



SECOND HARVEST
of SILICON VALLEY

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**SECOND HARVEST OF SILICON VALLEY LAUNCHES LARGEST
HOLIDAY FUNDRAISING CAMPAIGN EVER AMIDST
UNPRECEDENTED NEED DURING PANDEMIC**

Food bank providing double the amount of food to double the number of people at double the cost since the pandemic hit Silicon Valley

Highlights:

- Second Harvest launches its largest fundraising campaign ever to help cover increase in operational costs related to the pandemic.
- Financial donations and volunteers are needed to sustain emergency response efforts expected to continue at least another 12-18 months.
- Second Harvest is not distributing food collection barrels or accepting community food donations this holiday season due to safety concerns and high levels of demand.
- Low wage, hourly workers already struggling to make ends meet before the pandemic have been disproportionately impacted by economic crisis.
- Many people receiving food assistance during pandemic indicate it's the first time they've received help.
- Individuals, corporations and organizations can help by donating money and by volunteering. For more information, visit shfb.org or call 1-866-234-3663.
- Every monetary donation makes an impact – \$50 helps provide 100 nutritious meals.

SAN JOSE, Calif., November 20, 2020 — The impact of COVID-19 and subsequent economic downturn has resulted in job loss, wage loss and the depletion of savings, which has led to a dramatic increase in food insecurity across the Bay Area. As a result, Second Harvest of Silicon Valley is now providing food assistance to an average of 500,000 people every month – twice as many people as it served pre-pandemic. To help cover increased expenses and to sustain emergency response efforts related to the pandemic, Second Harvest has launched its largest holiday fundraising campaign ever with the goal of raising \$30 million dollars by January.

Since the pandemic started, the food bank's expenses have doubled as it has had to provide double the amount of food to double the number of people. The financial and operational strain of responding to the incredible increase in need has been further impacted by a 70 percent decrease in the federal government's contribution of pre-boxed food via the USDA's Coronavirus Food Assistance Program (CFAP). Additionally, Second Harvest is experiencing shortages in its vital volunteer workforce, which prior to the pandemic provided over a quarter million hours of labor a year.

Despite these challenges, Second Harvest has remained focused on its mission to lead the community to ensure that anyone who needs a healthy meal can get one. "The holidays will likely look and feel different for all of us this year, but for a huge portion of our community, who were already struggling to make ends meet before COVID-19, they have been hit especially hard by this crisis. They are worried about getting food on the table every day, not just during the holidays," said Leslie Bacho, CEO of Second Harvest. "A financial donation and a commitment to volunteer can help ensure that everyone in our community can continue to get the nutritious food they need to survive during this incredibly challenging time."

The economic fallout of the pandemic has hit low wage, hourly workers who were already struggling to afford rent and pay for food in Silicon Valley especially hard. Even before the pandemic, one out of every four people in Silicon Valley was at risk of hunger – these same households have been disproportionately affected by COVID's impact on the economy.

"We're hearing now that many of the people we are serving during the pandemic have never received help before," said Bacho. "So many in our community have had to exhaust their savings and are experiencing unstable housing, job setbacks and loss of transportation – they face a potentially long road toward recovery. When you consider this, along with post-recession data, we're concerned that there may be a significant and permanent increase in the number of people needing food assistance."

When the need for food assistance first spiked last spring, food banks across the nation issued a call for help and the USDA launched CFAP, which contracted with regional farms and food distributors to supply pre-packed boxes of food directly to food banks across the U.S. through October. Second Harvest was receiving an average of 38,000 boxes of CFAP food a week, but in November the USDA decreased shipments to 11,000 boxes of food a week for the next three weeks. After that, the program will go away entirely. The dramatic decrease in CFAP food

supply has created additional pressure on Second Harvest to purchase more product and to bring in more volunteers to pack the food.

“We have been incredibly grateful for the support we received from the USDA, but now with that support leaving, we need more community members to step in and help fill that void,” said Bacho.

Make monetary donations and host virtual food drives instead of donating food

Due to safety concerns and the high level of demand, Second Harvest is not accepting community food donations or distributing food collection barrels into the community this holiday season. Instead, the public is encouraged to make a financial donation; individuals and groups can host a virtual food drive. Organizers can set a goal, create their own personalized fundraising page with images and videos and then ask their community to donate. For more information visit on hosting a virtual food drive please visit shfb.org/ffd

How to donate funds

Individuals, corporations and organizations can help to ensure that anyone who needs a healthy meal can get one by making a monetary donation. A monetary gift helps Second Harvest feed people this holiday season and all year long – every \$50 donated helps provide enough food for 100 meals. To support the campaign, visit shfb.org to donate online or call 1-866-234-3663.

How to get help

During this difficult time, Second Harvest wants people to know that help is available, even if they have never needed it before. Second Harvest can connect people to a variety of different food resources, including its own grocery distributions held in partnership with community organizations throughout Santa Clara and San Mateo County. The food bank also provides enrollment support for federally funded food assistance programs like CalFresh. Due to COVID-19, CalFresh recipients may now receive the maximum benefit allowable based on household size, as well as have the ability to purchase in-person and at select retailers online with a CalFresh EBT card. Anyone who needs food should call Second Harvest’s multilingual Food Connection hotline at 1-800-984-3663, Monday – Friday, 8 a.m. – 5 p.m. or visit shfb.org. Staff speak English, Spanish, Vietnamese, Cantonese, Mandarin and Tagalog. Three-way interpretation is available for other languages.

About Second Harvest of Silicon Valley

Founded in 1974, Second Harvest of Silicon Valley is one of the largest food banks in the nation and a trusted nonprofit leader in ending local hunger. The organization distributes nutritious groceries through a network of more than 300 partners at drive-thru and walk-up sites across Santa Clara and San Mateo counties. Due to the prohibitively expensive cost of living in Silicon Valley and the economic downturn caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, hunger is at an all-time high. Second Harvest is now serving 500,000 people on average every month, which is twice as many people as they reached pre-pandemic. Second Harvest also connects people to federal nutrition programs and other food resources, and advocates for anti-hunger policies on the local, state and national levels. To learn more about how Second Harvest is responding to the incredible amount of need in Silicon Valley, visit shfb.org.

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