

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:  
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**Hunger Action Month** | FEEDING AMERICA

## **Foodlink hosting virtual conversations about range of issues during annual Hunger Action Month**

*Annual awareness campaign takes on greater significance in wake of pandemic, economic uncertainty*

ROCHESTER – With more than 60,000 *additional* people in the Rochester area projected to live in food-insecure households due to the pandemic, there is more urgency than ever to focus on the issue of hunger in our communities.

Foodlink and other hunger-relief organizations across the Feeding America network use September – Hunger Action Month – as a time to raise awareness about the root causes of food insecurity, and encourage supporters to take action on the issue of hunger. The annual month-long campaign brings attention to the reality of food insecurity in the United States, which is elevated this year due to the challenges associated with the ongoing pandemic. In Foodlink's 10-county service area, food insecurity is projected to rise 45 percent in 2020.

“Now more than ever, Foodlink is urging our neighbors to get involved during Hunger Action Month,” said Julia Tedesco, President & CEO of Foodlink. “The need is greater and the community’s response will be critical as we navigate this crisis in the months and years to come. Whether you have the capacity to donate, volunteer, or advocate – anyone can take action.”

Although Foodlink focused its COVID-19 response these past six months on the distribution of millions of pounds of emergency food and nearly 500,000 children’s meals for households experiencing food insecurity, its approach to advocacy extends well beyond feeding people. Foodlink finalized its inaugural Advocacy Agenda last February, and included three major focus areas: (1) Ensure no one goes hungry; (2) Improve access to healthy food – in schools, health-care settings and low-income communities; and (3) Eliminate the root causes of hunger. The full agenda is located on Foodlink’s website at [www.FoodlinkNY.org](http://www.FoodlinkNY.org).

Working with community leaders from other leading non-profits, Foodlink is facilitating a series of conversations around four topics – all of which influence food insecurity in various ways. On Tuesdays throughout September, beginning Sept. 8, Foodlink will post video interviews with

local experts that address: housing, health care, racism & employment. The videos – approximately 10-15 minutes in length – will be held via Zoom, and posted on Foodlink’s website, Facebook and YouTube pages.

In addition, Foodlink remains committed to advocating for policy change and legislation that will help food-insecure families access healthy foods. On the federal level, Foodlink will continue to speak to members of Congress about the importance of adequate funding for programs such as: The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), the Coronavirus Food Assistance Program (CFAP), Pandemic-EBT and USDA school meal waivers.

Foodlink also is advocating for participation in the 2020 Census, through the distribution of promotional materials to our network of member food pantries, and by allowing Census workers to attend our drive-thru food distributions to speak with clients directly about the importance being counted this year.

On Sept. 10, you can show your support of Hunger Action Month in a simple way: Wear orange! Orange is the color of hunger awareness because the nation’s first food stamps (which made their debut in Rochester on May 16, 1939) were orange. The city’s skyline will be lit orange in honor of hunger awareness, and you can show your support by wearing orange, snapping a photo, and using the hashtag #HungerActionMonth on social media.

To donate, volunteer or learn more about ways to get involved during Hunger Action Month, visit [www.FoodlinkNY.org](http://www.FoodlinkNY.org).

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## **About Foodlink**

For more than 40 years, Foodlink has leveraged the power of food to end hunger and build healthier communities in Allegany, Genesee, Livingston, Monroe, Ontario, Orleans, Seneca, Wayne, Wyoming, and Yates counties. Through good stewardship, innovation and collaboration, Foodlink mobilizes a diverse network of community partners to address both the symptoms and root causes of food insecurity.

Foodlink’s community health programs provide new access points to nutritious and affordable food in underserved communities. We empower individuals and families to make healthy choices through nutrition and culinary education initiatives. Through our food bank, we distribute nearly 20 million pounds of food annually to a network of nonprofit partners. The Foodlink Community Kitchen nourishes thousands of children daily with healthy meals, slices locally grown apples that are distributed throughout New York, and prepares people for careers in the regional food industry through a one-of-a-kind career empowerment program. Learn more about how we are transforming lives and creating healthy futures for every community

we serve at [www.FoodlinkNY.org](http://www.FoodlinkNY.org), or follow us on Facebook, Twitter or Instagram at @foodlinkny.

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