

Wisconsin Food Pantry Conference Call Meeting Notes

Friday, January 8th, 2021 (Next meeting 1/22/2021; participation details last item on this summary)

Meeting hosted by De' Kendrea Stamps, Foodshare Outreach Program Director, Feeding Wisconsin; led by Jennifer Putzer, Food Security Specialist, The Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP). Thanks to Feeding Wisconsin for hosting calls, and posting information to the FW website. Call support folks distributing food to needy households by providing information, providing an ear for challenges and ideas for solutions of practical problems.

COVID-19 Update:

- 494,747 reported cases compared to 422,065 on December 11th, 2020. There are **27,843** active cases. 5,039 Wisconsinites have died since the COVID-19 Pandemic began. Currently, **1,128** people are hospitalized with COVID; **243** are in Intensive Care. Patients age 60+ are the most common age group for hospitalization.
- **2,924** people reportedly had a confirmed case yesterday.
- On a county level, all but 11 counties are still at a "Very High" status for cases. The 11 counties are all in a "High" status except one that is in a "Medium" status.

Food Supply Update:

- The Coronavirus Food Assistance Program (CFAP 2) deadline was on December 11th, 2020. **Currently, there is no further update on the program applications.** This program provides direct financial assistance due to market disruptions and associated costs due to COVID-19. This phase has increased eligible commodities. Application acceptance began on 9/21/20. Services are available to help you apply.
<https://content.govdelivery.com/accounts/USDAAMS/bulletins/2ab7720>
- The Fifth Round of Farm to Families Food Box was announced on January 4th, 2021. The latest round of support will provide an additional 1.5 billion dollars worth of food added to the already 132 million utilized in the first 4 rounds of this program. The boxes will be filled with fresh produce, dairy, fluid milk and meat as well as seafood products, which is a new addition in the fifth round. So far, this program has distributed approximately 3.3 billion meals.
<https://www.usda.gov/media/press-releases/2021/01/04/usda-announces-continuation-farmers-families-food-box-program-fifth>.
- The USDA is adding several new food items to the TEFAP 2021 Food Availability List. Through special purchase programs including Section 32 Program the USDA is responding to high demand and will be adding frozen blueberries and peaches, fresh sweet potatoes, green split peas, frozen pork chops, and shredded cheddar cheese.

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Food Benefits and FoodShare Access:

- Temporary increase in individual monthly FoodShare allotment by 15 percent for six months, through the end of June 2020.
- Unemployment compensation is excluded from being counted as income for the purposes of calculating FoodShare benefits and eligibility.
- College students are now provided access to FoodShare as requirements that apply only to students have been waived and they are given access to FoodShare similar to impacted workers with reduced work hours due to COVID.
- Online resources for using SNAP benefits have expanded to move towards including more retailers, grocers, direct to consumer sales, and farmers' markets.

Questions/Discussions:

- N/A

Vaccination information:

87,609 vaccination distributed so far. Primarily to skilled nursing facilities as well as Assisted Living Facilities. Also, "Essential Workers" are receiving the vaccine.

<https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/covid-19/index.htm>

Next Meeting: De'Kendra Stamps will host on Friday 1/22/2021 at 10AM. Jennifer Putzer will lead the meeting through the New Year.

How to participate in the calls: Dial: 267-930-4000; Enter Meeting ID: 904-416-028# then when it asks for your participant ID, press "#". Food pantry operators, charitable feeding organizations, emergency response, and social service folks are the key constituents of these calls. During announcements, all participants can mute themselves by pressing mute on their phone or "*#6".

Questions related to notes: Questions related to notes can go to jennifer.putzer@dhs.wisconsin.gov. For urgent questions about The Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP) email DHSTEFAP@dhs.wisconsin.gov. For Emergency food needs, dial 2-1-1, describe your need and location. Staff will assist you in locating food resources.