



Food Security For All:

A Strategic Plan to End Hunger in Our City

2008 Progress Report

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



San Francisco Food Security Task Force
(Originally submitted January 2007)

Message from the Chair

As we move forward with our task of hunger prevention for the residents of our City, an economic recession and a climate of budget cutbacks threaten various food programs while demand is anticipated to increase. These essential nutrition programs support families and individuals who are at risk of hunger in San Francisco. Consequently, the San Francisco Food Security Task Force and the City faces new and ongoing challenges to improving food security.

The prices for wheat, dairy, meat, and produce are rapidly increasing causing more people to struggle to afford a nutritious diet without local assistance. The increasing price of energy puts a squeeze on low-income households, further eroding their food purchasing power. As more and more families depend on food banks to supplement their diets, scarce United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) commodities mean fewer food items in regular neighborhood pantries.

Last year the San Francisco Food Bank served 118,000 and distributed 27.4 million pounds of food, enough for 58,000 meals per day. This year the program is serving 124,000 people and are on track to distribute 31 million pounds of food, enough for 66,000 meals per day.

As a City, San Francisco has a higher proportion of older adults than all other California counties living on a fixed income who are vulnerable to rent increases and inflation, who now have less to spend for food. Included in this group is a large population of SSI recipients who are not eligible for food stamp benefits.

School meals and snacks are under pressure due to State budget cuts and reimbursement rates that are not enough to meet regionally high costs. While the Direct Certification program allows school children who receive CalWORKs and food stamp benefits to be automatically certified for free lunch, our challenge is to create an interface between the School District and Human Services systems that can be used to identify all eligible children throughout the school year.

While significant challenges lie ahead, the San Francisco Food Security Task Force is pleased to report some successes with the hunger issues that we are working on:

In 2006, the Food Stamp Program was awarded a \$1 Million grant by the USDA to be used to increase participation in food stamp benefits and to further our mission of finding ways to connect San Francisco residents with the Food Stamp Program and increasing access by making the application process as uncomplicated as possible.

The US House of Representatives passed Consolidated Appropriations Bill (CAB), to fund the Women, Infants and Children Supplemental Nutrition Program (WIC) at \$6.02 Billion- enough for states to service 8.55 million participants. In San Francisco, 1,370 participants avoided being dropped from the program.

Through the financial support from the Mayor's Office and the Department of Children, Youth and their Families, San Francisco Unified School District's Student Nutrition Services department rolled out salad bars in 25 schools. The salad bars have been a huge success, and have increased the availability and consumption of fresh produce among students participating in the

meal program.

The Department of Aging and Adult Services (DAAS) is piloting an emergency home-delivered meal system, and the Commodity Supplemental Food Program (CSFP) remains intact this year, in part due to successful advocacy by the San Francisco Food Security Task Force and other food advocates.

The 2007 Farm Bill Food Stamp Provisions provide for several regulation changes that we will be implementing this year including:

- ◇ Increasing the minimum benefit
- ◇ Increasing the minimum standard deduction
- ◇ Excluding combat pay as income
- ◇ Removing the cap on dependant care deduction
- ◇ Excluding certain retirement and educational accounts from resource limits

This year, the San Francisco Food Security Task Force is continuing to work on the recommendations in our strategic plan while advocating for legislative policies that strengthen the nutrition programs that protect our community against hunger.

Leo O'Farrell
San Francisco Food Stamp Program Director
Chair, San Francisco Food Security Task Force

Executive Summary

This update summarizes the San Francisco Food Security Task Force’s progress in addressing the recommendations outlined in its strategic plan. For each major topic area, this update identifies:

1. Accomplishments
2. Work in progress
3. New directions
4. New challenges

A more detailed summary for each Program may be found in the pages, which follow.

Update for Food Stamp Program (FSP)

Accomplishments

- ◇ Food Stamp Program awarded a \$1 Million USDA participation grant
- ◇ Food Stamp Program established the Food Assistance Service (Call) Center
- ◇ An ordinance amending the San Francisco Park Code now requires San Francisco Farmers’ Markets to accept food stamp benefits, WIC and Senior Farmers’ Market nutrition programs

Work in Progress

- ◇ A food stamp web application is in development
- ◇ 18 remote food stamp application sites have been selected to provide assistance with the new website, when ready

New Directions

- ◇ The next year will focus on the development and launching of the web application program and setting up the remote application sites

New Challenges

- ◇ Increasing the language capacity (other than English) of the Food Stamp Program Call Center
- ◇ Cultivating employee morale following significant workflow changes

Update for School Lunch and Breakfast Update

Accomplishments

The San Francisco Student Nutrition Services:

- ◇ Added salad bars to 25 schools in the district
- ◇ Increased participation in the School Meals Program
- ◇ Increased the number of students qualifying for reimbursable meals

Work in Progress

The San Francisco Student Nutrition Services is working on:

- ◇ “Grab and Go” breakfast program in four schools
- ◇ Hot breakfast menu in 10 elementary schools this spring

New Directions

- ◇ Implementing a new Point of Service system which will improve accountability

New Challenges

The San Francisco Unified School District has:

- ◇ A \$40 million budget deficit for 2008-2009
- ◇ Rising food and transportation costs are placing additional pressure on tight budgets
- ◇ Aging kitchen equipment and inadequate distribution facilities need upgrades

Update for Summer Food Service Program

Accomplishments

- ◇ A new site has been added in the Sunset District
- ◇ Ongoing media events were arranged to advertise the availability of Summer Lunch
- ◇ DCYF hosted the First Annual Summer Lunch Appreciation Reception
- ◇ DCYF surveyed site supervisors to elicit feedback regarding the meals

Work in Progress

- ◇ Summer 2008 postcards announcing the program were sent out in March 2008
- ◇ Brochures were sent out in May 2008
- ◇ Door hangers will be distributed in areas close to Summer Lunch sites

New Directions

- ◇ DCYF will be assessing the administrative structure of the program to increase efficiency in distributing the meals

Update for Women, Infants and Children Supplemental Nutrition Program (WIC)

Accomplishments

- ◇ The new WIC Food Package will enhance the nutritional quality of foods available to WIC participants
- ◇ The House passed a Consolidated Appropriations Bill funding WIC with \$6.02 Billion

Work in Progress

- ◇ The WIC community will gather input and support from potential WIC stakeholders on ways to maximize the benefits of the new WIC Food Package

New Directions

- ◇ Direct the City's lobbyist to advocate for adequate federal funding
- ◇ Ensure that the program has adequate staffing to serve eligible populations
- ◇ Develop a policy statement strongly opposing pending cuts to federal nutrition programs

New Challenges

- ◇ Advocate for federal WIC funding to keep up with food inflation
- ◇ Sustain quality nutrition services and provide WIC with the tools to fight the nation's epidemic of obesity and overweight

Update for Programs for Older Adults

Accomplishments

- ◇ The Department of Aging and Adult Services is piloting an emergency home-delivered meal system for older and/or disabled adults
- ◇ The San Francisco Food Security Task Force workgroup is researching a pilot program to provide delivered groceries to homebound individuals
- ◇ Created a workgroup to address food stamp ineligibility for SSI/SSP recipients
- ◇ Advocacy efforts for the Commodity Supplemental Food Program (CSFP) were successful and the program will continue to service over 9,500 older adults

Work in Progress

- ◇ The San Francisco Food Security Task Force will continue to work on all remaining strategic plan recommendations

New Challenges

- ◇ The budget crunch at both the state and local levels will exacerbate the shortage of nutrition resources for older adults in San Francisco