FOOD For THOUGHT

FIND REGIONAL FOOD BANK

WINTER NEWSLETTER 2025

FIND Regional Food Bank Responds to the Rosa Fire

When the Rosa Fire caused widespread power outages in the Mountain Center region, many families suddenly lost access to food and essential resources. Thanks to a request from Anza Electric Cooperative, **FIND Food Bank quickly mobilized an emergency distribution to support our neighbors in need.**

It was incredible to see how quickly our community came together after the Rosa Fire. With the help of Anza Electric and Cooperative, Assemblyman Jeff Gonzalez and his team — who rolled up their sleeves to volunteer alongside our staff, Cal Fire, and community partners like Santa Rosa Band of Cahuilla Indians — **FIND distributed 220 emergency food boxes** to local families. Together, with your generosity, we ensured that no one had to go without during this difficult time.

This emergency response reflects a larger role that FIND holds in our region. As the designated disaster response food bank for eastern Riverside County and the State of California, **FIND is prepared to respond to wildfires, earthquakes, floods, and even global crises like the pandemic.** In emergencies, FIND delivers food, water, and supplies where they are needed most — and our everyday hunger-relief services ensure that vulnerable families are better protected from future disasters.

This is what community looks like: **coming together so that no one is left without food or support in times of crisis.**

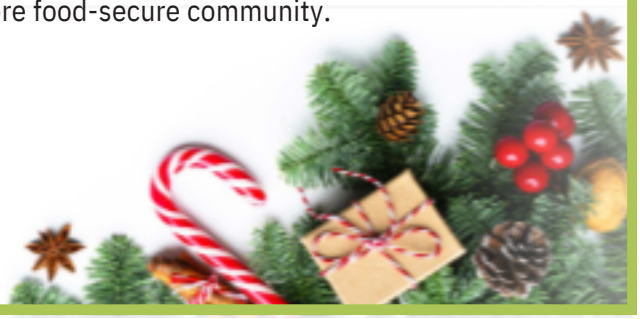
Message from the President and CEO

During Hunger Action Month in September, we celebrated the grand opening of FIND Regional Food Bank's new Food Security Campus — a milestone made possible **because of you**. (Please be sure to read more about the grand opening on page 4.) Your generosity has given FIND Regional the space and resources to meet growing demand and ensure that more families, children, and seniors across our desert region have access to fresh, nutritious food.

This achievement comes at a critical time. With changes to CalFresh benefits creating deeper hardship for individuals who were already struggling, more of our neighbors will be turning to FIND Regional for support. The holidays, which should be filled with joy and togetherness, can feel especially heavy for families struggling to put food on the table. Thanks to you, FIND Regional is here to provide not only meals, but hope.

Your support during the holiday season and beyond sustains our mission and reminds every person who comes to us that they are not alone. Together, we are building a stronger, healthier, and more food-secure community.

Debbie Espinosa
President and CEO,
FIND Regional Food Bank



Yolanda's Experience

For many families across our desert region, our high cost of living makes it harder to stretch each paycheck. Food prices have placed a heavy burden on households already struggling to make ends meet.

Yolanda A., a participant in FIND Regional Food Bank's distribution programs, shared how access to nutritious groceries has helped her family manage through tough times. The fresh produce and staple items she receives provide immediate relief while also easing the strain on her family's budget.

> ***"The potatoes, celery, and apples — everything just helps a whole lot. You know, everything is just so expensive. When I found out about the program, it really helped my family. We can pay some bills. Food is just so expensive. Thank you so much for this program, FIND Food Bank, and all the volunteers."***
>
> — Yolanda A., Community Mobile Market Participant

Stories like Yolanda's remind us that behind every box of food is a family making difficult choices. **Your support ensures that neighbors like Yolanda do not have to choose between paying bills and putting healthy meals on the table. Together, we are making a difference — one meal, one family, one story at a time.**

Ready to Help Support Our Neighbors? Scan Here

College Corner

FINDSUCCESSWelcomes New Cohort

This fall, your support helped FIND welcome its newest interns — a group that includes both traditional college students and adults to create brighter futures for themselves and their families. Many participants are pursuing education later in life, motivated by the desire to expand career opportunities and build lasting stability.

Through FIND's Success Program, participants receive hands-on training, workforce development skills, and industry-recognized certifications, while also giving back by supporting on-campus food pantries and community projects.

By combining reliable food access with career and leadership development, FIND SUCCESS tackles the root causes of hunger and empowers students to break the cycle of poverty. With additional guidance from FIND's Community Health Workers, participants are connected to public benefits and life skills resources, ensuring they have the support needed to thrive in school and beyond.

Community and Cal Guard Support Keeps FIND Moving

Thanksto anincredibleoutpouringof care, FIND Regional Food Bank continues to serve the desert community amid interruptions to SNAP and payroll funds this November. Residents, local businesses, and members of the Cal Guard have stepped in to ensure families have access to nutritious food.

Cal Guard members are stationed at FIND's warehouse, helping break down and package food for mobile sites, partner agencies, and direct distribution. Their presence is especially critical during this high-demand period, when volunteer numbers are historically low.

Recently, City of Indio Mayor Glenn Miller joined FIND staff to thank the 12 soldiers for their service, emphasizing the importance of their work for local families facing hunger. FIND is incredibly grateful of the donors, community partners and volunteers who have stepped up this winter; this support ensures thousands of residents — including children, seniors, and families — continue to receive the food they need during these challenging times.

A New Era for FIND Food Bank: Grand Opening of Our Expanded Facility

This September, during Hunger Action Month, FIND Regional Food Bank proudly celebrated the grand opening of our new facility — a milestone made possible by the generosity of our community. Donors, partners, volunteers, and local leaders joined together to cut the ribbon on a building that represents hope, resilience, and the promise of a hunger-free future for the Coachella Valley and surrounding desert region.

The expansion adds 40,000 square feet of warehousing to FIND's Food Security Campus, nearly tripling our capacity to store dry goods and frozen foods. With this increased space, FIND can now process up to **40 million pounds of food annually** — fresh fruits and vegetables, dairy, and protein — ensuring families have access to the nutritious food they need. The facility also strengthens our disaster relief capabilities, enabling us to deploy food immediately when emergencies strike.

But this project is about more than bricks and mortar. The new space will also host training and education programs for youth and adults, building pathways to jobs that will streamline facility operations and logistics. These initiatives will help us tackle the root causes of hunger and poverty, expanding FIND's impact beyond food distribution.

This achievement would not have been possible without you. By contributing to our capital campaign and standing with FIND Regional, you made it possible for us to grow into the food bank our community needs today — and for decades to come.

As we step into this new chapter, we do so with gratitude and determination. Together, we are ensuring that every neighbor across our 10,000-square-mile service area has access to fresh, healthy food. Together, we are ending hunger today, tomorrow, and for a lifetime.

Support FIND Regional Food Bank, and you too can help feed the 125,000 adults, children, and seniors across California's southeastern desert region every month.

FIND REGIONAL FOOD BANK

FINDFoodBank.org

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