

Wisconsin Food Pantry Conference Call Meetings Notes

Friday, October 23, 2020 (Next meeting 11/13/2020; participation details last item on this summary)

Meeting hosted by Stephanie Jung Dorfman, executive director, Feeding Wisconsin; led by Kitty Kocol, Wisconsin Coordinator, 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. Call schedule and access information is at

COVID-19 Update

- High and rising. 180,064 reported cases compared to 110,828 on September 25, 2020. Of those 180,064, 38,852 cases are active. 145,509 people are recovering and 1,703 Wisconsinites have died since the COVID-19 Pandemic began. Currently 1,098 are hospitalized with COVID; 279 are in Intensive Care. Patients age 60+ most common age group for hospitalization.
- 3,413 people reportedly had a new case confirmed yesterday; three days ago, all-time Wisconsin saw a high of 4,591 reported cases, reportedly second highest in the nation.
- Positivity rates are highest in the Northwest (52%) and Southeast (34% Milwaukee/Racine/Kenosha); Southwest and Southwest had next highest at (XX) with most other regions 13-15% positivity rates.

Food Supply Update

- USDA just reversed cancellation of Farm to Family Food Box distribution. USDA announced proceeding with \$500M purchase of contracts for household boxes for distribution October-December 2020. USDA has also extended the Summer Feeding Program for children through the end of Calendar Year 2020 (or when all allocated funds are spent, whichever comes first) so school-aged children who are not in school can continue to receive meals.

Food Benefits and FoodShare access

- For October 2020, The Wisconsin Department of Health Services increased the Wisconsin FoodShare (SNAP) benefit to the maximum household award. Benefits added to QUEST Cards November 1, 2020. Call 1-877-415-5164 for QUEST Card services. More information and ongoing updates can be found here: <https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/covid-19/forwardhealth-foodshare.htm>
- De'Kendra Stamps, Feeding Wisconsin reminded pantry operators that folks seeking help with Food Share enrollment can call 1-877-366-3635 and talk to a specialist.
- Pat Leigl from Salvation Army in Appleton discussed a pressing need safe operation of a shelter to host homeless folks who both need food and lack shelter. Kocol offered to inquire of the TEFAP Network.
- *Update: Following the meeting, USDA announced renewal of The Farm to Family Food Box program for a 4th round of food distribution through year-end. Nationwide food purchase of \$500M about 50% of previous quarter. <https://www.usda.gov/media/press-releases/2020/10/23/usda-announces-fourth-round-farmers-families-food-box-program>*

Questions/Discussion

- Donna Ambrose, Wausau (Marathon County) concerned about logistics of Farm to Family Food Boxes (CFAP: COVID Food Assistance Program). Boxes oversaturated in Wausau. Distributions to agencies not in the food distribution business. Necessitated food rescue from the Neighbor's Place to prevent waste and protect food safety. Unlabeled food; lack of notice/coordination.
- Marty Lee, Wautoma Food Pantry (Waushara County) expressed interest in surplus in Wausau in future. (Kocol offered contact info exchange.) Lee described its mobile distribution in the county; nine locations earlier in the year, soon to be four, drive-thru locations including Waushara County Fairgrounds and a local fire department. The Waushara County Food Pantry reports feeding about 2,400 households/week through the mobiles. Many households work in Ag or hospitality and receiving neither FoodShare nor unemployment. Feeding many more folks than past who are aged 40-50 years. Families are home-schooling children of necessity during Pandemic; to some degree, this shifts food use/needs.
- John Bradley, Portage Food Pantry described its outdoor distribution model and concerns about how to manage indoor/outdoor food transfers and how that will affect building conditions.
- Pat Leigl, Salvation Army of Appleton is seeking strategies and resources to help the agency find the safest way logistically to conduct an outdoor or quasi-outdoor soup kitchen for people who have no shelter. Cassie Faulks, Northeastern Coordinator for Feeding America Eastern Wisconsin, recommended Pat reach out to Nan Paul at the Green Bay Salvation Army. Cassie thought Nan could be a great resource.

Next Meeting: De'Kendrea Stamps will host on Friday, November 13th at 10AM. Stephanie is on leave through the 2020 holidays.

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 will be muted. We will open the lines for questions and comments to follow and participants can mute themselves by pressing mute on their phone or "*#6."

Questions related to notes?: Questions related to notes to kittykocol@dhs.wisconsin.gov For non-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.