



A member of
**FEEDING
AMERICA**

Food for Thought

Quarterly Newsletter • March 2016

A Different Kind of Food Fight

Food Fight!!! Channel One is inviting you to join us for a different kind of food fight through the Minnesota FoodShare March Campaign. With about 9,000 individuals in Minnesota alone seeking food assistance each and every day, it is time for all of us to join in and fight back against hunger in our communities.

Last fiscal year, your partnership helped Channel One distribute 9.3 million pounds of food to over 100,000 individuals in need of food assistance.

Who does your partnership with Channel One help? We are helping feed seniors, individuals with physical or mental-health disabilities, working families and individuals, children, people in times of crisis due to job loss, medical problems or personal disaster, and food shelves, programs and agencies in 14 counties. **Thank you for partnering with Channel One and helping us change thousands of lives!**



The Minnesota FoodShare March Campaign is a statewide food and fund drive that Channel One participates in each year during the month of March. During this month-long effort, people participate in food and fund drives where they work, through service clubs, schools and places of worship. **All food and cash donations the Channel One Supplemental Food Shelf receives during the month of March stay in our local community to help feed people in need.** Every pound and dollar is important because, the more food and funds that Channel One collects during

March, the greater our allocation from the Minnesota FoodShare statewide incentive fund.

To help meet the rising need in the Channel One Supplemental Food Shelf Program, our goal this year is \$225,000 and 225,000 pounds of food! Here are four ways you can help Channel One reach our goal:

- Make a gift to Channel One online at www.helpingfeedpeople.org during the month of March.
- Host a food and/or fund drive.
- Have your business or organization participate in Denim Days.
- Give an additional gift of food to Channel One in March.

Contact Barb at barbaraschramm@channel-one.org or visit the Channel One website at www.helpingfeedpeople.org to find documents to help make your campaign a success!



I can hardly believe that March is upon us! Wasn't it just yesterday that we were packing away holiday decorations and making valentines for the special people in our lives? Now it's time to get ready to plant spring flowers. March is a month of weather ups and downs in our part of the country – where you leave your coat at home some days, and shovel 10 inches of snow other days. At Channel One, we have one constant during March – our Minnesota Food Share March Campaign! Throughout March you will have opportunities to support Channel One or your local food shelf. You might be asked to donate food for a food drive that your workplace, service club or place of worship is hosting. Or you might have the opportunity to buy a Denim Days sticker, and wear jeans to work one day. Maybe a letter was recently delivered in your mailbox, asking you to support your local food shelf with a cash donation. (Did you know that at Channel One we can provide enough food for four meals with the donation of just one dollar?) Or maybe you have a little free time, and can volunteer at Channel One or your local food shelf. During the Minnesota Food Share March Campaign, your donations of food or funds do even more to help

neighbors in need. Whatever way you choose to get involved, Channel One thanks you for being our partner in the fight against hunger!

Together, we are feeding people and changing lives!

Jennifer Woodford

Jennifer Woodford, Executive Director

Mile of Mac and Cheese

Thank you to everyone who purchased and donated macaroni and cheese to help us reach our Mile of Mac goal!

With much thanks to the generosity of Rochester Hy-Vee Stores, Noodles & Company and all of our individual partners, we were able to collect one full mile - 9,000 boxes - of mac and cheese!

There are thousands of families in our community struggling with hunger that are grateful for your generosity!

If you are looking for more great opportunities to help feed people in need, contact Barb at 507-424-1705.



Making a Difference

Eight-year-old Oliver and his mom Nicole have been volunteering at Channel One for four years. They have found many ways to get involved - from family volunteer days to farmer's markets. Oliver said he likes volunteering at Channel One because it helps feed people in need, including children who do not have enough to eat, "and it is fun, too!"



Nicole said, "Volunteering at Channel One gives you an appreciation for so many things, including the food you have on your table each night and the volunteers and staff that support Channel One each day."

