



## **MEDIA ALERT**

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## Second Harvest to Expand Produce Express Distribution

**Erie, PA., September 18, 2019** – A core strategic objective of the Second Harvest Food Bank of Northwest Pennsylvania is to ensure that those facing hunger in our area are receiving access to quality, nutritious food. Second Harvest is expanding its Produce Express Program by offering two additional distributions at Second Harvest each month in an effort to achieve that goal. This will increase the number of Produce Expresses at Second Harvest to four each month.

The first of the new Produce Express distributions will take place this Wednesday, September 18<sup>th</sup> at 2:30 p.m. Going forward, additional Produce Expresses will take place on the 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Wednesday of each month at 2:30 p.m. at the Second Harvest.

Second Harvest started hosting a monthly Produce Express distribution at its warehouse in July of 2016. In the first year of the program, Second Harvest distributed enough food to provide 25,000 meals. The following year (2017-18 fiscal year), Second Harvest expanded that distribution to occur twice each month, which increased the food provided to nearly 57,000 meals to those in need. Last year, during the 2018-19 fiscal year, the Produce Express at Second Harvest distributed nearly 175,000 pounds – or enough food to provide more than 145,000 meals. Second Harvest will continue to hold a Produce Express distribution twice per month on the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Tuesday at the food bank.

The significant increase in meals supplied is an indicator of the need in northwest Pennsylvania. The expansion of the Produce Express program on the 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Wednesday of each month, on a different day of the week and at a different time of the day, will reach new families who may not be able to take advantage of the Tuesday distributions. Additional distributions are an effort to meet the need in the area by providing twice as much fresh, healthy food options.

This new Produce Express distribution is open to all who meet the income qualifications and reside anywhere within Second Harvest's 11-county service area. Event details include:

What: Second Harvest Produce Express Program

When: Wednesday, September 18th at 2:30 p.m.

Where: Second Harvest Food Bank of NW PA, 1507 Grimm Drive, Erie, PA 16501

\*Families and individuals who wish to participate are not required to pre-register for the distribution.

Each distribution will supply enough nutritious fruits and vegetables to provide eligible individuals and families with around 25-50 pounds of nutritious food, free of charge. By making fresh, healthy produce available to those who normally would not have access to it, Second Harvest is working to encourage the community to eat healthier and make better nutritional choices.

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***About the Second Harvest Food Bank of Northwest Pennsylvania***

The mission of the Second Harvest Food Bank of Northwest Pennsylvania is to provide food to those in need within 11 counties of northwest Pennsylvania while creating awareness and educating the community on the realities of hunger. Second Harvest provides food to 399 member agencies and distribution partners throughout the 11 counties of northwest Pennsylvania. These organizations include food pantries, soup kitchens, shelters, Produce Express mobile distributions, Military Share – a Produce Express Program, School Pantries, Backpack Programs and Senior Box distribution sites. In the most recent year, Second Harvest has distributed 9.6 million meals to individuals in need. Second Harvest serves the following 11 counties in northwest Pennsylvania: Cameron, Clarion, Clearfield, Crawford, Elk, Erie, Forest, Jefferson, McKean, Venango and Warren.