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Second Harvest Heartland, Loaves & Fishes and Twin Cities Restaurants Teaming Up to Feed Community in Midst of Coronavirus Outbreak

Chowgirls Catering, Restaurant Alma, The Bachelor Farmer donating kitchens, restaurant teams

SAINT PAUL, Minn. (March 17, 2020) — Second Harvest Heartland — one of the nation's largest, most efficient and most innovative hunger relief organizations — today announced that it is joining forces with Loaves & Fishes to distribute prepared meals made from the kitchens of [Chowgirls Catering](#), [Restaurant Alma](#) and [The Bachelor Farmer](#).

As Minnesotans stay home in an effort to keep the entire community safe as concerns regarding COVID-19 grow, and on the heels of Minneapolis Mayor Frey's emergency declaration for restaurants to close their doors except for takeout, delivery or drive-through orders, the hospitality industry is left with few patrons, an abundance of food and teams with less work to do. With a dash of innovation and a generous helping of creativity, three Minneapolis restaurants – Chowgirls Catering, Restaurant Alma and The Bachelor Farmer – announced they will donate their quiet kitchens and engage their idle teams to prepare meals this week to feed members of the community who are experiencing hunger due to the coronavirus outbreak.

"In this time of uncertainty, the basic human need of being fed has come to the forefront of this crisis," says Liz Mullen, executive director of Chowgirls Catering. "Chowgirls is honored to partner with Second Harvest Heartland and fellow restaurants to turn our space into "Minnesota Community Kitchen." We will be reaching out to our food and hospitality industry friends to help us by donating food, recruiting volunteers to help prepare meals and using their talents to feed our community. I have been amazed with the outpouring of support already and feel privileged to be a part of this amazing effort."

One of Second Harvest Heartland's existing community partners, Loaves and Fishes – a free public dining program with 30 locations throughout the state – has offered to use their sites to distribute the prepared meals. The plan is to provide 200 to 500 meals a day to start with, eventually ramping up to 2,000 meals a day.

"The coronavirus has put stress on our industry and we're in touch with that it means to go without," says Alex Roberts, executive chef of Restaurant Alma. "We don't have customers for the time being, but we do have food, we do have chefs, we do have line cooks. Let's use them to feed folks who need a good meal as we face down the virus. I challenge my many great local restaurant and hospitality partners to join me."

The public is encouraged to donate as able in order to help Second Harvest Heartland and its mighty network of partners continue to provide meals for the most vulnerable among us.

"This coronavirus outbreak is disrupting so many facets of our livelihood – but it's also bringing out the best of Minnesota's collective empathy," says Allison O'Toole, CEO of Second Harvest Heartland. "I have been nothing but amazed and proud of how everyone is stepping up to ensure all our neighbors have full pantries during this crisis."

Any restaurants interested in donating their kitchens, remaining food, teams and talent are encouraged to contact Second Harvest Heartland's Food Rescue emerging streams developer Dianna Wortz at dwortz@2harvest.org.

About Second Harvest Heartland

Second Harvest Heartland is one of the nation's largest, most efficient and most innovative hunger relief organizations. Second Harvest Heartland provides an average of 75 percent of all food distributed by its food shelf partners, and in 2019, provided more than 89 million meals to nearly 1,000 food shelves, pantries and other partner programs serving 59 counties in Minnesota and western Wisconsin. Second Harvest Heartland leads through innovation, finding efficient, effective solutions to connect the full resources of our community with our hungry neighbors. For more information, visit 2harvest.org or call 651-484-5117.

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