10 Resolutions for the New Year

As one year concludes and another begins, it’s natural to spend time thinking about those things for which you are most grateful. Certainly family, friends, and good health are a few things that come to mind. The staff of Feeding Tampa Bay would like to add another to that list – you, our agency partners! We want to express our sincere thanks to all of you who play a critical role in getting the food to people in need. Without you, food banks would not exist. Because of you the food reaches the elderly, disabled, homeless, working poor, single parent families, battered women, abused children, newly unemployed, and others in need. We are grateful for your compassion; your energy, time and hard work in distributing the food; we are thankful for the kindness shown to those of us that work at the food bank; and most of all we are thankful for you! Together we make a difference!

Join us in making 2016 the best year yet! We’ve come a long way, yet we still have far to go. We need to Be Food Forward meaning we have to work together to engage and mobilize the community, innovate and optimize our distribution practices, and deliver healthier outcomes to those we serve. With the New Year upon us, now’s the perfect time to re-evaluate your food program, make goals, make changes, and help us in serving more. Below we’ve listed ten New Year’s resolutions that can help you do just that!

- **Write a Grant**
  There are billions of dollars awarded every year to nonprofit organizations through foundations and corporations. Writing a grant could enable your food pantry to grow, improve, and strengthen.

- **Meet New People**
  Get to know the other Feeding Tampa Bay agencies in your area. Other agencies are some of the best resources out there! You can share tips, partner, help and support each other. For more information on agencies in your area, visit our website.

- **Get Organized**
  Take the time to make sure your agency’s paperwork is in order. Does your agency have all the necessary items including copies of pest control invoices, temperature logs, volunteer trainings, and more neatly organized and accessible?

- **Stay in Touch**
  Feeding Tampa Bay loves hearing from you. Whether your agency wants to share a touching story or voice a concern, we’re here to listen. Take time to touch base more often with our Agency Relations department and let them know how your agency is doing.

- **Eat Smart**
  Research shows us many in our community do not have even a basic understanding of nutrition or food skills. With the growing epidemic of obesity and other health problems, your agency can help by sharing nutrition education to your clients. To find out more, attend one of our upcoming Nutrition Education classes at the warehouse.

- **Branch Out**
  Commit to finding new volunteers for your agency. With new volunteers come fresh ideas, renewed energy, and additional experience and expertise.

- **Invest in the Future**
  Almost 70% of the food Feeding Tampa Bay distributes is perishable and the number will continue to grow. Now is the time to invest in more and better refrigeration. Upgrade your coolers and freezers or purchase brand new ones.

- **Participate in Feeding Tampa Bay’s Premier Product Program**
  Feeding Tampa Bay’s PPP program offers discounted pricing on a variety of food items. This program is a great opportunity not only to obtain needed items for your agency, but to save you money too!

- **Try Something New**
  As many of those we serve are the working poor, studies show that making it to a food relief organization during normal business hours can be a significant challenge. Eliminate this barrier by adding evening or weekend distribution hours to your food pantry.

- **Raise Awareness**
  Help the Food Bank raise awareness about hunger in our community by liking our social media posts and sharing them with your contacts. You can follow us on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram.

---

**DID YOU KNOW?**

Feeding America is the nation’s largest domestic hunger-relief organization -- a powerful nationwide network of 200 food banks and 60,000 partner agencies working together to impact almost every community in all 50 states. Last year alone, the Feeding America network distributed over 3 billion meals to people in need! Feeding America leads the fight against hunger not only by securing and distributing meals, but also by raising awareness, educating the public, and cutting-edge research.

**FUn FACT:**

Feeding Tampa Bay is a member food bank of Feeding America. In fact, we are one of the twenty largest food banks in the network!
Congratulations to Community Cupboard Food Pantry on the acquisition of their new 12-foot box truck. This 100% volunteer run food pantry distributes 5,000-6,000 pounds of food a week to over 425 families! With this new addition to their pantry, this agency will be able to collect and distribute even more food better serving the Apollo Beach community.

December 12, 2015 was a big day for the Feeding Tampa Bay team as staff, volunteers, partners, and sponsors gathered together to serve hundreds and hundreds of families holiday grocery items. The line of cars snaked around the complex as families waited patiently for their turn to receive a turkey, produce, and holiday staples like green beans and gravy. An annual tradition, this event coined “From Our Table to Yours Family Food Distribution” shows what amazing impact the community can have when we band together to serve our neighbors in need.

For the fourth year in a row, Feeding Tampa Bay and The Mosaic company partnered together in December to ensure that 700 students and their families at Gibsonton Elementary School received a holiday meal. With the help of a $15,000 grant from Mosaic, Feeding Tampa Bay was able to source all the makings of a holiday dinner: ham, roast beef, mashed potatoes, mac & cheese, stuffing, gravy, and more!

The St. Petersburg Bowl kicked off on December 22nd with Fill the Bowl - a program that provides weekend meals for children in need. Players from the Marshall and UConn football teams worked alongside kids from two Boys and Girls Clubs to pack 2,750 bags of food for Feeding Tampa Bay's child Backpack Program. These bags of food will provide over 13,000 meals to hungry children in our community!

One of our agency partners, the Thomas Promise Foundation, had a wonderful “2nd Annual Dinner with Santa” event that impacted over 200 people and many local children. Children and their families were able to dine with Santa and then leave with presents, winter items, and food. It was a great success with so many lives touched right before the holidays!

Meet V
Voltario “V” is one of Feeding Tampa Bay’s star drivers. V has worked for Feeding Tampa Bay for 7 months, however his food banking experience extends well beyond that. Formally an employee at one of our partner agencies, Religious Community Services, V spent 3 years dedicated to food relief in Pinellas county where he not only worked as a driver and warehouse staff member, but also as a USDA TEFAP coordinator and in the Agency Relations department. When the opportunity to work for Feeding Tampa Bay arose, V decided to make the change as his work here allows him to impact more people in West Central Florida. One of V’s favorite aspects of his work at Feeding Tampa Bay is his involvement with our Mobile Pantry Program. His work with this program allows him the opportunity to spend time directly in the community affecting change and making a difference to hundreds of individuals.