March is National Nutrition Month

It’s that time of year again, when many Florida grown fruits and vegetables are in season! You’ll be seeing strawberries, squash, blueberries, green beans, and much, much more available in the upcoming months. Feeding Tampa Bay is continuing to bring in significant amounts of produce for our agencies to distribute to clients. Providing fresh produce is a healthy nudge that will help improve the nutritional intake of the families you feed.

Coincidentally, March is National Nutrition Month. An entire month that is dedicated to bringing awareness to healthy eating. This year’s theme is “Put Your Best Fork Forward”, emphasizing how small changes in your diet can make a big difference to your health.

The clients you serve may have limited food choices due to financial constraints, transportation, and the ability to prepare food. Providing more availability to produce will increase the nutrients and vitamins in their diet.

In the spirit of National Nutrition month, here are some healthy eating resources:

- Nutrition workshops hosted by the Children’s Board Family Resource Center
- Participate in the The Humane Society’s initiative to promote Meatless Monday
- Utilize easy produce recipes from Feeding Tampa Bay to hand out during your distribution
- Visit www.choosemyplate.gov to find helpful information and tools on nutrition

REMEMBRANDS

Boxes

Please remember to bring back your banana boxes and pallets to Feeding Tampa Bay. These are important items that will help the food bank get food out to agency partners and clients.

Submit your success story!

We love hearing about your food programs and achievements! Contact Jessenya Ramirez at jramirez@feedingtampabay.org to share the story of how your agency is working to build capacity and serve the community.

DID YOU KNOW?

Did you know cabbage was one of the first known vegetables to be cultivated? Cabbage is an excellent source of vitamin C and K. Cabbage also contains virtually no fat and can be steamed, boiled, braised, microwaved, stuffed, or stir-fried, and eaten raw.

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Try this Sautéed Cabbage recipe!

In a large skillet, heat 1 ½ tbsp of margarine, add ½ head of shredded cabbage, and 2 grated carrots.

Sauté over high heat until tender, approx. 4-6 mins.

Season with salt and pepper as desired.

SUCCESSION PLAN

What would happen if you were unable to run your agency?

Many agencies don’t have a staff member or volunteer on hand that could just step in and take charge in a moment’s notice if an emergency were to occur. We ask that your agency consider creating an Agency Succession Plan to ensure things continue to run smoothly both at your pantry and also with Feeding Tampa Bay and any other outside organizations you have built relationships with. A Succession Plan will address issues related to both planned and unplanned departures. If your agency has someone that already is or can become a trained successor, please submit that information to Feeding Tampa Bay so that it can be added to your agency file.

To start and or submit your own Succession Plan, please visit the following link: https://form.jotform.com/6304426099696965

For more information please contact Jessenya Ramirez at: 813.254.1190 x229 or jramirez@feedingtampabay.org

Agency Accounts

Feeding Tampa Bay is now requiring ALL agencies to write their agency account number directly on their checks.

The Annual Membership fee for our agency partners will be billed to your agency account. Your membership payment is due by March 31, 2017. If you need a copy of your invoice or have any questions about the fee, please contact Rakesha Brown at 813.254.1190 x204 or rbrown@feedingtampabay.org.
**United Food Bank of Plant City**

We are excited to showcase the United Food Bank of Plant City in action giving their clients a healthy eating nudge! This agency hosted a health literacy class, with the help of Chef Michael Ambrosino from South Florida Baptist Hospital, incorporating a cooking class to directly teach their clients how to cook the squash they received.

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**Feeding Tampa Bay Hunger Dinner**

Feeding Tampa Bay held its second Hunger Dinner in February. At the dinner guests were separated into two categories -- food secure and food insecure. The food secure guests received a beautiful, three-course, plated meal while the food insecure guests waited in line to be served a traditional soup kitchen meal. The goal of the Hunger Dinner is to open the eyes of the participants and emphasize the disparity in our community. Both food secure and food insecure guests shared a table during dinner and discussed the reality of hunger and the tough choices the families we serve have to make every day.

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**Your Pantry Matters**

The February class for our Feed and Lead series was “Your Pantry Matters”. This session covered information regarding recruiting and managing volunteers and also on how to find, apply, and receive grants for your pantry. The guest speakers for this session were Feeding Tampa Bay’s own Megan Carlson, Community Engagement Manager, and Shane Holman, Grants Coordinator.

If you missed this class, don’t worry because different educational sessions are held every month! Please check your email and look for flyers advertising upcoming session topics.

Lunch is provided at all of the sessions and you have a great opportunity to grow your pantry as well as to network with other partner agencies and Feeding Tampa Bay staff.

For more information or to RSVP, please email Karen Serrano Arce: kserranoarce@feedingtampabay.org

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**ACCESS Florida**

Help provide your clients with more potential resources in their county!

Your clients maybe eligible to receive some more assistance with the Florida Department of Children and Families Automated Community Connection to Economic Self Sufficiency (ACCESS). Direct your clients to the nearest location near them, as there is an office in every region. Your clients can apply for Food Assistance (SNAP), Medical Assistance, and Temporary cash (TANF). The applications are available in english, spanish, and creole.

For more information please visit: http://www.myflorida.com/accessflorida/

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**Meet Dianne**

Feeding Tampa Bay is proud to welcome Dianne Montes, our new Inventory Associate. Dianne likes her work environment because it allows her to interact with like-minded people at Feeding Tampa Bay. She recently received her BS from USF-St.Petersburg in Environmental Science, Policy, and Sustainability with a Minor in Geospatial Sciences. Dianne was also a Coastal Community Climate Adaptation intern with UF/IFAS Extension Pinellas County. A few fun facts about Dianne is that she was a “band nerd” in high school and played the tuba, she is an expert at car karaoke, and she thinks Back to the Future and Back to the Future 2 are the greatest movies ever.