

Survey respondents who do not participate in food assistance programs identified not knowing about them as the primary reason why.

Finding

Conclusion

Users and eligible non-users of emergency food identified lack of awareness of programs, service locations and times, and eligibility criteria as primary barrier to accessing emergency food.

Recommendation #1

Develop easily accessible, multi-lingual, multi-media regular communication about available emergency food assistance programs and services, eligibility criteria and location-date-time information.

Donors identified the compelling nature of a time-sensitive emergency as a primary motivator for taking extraordinary steps (including crowd funding) to bring food to those in need during the 2017 Wildfire Disaster.

Finding

Conclusion

Helping the community and a clear understanding of the urgency of the situation are together key facilitators of food donation for individuals and business owners in the community.

Recommendation #2

Develop a human-centered story-telling campaign designed to decrease the stigma of food insecurity and serve as a platform for potential donors to experience empathy for fellow residents who are experiencing food insecurity.

Awareness of programs, transportation and program dates and times were identified by users and non-users of the emergency food system as being primary barriers to access in the community.

Finding

Conclusion

Vital food safety net providers like the food bank struggle to provide essential services with little-to-no Federal or State funding, diminishing donations and shrinking volunteer pools.

Recommendation #3

Expand food access locations and minimize transportation barriers by leveraging existing place-based service locations and operations to include food distribution within the scope of services offered.

Users and eligible non-users of emergency food lack adequate access to the transportation, food storage and food utilization resources necessary to maintain food security.

Finding

Conclusion

Increasing the availability of locally grown and/or produced low-cost healthy food options will support efforts to increase the number of programs and locations that are able to provide emergency food.

Recommendation #4

Large economic anchor institutions in the community (such as healthcare, education and government institutions) should include supporting access to healthy food for all residents as an essential part of future policy and planning activities.

During the 2017 Wildfire Disaster, cash aid and food donations to providers of emergency food significantly increased as a result of clear and urgent communication over social and print media regarding the need and how to donate.

Finding

Conclusion

Outside of time-sensitive disaster(s), potential funders and donors to the emergency food system lack direct connection to immediate, clearly defined opportunities to provide financial assistance.

Recommendation #5

Non-profit service providers should explore new ways to engage individual, institutional and private industry donors in funding opportunities via new and emerging technology such as social networks and crowd funding tools.