



Hundreds of Residents Benefit from Garrett County Food Resource Day

Residents Learn About the Food Supplement Program and Additional Community Resources

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Oakland, Md. – August 8, 2013 – More than 400 Garrett County residents who are struggling from the recession and are recovering from the damage caused by snowfall in last year’s Hurricane Sandy came out to the Food Distribution Warehouse in Oakland today to participate in the Garrett County Food Resource Day to learn about nutrition programs and community resources available to help households stay on their feet during tough times. This event follows three other resource days held since last October that were coordinated by Maryland Hunger Solutions in communities around the state that were hard-hit by Hurricane Sandy.

Maryland Hunger Solutions screened all attendees to see if they were eligible for Food Supplement Program Benefits (FSP, formally known as the Food Stamp Program), and assisted those who qualified with FSP application assistance. Fresh fruits and vegetables donated by the Maryland Food Bank – Western Branch were distributed to attendees, who also learned about community resources including housing and energy assistance programs, low-cost and free senior transportation and activity services, and programs that benefit children, such as Head Start.

“The Food Supplement Program is essential in helping low-income Marylanders put food on the table, but far too many people miss out because they are not sure how to apply or do not think they are eligible to receive benefits,” said Michael J. Wilson, Director of Maryland Hunger Solutions. “The Garrett County Food Resource Day is a way to reach people in their own community and to help as many qualified individuals as possible sign up for this program and other important resources.”

Nearly one in six households in Maryland struggled to afford enough food in 2012 according to a recent report released by the Food Research and Action Center. Approximately 4,800 residents in Garrett County receive FSP benefits, but many additional households – including those with seniors and low-wage earners – are eligible but not currently participating in the program.

“Low-income seniors are especially vulnerable to hunger,” said Hank Greenberg, state director for AARP Maryland. “Struggling with a high cost of living and medical expenses, some low-income seniors cannot afford groceries without assistance from the Food Supplement Program.

The average monthly benefit of \$113 goes a long way in ensuring that seniors have access to healthy foods.”

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Maryland Hunger Solutions partnered with the Garrett County Community Action Committee, the Maryland Food Bank – Western Branch, and AARP Maryland to make this event possible.