



Regional Food Bank

of Northeastern New York

Alleviating hunger ... Together

Summer Food Service Program

Background

The Summer Food Service Program (SFSP) is a federally funded program operated nationally by the U.S. Department of Agriculture. The New York State Department of Education administers the SFSP at the state level. The program was established to provide nutritious meals to children during summer vacation when the National School Lunch and School Breakfast Program meals are not available. However, while more than 17 million children participated in the free or reduced priced school meal program in FY 2006, only about 2 million children received meals during the summer months, largely due to the lack of local programs. Simply put, too many of America's kids are going hungry in the summer.

Overview of the Regional Food Bank of Northeastern New York

The Regional Food Bank of NENY works to alleviate hunger by collecting large donations of food from the food industry and distributing it to charitable agencies including food pantries, soup kitchens, shelters, and other programs serving hungry and disadvantaged people. In 2008, the Food Bank provided nearly 20 million pounds of food to more than 1,000 charitable agencies in 23 counties of New York State. The Regional Food Bank is one of eight food banks in the state and a member of Feeding America, the Nation's Food Bank Network.

Regional Food Bank and the Summer Food Service Program

Many children are unable to participate in the Summer Food Service Program because there are not enough sites to serve all the children who need to eat. To help address this problem, the Food Bank first made the commitment to sponsor the Summer Food Service program in 2008. We and our partner agencies provide children in low-income areas with nutritious meals in the summer when they would otherwise go without. Currently, the Food Bank sponsors the Summer Food Service Program at sites in Albany, Fulton, and Montgomery Counties.

Regional Food Bank Summer Food Facts

- Demand at emergency feeding programs like food pantries and soup kitchens increases during the summer, as parents of children who receive school breakfast and lunch have to provide additional meals for their families, putting additional stress on low-income families' tight budgets.
- In Fulton and Montgomery Counties, the Food Bank is the sole sponsor of "open" summer food sites, which are sites open to the general public. Without our support, children at these sites would have no means by which to access nutritious, free meals.
- The Food Bank served over 5,000 nutritious breakfasts and lunches at summer food sites this July, compared to 3,300 last year, highlighting the increased need for services in our community.
- More than 12 million children in the United States are food insecure – unable to consistently access adequate amounts of nutritious food necessary for a healthy life.
- President Obama has set a goal of ending childhood hunger by 2015. Strengthening child nutrition programs—including the summer food service program—is an essential strategy for the nation to reach to achieve this goal.

Regional Food Bank of Northeastern New York
965 Albany-Shaker Rd.
Latham, NY 12110
518-786-3691