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**NEW YORK CITY PASSES 200 MILLION MEALS DISTRIBUTED THROUGH
GETFOODNYC EMERGENCY PROGRAMS**

NEW YORK—Mayor Bill de Blasio and Director of the Mayor’s Office of Food Policy Kate MacKenzie announced today that [GetFoodNYC](#), the City’s emergency food program established to combat hunger related to the COVID-19 pandemic, has now distributed over 200 million free meals to New Yorkers in need. This massive number comes as economic fallout from the pandemic continues to heighten the existing need for food support across the city. Any New Yorker in need of food can visit nyc.gov/getfood or call 311 to find a program that works for them.

“Last March, we were facing unprecedented levels of food insecurity in the five boroughs,” said **Mayor Bill de Blasio**. “We acted quickly to stand up an enormous interagency effort to get food to the people who need it. This milestone is proof of our efforts to ensure no New Yorker goes hungry.”

As part of Mayor de Blasio’s [FeedingNYC](#) pandemic response plan, the City created a number of programs, most visibly free Grab & Go meals at hundreds of Department of Education sites across the city, provided without the need for sign-up or identification, and Emergency Home Food Delivery for people who, due to a combination of health and economic factors, cannot go out, have no one to go out for them, and cannot afford private delivery options. These programs, which continue operating today, distributed the bulk of the 200 million meals.

The plan also funded creation of a massive Pandemic Food Reserve Emergency Distribution, which is well on its way to providing pantries and community-based organizations with approximately 18 million pounds of produce and shelf-stable goods.

“Food insecurity was, is, and remains one of the great challenges of our time, and the pandemic has only exacerbated the level of need in every neighborhood of the city,” said **Kate MacKenzie, Director of the Mayor’s Office of Food Policy**, which oversees the day-to-day operation of the GetFoodNYC programs. “These programs have kept our neighbors from going hungry. As we move closer to the release of the City’s first-ever ‘Ten Year Food Plan,’ I want to thank Mayor de Blasio for his continued commitment to feeding those in need.”

“The Department of Sanitation doesn’t just pick up trash – we move mountains to keep New Yorkers safe, any way we can, whenever we are called upon. We did it after 9/11, we did it after Hurricane Sandy, and a year ago, we embarked on a new task to get food to people in need during the greatest crisis our city has faced in a generation,” said **Edward Grayson**,

Commissioner of the New York City Department of Sanitation. “I want to thank Mayor de Blasio for his commitment to feeding New Yorkers, and give my deepest gratitude to every one of the hundreds of DSNY employees who helped that commitment become reality.”

“Each meal served represents a young person or member of our community who did not have to go hungry during this crisis,” said **Schools Chancellor Richard A. Carranza.** “This could not have been accomplished without the heroic work of our food service employees who opened meal hubs on day one, expanded service to all New Yorkers, and reported to work every day to fight hunger in our communities.”

"Providing food for New Yorkers who need it has been a top priority for the City Council since the early days of the pandemic. We are proud to have fought for the funding that has enabled the city to deliver so many meals to so many of our most vulnerable neighbors. We will continue fighting against food insecurity throughout the pandemic and into our city's recovery, " said **Speaker Corey Johnson.**

“Food insecurity was a deep and real threat to Queens families struggling to make ends meet well before COVID-19 began. We are beyond grateful to our food pantries and community-based organizations, who heroically stepped up to feed thousands of families at a time during this unprecedented public health crisis,” said **Queens Borough President Donovan Richards.** “GetFoodNYC has been a critical lifeline for Queens families in need, and we share in the program's mission to ensure that, during this crisis, New Yorkers don't need to wonder where their next meal is coming from.”

"New York City can be proud that we have distributed 200 million emergency meals, and the participation of schools is particularly impressive. The need remains acute, and I urge everyone in our city to continue to prioritize food insecurity. I refuse to live in a City where even one of us does not know where their next meal will come from. My staff and I have distributed food and essential items directly to 12,000 families during the pandemic, and I have seen firsthand that the need remains urgent. We will not rest until we fund the next 200 million emergency meals," said **Council Member Robert Cornegy, Jr.**

“The COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted the enormous food insecurity that millions of hardworking New Yorkers face every day,” said **Council Member Matthieu Eugene.** "I want to commend The Mayor’s Office and The GetFoodNYC program for making a profound and necessary commitment to helping feed our city during this very difficult time. I also want to thank the many organizations and volunteers who have been a part of this effort, without whom it would not have been possible. I believe it is our moral obligation as public servants to provide food to those who are at-risk and are struggling to feed their families, especially during a pandemic. The success of this program and similar initiatives throughout the city are an important reminder of the positive impact we are able to make in people’s lives when we work together towards a common goal.”

"Millions of New Yorkers were food insecure prior to COVID-19, and the pandemic has only exacerbated the need for our most vulnerable residents," said **Council Member Vanessa L. Gibson.** "I commend the administration for their leadership in tackling this issue by supporting

our non-profit food providers and community partners that were on the frontlines providing meals to New Yorkers each day during this crisis. Our work, however, does not end here. This milestone is a reminder that we must continue to work together to combat food inequity and hunger in our city."

"No New Yorker should go hungry in our city, no matter what," said **Council Member Ben Kallos**. "New York City has proven we can keep those in need within our City fed despite what may be going on. Grab and Go meals have literally been lifesavers for struggling families and delivering meals has kept many seniors from being hungry. 200 million meals is very impressive. Thank you to Mayor de Blasio for sticking with it and to the many workers on the ground at the DOE and those who deliver meals throughout this pandemic. Your work has made a difference."

