

AGENCY AND ADVOCACY UPDATE

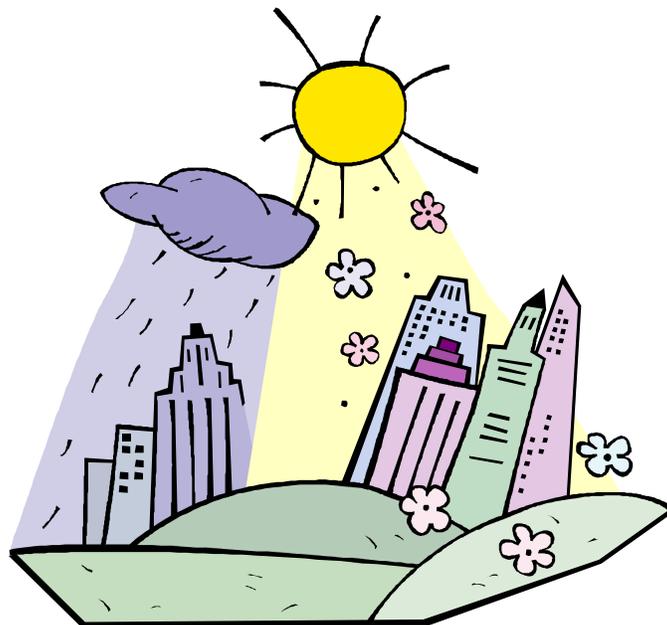


April, 2010

SECOND HARVEST FOOD BANK OF LEHIGH VALLEY AND NORTHEAST PENNSYLVANIA IS A PROGRAM OF COMMUNITY ACTION COMMITTEE OF THE LEHIGH VALLEY



April, 2010



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DATES TO REMEMBER:

Friday, April 16th – Last day to submit letters for the 2010 Letter Writing Campaign, see page 7 for details.

News You Can Use

My Package of Frozen Meat looks “Funny”

The bright red color of ground beef is often used by consumers as a selection factor when purchasing hamburger, but a dark gray-purple color may not necessarily be a bad thing.

All warm-blooded animals contain a pigment called *myoglobin* in meat tissues. This pigment is normally a dark grayish-purple but when it comes in contact with oxygen, it becomes *oxymyoglobin* and reacts by turning a deep red color. Meats that are vacuum-packed have not been exposed to oxygen long enough to turn red.

It is for that eye-pleasing coloration that most fresh ground beef sold in clear packages at the market is packaged using a clear film that is oxygen permeable. The oxygen goes through the film and allows the meat to turn that pretty red color we associate with fresh beef. This is why it is not recommended to freeze meat in store packaging.

Coloring can also indicate spoilage. If your package of ground beef is grayish all the way through and does not turn red when exposed to air for fifteen minutes or so, it may be spoiled. Usually your nose will tell you right off the bat, as spoiled ground beef will smell sour. It will also feel tacky to the touch. Don't take any chances with spoiled meat. When in doubt, toss it out.

Reprinted from <http://homecooking.about.com>

Why Does Second Harvest Want Me to Count Self-Declaration Forms?

We hope that our member pantries noticed the request in the January *Update* for a count of the Self-Declaration of Need forms collected from July 1 to December 31, 2009. Each month since, we have asked that you report any new “self-Decs” that you’ve received. This is in addition to the normal participation reporting that you do each month.

The reason is that The Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture (PDA) is collecting information on the number of households state-wide that are served with government supported foods (State Food Purchase Program funding and USDA commodities). PDA would like to be able to document the increases in participation at local pantries all across Pennsylvania.

Since each head of household signs a form once each fiscal year (July 1-June 30), the number of forms provides a pretty accurate indication of unduplicated participation.

Please help us to provide the information that PDA needs. Maria will be calling you if we are missing your report.

