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SECOND HARVEST FOOD BANK INVESTS MORE THAN \$1.1 MILLION IN KEY PARTNERS TO STRENGTHEN THE LOCAL HUNGER SAFETY-NET

Food Bank Purchases Equipment and Upgrades to Increase Capacity

SAN JOSE, Calif., September 21, 2015 – Second Harvest Food Bank of Santa Clara and San Mateo Counties has invested more than \$1.1 million in more than 40 nonprofit partner agencies to help strengthen the local hunger safety-net. These agencies, many of which are pantries, soup kitchens, shelters and multiservice organizations, are part of a network of 330 nonprofits that distribute food provided by Second Harvest to our hungry neighbors in communities up and down the peninsula. The Food Bank has purchased equipment, including refrigerators, freezers, trucks, pallet jacks, and ovens, and funded upgrades such as new floors and shelving to build the capacity of its partners so they can distribute more food.

Second Harvest Food Bank and its partner agencies have continued to face unprecedented need, even in recent years as the economy has soared. The number of people Second Harvest serves jumped 50 percent after the Great Recession started in 2007, and it remains stubbornly high at nearly 250,000 people every single month.

The rapid rise and sustained increase in the number of people in need of food has put a serious burden on the pantries, soup kitchens, shelters, churches and other agencies that serve as Second Harvest's distribution network. Many are small, volunteer-run operations that lack the infrastructure they need to accept more food from Second Harvest and in turn provide more food to local families and individuals who don't have enough to eat.

"We determined that one of the most efficient ways to get more food into the community was to build the capacity of our partners, who are on the frontlines every day not only distributing food, but providing a number of other services their clients need," said Kathy Jackson, CEO of Second Harvest Food Bank of Santa Clara and San Mateo Counties. "If you don't have refrigerators or freezers large enough to store more food or you don't have pallet jacks to move it around, meeting the increased need for food can be very difficult."

Utilizing a rigorous evaluation process, Second Harvest Food Bank began making investments in its partner agencies in 2013. Agencies interested in expanding their capacity applied for the equipment and upgrades they needed to store and distribute more food.

“I don’t know of any other food bank in the country that is making this kind of substantial investment in the nutritional safety-net,” Jackson added.

“The truck and refrigeration units provided to us by Second Harvest have been a godsend,” said Bart Charlow, CEO of Samaritan House in San Mateo. “As a major partner for Second Harvest Food Bank, Samaritan House provides over 800,000 meals each year to very hungry local residents, who are struggling financially. From summer lunches and afterschool snacks for needy children, to hot prepared mobile meals delivered to homebound seniors and folks with disabilities, we make sure they can afford to eat each day – essential to their health and survival. This is a huge logistical undertaking; more than just the industrial-sized kitchen, we need to transport and store food so that people can eat from San Carlos through Daly City.”

Jim Gallagher, director of Cathedral of Faith’s Reaching Out food pantry in San Jose, agreed: “What a difference a fridge makes. With our new 22-foot refrigerated truck, we can now take cold items like fresh milk, meat and eggs to some of the most vulnerable children in this valley. Thank You Second Harvest for investing in the future of our children.”

Second Harvest Food Bank of Santa Clara and San Mateo Counties is the trusted leader dedicated to ending local hunger. Since its inception in 1974, Second Harvest has become one of the largest food banks in the nation, providing food to nearly one quarter of a million people each month. The Food Bank mobilizes individuals, companies and community partners to connect people to the nutritious food they need. More than half the food distributed is fresh produce. In fact, Second Harvest provides more fresh fruits and vegetables than any other food bank in the United States. Second Harvest also plays a leading role in promoting federal nutrition programs and educating families on how to make healthier food choices. Visit www.SHFB.org to get involved.

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