

**Tri –County Food Clearinghouse**  
**servicing Fond du Lac, Manitowoc & Sheboygan Counties**

**Quarterly Report**  
**April - June 2010**

*Hunger is isolating; it may not and cannot be experienced vicariously. He who never felt hunger can never know its real effects, both tangible and intangible. Hunger defies imagination; it even defies memory. Hunger is felt only in the present.*

*--Elie Wiesel*

Tri-County Clearinghouse activities during the second quarter continued to focus on education, gathering of data and forming relationships. The Project Manager continued to work with the food pantries in the tri-county area (Fond du Lac, Manitowoc and Sheboygan), piloted the food supplier survey and interview process, established an agreement with a storage and transit provider, met with management staff of and toured the Feeding America Southeast Wisconsin and Hunger Task Force Milwaukee facilities and began discussions with other food provider groups – such as NOURISH to begin a partnering process.

**Pantries**

Food pantries are central to the food distribution – providing safe storage and meeting community needs by dispensing food to needy individuals and families. Second quarter activities related to the food pantries included the following:

- Pantry surveys continued to trickle in, data was compiled and contacts have been initiated with pantries that have not responded to the survey process.
- Onsite visits were made to pantries in Sheboygan and Manitowoc counties to observe the food distribution process, discuss the strengths and needs of their organizations, learn more about their food supply/suppliers and speak with both the pantry volunteers and consumers.
- The Project Manager attended the quarterly meetings of food pantries/food resources in Manitowoc and Fond du Lac counties and the meeting of the Sheboygan County Food Bank.

(Appendix A – Sample Food Pantry/Meal Program Calendar for the Month of July 2010 for Fond du Lac, Manitowoc and Sheboygan Counties and Pantry Strengths and Needs Chart)

**Suppliers, Other Food Resources, Storage and Transportation**

Identifying the potential food supply sources and resources, as well as the organizations already accessing these sources and resources, are key to developing a comprehensive strategy. The food supplier survey and interview process was piloted with Johnsonville Sausage, LLC on June 7, 2010. Special thanks to Ryan Pociask of the Johnsonville Marketing Team for reviewing the draft survey document, making suggestions for revisions and for coordinating and participating in the pilot interview with Mary Madden and Wendy Radder. (Appendix B – Food Resource Supplier Survey)

Additional activities related to gathering supplier information included meetings with:

- Jim Sartori and Steve Tittl of Sartori Food Corporation resulting in an agreement to pilot a donation process in late July or early August 2010.
- Lou Gentine of Sargento Foods Incorporated to provide an overview of the study of developing a comprehensive strategy for supporting the food delivery system in the tri-county area of Fond du Lac, Manitowoc and Sheboygan counties.
- Steve Weinreich of Dean Foods has agreed to work with the Sheboygan County Food Bank and Sheboygan and Plymouth Area United Way in donating products as they become available.

As information was gathered from both the pantries and suppliers, it became apparent that to immediately support the food distribution system storage and transport of donated products needed to be addressed. Jim Sartori connected the project to Jeff Goelzer of Glacier Transit and Storage (GTS). After meeting with Jeff Goelzer, John Ziegler and Kyle Nothem, a process was drafted to test both storage and transport of items that may be donated and cannot immediately be distributed or stored by the pantries. (Appendix C)

During the testing of the storage and transport process, GTS agreed to donate the storage costs. If transport of items to a pantry or central location within a county is required, GTS will work with the Sheboygan Food Bank and United Way to incorporate the run into GTS's current dispatch system or will bill the cost at a nominal rate. The Sheboygan County Food Bank and United Way will be able to use GTS's software system to track food donations, inventory, distribution quantities, etc. This process offers the means to support the current system and provide the project with preliminary information on both storage and transportation requirements.

**Feeding America Eastern Wisconsin and Hunger Task Force**

On site visits and meetings were conducted with Feeding America Eastern Wisconsin (formerly America's Second Harvest of Wisconsin) and Hunger Task Force. Project Manager, Ann Wondergem; Sheboygan and Plymouth Area United Way Director, Bill Weissert and from Lakeland College Student Intern, Lee Ann Van Der Sande, met with:

- Bonnie Bellehumeur – President of Feeding America Eastern Wisconsin and Jeff Kujawa – Operations Manager.
- Sherrie Tussler – Executive Director of Hunger Task Force

The following provides a high level overview of the two organizations.

<b>Feeding America Eastern Wisconsin</b>	<b>Hunger Task Force</b>
Serves 36 Counties in Eastern Wisconsin	Primarily serves the City of Milwaukee
Provides food to pantries, meal programs/soup kitchens, group homes, day care programs, senior centers	Provides food to pantries, soup kitchens, homeless shelters, senior meal sites and subsidized permanent housing
Food supply/funding comes from food & grocery industry, maintenance fees that are charged to member pantries/organizations to cover storage and transportation expenses, individuals, foundations, corporations	Food supply/funding comes from The Emergency Food & Assistance Program (TEFAP), federal stimulus program funds, individuals, foundations, corporations, bequests, organizations, Hunger Relief Fund of Wisconsin, investments & other revenue

