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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**Now More Than Ever, Feeding America Riverside | San Bernardino Needs Support From the Inland Empire in the Fight Against Hunger**

*Feeding America Network Food Banks across the Country Unite for Hunger Action Month Amid COVID-19 Pandemic*

**(Riverside, CA – September 1, 2020)** Hunger impacts people in every corner of the country, including over 215,000 children in Riverside and San Bernardino Counties. And given the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, that number is expected to increase this year.

That's why Feeding America Riverside | San Bernardino (FARSB) joins Feeding America® food banks nationwide this September to take part in Hunger Action Month® and inspire people to take action and bring attention to the reality of food insecurity in America. This year's campaign comes at a critical time when the COVID-19 pandemic has hurt millions of people living paycheck to paycheck. Due to staggering unemployment rates, Feeding America estimates an additional 17 million people could be food insecure in 2020 as a result of this crisis, bringing the total up to 54 million people.

"Food banks are essential during times of crisis, and right now is no different. While we've distributed over 12 million pounds of food to families in the Inland Empire since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, the reality is that hunger existed in the community long before the pandemic and that more of our neighbors – kids in our children's classes, the barista at the local coffee shop, and those who may be unemployed – could be struggling to put food on the table," said Stephanie Otero, CEO of FARSB. "Every action counts, and there's no better way to support your local food bank, FARSB, then during Hunger Action Month®," said Otero.

FARSB is encouraging the community to come together during Hunger Action Month by using social media to leverage good. Social media followers and friends are encouraged to join in the fun, by participating with the food bank virtually, which will enter them into weekly prize giveaways hosted every Friday through the month of September on FARSB's Facebook and Instagram accounts (@feedingamericaIE). Others can join in on the fun and win weekly prize giveaways by making \$2 or more donations (equating to nearly 16 meals) by texting HungerAction to 71777 or visiting [www.FeedingIE.org/hungeraction](http://www.FeedingIE.org/hungeraction). Each photo shared and \$2 donation made is one entry into the weekly giving contest. Multiple entries are welcomed and encouraged as FARSB raises funds to support critical hunger relief efforts.

Sharing, volunteering, pledging to advocate, fundraising and donating are just a few of the ways the community can pitch in.

“We need your help now more than ever,” said Claire Babineaux-Fontenot, CEO of Feeding America. “Hunger in this country existed long before COVID-19, but the pandemic has thrust more and more of our neighbors into food insecurity, and food banks are responding to a sustained, increased demand. With support of the community, together we can end hunger one helping at a time.”

September marks the thirteenth year the Feeding America network has organized this annual call to action. To learn more about FARSB and other ways you can get involved for Hunger Action Month in Riverside and San Bernardino Counties, please visit [www.FeedingIE.org/hungeraction](http://www.FeedingIE.org/hungeraction) or [HungerActionMonth.org](http://HungerActionMonth.org). You can also join the conversation by posting photos or stories to social media with #HungerActionMonth, @FeedingAmericaIE and @FeedingAmerica.

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### **About Feeding America Riverside | San Bernardino**

Feeding America Riverside | San Bernardino (FARSB) is leading the fight against hunger in the Inland Empire by providing food access, emergency relief, education, and advocacy to families in Riverside and San Bernardino Counties. FARSB opened in 1980 as Survive Food Bank in response to the increasing concern about the dual problems of hunger and food waste in the Inland Empire. Today, FARSB is the primary source of food to over 200 local nonprofit organizations, distributing over two million pounds of food monthly to emergency food pantries, homeless shelters, soup kitchens, high-need elementary schools, halfway houses, senior centers, residential treatment centers, shelters for the abused, after school programs and group homes. With the help of these charity partners, they make up the largest hunger relief organization in the Inland Empire, making food security a reality for over 1.2 million people every year. FARSB is one of 200 food banks across the nation affiliated with Feeding America, the national organization, however, FARSB raises their own funds through community initiatives in the Inland Empire. FARSB proudly holds the 2019 Guide Star Seal of Transparency, the highest level of transparency achievable through Guide Star and is rated 100/100 on Finance & Accountability through the Charity Navigator Encompass Rating System. For more information on how you can help, or to donate directly to FARSB, visit [www.FeedingIE.org/donate](http://www.FeedingIE.org/donate). 100% of donations stay in the Inland Empire to help feed children and families in need.