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## The Sioux Chef Joins Minnesota Central Kitchen to Fight New Twin Cities Food Deserts

*Funded by Medtronic, team of native culinary staff will prepare up to 2,000 meals weekly*

**MINNEAPOLIS, Minn. (June 17, 2020)** — [Minnesota Central Kitchen](#) (MCK) announced [The Sioux Chef](#) as its newest partner in the effort to address growing demand for food assistance during the COVID-19 pandemic and social uprisings in the South Minneapolis community. The Sioux Chef is opening its doors to MCK and transforming its kitchen space to prepare up to 2,000 meals weekly that will be delivered and served at hunger-relief organizations in Minneapolis and St. Paul. Twin Cities co-op partner The Wedge Table is also joining the MCK coalition this week.

As a result of the economic crisis that hit with COVID-19, demand for food assistance in Minnesota has tripled. Since mid-March, MCK has been innovating alongside corporate, restaurant, and hunger-relief partners to add kitchen and workforce capacity and transform rescued produce and ingredients into ready-to-eat meals. To date, MCK has distributed more than 448,000 meals and recovered more than 726,000 pounds of food.

"For the last seven years, our team has been dedicated to making Indigenous foods more accessible to as many communities as possible. Right now, our local community is struggling with hunger," said Sean Sherman, The Sioux Chef founder. "We're excited to join Minnesota Central Kitchen to assist with building a stronger, healthier and more equitable community that's equipped to fight both COVID-19 and social injustice."

The Sioux Chef partnership is made possible through funding from Medtronic and adds critical capacity for preparing meals. This week, The Sioux Chef culinary team – under the guidance of Sean Sherman – are leveraging their skillset to craft and prepare high-quality, healthy, culturally connected meals that will be distributed at El Colegio Charter School and other sites serving affected community members. Meals provided by Minnesota Central Kitchen are available daily at more than 50 locations across the Twin Cities.

"This partnership exemplifies the best in our community, when neighbors stand with neighbors" said Allison O'Toole, CEO of Second Harvest Heartland. "Adding The Sioux Chef to the Minnesota Central Kitchen team will allow us to provide more meals to local families so they won't have to navigate these tough times hungry."

In addition to providing meals to those in need, Minnesota Central Kitchen puts food industry personnel – including cooks, chefs and caterers – back to work after pandemic-related layoffs. Partnerships like those with The Sioux Chef and The Wedge Table help to employ more than 100 people a day at seven kitchen locations.

Commercial kitchens with food to donate are encouraged to register on [mealconnect.org](#) or contact Second Harvest Heartland's food rescue emerging streams developer Dianne Wertz at [dwertz@2harvest.org](mailto:dwertz@2harvest.org). Restaurants interested in donating their kitchens, teams and talent should contact Chowgirls at [cook@chowgirls.net](mailto:cook@chowgirls.net).

### About Minnesota Central Kitchen

Minnesota Central Kitchen is an effort led by Second Harvest Heartland, core partners Chowgirls Catering and Loaves & Fishes, hard-working production kitchens and a growing coalition of restaurants, food service providers and supporters. Production kitchens are Appetite for Change, Chowgirls, Compass/Eurest, Sodexo and Surly Brewing Company. Support comes from The Cargill Foundation, General Mills Foundation, The Good Acre and UnitedHealth Group. Powered by partner kitchens, employees and culinary expertise, Minnesota Central Kitchen prepares and distributes more than 10,000 packaged meals per day for hungry Minnesotans. Meals are distributed daily at locations across the Twin Cities Metro Area. For more information, visit [2harvest.org/mncentralkitchen](http://2harvest.org/mncentralkitchen).

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