



Tulalip Charitable Contributions Funds Distribution Report

NAME OF AGENCY: Emergency Food Network

DATE OF AWARD: 2017 Q3

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GENERAL GOALS: The mission of Emergency Food Network (EFN) is “to provide Pierce County with a consistent, diverse and nutritious food supply so that no person goes hungry.”

SPECIFIC USE FOR THIS AWARD:

This award went towards programs and operational expenses.

For more information please read the attached report from Emergency Food Network.

Emergency Food Network Co-op Food Purchasing Program Report

Emergency Food Network (EFN) is grateful for the support of \$2,000 from the Tulalip Tribes for our general operations in 2017. The mission of EFN is to provide Pierce County with a consistent, diverse, and nutritious food supply so that no person goes hungry. EFN has a network of 71 partner food pantries, hot meal sites, and shelters. Each month, we provide our Partner Programs with more than one million pounds of food, at no cost to them. ***Support from the Tulalip Tribes helped EFN provide our Partner Programs with 14,446,002 pounds of food in 2017.*** By leveraging donated, purchased, and government food with food grown at Mother Earth Farm, EFN distributed \$12 worth of food for every \$1 that we received. Your grant of \$2,000 provided 9,625 meals to households experiencing food insecurity in Pierce County.

Program Highlights

In 2017, EFN accomplished the following through our core programs:

- Distributed 818,737 pounds of food through the Co-op Food Purchasing Program
- Expanded our Co-op Food Purchasing Program to include the purchase of dairy
- Grew 138,878 pounds of food at Mother Earth Farm
- Distributed 2,000 Break Bags to students receiving free or reduced-cost lunch before each Thanksgiving, winter, and spring break. A total of 6,000 bags in 2017.



Milk purchased through the Co-op Food Purchasing Program

The Need

In 2017, our Partner Programs accommodated 1,360,481 guest visits from children, adults, and seniors experiencing food insecurity. While some people visited a food pantry just once during the year, when an unexpected expense, like a car accident, put a strain on their already limited budget, the majority of guests visit food pantries regularly throughout the year in order to stretch their budget. In 2017, food pantry guests made an average of 6.9 visits per year, the highest since Washington State Department of Agriculture began tracking the figure. While the number of individuals visiting a food pantry has finally started to decrease, the individuals and families that are still experiencing food insecurity are relying on our Partner Programs more than ever before.

The housing crisis in Pierce County is one of the biggest threats to households experiencing food insecurity. According to the U.S. Census, Pierce County experienced the largest net increase of people moving from another county within the United States in 2016. The affordable housing stock in Pierce County is not sufficient for the rapid population growth in Pierce County and rental prices are soaring. With wages not increasing at the same rate as rental prices, households are slipping further into economic insecurity. Visiting a food pantry can help households make ends meet faced with a rising cost of living.

The end of each month is particularly busy at emergency food sites. The average SNAP (formerly food stamps) benefit is \$1.40 per meal, but the average meal price in Pierce County is \$3.13. Many SNAP recipients run out of their benefits by the end of the month and rely on food pantries so that they don't go hungry. Households experiencing food insecurity use a variety of coping mechanisms to stretch their food budget, like eating expired foods, buying less-expensive but often less-nutritious foods, or skipping meals entirely. These coping mechanisms can have a negative impact on people's physical and emotional health. In 2017, EFN provided our Partner Programs with enough food for every guest to leave with food for nine meals. Visiting a food pantry provides a household with the food they need to prepare nutritious meals so that they do not have to use coping mechanisms like skipping meals.

A food program guest recently shared how visiting a food pantry helps them meet their basic needs while managing an autoimmune disease:

The food is a godsend. I don't go shopping a lot because I have a wheelchair. Coming here gets me the basic necessities to cook myself a healthy meal. I don't get a lot on food stamps, if I didn't come here I don't know where I'd get my basic necessities.

Seniors in particular are experiencing a deepening need for emergency food. Visits by seniors have increased by 33% since 2011 and now account for nearly 1 in 4 food pantry visitors. Additionally, seniors made an average of 8.8 visits per year, far greater than the rest of the population. Older adults face the challenge of living on a fixed income and many of them have health-related dietary restrictions. As the Baby Boomer



Guests lined up at one of EFN's Partner Programs

generation reaches retirement age, many of them without retirement savings, we anticipate that our Partner Programs will continue to see an increase in the number of older adults that they are serving.

Impact

In 2017, EFN provided our Partner Programs with 14,446,002 pounds of food, at no cost to them. More than 60% of the food distributed by our Partner Programs was sourced from EFN. At the end of each year, we send our Partner Programs an Annual Survey. Our Partner Programs are asked to share their challenges and successes throughout the year and the ways EFN can improve our services to them. We learned the following from our 2017 survey:

- 97% of our Partner Programs maintained an adequate supply of staple food
- 94% of our Partner Programs were able to access food from EFN when needed
- 92% of our Partner Programs did not have to turn away a guest due to a lack of food

Our Partner Programs also shared the following feedback about our services in 2017:

“EFN made a significant contribution by delivering our weekly subsidies this year! With our erratic transportation, it was a much-needed boost to our ability to stay open.” – Samoan Family Services

“We are thankful for EFN and Mother Earth Farm! Warehouse folks and drivers are amazing. Thank you for the addition of milk – so appreciated.” –Trinity Community Food Pantry

“EFN [food] is provided in good quantity, it lasts all day, and first and last clients are able to receive the same amount of food. Now we are able to have self-select model and better product variety on a stable basis.” – Lakes Nourish



A donation of 40,000 pounds of Rainier cherries EFN received in 2017

EFN is grateful for the generosity of the Tulalip Tribes. Your support was used to collect, store, and distribute 14,446,002 pounds of food to our Partner Programs, providing individuals experiencing food insecurity with a reliable source of food. When people have their nutritional needs met they can focus at work and at school and have a better overall quality of life. Thank you for helping us ensure that no person goes hungry.