



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Zachary Webb
Second Harvest Food Bank
P: 814-459-3663 x 114
zwebb@NWPFoodbank.org

Second Harvest Continues to Offer Support to Those in Need of Food in Erie County

Erie, Pa., June 9, 2020 – The Second Harvest Food Bank of Northwest Pennsylvania continues to amplify its efforts in Erie County to provide hunger relief during the COVID-19 crisis and beyond. As the largest hunger relief organization in the 11-county service area, Second Harvest provided **5,241,541 meals** through **216 hunger relief agencies** in Erie County during 2019. It is anticipated that the COVID-19 crisis will cause unemployment numbers to rise in our region. Second Harvest is positioned to provide help for the anticipated increased need for food.

“Unfortunately, we have seen many new households being served in the months since the COVID-19 crisis started. This is reflective of the challenges many are facing during this pandemic,” says Second Harvest CEO Karen Seggi. “Food insecurity is a problem year-round, but it has become especially prevalent during the current crisis.”

If you or someone you know is in need of food and resides within Erie County, please call the Second Harvest Emergency Food Line at (814) 459-3663 x 117, or visit the agency locator at nwpafoodbank.org/agency-locator to find a distribution site.

In addition to matching you with one of the hunger relief agencies, Second Harvest also offers the following programs listed below:

- Member Agencies and Produce Express** – Second Harvest provides many of the food distributions for the Erie county food pantries. Second Harvest’s Produce Express program also delivers truckloads of food for up to 200 struggling families in need where traditional food pantries are not available. Distributions occur at varying times each month. Contact Second Harvest for more information.
- SNAP Outreach** - Second Harvest provides pre-screening and application assistance for those applying for Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) – formerly known as “food stamp” - benefits.
- Senior Box Program** -Those in need, who are 60 years of age or older and meet certain income requirements are encouraged to enroll in this program. More than **328,305 meals were distributed through the Senior Box Program in Forest County** in 2019. Senior boxes are distributed across 57 locations in Erie County. Contact Second Harvest for dates and times.

- **Military Share** – The Military Share program is designed to provide fresh, nutritious foods for families with at least one active duty military member, or veteran of their families. Contact Second Harvest for upcoming distribution dates and times.

- **BackPack and School Pantry Programs** – The Second Harvest Backpack and School Pantry programs provide children with nutritious, child-friendly food when other resources, such as school lunches and after-school meals or snacks, are not available. School pantries have set distribution schedules and offer ongoing food assistance services in a safe, secure setting. Contact Second Harvest for more information.

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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. Last year, Second Harvest distributed 9.6 million meals through an anti-hunger network of 399 partner organizations. Second Harvest serves the following 11 counties in northwest Pennsylvania: Cameron, Clarion, Clearfield, Crawford, Elk, Erie, Forest, Jefferson, McKean, Venango and Warren.