

AGENCY AND ADVOCACY UPDATE



October, 2010

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



October, 2010



Happy Halloween

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DATES TO REMEMBER

The Annual Empty Bowls Event will take place on **Saturday, October 23, 2010**. Please contact Sharon Hall at 610-434-0875 for more details.

In preparation for the event, the Food Bank will close on **Thursday, October 21, 2010** at noon and remain closed until **Monday, October 25, 2010**. If your standing appointment falls during this time, please call the Food Bank to reschedule.

News You Can Use

State Food Purchase Program (SFPP)

The Pennsylvania budget, though passed, has not yet been enacted; therefore, we are awaiting funds for first quarter SFPP allocations. Leftover food that our agencies ordered in 2009-2010 (including frozen meat) may be available to you. Please request your pick list and make an appointment for pickup or delivery. Don't let your participants miss out on the nutritious food available through the program while we wait for state funding.

New Proxy Form

If someone arrives at your pantry claiming to represent a participant and wanting to pick up that participant's food, how do you respond?

At a recent meeting of the Emergency Food Advisory Committee of the Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture (PDA), members discussed the need for a uniform Proxy Form for participants wanting someone else to pick up their food for them. The result is the PA TEFAP proxy form that is included in this mailing. Currently, this proxy form is not mandatory, but PDA requests that we encourage you "to use this form rather than napkins and wrinkled pieces of paper to document proxies (as this makes record keeping a nightmare)."

A similar form will be provided for the participants in Commodity Supplemental Food Program (CSFP). Only CSFP sites will receive that proxy form.

Are You Using the Current Self-Declaration of Need Form?

PDA field representatives report that many pantries are still using last year's form. Even though income guidelines have not changed, new forms (with 2010-2011) must be completed and retained. Copies of the current year's form have been sent to all member agencies. Another copy is included with this mailing. Please use the current year's form. PDA field representatives will be checking for this form during routine inspections.

Recertification for CSFP Participants

During October (the 6-month point of the program year), all CSFP participants must appear **in person** to receive and sign for their packages. It is not necessary to collect income or age verification. CSFP sites should have each participant sign the white copy of the application and return to Second Harvest **or** have each participant sign the regular sign-in sheet and return that. Only one signature is necessary. No boxes should be given to proxy holders in October, or thereafter, without verification that the senior listed on the application is still participating in the program.

Cooks' Corner

Creamy Parmesan Pumpkin Sauce

Basic sauce to flavor low-cost grains and proteins

Ingredients

- 16 ounces fettuccine
- 1 can (12 ounces) evaporated milk (or half-and-half)
- 1 tablespoon cornstarch
- 2 tablespoons butter
- 1 can (15 ounces) solid-pack pumpkin
- 1 teaspoon onion powder
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1 teaspoon garlic powder
- 1 teaspoon dried sage or 1 tablespoon of chopped fresh sage (or thyme)
- 1/4 cup freshly grated Parmesan cheese
- 1/4 cup pine nuts or other nuts (optional)

Preparation

- Cook the pasta according to the package directions.
- While the pasta is cooking, whisk together the cornstarch with 4 tablespoons of evaporated milk.
- Then add to the saucepan with remainder of the milk. Heat over low heat, stirring continuously until the liquid starts to thicken.
- Stir in butter, pumpkin, and seasoning and cook over low heat until heated through.
- Drain the pasta and toss with cheese.
- Then combine sauce and garnish with the pine nuts, if desired.

*You can also use mashed fresh winter squash or left over roasted squash with this recipe.

Nutritional Information Per Serving			
Servings: 8			
309 calories	21 mg cholesterol	52 g carbohydrate	11 g protein
7 g fat	337 mg sodium	4 g fiber	

Source: Canned Food Alliance (adapted)

Fechas en Productos de Alimentos

¿Qué es fechar los alimentos?

"Fecha Abierta" (el uso de una fecha de calendario en lugar de un código) en un producto alimentario es una fecha estampada en la envoltura de un producto para ayudar a la tienda a determinar por cuanto tiempo se puede ofrecer un producto a la venta. También puede ayudar al comprador a saber el margen de tiempo en que puede comprar un producto para que tenga la mejor calidad posible. *No se trata de una fecha de inocuidad.*

Después de vencida la fecha, el producto todavía estará sano, aunque no en su mejor calidad, si se maneja apropiadamente y mantiene a 40 °F (4.4 °C) o menos por el tiempo de almacenamiento indicado en la tabla (vea abajo). Si el producto tiene una fecha "usar hasta", siga la fecha. Si el producto tiene una fecha "vender hasta" o no tiene fecha, cuézalo o congélelo siguiendo el tiempo indicado en la tabla.

