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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

## Families Can Find Free Summer Meal Sites With Second Harvest's Easy-To-Use Online Locator

Any Child Who Needs a Free Meal Can Get One – No Questions Asked

### Highlights:

- Free summer meals are back and any child who is 18 or younger can get a nutritious, free lunch at more than 80 sites in Santa Clara and San Mateo counties – no registration is required.
- Second Harvest's online locator makes it easier than ever to find a summer meal site near you.
- Some sites also offer free breakfast and an afternoon snack as well as low-cost meals to adult caregivers.
- For additional help finding a summer meal site, or other food resources, text "Summer" for English, "Verano" for Spanish, "Muahe" for Vietnamese or "Лето" for Russian to 876-876 or visit [www.shfb.org/getfood](http://www.shfb.org/getfood).

**SAN JOSE, Calif., June 9, 2022**—Summer is here and that means thousands of local kids will lose access to the free meals they receive during the school year. With record high inflation and skyrocketing gas prices, coupled with the phasing out of many pandemic support programs, including the child tax credit, this summer could be particularly difficult for many local families already struggling to pay their bills in Silicon Valley – one of the country's most expensive places to live. Second Harvest of Silicon Valley is working to raise awareness about the summer meal program so kids can get the nutritious food they need while school is out.

To make it easier than ever for local families to access free summer meals, Second Harvest recently launched a site locator on its website. Families can go to [www.shfb.org/mealsforkids](http://www.shfb.org/mealsforkids) and enter their location using their address, city or zip code. Icons pop up on a map where summer meal sites are located and when users click on the icon, they see all the information needed, including location details, mealtimes and contact information.

This year, there will be more than 80 federally funded summer meals sites in both counties where any child or teen 18 or younger can get a free lunch with no advance registration or documentation required. Some sites also offer free breakfast and an afternoon snack. To encourage participation, select sites have received grants that make it possible to provide low-cost or no-cost meals to parents and caregivers so families can eat together.

To raise awareness and help connect families with the nutritious food they need to thrive this summer, Second Harvest is collaborating with high-need school districts, libraries, social service

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organizations and other nonprofits throughout both counties that serve summer meals.

“We want to make it easy for local families who are wondering how their kids will get enough nutritious food to eat now that school is out,” said Leslie Bacho, CEO of Second Harvest of Silicon Valley. “The locator will help families find summer meal sites as well as free grocery distributions that are convenient for them. We are working to reduce the barriers to accessing food and making sure people can easily find out where to go is a big part of that.”

### **Summer meals help kids thrive**

Summer meals are important because studies show that kids who don’t get enough nutritious food to eat have trouble concentrating, are sick more often, and are more likely to suffer emotional and physical effects that can last a lifetime.

The federally funded Summer Food Service Program is designed to replace school breakfast and lunch, filling a nutrition gap that exists for thousands of children during the summer. Funded through the USDA Food and Nutrition Service and administered by the state, the Summer Food Service Program reimburses lunch providers like schools, libraries and summer camps that serve free healthy meals and snacks to children and teens in low-income areas.

Second Harvest leads local efforts to increase the number of these federally funded summer meal sites by connecting sites to sponsoring organizations and meal providers as well as providing infrastructure and sharing best practices through the Child Nutrition Coalition. The food bank works with schools, libraries, summer camps and other service providers to open new sites and make sure families know about them by creating marketing materials like fliers and banners its partners can use. Second Harvest also promotes summer meals through social media as well as radio and other channels so that more families know about this valuable source of nutritious food.

### **For more information on Free Summer Meals or food assistance**

In addition to the locator, families who need help finding a summer meal can text “Summer” for English, “Verano” for Spanish, “Muahe” for Vietnamese or “Лето” for Russian to 876-876. For help accessing other food resources, call Second Harvest’s multilingual Food Connection hotline at 800-984-3663 or visit [www.shfb.org/get-food](http://www.shfb.org/get-food).

### **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, the economic downturn caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, and the rise in inflation, Second Harvest is now serving an average of more than 450,000 people every month. 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](http://shfb.org).

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