



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Media Advisory

Yolo Food Bank Launches COVID-19 Relief Fund **Rapid-response initiative addresses 30% increase in food assistance needs** **of Yolo County residents since start of pandemic**

The Yolo Food Bank COVID-19 Relief Fund launched today, a rapid-response, community-driven effort to supply emergency nutritional support to county residents who have been devastated by the pandemic.

“The need we’re seeing in our community is unprecedented,” said Yolo Food Bank Executive Director Michael Bisch. “In the five weeks since the shelter-in-place order we’ve experienced a 30% increase in requests for food assistance, primarily from community members seeking our assistance for the very first time. By donating to the COVID-19 Relief Fund, Yolo County businesses and residents will help us to meet that need and get food to as many of our neighbors as possible, as quickly as possible.”

Assisted by more than 700 new volunteers, YFB has adapted and expanded services significantly during the crisis, including:

- Initiating an emergency food home delivery program to nourish low-income senior citizens and health-compromised residents, providing doorstep service to

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more than 2,200 households every week, serving 5,500 residents

- Adding eight new food distributions to the 120 existing monthly distributions throughout Yolo County
- Delivering three daily meals to almost 200 at-risk homeless residents sheltered by the County and cities in local motel rooms
- Providing procurement, storage, and logistical support for bulk shipments of tens of thousands of diapers, wet wipes, liquid hand soap dispensers, and other essential goods on behalf of the County of Yolo and local nonprofits
- Establishing comprehensive social distancing protocols at all food access sites to ensure the health of staff, volunteers, and the community that YFB serves

YFB is in partnership with the Yolo County Office of Emergency Services, as the lead coordinating organization for all emergency food response and essential goods distribution countywide during the disaster.

“Yolo Food Bank is an essential first-responder on the front lines of this crisis, ‘flattening the curve’ and providing economic disaster relief,” said Yolo Food Bank Board President

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and local farmer Tom Muller. “The demand for our services has never been higher, and our ability to meet that demand is dependent upon philanthropic gifts from businesses and individuals. We’re asking our friends and neighbors to help keep Yolo County fed during this crisis by donating to the COVID-19 Relief Fund.”

The Yolo Food Bank COVID-19 Relief Fund was established with generous seed funding from some of the region’s leading businesses and philanthropic funders. Nugget Markets, Wells Fargo, Kelly Foundation, Bank of America, Travis Credit Union, and Community Harvest of Davis are among those joining Muller and his wife, Shelley, in making commitments.

To donate to the COVID-19 Relief Fund, or for more information, visit <https://yolofoodbank.org/>, or contact Joy Cohan at 530-383-1814 or joy@yolofoodbank.org.

For 50 years, YFB has led the battle against food insecurity in Yolo County. YFB manages a network of more than 200 partnerships – grocers, farmers, wholesalers, processors, healthcare providers, corporate and individual funders and grantors, school districts, local governments, and 72 nonprofit organizations – that collect and distribute food to more than 45,000 people across Yolo County every month. In 2019, YFB opened its new

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food recovery warehouse and operations facility. Currently, six million pounds of fresh produce, dairy, meats and other foods are collected and distributed from the facility annually. The full capacity of the site is 10-12 million pounds of food each year, enough to meet the full food security need of Yolo County residents.

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