¿Es requerido fechar los alimentos?

Las regulaciones federales generalmente no requieren fechas en los productos, excepto cuando se trata de fórmulas para infantes y algunos alimentos para bebés. Sin embargo, si se usa una fecha de calendario, ésta debe incluir el día y el mes (también incluir el año en caso de alimentos no perecederos y congelados). Cuando se usa una fecha se debe explicar su significado mediante una frase, tal como, "vender hasta" o "usar antes de".

En los Estados Unidos no existe un sistema uniforme para fechar alimentos o que sea aceptado universalmente. Aunque más de veinte estados requieren fechas en algunos alimentos, hay áreas del país donde muchos alimentos llevan alguna forma de fecha abierta y otras donde casi ningún alimento lleva fecha.

¿Qué tipos de alimento se fechan?

La fecha abierta se encuentra principalmente en alimentos perecederos como las carnes, aves, huevos y productos lácteos. Fecha "cerrada" o en "código" puede encontrarse en productos como alimentos enlatados o en caja.

Tipos de fecha

- Fecha "**Vender hasta**", sirve para que la tienda sepa hasta cuando puede ofrecer el alimento a la venta. Los productos se deben comprar antes de esa fecha.
- Fecha de "**uso óptimo**" (o "antes de") es una recomendación para usar el alimento cuando éste se encuentra en su mejor sabor o calidad. No se trata de una fecha de compra o de inocuidad.
- La fecha "**Usar hasta**", es la última fecha recomendada para usar el producto mientras se encuentra en su mejor calidad. Esta fecha la determina el fabricante del producto.
- "**Fecha cerrada o en código**" son las cifras de empaque usadas por los fabricantes.

Keep School Lunches Safe

As children head back to school this fall, parents and caretakers may wonder, "What's the most important thing that the kids should take to school with them?" From my perspective as a food safety specialist, I'd recommend an insulated lunch box as the best investment of the school year. For a few dollars, an insulated lunch box can keep children healthy and engaged to learn by protecting them from foodborne illness.

If you pack perishable food in an old-fashioned brown paper bag, it can be unsafe to eat by lunchtime. When children are sent home sick or stay home because of illness, it's difficult for them to succeed in their school work.

Insulated lunch boxes help maintain food at a safe temperature until lunchtime. Perishable lunch foods, such as cold cut sandwiches and yogurt, can be left out at room temperature for only 2 hours before they may become unsafe to eat. But, with an insulated lunch box and a chilled freezer gel pack, perishable food can stay cold and safe to eat until lunch.

Why keep food cold? Harmful bacteria multiply rapidly in the "Danger Zone" — the temperatures between 40 and 140 °F. So, perishable food transported without a cold source won't stay safe long.

Here are some other tips to keep food safe until lunchtime:

- **Clean Hands:** Always make sure your hands are clean before preparing lunches. And, make sure your children understand that they need to wash their hands thoroughly before eating lunch or snacks. "Washing hands thoroughly" means using soap and warm water, and rubbing hands for 20 seconds (the time it takes to sing "Happy Birthday" twice). If water is not available, provide moist towelettes or hand sanitizing gels in the lunch box.
- **Freeze your juice box:** You can freeze juice boxes and use them as freezer packs. By lunchtime, the juice should be thawed and ready to drink.
- **Hot Foods:** To keep hot foods hot, use an insulated bottle like a thermos for foods such as soup, chili, or stew.
- **Non-Perishable Food:** Some food is safe without a cold source. Lunch items that don't need to be refrigerated include whole fruits and vegetables, hard cheese, canned meat and fish, chips, breads, crackers, peanut butter, jelly, mustard, and pickles.

If the lunch box comes home with food in it, make sure to throw away any perishable food items, because they have been unrefrigerated too long!

If you have any other questions about packing lunches safely or have other food safety questions, feel free to contact Second Harvest at 610-434-0875 or the USDA's Food Safety and Inspection Service at the Hotline (1-888-674-6854 toll-free) or online at AskKaren.gov.

Community Financial Resources Visa Prepaid Card

Convenience . . . Simplicity. . . Value. . .

Do you want a debit card and don't have a bank account?

The Community Financial Resources Visa Prepaid Card may be right for you.

Why is this prepaid debit card program a better banking alternative?

