that affect partner agencies and the clients they serve and help to ensure that the Food Bank is adequately serving our entire region. It also will receive feedback from and be the voice of the Food Bank's network of agencies, encourage other agencies to be more involved with the Food Bank and its initiatives and serve as mentors to other Food Bank members. Learn what other agencies in your county are doing and how they have been operating during these unprecedented times.

Latest Updates Regarding COVID-19 and SNAP



HUNGER SOLUTIONS
NEW YORK UNITING POLICIES AND
PROGRAMS TO END HUNGER

The Continuing Resolution (CR) recently passed by Congress and signed into law by the President on October 1, 2020, reinstated the SNAP interview adjustment waivers and certification extension period waiver originally authorized under the Families First

Coronavirus Response Act.

The CR reinstated and extended the availability of these waivers through June 30, 2021. In NYS, these waivers will be in effect from October 1, 2020 through December 31, 2020.

These waivers are optional for SNAP offices. Meaning SNAP offices have a choice in implementing these waivers.

Interview at Initial Application and Recertification

SNAP offices are **not** required to interview a household at initial application or recertification through December 30, 2020 if the following conditions are met:

- the applicant's identity has been verified; and,
- all other mandatory information and verification has been provided and is valid.

New Applications Eligible for Expedited Processing

SNAP offices can choose to apply the following rules through December 30, 2020:

- SNAP applications found eligible for expedited processing may be processed and an expedited benefit issued without an interview being attempted or taking place if the following conditions are met:
 - the applicant's identity has been verified; and
 - the applicant has provided enough information for the SNAP office to determine eligibility and calculate a SNAP benefit.

Six-month Extension on Recertifications

NYS is allowing SNAP offices to again extend recertifications in order to help re-distribute and balance the SNAP recertification workload over the next federal fiscal year and to promote timely approval of benefits for eligible households. Important details include:

- SNAP offices are not required to extend certification periods for SNAP households.
- SNAP households that already received a six-month extension previously (March 2020 – June 2020 and July 2020 in NYC only) are not eligible for any further extensions.

For more details including the policy memo from OTDA and other important information go to our [COVID-19 webpage](#).

Nutrition Education

Just Say Yes
To Fruits & Vegetables

Holiday Meals Made Healthy

The Holidays (Thanksgiving—New Year) are a great time of year filled with family, friends,

and food! While we love to indulge on cookies, pies, treats, and cheese-filled casseroles, set yourself up to make healthy choices with these tips!

Cheers to Good Health!: Drink up some water to manage calories. Add some flavor with mint leaves, lemons, or frozen fruit. Skip the sugary drinks like soda, punch, or lemonade. Also, keep light on the whip of that hot cocoa!

Spice Things Up!: Utilizing spices and herbs is a wonderful way to enhance the flavor of any dish without adding salt or sugar!

May Your Plate Be Merry and Bright: Brighten up your plate with fresh, colorful fruits and vegetables! Fill up half your plate with veggies such as beans, broccoli, or mixed greens and fruit like berries or grapes.

Tweak the Sweets: Fruits can make delicious desserts! Gather the season's finest fruits for a nice fruit salad. Sprinkle on some cinnamon for an extra flavor boost!

For your next Holiday Gathering, try these delicious Spiced Apple Bean Muffins! Filled with fiber and protein, they're sure to be a healthy hit (and no one will know there are beans in them unless you tell them)!

Ingredients:

½ cup sugar
¼ cup canola or vegetable oil
1 beaten egg
2 cups cooked and mashed pinto beans
1 cup flour
1 teaspoon baking soda
1½ teaspoons cinnamon
1 teaspoon ground cloves (optional)
2 cups peeled and diced apples
1 teaspoon vanilla
½ cup raisins
½ cup chopped pecans

Directions:

1. Preheat oven to 375° F.
2. In a large bowl, blend sugar and canola or vegetable oil
3. Add eggs and beans and mix well.
4. Stir in remaining ingredients.
5. Scoop into greased muffin tin.
6. Bake for 15-20 minutes or until a toothpick comes out clean.
7. Cool and enjoy!
8. Refrigerate leftovers.

**Do You Know Any
Hunters?**



The Venison Donation Coalition, Inc. is a non profit organization that coordinates the efforts of hunters, deer processors, food banks, individuals and organizations to provide a high protein, low fat meat source to the hungry. Hunters and farmers are able to donate an entire deer or a portion of their deer to the Venison Donation Coalition. Once you have your deer properly field dressed and legally tagged, you can bring it to one of the processors near your home or where you hunt. Whole deer donations are greatly appreciated but not required.

There is NO COST TO THE HUNTER/FARMER for the processing fees of donated venison. The Food Bank will pick up the meat from the processor to put into inventory so that member agencies can order it.

www.venisondonation.org

CALL AHEAD to make sure the processor is open and accepting deer.



Winter squash are an excellent source of fiber, vitamin A, and vitamin C. Even better—they taste great! They are also pretty much interchangeable. If you don't have the type called for in the recipe, switch to a different winter squash! Here are two simple recipes using different types of winter squash.