Cook's Corner

Blueberry Smoothie

Ingredients

- ◆ **1 cup** chilled fresh blueberries or frozen blueberries, slightly thawed
- ◆ **1/2 cups** chilled pineapple-orange juice, pineapple-orange-strawberry juice, or orange-strawberry-banana juice
- ◆ **1 carton** vanilla fat-free yogurt (6-ounces)



Directions

1. In a blender, combine blueberries, juice, and vanilla yogurt. Cover and blend about 1 minute or until almost smooth.
1. Pour immediately into glasses. If desired, top individual servings with any remaining blueberries to taste.



Nutrition Facts	
Calories	117
Total Fat	0 g
Saturated Fat	0 g
Cholesterol	1 mg
Sodium	Sodium 36 mg
Carbohydrate	Carbohydrate 28 g
Fiber	2 g
Protein	3 g
Percent Daily Values are based on a 2,000 calorie diet	

Eliminating Confusion Surrounding Food Recalls



Food Recalls can occur quite frequently and be scary if you do not know or understand which specific foods or brands are being recalled. There are now online tools to help clear up the confusion surrounding recalls. By following 4 simple steps, you can get the facts about recalls.

The best way for anyone to get email notifications of all food recalls is by signing up for free email updates from www.recalls.gov. This is a one-stop shop for all U.S. Government recalls. We encourage everyone who needs recall information to sign up today! It's fast and it's easy.

Follow these few steps and you will receive an instant acknowledgement of your subscription from the Department of Health and Human Services:

1. Log on to www.recalls.gov
2. Click on the "Food" tab at the top.
3. Click on "Sign Up for Free Recall Updates by E-Mail" (in red toward top of page)
4. This takes you to the Department of Health and Human Services sign up page, where you will:
 - a. Enter your email address and confirm same; and
 - b. Check the box titled FoodSafety.gov Recalls and Alerts under the FoodSafety.gov Updates section.



A Few Words on Quality and Safety Dates

Is This Food Still Good? Basic Guide to Package Codes and Dates

What Do the Numbers Mean?

The codes and dates printed on food packages have different purposes. If a food appears to be “outdated” it does not automatically mean the food is unsafe or unusable.

Below is a guide to many different numbers one might find on food packaging. Use this to help you determine whether or not your food is safe to consume. Remember: When in doubt, throw it out.

Code Date

Manufacturers may stamp numbers on products so they know when and where they were produced. This is helpful if there is a recall and foods need to be taken off the shelf.

Manufacturing or Packing Date

Product may be stamped with a date preceded by “MFG.” This date can be used along with recommended shelf life for guidance on how long a product will have its best flavor and quality.

Best If Used By Date

This is the date by which the product is at its highest quality, but can still be safely consumed for a period of time after the date. The length of time is dependent on the product and its storage.

Expiration Date

This is the date the manufacturer recommends the product be used by for best quality (flavor, color, texture). If stored properly, items remain safe and wholesome. However, flavor, color, and texture may change slowly.

Pull or Sell By Date

The manufacturer recommends this be the last day the product be sold in a retail store. The product will remain safe and wholesome for a reasonable amount of time for use after purchase. The amount of time depends on the product type and storage conditions.

Freezing

Many products can be frozen to extend the acceptable storage time. Freezing a product holds it in its present state. Bacteria cannot grow in the freezer. However, freezing will not kill bacteria if it is already present.

Highlights from the 2010 Anti-Hunger Policy Conference



The 2010 Anti-Hunger Policy Conference, co-sponsored by Feeding America and FRAC was held in Washington DC in early March. Hundreds of anti-hunger advocates, elected officials, and legislative staff gathered at the Capital Hilton to discuss the overwhelming problem of childhood hunger in the United States and strategized ways to end it.