"At the start of the pandemic, my office was inundated with calls from residents frantic about food insecurity. I thought at the time, that the task of addressing this problem was monumental, if not impossible. But, GetFoodNYC got the job done. Kudos to all the individuals involved in making sure that New Yorkers didn't go hungry," said **Council Member Karen Koslowitz**.

"I am happy to have supported GetFoodNYC that brought food to the most vulnerable children, adults and senior citizens. This program proved to be a true life line by providing healthy meals and nutritious foods at a time when New Yorkers needed it most. I am pleased to express support for the upcoming Ten Year Plan that will continue to assist those in need," said **Council Member Alan Maisel**.

"COVID-19 has created an unprecedented level of food insecurity. Communities of color have struggled as food deserts for years, and this pandemic has highlighted the need for access to affordable, healthy, and culturally competent food options. We are grateful for the swift action of the City to support New Yorkers in need, and for the partnerships that have allowed our local food pantries to remain well-stocked and meet these new levels of demand," said **Council Member I. Daneek Miller**.

"I represent the neighborhoods hardest hit by COVID-19 and this pandemic has exposed the many disparities that exist in our city none greater than access to food. We need to continue to put resources that will ensure everyone across the City from children to senior New Yorkers have access to food. Programs like GetFoodNYC and prioritizing funding for emergency food providers are critical as we work to recover from COVID-19. No one should ever have to worry about their next meal," said **Council Member Francisco Moya**.

"The COVID-19 pandemic has exacerbated the many challenges New Yorkers faced prior to the pandemic. One of these issues, among many, is the food insecurity that has plague our city," said **Council Member Kevin C. Riley**. "I commend Mayor Bill de Blasio and his collaboration with DSNY Emergency Food and Home Delivery services, the DOE Grab and Go Program, and the numerous community based organizations throughout our city that provide these essential services during these unprecedented time. 200 million meals is just the start and I look forward to the continued partnership and efforts to ensure that our city continues to receive these essential services."

"This is the power of government. Since March the City's unprecedented response and commitment has been that no New Yorker needs to go hungry by ensuring access to 3 meals per day, 5 days a week for every person who needs it. Early in the pandemic the administration launched this effort in record time by mobilizing the school meals program — the City's single largest food distribution system -- and creating a groundbreaking home delivered meals program. We know extraordinary levels of chronic food insecurity existed in New York City before the pandemic. We need to ensure that we learn what is possible and how to build on this — not just with the next emergency, but to address New Yorkers ongoing food needs," said **Liz Accles, Executive Director, Community Food Advocates.**

"In response to the worst hunger crisis in modern times, the City took swift and decisive action to start a mass new food distribution program essentially from scratch. The City deserves great praise for providing meals to so many New Yorkers so quickly. As this crisis continues, we look forward to working cooperatively with the City on sustainable, long-term ways to ensure that all New Yorkers have access to nutritious, tasty, and culturably-compatible foods – including joint efforts to continue to expand participation in the federally-funded SANP and WIC programs," said **Joel Berg, CEO of Hunger Free America.**

"The COVID-19 pandemic has created and worsened health and economic disparities across New York City, including and especially food insecurity," said **Lisa David, President and CEO of Public Health Solutions.** "In partnership with community-based organizations and the health care sector, and with the support of the City, we have connected New Yorkers with the emergency food services they need to stay afloat and feed their families during this challenging time. As vulnerable New Yorkers continue to face the long-term impacts of the pandemic, it has never been more important to ensure food access for all."

"Today we recognize what New Yorkers can achieve when we fight hunger together," said **Leslie Gordon, President and CEO of Food Bank For New York City.** "We thank the Food Policy team, and owe deep gratitude to the many staff and volunteers at emergency food providers who have worked diligently to ensure meals are provided to New Yorkers in need. COVID-19 has forced us to mobilize like never before — continued recovery will require ongoing partnerships with the city to respond to the need that will be felt in our communities for weeks, months and years to come."

"Two hundred million breakfasts, lunches, and dinners--that's the meal gap that New York City cafeteria workers have been toiling tirelessly to fill since last March, the gap that City officials have been straining to shrink to ensure no New Yorker goes hungry. Two hundred million meals over too long a time period makes clear: it's Congress's turn to provide meaningful economic relief to families to plug the meals gap," said **Dr. Pam Koch, Executive Director, Laurie M. Tisch Center for Food, Education & Policy.**

"It takes a city to feed a city," said **Jennifer McLean, Chief Operating Officer at City Harvest.** "Food insecurity has surged during the pandemic and has required an unprecedented, coordinated response across government, nonprofits, and community groups. In partnership with the City's GetFood program, we delivered more than 4.1 million pounds of food to New Yorkers

in need. We are grateful for the city's continued commitment as we work to feed our neighbors during this crisis."

"The pandemic has ripped a giant hole in our economy, bringing with it the highest rates of hunger and poverty we've seen here in New York City in modern history. I commend Mayor Bill de Blasio and Schools Chancellor Richard Carranza for taking swift action to address the unprecedented need, opening up food hubs in public school buildings citywide," said **Rachel Sabella, Director of No Kid Hungry New York**. "The men and women of the New York City Department of Education's Office of Food Nutrition Services are true heroes for being on the front lines of the pandemic since Day 1, providing meals to kids and families across the five boroughs."

"Amidst the challenges of the pandemic, we have come together as a city to bridge the gap for those most in need. It will take all of us to continue to work together on the path to recovery. I commend Mayor de Blasio and his team on this extraordinary effort to get 200 million meals into the hands of New Yorkers in need. The Campaign Against Hunger has witnessed our communities' devastation as the crisis continues to inflict disproportionate hardship on many who are currently struggling to feed their families. We are happy to know that NYC has committed, and remains dedicated to ensuring that no New Yorker goes hungry," said **Dr. Melony Samuels, Executive Director of The Campaign Against Hunger**.

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