



SAN DIEGO  
FOOD BANK



# food for thought

Winter 2009

## Community Rallies Behind SDFB



J. Scofield Hage  
Executive Director & CEO

*As the economic crisis continues to take its toll on local families, the San Diego Food Bank has seen a wave of community support.*

In our last newsletter I outlined the extent of the economic crisis gripping San Diego – mounting job losses, home foreclosures, rising rents and mortgage payments, and rising prices at the pump and supermarkets.

In response to soaring demand from tens of thousands of additional families seeking assistance, I called upon the community to rally behind us and help us feed these families and children in need.

The response was overwhelming. Over 400 businesses and 100 schools participated in our annual Holiday Food Drive raising over 400,000 pounds of food.

In November, the Torrey Pines Hilton hosted a gala for the San Diego Food Bank raising over \$140,000 – an unprecedented amount for a first annual event.

The sheer scale of kindness and generosity pouring in from the community is deeply moving, and we have endeavored to recognize everyone who has contributed in this issue. Although the economic crisis is still unfolding and the outlook for 2009 remains uncertain, the San Diego Food Bank will tackle this crisis from a position of strength.

We have secured full ownership of our warehouse from the Neighborhood House Association and we launched a new logo to reflect our position as a vital community resource.

As we start 2009 I humbly ask you to remember us beyond the holiday season. While the holidays may be over, hunger in our county is not. On behalf of the San Diego Food Bank we thank you for your support and offer our best wishes for the New Year.

## Demand for Food Soars

The surge in demand from tens of thousands of families and slowing food donations left the San Diego Food Bank with a gaping deficit of donated food in the third quarter of 2008.

In the first quarter, the Food Bank distributed 8% more food than it received from donations. In the second quarter the figure jumped to 21%, and the SDFB finished the third quarter of 2008 with a seven week supply.



“As a state recognized emergency response organization we need to keep at least a two month supply in the event of a catastrophic emergency,” said CEO J. Scofield Hage. “Before we started the Holiday Food Drive we were looking at our empty shelves in disbelief, but the community pitched in during the holidays and helped increase the supply. We are truly grateful to everyone who contributed to this county-wide effort.”

The SDFB blames the increasing demand for food assistance on the economic crisis affecting large numbers of low-income working families and increasing numbers of middle class families. Programs such as the SDFB’s Emergency Food Assistance Program (EFAP) illustrate the surge in demand. **EFAP, intended for families in immediate need, increased by 21,043 people from January to December 2008.**

Programs Director Vanessa Franco said, “This is an alarming increase, and from what I’ve seen in the community, we fear it may increase further in 2009.”

The San Diego Food Bank is concerned that food contributions will decline following the holiday season but demand will continue to outstrip supply. Food Resource Manager Will McHenry said, “Donations typically decline by 35% at the start of January following a peak of giving during the holiday season.”

This year the SDFB is urging people to continue hosting food drives and making monetary donations. J. Scofield Hage said, “**The holidays may be over, but our food lines are still growing.**” This year we need the community to remember us long after the holiday decorations have been put away.”

*For information on ways you can help visit: [www.sandiegofoodbank.org](http://www.sandiegofoodbank.org)*