



# THE COVID-19 REPORT

## A MESSAGE FROM THE CEO

**The global pandemic has brought challenges we have never faced before.**

When disasters strike we are often asked if the Food Bank is going to run out of food. The short answer is no—because we're not going to let that happen! And we know our supporters aren't going to let that happen either.

We thank you for stepping up when job loss, food prices and demand for our services were simultaneously skyrocketing.

In the 45 years of serving our community, it's people like you who have allowed us to help our neighbors make it through recessions, devastating wildfires and destructive earthquakes. Rest assured we are here for the long haul and we will continue to nourish our neighbors through this new COVID-19 world too.

With 50 million claims for unemployment filed in California since the pandemic began, we know it's going to take years for many members of our community to get back on their feet. In fact, it was only last year that we saw client numbers level off since 2008's Great Recession.

*(continued)*

## INSIDE

- > Who the COVID-19 economic fallout hurts the most — and why
- > Partners in Service: Agency Update
- > How you are making an impact

***"We are here for the long haul and we will continue to nourish our neighbors through this new COVID-19 world..."***

— Joel Sjostrom, President and CEO, Food Bank of Contra Costa and Solano

# OUR PANDEMIC RESPONSE

## A MESSAGE FROM THE CEO



With the COVID-19 health and financial crisis anticipated to intensify this fall, not only are we focusing on sustaining this elevated level of support, we are planning on the demand growing even more.

As we prepare to increase our capacity to purchase, store and distribute more food, it's clear that in order to keep up with demand, we need to further develop the incredibly effective network of partner agencies, volunteers, suppliers and donors that we have built over the years.

As the world works on eradicating this virus, our priority at the Food Bank is to be proactive and expand our proven systems, so we can be there for our community for whatever comes next.

A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to read "Joel Sjostrom". The signature is stylized with a large loop at the end.

Joel Sjostrom  
President and CEO  
Food Bank of Contra Costa and Solano

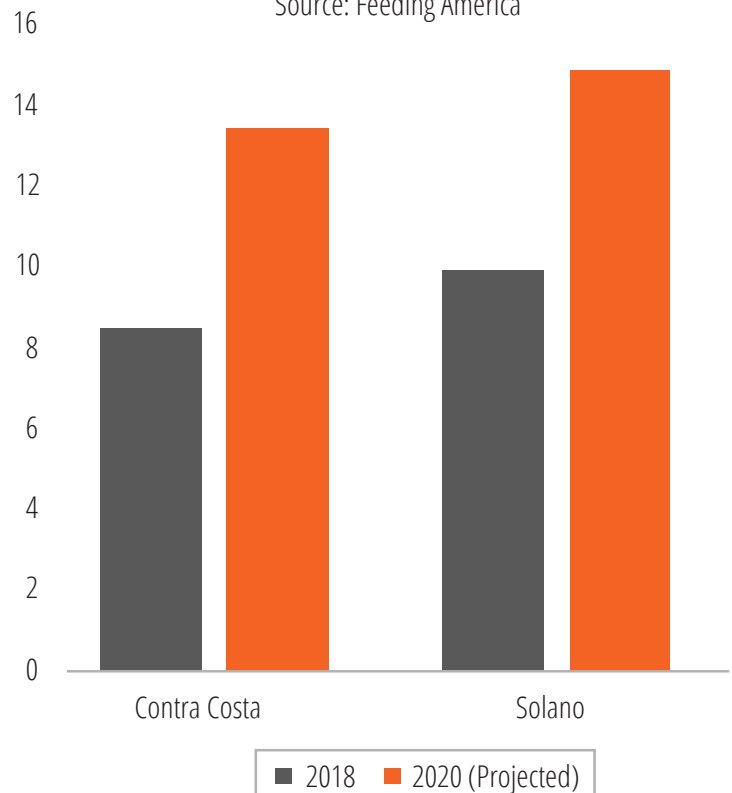
We have seen an increased need and a lot of new faces as the COVID-19 pandemic progresses. **Pre-COVID-19 we were serving 178,000 people each month; currently, we are serving 270,000 people each month!** With businesses remaining closed and unemployment climbing, the toll the pandemic is taking on the working poor is especially great.

## THE NUMBERS

- Every month **29% of households we serve** rely on us for at least half of their food.
- The cost of living in Contra Costa and Solano counties is **42% higher** than the U.S. average.
- In 2020 food insecurity in Contra Costa County has **risen 58%** with a **54% increase** in Solano County (*see chart, right*).
- We are expecting to serve **40,000 more people** each month on average (from pre-COVID-19 figures).

## % FOOD INSECURITY BY COUNTY

Source: Feeding America



## CRISIS RELIEF

### YOUR IMPACT

As an essential service, we have been working hard to continue fulfilling our mission to feed our community. **Here are some ways your support has made an impact...**



We are providing nearly **1,000,000 pounds of food** every week.



**11,769 individuals** received emergency food boxes since March at **drive-thru distributions.**



Partner agencies are **serving** an average of **79% more people.**

## PARTNERS IN SERVICE



*Clients at partner agency, St. Bonaventure, receive the same food and care without leaving their car during bi-monthly drive-thru pantry distributions.*

In early March as news of the pandemic was spreading, we were busy preparing for the potential effect COVID-19 would have on the already vulnerable community we serve: chronically-ill seniors scared to open their doors, parents on fixed incomes and children who no longer had lunch. They were now at a further disadvantage due to consumer hoarding, lack of public transportation and a global shut down of manufacturing.

As first responders during a crisis, we were prepared to quickly distribute even more emergency food boxes and fresh produce to our network of 200 partner agencies. These nonprofits are the soup kitchens and food pantries – like Monument Crisis Center, Loaves and Fishes, Faith Food Fridays and St. Vincent de Paul – who provide individualized, life-changing help to our communities daily and are truly unsung heroes year-round.

And because of the longstanding relationships we have with our partner agencies, we were able to distribute food without delay to the most at-risk communities while quickly implementing innovative ways to address the heightened needs of families experiencing hunger for the first time.

For 45 years our partner agencies have been fighting hunger alongside us. Together, we will continue to proactively develop systems to meet the needs of our neighbors during any crisis.

***“My husband just had an operation, so we do not have an income right now. I am his full-time caregiver and we are really grateful for the food.”***

***— Mary from Pittsburgh***



## OUR RESPONSE IN PICTURES

When COVID-19 struck, we immediately found ways to update our services to provide safety to our clients, volunteers and staff while meeting an increased need for food. We are determined to be there as long as we are needed to protect our most vulnerable neighbors from going hungry.



*“I took in three children under 3-years old because nobody wants to take foster kids during a pandemic. I guess I had a choice, but my heart didn’t have a choice. It will be six months before the foster care money comes in for the kids, so here we are. The Food Bank and [partner] pantries have been such a big help.”*

—Cheralyn from Fairfield



*Clockwise from top left: We’ve expanded our services to include drive-thru food pickups, allowing us to reach more households while safely practicing social distancing. | Our programs have implemented safety and distancing practices with masks and reduced contact with food. | The National Guard helps us assemble 1,500 boxes of food and 10,000 pounds of produce each day (photo taken before mask ordinance). | A first-time client picks up food for his household.*