

# First Solano County Food Day encourages healthy eating

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A Solano County public health program joined forces with a food bank to kick off the county's first-ever Food Day on Tuesday.

The county's Nutrition Education and Obesity Prevention program, together with the Food Bank of Contra Costa and Solano and other local organizations, held the national event at the courtyard of the county building at 355 Tuolumne St.

It was also a regular distribution day for the food bank's Community Produce program, which attracts about 220 people each day.

"We definitely wanted to start in a smaller scale, that's why we've teamed up with the food bank," said Aida Camarillo, health education specialist. "Our target group is already here. We are sharing with them healthy recipes they can make with the produce they got today, and the other booths are teaching them how to grow their own food."

The county program currently provides education to fourth graders about the importance of healthy eating and physical exercise, Camarillo said.

The food truck, carrying thousands of pounds of produce, comes to the site twice a month for distribution. On Tuesday, those lined up for the produce received onions, carrots, zucchini, apples, oranges, pears and potatoes. Those who can self-certify that they meet the low-income requirement can receive the produce during the Community Produce distribution day.

Barbara Stanley of the food bank said the joint effort only strengthened the organization's goal.

"We want to bring attention of good nutrition to everyone, and the importance of healthy food," Stanley said. "Food Day brings recognition to that."

Irene Ginter and her husband carried bags full of produce Tuesday afternoon after lining up for about a half hour.

"This is the greatest," Ginter said.

She said she found out about the program about six months ago and it has changed her life.

"It made me cry when I first heard about it," the Vallejo woman said.

She said the program is her main source of produce and she would stretch the food out to last them for two weeks, like making a huge pot of cabbage soup that would last her for many days.

"At least I'm eating," Ginter said.

At Food Day, she said she's also received a lot of information about making the best out of her produce.

Organizers said they hope for a bigger Food Day next year, and the county program is already planning for a Fruit and Veggie Fest in March.

"It's about getting people back to eating real food," said Tatiana Dykes, program coordinator.

For more information on the food bank's program, visit [www.foodbankccs.org](http://www.foodbankccs.org) or call 707-421-9777.