



## Farm to Food Bank

### Alameda County Community Food Bank and UnitedAg Member Farms Team Up to Feed Those Most in Need

#### A Win-Win: Andrew & Williamson/ Good Farms, Rancho Guadalupe and Dynasty Farms providing vegetables and fruit to Food Bank

Oakland Ca, - In one of the first agreements of its kind between a county food bank and California producers, two farms will begin providing, at a reasonable rate, produce to the Alameda County Community Food Bank, allowing it to provide additional much-needed fresh fruit and vegetables to a growing number of residents in need of assistance. This innovative pilot program assists the food banks while keeping the agricultural supply chain together which is critical to the future of food supply.

As the county ends its seventh week of shelter-in-place, the demand for food at local food banks increases every day.

“When the COVID-19 emergency took hold, we experienced a 1,000 percent increase in calls to our emergency food helpline – more than half of which were from households that had never reached out for help before,” says Suzan Bateson, Executive Director of Alameda County Community Food Bank. “The communities impacted hardest by this emergency are those we’re already serving and partnerships with California farms have long been an integral part of our work. Those partnerships have taken on added importance during this crisis – both to serve an unprecedented surge in the number of households needing our help, and by supporting our local farmers who are a vital part of the food system on which we all rely.” ACCFB’s food distribution is up more than 25% year over year and it is providing enough food to serve more than 50,000 people per day.

“Long before the current crisis hit, Alameda County had strong and unique programs aimed at ending food insecurity. Our “Food as Medicine” program and our urban farms were unique models of food delivery and sustainability,” says County Administrator Susan Muranishi. “We are proud of and grateful for the partnerships with California farms that will increase our ability to supply fresh produce to a growing vulnerable population.”

“When the COVID-19 crisis hit, and the foodservice operations all came to a standstill overnight, millions of jobs were lost and with it the demand for our produce. To bring more diverse options to the foodbank, and at the same time recover our cost to grow and harvest it, creative solutions were necessary to take care of those who need it most and help keep agriculture whole.” says A.J. Cisney, General Manager of Rancho Guadalupe.

Deliveries will begin May 5, with nearly 4,000 pounds of strawberries from Andrew & Williamson / Good Farms, Rancho Guadalupe and over 7,000 crowns of broccoli from Dynasty Farms. These are foods that have not been regularly available at the food banks. The pilot program hopes to expand into the larger state network of food banks (California Association of Food Banks) and increase its product offerings. UnitedAg Member Farms are hopeful this concept will grow into something bigger.

# Press Release



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