Read more about these amazing volunteers online at www.helpingfeedpeople.org.



Rescued Food is Changing Lives

Did you know 40% of the food produced in the United States is never eaten? That is a lot of food going to waste, especially knowing that about 62,750 people living in Southeast Minnesota are food insecure, which means that they do not always have access to enough food for all members of their household. **This is where hunger relief agencies like Channel One step in to rescue food that would otherwise be lost or wasted and give it to those who need it most.**

Channel One currently has a large refrigerated truck and one Sprinter van that rescue food from 32 retail stores in Olmsted County five days per week. Our partner agencies pick up at 79 retail stores on our behalf outside of Olmsted County. Our retail partners include Walmart, Kwik Trip, Target, Hy-Vee, Cub Foods, Sam's Club, Panera, People's Food Co-op, Great Harvest, Costco, Natural Grocers and so many more. (Check out our 2015 Annual Report on www.helpingfeedpeople.org/news for a full list of retail and agency partners!) The types of food rescued include fresh produce, dairy products, deli items, bakery items and packaged goods.

Why do the retail stores give the food away? The rescued food is safe to eat, but may be nearing its best-if-used-by date or sell-by date and stores will pull that product and donate it. Meat cannot be sold past the date on the package, but the retailers can freeze it and give it to Channel One frozen. We keep it frozen and get it to our clients still frozen to ensure food safety laws are being met. Fresh produce may have small blemishes or be misshapen and do not meet a retailer's standards for appearance and is then donated. Channel One is licensed by the Minnesota Department of Agriculture, and we get audited by Feeding America and AIB to ensure food safety laws are being upheld.

A large percentage of the rescued food picked up in Olmsted County stays in Olmsted County, but our agencies in all 14-counties are welcome to come to Channel One and pick up rescued food for their food shelves and programs. **Last fiscal year, Channel One rescued 2,242,666 pounds of food from retailers to help feed people in need.**

In addition to retail pick-ups, Channel One Regional Food Bank food rescue programs include gleaning, farmer donations, farmers market pick-ups and gardener donations. **Gleaning** occurs when farmers intentionally leave a row of produce unharvested or allow people to enter a field and collect unharvested produce. It also refers to the harvesting of fruits and vegetables from individual's gardens, community gardens and community orchards. Channel One has a Glean Team consisting of staff members and volunteers that accomplish this important task. **Because of the efforts of everyone working together to rescue fresh produce, Channel One was able to rescue and distribute 1,912,997 pounds of fresh produce to people in need last fiscal year.**

Channel One Regional Food Bank is the largest hunger relief agency in Southeast Minnesota and last year distributed 9.3 million pounds of food to over 100,000 people in need. This is accomplished by providing food for food shelves, meal programs and other agencies in our 14-county service area. **Together, we can all fight hunger.**

Save the Dates!

- On **Saturday, May 14th**, the Letter Carriers will conduct their **24th Annual Stamp Out Hunger Food Drive**. Postal customers are encouraged to put food by their mailboxes in the morning, and your letter carrier will take it to the post office where Channel One will collect it. *They are trying to surpass the world goal of the most food collected in one day at multiple locations that they set in 2011 of 77.1 million pounds of food, so please help them reach their goal!*
- Channel One's **12th Annual Empty Bowls Event** will be held at the Rochester Arts Center on **Thursday, October 13, 2016, from 11 a.m. - 8 p.m.**



Join us for a different kind of food
fight during the Minnesota FoodShare
March Campaign!

Channel One Food for Thought is a quarterly publication of Channel One Regional Food Bank, a 501(c)3, non-profit organization whose mission is *“to work in partnership with others to help feed people in need.”* If you receive multiple copies of our newsletter, please share the copies with others and contact us at 507-424-1716, so we can reduce the number of copies. If you have moved, please let us know so we are able to update our mailing list or remove your name. **Thank you!**

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