

# ADDRESSING FOOD INSECURITY

Food insecurity, defined by the USDA, is the lack of consistent access to enough food for an active, healthy life<sup>1</sup>. Effective solutions need to address a number of factors tied to the availability of appropriate resources including lack of affordable housing, social isolation and individual wellbeing, the cost of medical care, underemployment, education and low wages. Aramark is committed to finding ways to promote access to healthy food across the communities where we serve.



PEOPLE

## OUR APPROACH

Our efforts include a range of activities and solutions from the back of house in our kitchens to consumer options and community support. In alignment with our goal to reduce waste before it is generated, our proprietary food management process helps us reduce, reuse and recycle from the initial purchase to production to final waste disposal.

Additionally,

- We partner with Food Donation Connection, to provide a way to donate unused, unserved food to qualified non-profit organizations.
- Our Healthy for Life 20 by 20<sup>®</sup> commitment, an initiative with the Aramark Heart Association, offers a curriculum of educational experiences that inspire people in our communities to discover, choose and prepare healthy foods.
- Aramark Building Community, our global volunteer program, creates opportunities for employees to support local communities to empower, support and inspire families to lead healthier lifestyles.

## STRATEGIC RELATIONSHIPS

Food insecurity is a complex issue requiring a deep engagement with many stakeholders. We believe active partnerships are critical to driving solutions and establish relationships with purpose, supporting organizations that share our goal to increase access to healthy food. We support the efforts of:

- **Swipe Our Hunger**, a student led movement to end college hunger
  - As a founding funder of its Research and Development (R&D) Lab, our support enables Swipe Out Hunger to create change across campus systems. This will include piloting cutting-edge projects on campuses, leveraging data and research and developing advocacy strategies to catalyze public funding for higher education basic needs programs.
- **The Hope Center for College, Community and Justice**, an action research center focused on rethinking higher education and social policies, including access to healthy food.
- The **Alliance for Strong Families and Communities**, a national strategic action network with a vision to achieve a healthy and equitable society, and dozens of their member partners across the country.

## ADDRESSING CAMPUS FOOD INSECURITY

Aramark recognizes that food insecurity is a growing concern among higher education institutions. Effective paths forward need to not only provide food to those that need it most, but must also address a number of factors tied to the availability of appropriate resources. We are committed to collaborating with all relevant stakeholders to develop and support a customized plan to address the needs of students on campus.

## COLLABORATIVE SOLUTIONS

To design the right solution we must first understand the specific conditions at each campus location and take into account perspectives from all the stakeholders – including students, non-profits, administration and food service. We have utilized a number of practices that offer turnkey solutions in some locations and developed additional custom solutions that meet the specific needs of the local stakeholders in other locations.

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<sup>1</sup> U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA)

## Turnkey Solutions

The following practices have been implemented in dozens of campus locations and have proven simple and effective. Our operators have access to details in the Aramark Addressing Food Insecurity toolkit.

- Food Donations – Aramark’s Food Donation Program provides a way to donate unused, unserved food to qualified non-profit organizations, including student groups and the local campus community.
- Pantry Support – Aramark donates funds, food items or space to university managed food pantries. We work with stakeholders to review the best approach for each campus.
- Meal Swipe and Declining Balance Donations – In partnership with third party organizations, such as Swipe Out Hunger, we provide opportunities for students to donate meal plan swipes or dollars to students in need.

## Custom Solutions

In addition to the turnkey solutions provided above, there are a number of additional solutions that can be tailored to the specific campus environment and stakeholder needs.

- Increase Access
  - Low cost grocery stores on campus
  - Expanded hours of operation
  - Host Farmer’s Markets or CSA pickup locations
  - Provide transportation to regional Farmer’s Markets
- Leverage Technology
  - Allow for 24/7 access with self-checkout, kiosk and mobile platforms
  - Centralized email address for community to bring attention to food security concerns in individuals
- Education and Engagement
  - Develop training for campus community to identify signs of food insecurity
- Innovate
  - Family style dinners for underserved populations such as commuters or graduate students and their families, encouraging leftovers to go for additional meal
  - Provide backpack programs for commuter students
  - Create dining plans that allow ALL students on campus to participate, completely removing any stigma associated with food insecurity