

## Minneapolis Department of Health and Family Support

### Healthy Food Shelves Initiative

October 12, 2012

8:30 – 10:30am

### Meeting Notes

**Welcome and Introductions:** 8 representatives from Minneapolis food shelves and hunger relief organizations participated in the meeting, along with two staff from the Minneapolis health department and two staff from the communications/marketing firm, Mod and Co.

**Spotlight on the Catholic Charities Food Shelf:** Jacob Schuster, from the Catholic Charities Branch II Food Shelf presented information on the organization's background and current operations. **If you have any questions about their efforts to increase healthy foods, please contact Jacob Schuster at [Jacob.Schuster@cctwincities.org](mailto:Jacob.Schuster@cctwincities.org).** Thank you to Jacob for hosting our meeting!

### Communications Messaging for the Minneapolis Food Shelf Network:

- Mod and Co presented communications ideas to help brand the Minneapolis Healthy Food Shelf Network and encourage donors to give healthy items, including fresh produce. The group liked the colors, design, and material presented, so Mod will move ahead with finalizing everything. **Please view the power point document attached to the email for more details.**
- The Minneapolis Food Shelf Network will have a **logo** that we can use to brand any communications or activities we decide to do as a group, **a value statement** to let people know what we believe (i.e. Everyone Deserves Healthy Food), and a number of **key messages** that can be tailored to different audiences such as "Did you know you can donate fresh produce to your local food shelf?"
- Mod will also create **brochures** to distribute at events and public spaces in your community, a simple **website** with critical information for donors, and various materials like **magnets** with the nearest food shelf donation days and times, **tote bags, window clings, garden signs, and retail signs**. The group also expressed interest in bus ads, but these are cost prohibitive given our small budget.
- The group liked the idea of working with retail stores as a winter strategy, especially focusing on co-ops and health food stores. Brochures and **gift cards in small denominations** (\$5) will be

available for people to pick up (gift cards are then added on to their store purchase at checkout and donated to a designated food shelf). It will be important to explain to donors why their cash donation is important and how it will be used (to buy healthy items that are often expensive for food shelves to purchase on their own).

- Partners also recommended that we could ask stores to sponsor a “round up to the nearest dollar” program on all purchases, with the money raised going towards food shelves. Signs at the register would be helpful for promoting this. The group suggested that tote bags could be sold at the stores, with proceeds going towards food shelves.
- In the spring, community gardeners might appreciate a “growing guide” to tell them what’s in season at different times so they can plan ahead when planting fruits and veggies to donate.
- Mod and Co will help develop a timeline and strategy so that we can **collectively distribute materials to various audiences to raise their awareness** about our food shelves and the need for healthy food items. The group agreed that good target audiences for these messages would be **retail stores, food drive organizers, farmers markets, and community gardeners**.
- Where appropriate, we’ll consider translating the materials into other languages.
- Food Day is coming up on October 24<sup>th</sup> but given the timing, it would be difficult to pull something together to launch the Minneapolis Healthy Food Shelf Network messages at that time. Instead, the group will plan to launch a bit later, perhaps by doing a press event and a letter writing campaign to potential donors (MDHFS staff will coordinate).
- March is food drive month – consider this when planning timing and communications channels.

### **Garden Gleaning Project:**

- Jared Walhowe from the Minnesota Project described the Garden Gleaning Project and gathered feedback from the group on how they had, or would like to, work with gardeners and farmers markets to get fresh produce donations.
- The Garden Gleaning Project (GGP) connects food shelves and community gardeners using a neighborhood coordinator to help build relationships and coordinate logistics until a sustainable system is developed. Currently, they work with CAPI, STEEP, Little Kitchen, and Waite House food shelves. They also have relationships with Kingfield, Northeast, and Brooklyn Park farmers markets.
- GGP does outreach to community gardeners to encourage them to “plant an extra row to donate”. They also help coordinate deliveries and organize harvesting of school/church gardens.

- Jared and his team are coming up with a toolkit of best practices and recommendations for food shelves and community gardeners. It will likely include tips for recreating the neighborhood coordinator model, information on produce food safety and handling, donor liability, and guidelines for harvesting/preparing/delivering food to food shelves.
- Jacob (Catholic Charities) has worked with Dream of Wild Health to get produce (they are co-located in the same building). CAPI is working with 3 of their community gardens (in return for free gardening space, gardeners must donate to the CAPI food shelf).
- Common challenges include coordinating pick up/delivery of produce, getting too much of an unfamiliar item or low-quality deliveries that spoil before they can be given out, and lack of client demand for certain healthy items.
- Food shelves would like to see a list of places that they can give their wasted produce to (i.e. meal programs in churches, Compostadores, etc); transportation is often an issue.

### **Review of Food Shelf Network Goals, Progress, and Future Activities:**

- The group reviewed a handout that recapped the Minneapolis Food Shelf Network's original goals, barriers, and priority areas of action, as well as a summary of progress made during the first 6 months of the initiative. **Please see the attached handout for details.** Partners talked about things they would like to see in the future and activities they would like to work on collectively.
- Simply Good Eating staff would be willing to have satellite office space within a food shelf if it's available – this would benefit the food shelf by having a nutrition expert on-site on a regular basis and allow the nutrition educators to become more closely involved in the community.
- The group agreed that they find the every-other-month- partner meetings helpful for networking, learning about and touring other food shelf facilities, and addressing common issues to increasing healthy foods.
- Partners would like more time to meet with other food shelves in their immediate vicinity. Future meetings will include time for small group discussion and problem-solving.

### **Meeting reflection and wrap up**

- The group briefly discussed interest in splitting produce pallets from Second Harvest with one question about who will split them (food shelves vs. Second Harvest). **If your food shelf is interested in sharing a free produce pallet with another food shelf in your area, please let us know so we can help coordinate!**