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## Governor Christie Furthers Commitment to Service Organizations by Announcing \$2 Million in Funding for Food Bank of South Jersey

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As 'Season of Service' Continues, Additional Funds to Provide Continued Access to Groceries and Nutritious Meals for Those in Need

**Trenton, NJ** – As part of the Administration's ongoing commitment to assist service organizations during this "Season of Service," Governor Chris Christie today announced the Food Bank of South Jersey will receive \$2 million in funding to secure continued access to food and nutritious meals for those in need in South Jersey. The funds, approved by the Delaware River Port Authority (DRPA) today, were previously committed to be used for the purchase of food products for the communities served by the Food Bank of South Jersey. Over their 25-year span, the Food Bank of South Jersey has provided more than 100 million pounds of food, or 76 million meals, to thousands of families, seniors, individuals, and children in need.

"At a time when food banks, food pantries and soup kitchens are experiencing an overwhelming increase in demand, it was imperative to secure this \$2 million in funding for the Food Bank of South Jersey," said Governor Christie. "These funds will continue the vital work being done by CEO Val Traore and her staff -- from the Hope Mobile and nutrition education programs to access to groceries and nutritious meals, the Food Bank of South Jersey is making a real difference for families in need in the South Jersey community.

"This Administration is committed to helping our most at-risk citizens. During this season of service, many of my

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cabinet members also have been giving back to the community by volunteering their time serving meals, packing boxes or delivering meals to those in need at food banks and soup kitchens across the state. For those New Jerseyans who can afford to help, donating to your local food bank or food pantry can go far to help meet the food security needs of our communities.”

The Food Bank of South Jersey partners with more than 200 organizations to provide 8 million pounds of food annually to feed at-risk populations in Burlington, Camden, Gloucester and Salem Counties. With the addition of the Hope Mobile, a tractor trailer that holds 45,000 pounds of food, it also has the ability to bring food directly to those in need at 15 sites monthly in the four-county area, reaching more than 21,000 families faced with food insecurity issues.

Recognizing the critical nature of hunger and emergency feeding issues, Governor Christie has committed \$6,818,000 in Fiscal Year 2012 for the Department of Agriculture’s State Food Purchase Program (SFPP). The funds are allocated on a quarterly basis to food banks to buy fresh fruits and vegetables and other nutritious foods for distribution to their network of more than 700 food pantries, homeless shelters and soup kitchens.

In addition to the State Food Purchase Program, the New Jersey Department of Agriculture also administers the federal Emergency Food Assistance Program, which distributes United States Department of Agriculture-donated foods to the food banks. During the past year, the Department accepted 27 million pounds of federal foods through this program.

Other departments working to combat hunger and food insecurity issues include the Department of Health and Senior Services (DHSS) with its initiatives to improve access to fruits and vegetables in communities through farm markets, gardens and incentives for supermarkets to locate in underserved areas and corner stores. DHSS also administers a supplemental nutrition program for Women, Infants and Children (WIC), which provides access to healthy food for 186,000 low-income women, infants and children up to age 5.

Through the Department of Human Services (DHS), the New Jersey Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (NJ SNAP) is administered as a safety net that supports low-income individuals, families and seniors by enhancing their food budget so that they can buy the groceries they need to stay healthy.

As a result of today’s DRPA Board action, the Food Bank of South Jersey will receive \$2 million "to be used for the purchase of food products only to be used for the community served by the Food Bank of South Jersey.” With today’s action, the DRPA will no longer be involved with economic development projects in order to focus on its core transportation mission.

Inspired by 8-year-old Aidan McManus of Burlington Township who demonstrated compassion and desire to improve the lives of others in his community. Governor Christie and First Lady Mary Pat Christie announced the Administration’s “Season of Service” on Thanksgiving Eve. Since then, cabinet officials have been volunteering and highlighting service opportunities throughout the Garden State and will continue through the end of December.

Christie Administration cabinet officials have already volunteered their services at a variety of organizations including Community Food Bank of NJ in Hillside, The Food Bank of Monmouth & Ocean County, Salvation Army, Oasis and Eva's Village in Paterson, New Visions Shelter in Camden, Elijah's Promise in New Brunswick, Homefront in Trenton, Meals on Wheels in Mercer County, Holiday Express in Tinton Falls, Children's Home Society of NJ and Visitation Home in Trenton.

Visit [volunteerism.nj.gov](http://volunteerism.nj.gov) to find ways to donate time or [www.endhungernj.org](http://www.endhungernj.org) to contribute to New Jersey food banks.

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