

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Foodlink joins Partnership for a Healthier America

Nationwide initiative combats hunger-related health problems, including obesity, heart disease, and diabetes

WASHINGTON, DC—Foodlink, the Feeding America food bank serving the Finger Lakes and Genesee Valley regions of New York, announced today that it has pledged to improve the nutritional quality of the food it distributes and will continue to encourage families to make healthier choices through a three-year commitment with the Partnership for a Healthier America.

As part of a commitment announced at Partnership for A Healthier America’s Innovating a Healthier Future Summit today, Foodlink agreed to:

- Increase the amount of nutritious food and beverage distributed by 25% over its base year, according to its Inventory Nutrition Ranking System.
- Decrease the amount of food and beverage of minimal nutritional value by 10% over its base year, according to its Inventory Nutrition Ranking System.
- Provide at least 50% of partner agencies with financial incentives to enable them to procure more nutritious food.
- Apply at least two new wellness “nudges” (via Feeding America’s Healthy Pantry Initiative) in 25% of partner agencies or direct distribution programs.

“In recent years, Foodlink has taken significant steps to improve the nutritional quality of the food we distribute,” Foodlink Executive Director Julia Tedesco said. “We’re honored to join the Partnership for a Healthier America to continue this vital work, and we’re hopeful that by meeting these benchmarks, we’ll be another step closer to fulfilling our mission of building healthier communities across our region.”

As a pioneer in the national movement to provide access to nutritious food, Foodlink will be a part of PHA’s initiative to combat food insecurity and obesity alongside prior year partners, Feeding America, the Capital Area Food Bank, the San Antonio Food Bank, Atlanta Food Bank, and the Des Moines Area Religious Council. Foodlink and 10 other food banks are joining the partnership this year. Foodlink’s Chief Program Officer, Mitch Gruber, attended the PHA Summit in Washington, D.C. this week.

“More than 156,000 food-insecure people in western and central New York depend on Foodlink to feed their families in times of need,” said Nancy Roman, President and CEO of the Partnership for a Healthier America. “America’s food banks not only fight hunger – they have the opportunity to fight hunger’s companion health problems, including obesity, heart disease and diabetes. In the 21st century, we simply cannot compound poverty with food inequity. We’re proud to partner with this vital organization to ensure food bank recipients get the nutrition they need to promote good health.”

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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 4,500 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, or follow us on Facebook, Twitter or Instagram at @foodlinkny.org.

The Partnership for a Healthier America (PHA) is devoted to working with the private sector to ensure the health of our nation’s youth by solving the childhood obesity crisis. In 2010, PHA was created in conjunction with – but independent from – First Lady Michelle Obama’s Let’s Move! effort. PHA is a nonpartisan nonprofit organization that is led by some of the nation’s most respected health and childhood obesity experts. PHA brings together public, private and nonprofit leaders to broker meaningful commitments and develop strategies to end childhood obesity. Most important, PHA ensures that commitments made are commitments kept by working with unbiased, third parties to monitor and publicly report on the progress our partners are making. For more information about PHA, please visit www.aHealthierAmerica.org and follow PHA on Twitter @PHAnews.