- Open a card account with only one piece of ID: either a SSN or an unexpired government issued ID (from any state or country) with a picture and unique serial number:
- Unlike a personal check, the card is universally accepted—wherever a VISA debit card can be used:
- The low monthly fee of \$1.00 is less expensive than most checking account fees:
- Unlike a traditional bank account, there is no minimum balance and you cannot overdraw the card or incur penalty fees for insufficient funds:
- The prepaid debit card comes with unlimited free guaranteed checks that cannot bounce after pre-authorization:
- Unlike a bank account, unauthorized garnishments are not allowed:
- Link the card to a high-yield saving account and transfer money between accounts for free.

The Community Financial Resources Visa Prepaid Card is convenient and cost effective

- With Direct Deposit, your card is automatically loaded with your pay, benefits, or tax refunds and your money is immediately available; no holds, no fees, no waiting in line to cash a check:
- Get secondary "partner" cards to inexpensively send money to family or friends around the world:
- Get "cash back" with your purchase for free and avoid ATM charges. If you need to go to an ATM, go on-line to find ATMs in the Allpoint Network which only cost \$1.50 per transaction:
- Keep track of your card balance with free automatic balance alerts to your mobile phone or email, or call the automated phone system, or check on-line:
- Budget your income and expenses by reviewing 12 months of card transaction history online.

For more information and/or to apply for this service, contact Susan Zlotnick with Community Action Committee of the Lehigh Valley by phone at 484-893-1064 or by email at szlotnick@caclv.org.

Advocates' Corner

Hunger Action Month

As you know, September was Hunger Action Month. I would like to thank all of the member agencies and volunteers who got involved in the many different initiatives that we organized throughout the month. It was a very busy time with a lot of great activities going on, including launching a new website (www.shfbvl.org), conducting the "My Way Pledge" campaign, and attending a number of fairs throughout the Lehigh Valley.

Hunger Action Month was successful thanks to our many volunteers. Their activities included taking the **MY WAY** pledge and designating "their way" to fight hunger, participating in the many food drives that took place throughout the month, volunteering at our warehouse or directly with our member agencies, participating in the "30 Ways in 30 Days" campaign, making monetary donations to the Food Bank, and purchasing Macy's Shop for a Cause passes to benefit Second Harvest.

Local business and community leaders also got involved by encouraging the entire Lehigh Valley and Northeast Pennsylvania community to take action to fight hunger through brief Hunger Action Month videos that aired on our new website. In addition, representatives from Second Harvest attended the Northampton County Wellness Fair where we received almost 700lbs of donated product from the generous employees of Northampton County. Finally, we attended Air Products' CareFair to spread the word about local hunger and recruit volunteers.

As always, we're overwhelmed by the community support surrounding Second Harvest. Thank you for all that you do and help us keep this momentum as we continue to fight hunger in our communities.

Call for Data

In addition to the monthly participation reports that are required of Emergency Food Assistance Providers, it has come to our attention that many food pantries and soup kitchens collect additional data. For example, one pantry tracks the frequency that individuals visit the pantry and found that the average household used the food pantry 3 times per year. This data is not only very interesting, but it could also be very useful in our education and advocacy initiatives, especially, as we continue to dispel myths about hungry people and advocate for strong government responses to hunger. If your pantry collects additional data and you are interested in sharing it with Second Harvest, please contact Elisa Zaehring, Advocacy Coordinator, at 484-893-1106 or ezaehring@caclv.org.

Coming Soon

It's that time again! Second Harvest Food Bank of Lehigh Valley and Northeast Pennsylvania is gearing up for the next Hunger Study to be published in 2011. As you may know, the Food Bank conducts a periodic study of its program participants to identify root causes of hunger throughout our service area. The last Hunger Study was published in 2007 and was based on face-to-face interviews of 350 individuals from 15 member agencies. Elisa Zaehring, Advocacy Coordinator, will be contacting a number of pantries and soup kitchens in the upcoming weeks to discuss data collection for the Hunger Study. Stay tuned for future updates.

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Community Action Committee
of the Lehigh Valley

Bits and Pieces

Fun Facts about Halloween Pumpkins

- About 9,000 years ago, the pumpkin originated in Mexico. It is one of America's oldest known vegetables. Pumpkins generally weigh from 15 to 30 pounds, although some weigh as much as 200 pounds.
- Many people think the pumpkin is a vegetable, but it is a squash fruit related to cucumbers, gherkins, and melons.
- Mostly pumpkins are orange but they also come in dark green, light green, white, red, gray, blue, and orange-yellow.
- Pumpkins grow in continental Europe, India, New Zealand, Australia, and Alaska.
- Pumpkins are rich in vitamin A, beta-carotene, and potassium, and their seeds provide protein and iron.

<http://b4tea.com/fun/days/fun-halloween-facts-interesting-halloween-trivia-fun-facts>