Partnered with Wal-Mart/SAMS, Target, Pick 'n Save	Leases farm land from Milwaukee County to grow more than 300,000 pounds of vegetables & fruit
Has recently instituted a Community Cares Program providing some foods at no cost (no maintenance fee), Kids Kafe, Back Pack Program	Kohl's Serves Supper for Kids, Harley-Davidson Foundation's Fueling Young Minds
2009 Annual Report Revenue - \$25,959,179 Expenses - \$25,739,264	2009 Annual Report Revenue - \$13,137,479, Expenses - \$11,877,213 End of Year Net Assets - \$5,227,684
2009 – 12 million pounds of food	2009 – 9.5 million pounds of food
37 FTE/PTE	44 FTE/PTE
Some local donors – Sargento Foods, Inc., Wal-Mart Stores, Target Stores, Aldi's, Dean Foods, Festival Foods, Fresh Brands, Johnsonville Foods, Inc., Lakeside Foods, Pick 'n Save Stores	Some local donors – Kohl's Department Stores, Piggly Wiggly, Sargento Foods, Inc., Time Warner Cable

Additional areas discussed in the meetings and during the onsite tours included storage capacity (refrigeration, freezer, dry), transportation requirements, use of volunteers, developing food resources, staffing levels, partnerships, advocacy, education and standards.

Feeding America also provided information on Hunger in Wisconsin 2010 using data gathered from the five (5) Feeding America Food Banks serving Wisconsin. The following is a summary of the data for the 36 eastern Wisconsin counties served by Feeding America Eastern Wisconsin from that report.

This data is based on responses by 717 agencies representing 1,073 programs (pantries, meal programs) and 356 clients who were interviewed at emergency food program sites.

- **Client Profile**
  - ***Gender***
    - 50% male and 50% female
  - ***Race***
    - 66% White, 27% African American, 5% Hispanic, 3% Native American, 2% Asian
  - ***Age***
    - 32% under 18, 58% between 18 & 64, 10% over 65
- **Employment and Education**
  - ***Government Food Assistance***
    - 41% received Food Stamp benefit, 44% participated in school breakfast program, 65% received free or reduced-price school lunch
  - ***Education***
    - 42% high school diploma, 23% less than high school, 23% beyond high school, but not completed college, 8% non-college business, trade or tech school, 4% completed college or beyond
  - ***Employment Status***
    - 73% unemployed, 14% employed full time, 13% employed part time

- **Choices**

- ***During the past year***

- 54% of adults have missed or cut back on meals because they did not have enough money to buy food
    - 18% of children did not eat enough because there was not enough money to buy food
    - 34% had to choose between paying rent or mortgage and buying food
    - 41% paying for heat or utilities and buying food
    - 32% paying for medicine or medical care and buying food

### **Partnerships**

Other food related activities during this quarter included meeting with Carol Christensen of NOURISH - Farm to Family Philanthropy. Founded in 2009, NOURISH is currently a member of Sheboygan County Interfaith Organization (SCIO). NOURISH enables collaboration between local farmers and volunteers to bring meals of fresh, locally grown ingredients to struggling families that deserve to eat well. NOURISH provided snacks to the Boys and Girls Club during the summer of 2009; and this year NOURISH is working with the Sheboygan and Plymouth Area United Way, the Boys and Girls Club, Head Start, SCIO and the Sheboygan Area School District in providing summer lunches to children at two sites in the City of Sheboygan (Sheridan and Jefferson schools. (Appendix D- NOURISH Brochure)

Additional meetings are being scheduled with NOURISH and other local groups to initiate discussions on how to work together to ensure limited resources are utilized effectively to meet the needs of all three counties.

### **Preliminary Information**

Preliminary information from potential food suppliers and resources indicate the following:

- Many local food suppliers currently donate food and/or funding to Feeding America and the Hunger Task Force.
- As a national organization, Feeding America has developed relationships, both nationally and statewide, with companies including, but not limited to: Nabisco, Kellogg's, Sam's Club, Wal-Mart, Pick 'n Save and Target.
- Food available for donation may not be housed at the local company's warehouse in Fond du Lac, Manitowoc or Sheboygan County but may be at a regional warehouse in another part of Wisconsin or another state.
- Some products are labeled for international sale and do not meet USDA requirements. Cost of relabeling of the product for donation purposes may be prohibitive.
- Some products are locally produced for another company under that company's label. These customer based products require permission from the customer prior to donation.
- Companies have varying internal policies on donation of products.
- Some foods can only be used for feeding programs (e.g. shelters, churches, etc.) and cannot be used for pantry distribution.

### **Next Steps**

- Ongoing personal contacts with the pantries that have not responded to the survey to gather needed and new information.
- Continue on-site visits to some of the pantries in each county.
- Attend regularly scheduled meetings of the food pantries in Fond du Lac, Manitowoc and Sheboygan counties.
- Conduct additional personal contacts with the major food and basic needs suppliers to assess the potential supply sources.
- Explore the best way to establish an Advisory Committee with membership from all three counties and representation from major suppliers, food banks/pantries, packaging and trucking companies, and other food programs, etc.
- Continue to research the benefits of integrating food recovery, harvesting and certified kitchen programs into a food distribution system.
- Continue to meet with representatives from NOURISH and other food organizations such as Sheboygan Area Local Food Alliance (SALFA) to collaborate on any new initiatives as well as the Food Clearinghouse project.

In conclusion, meetings with Feeding America, Hunger Task Force and NOURISH in tandem with information provided by the pantries, illustrates the need for a comprehensive strategy that will build on existing resources and organizations and foster capacity for improved integration and collaboration to support and expand the food delivery systems in the tri-county area. The business plan will incorporate this strategy to ensure development of a system to support both the current and long term needs.