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Interfaith Sustainable
Food Collaborative

January 2021 Newsletter

Happy New Year from Interfaith Food!

Fish to Families in Sonoma and Marin Counties

Starting this month Interfaith Food is partnering with local nonprofits to distribute fish to communities in Marin and Sonoma with a grant from Catch Together. This grant will help local fishermen struggling due to the COVID financial crisis, while also feeding our communities in a sustainable way. More than \$40,000 of fish will be distributed over about 5 months. Please let us know if your congregation is interested in receiving fish to share with people in need in your community and the quantity of fish fillets you can store and distribute. There are two options for fish: frozen packaged filets; or whole de-headed scaled fish (requires more prep in kitchen). If your congregation is making meals for an event that serves low income people we suggest the whole fish to utilize its entirety in a sustainable way that feeds more people. Those who choose the whole fish option will have priority in distribution.



Photograph by The Pacific Coast
Federation of Fishermen's Association

Martin Luther King Day: A Day On, Not a Day Off!

This coming Monday, January 18, 2021, is Martin Luther King Day. The holiday has become an opportunity for people to come

MLK Day Events

[January 18](#) - 9am-12pm

MLK day of service - Santa Rosa, Andy's Unity Park clean

together, in service and community, while reflecting on the life and teachings of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and countless other civil rights leaders. It is also a time to focus on the power of social activism and social justice. Now more than ever, we recognize the responsibility we have to show up in support of compassion, care and justice for one another. MLK Day is the only federal holiday designated as a national day of service during which all Americans are encouraged to volunteer to support their communities. In honor of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. we will take this day to support local action events in our communities. There are several service events happening throughout the Bay Area on MLK Day this year.

For links to more MLK Day events:

[Go Here](#)

up and gardening

[January 18](#) - 9am-4pm

MLK Day Family Food Sort -
Bank of Contra Costa/Solano,
Bag or box fresh produce,
Family-friendly, RSVP

[January 16-18](#) - 8am-12pm

Fruitvale Clean Up in Oakland,
Beautification and Litter
Removal

[January 17-18](#)

Peninsula Jewish Community
Center - San Mateo County,
Clean up on the 17th, many
service activities on the 18th



Hilltop staff with some of the food pantry bags they distribute.

Hilltop Community Church in Richmond Grows Breakfast Program

Hilltop Community Church in Richmond runs a food pantry Monday through Friday, 9am-12pm, that provides pre-made bags with cereal, milk and other donated items from congregants. Leading this effort is Renee Edmonds, who is joined by 7 volunteers each week to distribute these bags to low income seniors and families. Interfaith Sustainable Food Collaborative awarded Hilltop Church a mini grant of \$500 that went toward 4 months worth of milk and cereal purchases, breakfast items that were not typically donated nor provided prior to the mini grant. Hilltop serves about 50 people per week, which is an increase from the previous year before the impact of COVID. Hilltop's donations are unique in that congregants donate their fresh fruit and vegetables to the food pantry through their garden sharing program. This program is currently halted due to covid restrictions but will resume. Because of the success of the food pantry, USDA Farmers to Families partnered with Hilltop to provide additional 40lb boxes with produce to distribute in October and December of 2020 to serve the community during the increase in need brought by the pandemic. Hilltop is hopeful to

continue with these boxes in 2021 and continues to serve their community through the support of their parishioners.

Edible Landscaping for Your Garden

Got blueberries?

Are you familiar with the trend towards edible landscaping? Planting edible perennials in the landscape is a growing movement that prioritizes plants that are low maintenance, attractive to people and pollinators, and can be a steady, long-term food source. Landscaping with edible perennials is an excellent opportunity to support the local food system, create more interest and beauty in your landscape, and to feed your community! One inspiring example is [The Edible Churchyard](#) program, a project of the Union Theological Seminary in New York City. Their edible landscaping work is based on values of social justice and leadership development, and transforms underutilized space on church grounds into abundant gardens to nourish the community. There are edible landscape options for all spaces, from fruit trees, to berry bushes, to low-growing culinary herbs. No space is too small to bring to life!

[Read More](#)

Go Out and Glean!

Are you looking for a new activity to share with your community? There are opportunities to join some fantastic gleaning teams in Sonoma County. Gleaning is the act of collecting leftover produce after a harvest, called "seconds", that would otherwise be left in the fields. Some produce doesn't quite make the cut for market, usually for aesthetic reasons, but is perfectly good to harvest and eat. Gleaning is an act that is referenced in the Bible as part of the obligation to share the harvest with the needy, and was required in ancient times by Jewish law. Still today, gleaning is a great way to support efforts to eliminate food waste and hunger in our communities. It is an opportunity to meet some new neighbors and get your hands dirty in a safe, socially distant way. Food that is harvested during gleaning events is delivered to local food pantries to be distributed directly to folks in need. A few organizations that are currently gleaning and open to new volunteers include [Farm to Pantry](#), [Petaluma Bounty](#) and [Sonoma County Gleaners](#).

[Read More](#)

Save these Dates!



Mark your calendar for these upcoming Interfaith Food workshops. Each will be on-line/virtual.

February 3rd: Safety Precautions for Congregational Food Preparation and Distribution. Learn about ServSafe certification and more.

March 3rd: Congregations Spreading the Word About Pandemic EBT. Get resources to help your with outreach to millions of California children who will be able to access this unique nutrition assistance program.

March 14th: Halal and Kosher - Exploring Options for Relationships with Local Small Livestock Producers

More details will be coming in future e-mails from Interfaith Food and on our web-site.

Remember February 1-7 is World Interfaith Harmony Week, as declared by the United Nations.

Donate

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