



For immediate release:
December 15, 2017

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UPDATE: Emergency Food Distribution to Continue through Next Week

Foodbank of Santa Barbara County Emergency Response

***Daily distribution of healthy groceries in response to Thomas fire will
continue until December 22; two sites in Isla Vista will offer food on
Thursday, December 21***

BEGIN UPDATED INFORMATION

(Santa Barbara, CA / December 15, 2017) – In addition to providing food to the American Red Cross evacuation shelter at UCSB, the [Foodbank of Santa Barbara County](http://www.foodbanksbc.org) has arranged daily emergency food distribution that began this week to continue through next week from **Monday, December 18 through Friday, December 22** to serve regions of the south county identified as high-need. These include **Santa Barbara's east and west sides, downtown, Goleta, and Carpinteria**. **Two locations in Isla Vista** will offer food distribution on Thursday, December 21.

As the Thomas fire unfolds, the Foodbank aims to ensure that families, children, vets, seniors and all people facing hunger in the county have access to healthy food in the neighborhoods where they live.

Community members can pick up bags of fresh produce, nutritious shelf-stable groceries and protein items at the following locations (**PLEASE NOTE NEW HOURS**):

- **Foodbank warehouse, from 1 pm to 3 pm at 4554 Hollister Ave., 93110 (next to Page Youth Center)**
- **Foodbank Offices, from 12 pm to 2 pm at 1525 State St., 93101**
- **Franklin Neighborhood Center, from 12:30 pm to 2 pm at 1136 E. Montecito St., 93103**
- **Westside Boys & Girls Club, from 12 pm to 2 pm at 602 W. Anapamu St., 93101**
- **Saint Joseph Church, from 12 pm to 2 pm at 1500 Linden Ave, Carpinteria, 93013**

Two food distributions will take place in the Isla Vista area on Thursday, December 21 that are open to the public. Community members may receive food at these locations:

- **Isla Vista Youth Projects from 3:30 to 5:30 pm at 970 Embarcadero del Mar, 93117**
- **Catholic Charities beginning at 3 pm at St. Mark's Parish, 6550 Picasso Rd, 93117.**

Everyone is welcome. No paperwork/documentation is needed and no registration will be required.

The Foodbank requests community support to provide food for all affected by the Thomas fire. Those wishing to contribute via or visit [foodbanksbc.org](http://www.foodbanksbc.org), click "Donate" for "Thomas Fire Hunger Relief."

END UPDATE

Children and families are facing increased hunger as a result of the Thomas fire. One significant factor is that local students missed nearly 200,000 meals they would normally have received at school because district-wide closures through the end of the year mean the breakfast and lunch programs they rely on for daily nutrition will not be operating.

South County public schools enroll a total of 22,617 students, 10,246 of whom qualify for free/reduced price breakfast and lunches. Those students going without breakfast and lunch constitutes 20,492 missed meals every day. Santa Barbara Unified provides free breakfast for all enrolled students, which brings the potential total of daily meals being missed to 28,439. Over the seven days of school closures, children in Santa Barbara's south county missed up to 199,073 meals as a result of the Thomas fire.

Local schools were closed for seven days prior to the holiday break because of the Thomas fire. Students will not have access to school breakfasts and lunches during the remainder of the year because the fire-related closures run into the winter recess.

Numbers of students who went without school meals and how many meals they missed follow:

- Santa Barbara Unified, 15,185 students enrolled:
7,238 students qualify for free/reduced price breakfast and lunches = 14,476 meals/day lost
 - SBUSD provides free breakfast for its other 7,947 students = 7,947 add'l meals/day lost
- Carpinteria Unified, 2,269 enrolled; 60% eligibility rate for free meal programs:
1,368 students qualify for free/reduced price breakfast and lunches = 2,736 meals/day lost
- Goleta Union Elementary, 3,571 enrolled:
1,339 students qualify for free/reduced price breakfast and lunches = 2,678 meals/day lost
- Hope Elementary, 1,010 enrolled:
273 students qualify for free/reduced price breakfast and lunches = 546 meals/day lost
- Montecito Union, 413 enrolled:
28 students qualify for free/reduced price breakfast and lunches = 56 meals/day lost

Distribution has become more difficult at the same time that secondary impacts have led to increased need for food in the community, *even for those who have not been displaced from their homes.*

Normally the Foodbank distributes food throughout Santa Barbara County via 300 nonprofit partners and programs. At this time, many of those agencies are closed or reducing services because staff have been sent home to protect their health.

In addition to school meals not being served to children who face hunger on a daily basis, local school closures mean that Foodbank nutrition education programs *with food distribution* are also not taking place, eliminating another source of healthy food for kids and their families.

Many residents are unable to work because businesses shut down or reduce work hours during emergencies, so hourly employees face sudden loss of wages. Owners of businesses connected to tourism and recreation, along with their service providers and vendors, experience immediate loss of income.

Volunteers who want to help this week may sign up at <http://ow.ly/LDxq30hgfJq>

The Foodbank is the only distributor of USDA food in Santa Barbara County, the primary provider of food in case of disaster within the county, and the fiscal sponsor of [Santa Barbara County VOAD](#).

About Food Bank of Santa Barbara County

The Foodbank of Santa Barbara County is transforming the health of Santa Barbara County by eliminating hunger and food insecurity through good nutrition and food literacy. The Foodbank provides nourishment and education through its award-winning programs and a network of 300 nonprofit partners. In Santa Barbara County, one in four individuals receive food support from the Foodbank, 38% of whom are children. Last year, the Foodbank distributed 10 million pounds of food, half of which was fresh produce. For more information, visit www.foodbanksbc.org.