

Greater Cleveland Food Bank
COVID-19 Update
Week of May 11– May 15, 2020: Week in Review

This week has been busy – not that every week isn't but this week has brought lots of new opportunities, new programs, new successes on many fronts as well as new plumbing! Don't let that last item scare you – we didn't have a burst pipe or anything scary – rather new plumbing fixtures. Of course everything new has a story and some background so let's take a look at this past week!

This week, we learned more about the new federal program known as the Farm to Family Food Box Program, CFAP. This program from the USDA essentially provided the opportunity for food producers, distributors and suppliers to provide food – boxes of produce, dairy and cooked meat – to 501c3 organizations including food banks. Because so many of these local distributors and suppliers have been significantly impacted by the closure of restaurants, schools, hotels, etc. the USDA wants to support them and to get this food to non-profit entities that can use it and distribute it. The suppliers and distributors who were chosen via a national bid process to participate in this program were notified of their status last Friday, May 4. This week, those suppliers and distributors began working directly with non-profit organizations to find out who can distribute the boxes and determine details regarding volume, delivery, schedules, etc. Patty, our Food Resources guru, began talking to local suppliers that we'll be working with to determine the type, amount and details of the products they have ready for us and for our agencies. This is a new program and we are learning more each day. Logistics and scheduling are second nature to Patty as well as our Agency Services team who are working closely with our partner agencies to determine who can handle deliveries as well as store this product as much of it needs refrigeration. We are fortunate to be working with two of our long time suppliers – Sanson and Micelli – who are providing produce boxes and dairy boxes. On Friday, Sanson made their first delivery through the program: 300 dairy boxes to one of our partner agencies in Ashland County. The first phase of this federal program will last for six weeks so stay tuned as the program continues to evolve.

This past week, our work with Amazon to pilot the delivery of CSFP boxes happened. CSFP, or The Commodity Supplemental Food Program, allows us to provide boxes of food to seniors in need year around. Typically, the boxes are picked up from the Food Bank or at an agency partner but, to keep seniors safe, Amazon team members delivered the boxes this week to seniors who rely on them. We were pleased to be able to work with Amazon to deliver these boxes to many seniors in the community.

Last week, the office of the Mayor of Highland Hills made a request to serve seniors in that community. We were able to coordinate a delivery of 25 boxes of produce and shelf stable product to seniors. Well, success begets success as once again this week, our National Guard soldiers made deliveries to Highland Hills seniors. Congrats also to our Outreach team – they oversee home deliveries, sign folks up for SNAP and they answer calls from many individuals in our community needing help. **If you know someone who needs food or help with SNAP, please call our Help Center at 216-738-2067.**

Special shout out to Sav-a-Lot. For yesterday's Muni Lot distribution, they donated beautiful apples as well as the bouquets of flowers. The smiles that those flowers brought to the faces of the households we served – was the sunshine that was missing from the rainy afternoon!

We continue to advocate along with the other Ohio food banks and this week, we had good news on two fronts. Families with children who've missed meals due to school closings will receive a one-time bump of approximately \$300 per child to help them cover the costs of meals at home. And, as we gear

up for our summer meals programs, we were relieved to learn that our ability to provide “grab and go” meals to kids rather than congregate meals only will be extended through August 31, 2020, which will improve safety as we work to serve children in need this summer.

Plumbing – Moen donated three touchless faucets which will help in the handwashing process. And, we are working to install mobile handwashing stations in repack and salvage as part of our sanitation efforts.

“Determined people working together can do anything.”

Focus on possibility and who can help and how.

Mary LaVigne Butler, VP of External Affairs