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SAHA Launches Food Recovery Program for Seniors

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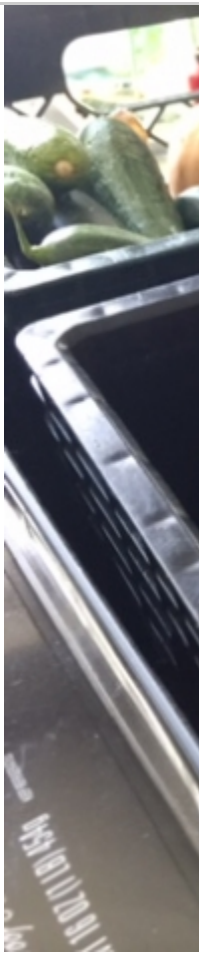
In December, SAHA kicked off a pilot food recovery program at three SAHA senior properties in collaboration with The New War on Poverty, the Alameda County Public Health Department, the Alameda County Community Food Bank, Daily Bread, and others. This pilot explores methods for improving food security for seniors and also helps inform the design of a county-wide approach to food recovery. We feel honored to be part of such an innovative and impactful program.

Californians dispose of almost 5.6 million tons of food each year, which represents 16 percent of the material that goes in to landfills. There has been a growing movement in the state, and locally in San Francico and Berkeley to divert this food to those in need, especially seniors who are not elligible for SNAP benefits, because they receive a State supplement to their SSI benefits in lieu of SNAP benefits.

Connecting seniors with fresh produce, meats, and baked goods takes special effort. We've developed a system to recover foods from the Albany Gill Tract, Imperfect Produce, and Berkeley Food Pantry (Berkeley Bowl and Whole Foods), and with the help of Daily Bread, distributes it to our three Berkeley apartments: Shattuck Senior Homes, Helios Corner, and Peter Babcock House. This pilot will run for 6 months from December 2016 through May 2017. During that time, we will measure the role that a highly local food recovery effort can play in reducing food insecurity, and the feasibility of implementing a similar program county-wide. At the conclusion of the pilot, Alameda County will evaluate and share their findings.

If the kick-off at Shattuck Senior Homes is an indication, we believe the program is going to have a huge impact on addressing food insecurity, as well as improving the day-to-day quality of life for the seniors in Berkeley. Here are a few comments from our residents:



One older gentleman said to his caregiver ?this is so cool? and another resident said ?wow, zucchini, I usually don?t get these?.

One Resident commented, ?I was looking forward to this ? I never expected it would be so?bountiful!? .

You can hear from residents and staff in these great interviews by Berkeleyside, Univsion, KPFA, and World Journal:

Food recovery pilot for seniors launches in Berkeley [3]
Berkelyeside - December 21

Miles de residentes de Concord se quedan sin electricidad por varias horas [4]
Univision - December 19

Berkeley Launches Pilot Program for Senior Food [5]
KPFA 94.1-FM Berkeley - December 19

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World Journal - December 20

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