The U. S. Departments of Agriculture and the Census Bureau report that in 2008, 16.7 million children lived in food insecure households. That's 22.5% of the nation's children. President Obama pledged to end Childhood Hunger by 2015 and we at Second Harvest Food Bank of Lehigh Valley and Northeast PA strongly support this goal

Advocates and elected officials must work together to end childhood hunger by 2015. The Childhood Nutrition Act is our most effective tool because it supports a number of child nutrition programs that play a vital role in helping nutrition, child care, and educational and enrichment activities while improving their overall health, development, and school achievement. Therefore, we must have a strong bill this year. Contact Congress today and encourage them to champion effective efforts to expand and improve program access for children who rely on these critical nutrition programs.

Call to Action

Call, email, or write your representatives and tell them that strong Child Nutrition Reauthorization Bill is essential to meeting the President's goal of ending childhood hunger by 2015. Please contact Elisa Zaehring, Advocacy Coordinator, at 484-893-1106 if you have any questions or comments. Tell Congress that we need a bill that:

1. **Increases** program access and supports participation by underserved children and communities;
2. **Enhances** nutrition quality and provides adequate meal reimbursements; and
3. **Modernizes** technology in order to simplify program administration and operation.



Advocates' Corner



It's Not Too Late To Participate in. . .

The Spring 2010 Letter Writing Campaign

This year, Second Harvest Food Bank of Lehigh Valley and Northeast Pennsylvania is working with our state association, the Pennsylvania Association of Regional Food Banks, in an effort to impress upon our State Senators and Representatives the importance of Pennsylvania's vital anti-hunger program – THE STATE FOOD PURCHASE PROGRAM.

The goal is the allocation of adequate resources to meet the needs of Pennsylvanians struggling with hunger and food insecurity - 1.4 million at last count by the US Department of Agriculture.

You can play a key role in this effort by communicating your support for this program to your State Senator and your State Representative.

If you would like to help – here is what you do:

- ◆ **Rewrite** the enclosed letter either by hand or using a computer.
- ◆ **Address** one to your State Senator and one to your State Representative (if you need help identifying your officials, refer to the back of the Sample Letter in this Update, call Elisa Zaehring, Advocacy Coordinator at 484-893-1106 or go to <http://www.pasen.gov>).
- ◆ **Type or print your name and home address** at the bottom of each letter.
- ◆ **Sign the letters.**

Regardless of which letter you choose (House of Representative, Senate or Both), **mail the letters to me at the address below by Friday APRIL 16, 2010 or drop them off at the Food Bank (2045 Harvest Way in Allentown).**

(Do NOT mail them to your Senator or Representative)

In early May, your letters will be hand-delivered to PA General Assembly Letters along with those of others around the state who want Pennsylvania's budget to reflect our concern for children, seniors, and people with disabilities, the working poor, and other vulnerable Pennsylvanians.

Please be a part of this important effort.

You are also encouraged to share this message with others - make multiple copies of the letter to share with friends, family members, co-workers, volunteers, clients and others who might be willing to participate in this effort. Gather all the completed letters and send them to me.

Thank you for your consideration and all you do help end hunger.

Send completed letters to:

**Elisa Zaehring
1337 E. 5th St.
Bethlehem PA 18015**

2045 Harvest Way
Allentown, PA 18104

Phone: (610) 434-0875
Fax: (610) 435-9540
www.caclv.org



Community Action Committee
of the Lehigh Valley

Bits and Pieces

What's So Great About Blueberries?

- Recently, researchers at Tufts University analyzed 60 fruits and vegetables for their antioxidant capability. Blueberries came out on top, rating highest in their capacity to destroy free radicals.
- North America is the world's leading blueberry producer, accounting for nearly 90% of world production at the present time.
- Fresh blueberries are available for nearly eight months of the year.
- Extracts of bilberry (a cousin of blueberry) have been shown in numerous studies to improve nighttime visual acuity and promote quicker adjustment to darkness and faster restoration of visual acuity after exposure to glare.
- Blueberries are great when eaten on their own but can also be added to cereal, yogurt, pancakes and bread.

<http://ac.marywood.edu/acoppola/www/berries.html>