

Wisconsin Food Pantry Conference Call Meeting Notes

Friday, November 13th, 2020 (Next meeting 12/11/2020; participation details last item on this summary)

Meeting hosted by De’Kendrea Stamps, FoodShare Outreach Program Director, Feeding Wisconsin; led by Jennifer Putzer, Food Security Specialist, The Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP). Thanks to Feeding Wisconsin for hosting calls, and posting information to the FW website. Call support folks distributing food to needy households by providing information, providing an ear for challenges and ideas for solutions of practical problems.

COVID-19 Update:

- 285,891 reported cases compared to 180,064 on October 23rd, 2020. 219,304 people are recovering and 2,457 Wisconsinites have died since the COVID-19 Pandemic began. Currently, 2,102 are hospitalized with COVID; 441 are in Intensive Care. Patients age 60+ are the most common age group for hospitalization.
- 7,048 people reportedly had a confirmed case yesterday.
- On a county level, it is significant that what was once considered a “high” level of COVID in a county is now as much as 3x higher than “high” meant in late spring or early summer. It is also significant that 65 counties of 72 are at this new “Critically High” level.

Food Supply Update:

- Fourth Round of Farmers to Food Bank was announced on 10/23/2020 and will run from 11/1/20-12/31/2020. It provides boxes of food filled with produce, dairy, fluid milk and meat. So far, this program has distributed approximately 110 million boxes. Distribution is based on internal need of each state. <https://www.ams.usda.gov/selling-food-to-usda/farmers-to-families-food-box>
- The Coronavirus Food Assistance Program (CFAP 2) is entering a second phase. It provides direct financial assistance due to market disruptions and associated costs due to COVID-19. This phase has increased eligible commodities. Application acceptance began on 9/21/20 and will continue until 12/11/2020. Services are available to help you apply. <https://content.govdelivery.com/accounts/USDAAMS/bulletins/2ab7720>
- USDA is continuing to expand SNAP shopping online and is currently piloting a program in Omaha, NE to expand this idea to include WIC. 47 states are involved with an estimate of over 1,000,000 SNAP shoppers participating in September, 2020. Currently, Wisconsin is providing this service with Walmart and Amazon, but is trying to bring in smaller grocers like Festival Foods. This grocery store is in the process of trying to meet the eligibility requirements. The inclusion of WIC in the online shopping process is being piloted in Omaha, NE. <https://www.fns.usda.gov/snap/online-purchasing-pilot>

DATCP Food Products Purchasing Grant

- Gov. Tony Evers and the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade, and Consumer Protection announced two of Wisconsin’s largest hunger relief organizations will receive an additional \$10

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million to help serve Wisconsinites experiencing food insecurity during the COVID-19 pandemic. Hunger Task Force and Feeding Wisconsin will each receive \$5 million in grant funding. The money will be used to purchase food for distribution, and for food storage and transportation.

- Feeding Wisconsin and our statewide network of six food banks and almost 1,000 food programs are seeing a 70% increase in demand for our services and our food banks are purchasing more food than ever before, these funds are enabling us to source great Wisconsin products to distribute to our neighbors faced with food insecurity during this challenging time.

Food Benefits and FoodShare Access:

- Some FoodShare members may get additional FoodShare benefits for November. Families enrolled in FoodShare may get additional FoodShare benefits for November to help during the COVID-19 pandemic. Families will get these additional benefits if they do not already get the maximum monthly benefit amount for the number of people in their household. For a household of one (1) the maximum monthly benefit amount is \$204 and for a household of four (4) the maximum monthly benefit is \$680.

Questions/Discussions:

- Sandy from Vilas Food Pantry inquired about the next meeting date. The next meeting is 12/13/2020.
- Donna Ambrose, Wausau (Marathon County) commented that they will continue to do outdoor/no contact distribution through April. In addition, they are working with social workers, etc. to get information regarding newly released patients to make sure they have access to food especially over the holiday season.
- Marty Lee, Wautoma Food Pantry (Waushara County) stated that they are doing something similar. They are working closely with health services to keep up-to-date on newly released patients to get them access to food.

Next Meeting: De’Kendra Stamps will host on Friday 12/11/2020 at 10AM. Jennifer Putzer will lead the meeting through the New Year.

How to participate in the calls: Dial: 267-930-4000; Enter Meeting ID: 904-416-028# then when it asks for your participant ID, press “#”. Food pantry operators, charitable feeding organizations, emergency response, and social service folks are the key constituents of these calls. During announcements, all participants can mute themselves by pressing mute on their phone or “*#6”.

Questions related to notes: Questions related to notes can go to jennifer.putzer@dhs.wisconsin.gov. For urgent questions about The Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP) email DHSTEFAP@dhs.wisconsin.gov. For Emergency food needs, dial 2-1-1, describe your need and location. Staff will assist you in locating food resources.