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Check Out Hunger campaign at TOPS, other local businesses begins Sunday

Donations help fund Foodlink's anti-hunger programs

ROCHESTER – Each time customers at Tops Friendly Markets and other local businesses open their wallets, they will soon have the opportunity to make a small donation to help those who struggle to put food on the table.

This winter's Check Out Hunger campaign begins Jan. 28 and lasts through Feb. 17. More than 30 Tops stores in the Rochester region are participating, along with other local businesses (see full list below). The donations help support Foodlink, our regional food bank that helps feed more than 200,000 people annually.

"TOPS has been a tremendous supporter of Foodlink for years and we're excited to kick off another Check Out Hunger campaign with them," said Heather Newton, Foodlink's Director of Development and Community Engagement. "Customers who donate can be assured that these funds are going to programs designed to help end hunger and lift up thousands of families who are struggling to make ends meet."

Shoppers can tell their cashier that they would like to round up their bill, or make a donation of \$2, \$3, or \$5 that will help provide food for individuals living in Foodlink's 10-county service area. The TOPS campaign also stretches beyond Rochester, to other regions of New York and into northern Pennsylvania and western Vermont. Overall, TOPS coordinates donations to Foodlink and nine other food banks; and since 2006, it has raised more than \$3.6 million through this campaign.

"At TOPS, we believe in eradicating hunger and assisting our fellow neighbors in need and so supporting this effort on an annual basis is something that we gladly stand behind," said Frank Curci, Chairman of the Board, and Chief Executive Officer for Tops Friendly Markets.

Other local grocers that have joined the Check Out Hunger campaign include: Abundance Cooperative Market (Rochester), Breen's Shop 'n Save (Williamson), Breen's Market (Palmyra),

Caledonia Marketplace, Hegedorns (Webster), Herrema's Marketplace (Rochester), Lori's Natural Foods (Henrietta), Perry Food Market, West's Shurfine (Honeoye & Livonia) and Gates Big M (Spencerport).

A few other local business also have agreed to support Foodlink. Knucklehead Craft Brewing in Webster is pledging to donate \$1 for every Kathy's Kreme Ale sold at their brewery during the campaign. At the City of Rochester Public Market, The Florida Nut House and Yerba Maté Cafe are also accepting donations.

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About Foodlink

Foodlink is a regional food hub and the Feeding America food bank serving Allegany, Genesee, Livingston, Monroe, Ontario, Orleans, Seneca, Wayne, Wyoming, and Yates counties. We alleviate hunger by distributing food to a network of hundreds of human service agencies and target the root causes of food insecurity through dozens of food-related programs and our state-of-the-art commercial kitchen. Last year, Foodlink distributed 17.4 million pounds of food, including 4.9 million pounds of produce, and served more than 1.1 million meals and snacks to children in our community.

Foodlink delivers multiple nutrition education programs aimed to help improve food literacy and empower families to make healthy choices. A suite of food access programs provide new access points to nutritious food in underserved communities. The Foodlink Community Kitchen prepares and delivers more than 5,000 meals daily to Rochester children, and supports our regional agricultural economy by minimally processing locally grown apples for distribution into schools and other institutions. Our innovative approach directly addresses diet-related health disparities related to food insecurity. Learn more about our mission to end hunger and to leverage the power of food to build a healthier community at www.foodlinkny.org.

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