Budget Friendly Winter Squash Recipes

Pumpkin Pudding

Makes 4 servings

Ingredients

- 1 package (3.4 ounces) instant vanilla or cheesecake pudding mix
- 1 1/4 cups canned pumpkin**
- 1 1/2 cups low-fat milk

1 teaspoon cinnamon or pumpkin pie spice

Directions

1. Combine all ingredients in a medium bowl.
2. Mix with a spoon or whisk until smooth.
3. Refrigerate for at least 1 hour.
4. Serve and enjoy!
5. Refrigerate leftovers.

*If you have leftover canned pumpkin, freeze in ice cube trays. Makes a delicious addition to mashed potatoes!



Winter Squash with Apple Juice Glaze

Makes 6 servings

Ingredients

- 1 acorn or butternut squash, about 2 pounds
- 3 tablespoons soft tub margarine
- 1 1/2 cups apple juice
- 2 tablespoons maple or pancake syrup
- 1 teaspoon cinnamon (optional)
- 1/4 teaspoon nutmeg (optional)
- Salt and black pepper to taste

Directions

1. Cut squash in quarters.
2. Scoop out the seeds. Peel and cut into small cubes.
3. In a large frying pan or pot, melt the margarine over medium heat.
4. Add the squash, apple juice, syrup, cinnamon and nutmeg to the pan. Bring to a boil.
5. Cook 20-25 minutes or until the squash is tender and the liquid has formed a glaze. Add up to 1 cup of water to keep the squash from sticking to the pan, if needed. Stir often.
6. Add salt and pepper to taste. Enjoy!
7. Refrigerate leftovers.

Turkey Tips for the Holidays!



FRESH TURKEYS

- Purchase your fresh turkey no earlier than 1 to 2 days prior to cooking.
- Once home, keep your fresh turkey stored in a refrigerator until you're ready to cook. Keep it on a tray, or in a pan to prevent leakage.

FROZEN TURKEYS

- The refrigerator is the safest way to thaw your frozen bird. Leave it in the original packing and place in a shallow pan on the bottom shelf of the refrigerator. Allow 24 hours for every 4 to 5 pounds of bird. A 20 pound turkey will take 4 to 5 days to thaw.
- The other safe way to thaw the turkey is in cold water. Leave it in the original packing, place a clean and sanitized sink or pan, and keep it covered in cold water. Change the water every 30 minutes. Allow 30 minutes per pound to thaw. A 20 pound turkey will thaw in cold water in 10 hours.

PREPARATION

- Don't forget to remove the giblet packages and cook them separately!
- For optimum safety, stuffing a turkey is not recommended. For more even cooking it is recommended that the stuffing be cooked separately. If you choose to stuff your turkey the following procedures are recommended:
 - Fill the cavity loosely and don't overstuff it.
 - The stuffing should be moist as heat destroys bacteria more effectively in moist environments.
 - Cook the turkey immediately after stuffing.

- Use a food thermometer to make sure the center of the stuffing reaches an internal temperature of at least 165°F.
- Wash hands with soap and water, and wash then sanitize utensils, cutting boards, countertops, the sink, and anything else that came into contact with the raw turkey and its juices.

ROASTING

- The following two tables show approximate cooking times for unstuffed and stuffed turkeys. These tables are based on an oven temperature of 325°F. Your turkey is safe when cooked to a minimum internal temperature of 165°F as measured with a food thermometer in the innermost part of the thigh, and the thickest part of the breast.

Unstuffed

8 to 12 pounds	2 3/4 to 3 hours
12 to 14 pounds	3 to 3 3/4 hours
14 to 18 pounds	3 3/4 to 4 1/4 hours
18 to 20 pounds	4 1/4 to 4 1/2 hours
20 to 24 pounds	4 1/2 hours to 5 hours

Stuffed

8 to 12 pounds	3 to 3 1/2 hours
12 to 14 pounds	3 1/2 to 4 hours
14 to 18 pounds	4 to 4 1/2 hours
18 to 20 pounds	4 1/2 to 5 hours
20 to 24 pounds	5 hours to 5 1/2 hours



Delivery Information

Regional Food Bank Delivery Sites for 2020

Food Bank Delivery Schedule for 2020

[Click here for the current Drive-Thru Pantry Schedule](#)

Ordering Information

To Order from Our Latham Facility or a Delivery:

Appointments for Latham pick-ups are on Mondays, Tuesday Mornings, Thursdays, and Fridays.

Go to www.regionalfoodbank.net where our inventory is updated on Mondays, Tuesdays and Fridays.

Order weekdays from 9am-2pm, 2-5 business days before your pick-up date as follows:

- By phone at 518-786-3691
- By fax at 518-786-3004
- By Email at fborders@regionalfoodbank.net
- Using our Online Ordering system (you must receive training)

To Order from Our Cornwall-On-Hudson Facility:

Appointments for Cornwall-on-Hudson pick-ups are on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays.

Go to www.foodbankofhudsonvalley.org; our inventory is updated on Mondays, Tuesdays and Fridays.

Order weekdays from 9am-2pm, 2-5 business days before your pick-up date as follows:

- By phone at 845-534-5344
- By Email at orders@foodbankofhudsonvalley.org
- By fax at 845-534-5256
- Using our Online Ordering system (you must receive training)



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