Partnership Addresses Need for Emergency Food During COVID-19; Michigan Serves as Model to Secure, Deliver Emergency Food

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LANSING, Mich. – A partnership between state government, Meijer and the Food Bank Council of Michigan will help feed a growing number of residents turning to food banks during the COVID-19 crisis.

The collaborative project between the State Emergency Operations Center (SEOC) and Food Bank Council directly responds to the massive need being placed on the state's seven regional food banks.

"School closures, unemployment and rising poverty related to the pandemic are disproportionally impacting people already at risk of hunger," said Gov. Gretchen Whitmer. "Working together, the State of Michigan and our partners in the nonprofit and business sectors can help families and seniors put food on the table during these difficult times."

Through a memorandum of understanding, now serving as a model for other states, Meijer initially sourced $1.6 million in food products with delivery to Michigan food banks starting this week. Delivery of a $2 million second round will start as early as May 1.

Food items provided in the program include canned vegetables and fruit, pasta, hot and cold cereal, and protein products such as canned salmon, peanut butter and canned beans.

Dr. Phil Knight, executive director of the Food Bank Council, credited the SEOC, Michigan Department of Health and Human Services, Federal Emergency Management Agency, Attorney General's office and state Department of Technology, Management and Budget for activating the program in just over a week.

"This amazing partnership means less Michiganders will go without food during this already incredibly stressful time," said Knight. "The need is massive, but the unwavering commitment to create food security remains steadfast."

In Michigan, the food bank network's distribution volume has jumped 41% since early March. Projections show that even a 1.1% increase in unemployment and 1.5% increase in the poverty rate will raise Michigan's food insecurity rate from 13.6 to 14.6%, increasing the number of food insecure Michiganders by 100,000.

For more information on the Food Bank Council of Michigan's response to COVID-19, visit www.fbcmich.org/covid-19/.

Information around the outbreak is changing rapidly. The latest information is available at Michigan.gov/Coronavirus and CDC.gov/Coronavirus.

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Coronavirus Disease 2019

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Stay Smart. Stay Safe. @MichiganHHS reports today, June 17, 2021, 172 new COVID-19 cases & 20* deaths. For * details bit.ly/2KcnkrO. Michigan's total cases are now 893,002 & 19,598 deaths. Find the latest data & #COVID19 news at

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