Food For Thought
healing with food+love

# THE DISH

CELEBRATING
35 YEARS
OF SERVICE

AUTUMN 2024

## Food Security vs. Nutrition Security

This month the U.S. Department of Agriculture launched #WhatsOnMyPlate, a nationwide initiative to highlight how MyPlate fits many lifestyles and is adaptable to various preferences, cultural tastes, budgets, and medical conditions.

As part of Food For Thought's comprehensive nutrition services, we often utilize the MyPlate approach to encourage healthy eating and help our clients better manage their diet-sensitive medical conditions and avoid nutrition insecurity.

In our efforts to advance a more engaged, countywide "food is medicine" culture, it's important to understand the difference between food security and nutrition security.

**Food Security** refers to having access to enough food (calories), while **Nutrition Security** focuses on access to healthy food that meets personal preferences, diet-sensitive requirements, and cultural responsiveness. ***Food For Thought provides nutrition security.***

Nutrition Security also considers the quality, affordability, accessibility, and safety of foods that promote wellbeing and prevent disease. The term "nutrition insecurity" is used to bring more attention to disease prevention, management, and treatment. It also focuses on one of our organizational goals: **health equity**, and the quality of food available.

## Upcoming Events


# From Our Executive Director

Dear FFT Supporters and Friends,

The harvest season is one of my favorite times of the year at Food For Thought. Our own garden continues to produce delicious food for our clients, and the last of the tomatoes and other fall crops are coming in from local farms and supporters who share their bounty with us. All of this makes me grateful for the support of our generous community, and that I live in such a beautiful and wonderful place!

This is our 35th year, possible only because of the support of our incredible volunteers and donors. To continue this vital work and keep up with the growing demand for our nutrition services, we invite in-kind donations, particularly fresh produce and eggs. If you or someone you know grows or farms their own food or has excess crops they would like to donate, we gratefully welcome your contributions. These donations help us provide fresh, nutritious options to the people we serve and who are at great risk of nutrition insecurity.

If you are not already a volunteer and have time, please consider joining us. We are heading into the busy holiday season, which is also a time when our clients need us the most.

Thank you for joining our mission and helping us create a more nourished community. Together, we are cultivating a countywide food is medicine culture as we turn the bounties of the harvest season into hope and healing for thousands of Sonoma County residents.

With heartfelt gratitude,

Ron Karp, Executive Director

Heart of Sonoma County 45th Annual Awards

2024 AWARD WINNER

Achievement in Nonprofit Excellence

FOR YOUR KITCHEN

## Panzanella Salad

### Ingredients

- 3 slices stale sourdough bread, cut into 1" pieces
- 1 lb tomatoes, diced
- 1 cucumber, sliced and halved
- ½ red onion, thinly sliced
- 1 bell pepper, seeded and cut into 1" pieces
- 6 fresh basil leaves, chopped
- 1 tbsp capers, drained
- 6 oz cooked chicken or tofu (optional)

**FOR THE VINAIGRETTE:**

- 1 tsp garlic, minced
- ½ tsp Dijon mustard
- 1 tbsp white wine or champagne vinegar
- 2 tbsp olive oil
- Salt and pepper to taste

### Instructions

To dry out the bread, leave out for a few hours or bake at 200°F for half an hour. Meanwhile, make the vinaigrette by whisking together all ingredients. In a large bowl, combine the vegetables, capers (optional), and ½ the vinaigrette. Add the bread and stir gently. Taste and add more vinaigrette as needed. Serves 2 as an entree, 4 as a side.

SPONSOR SPOTLIGHT

## River Road Family Vineyards and Winery

River Road Family Vineyards & Winery stands out not only for its exceptional wines but also for its commitment to community and sustainability. As a proud B Corporation, River Road prioritizes social and environmental responsibility, ensuring that every bottle reflects their vision to care for the planet and the people who call it home.

The winery's commitment and compassion shine through their support of Food For Thought and their team's weekly volunteer shift in the food bank, helping to fill orders for clients, stock shelves, and process food items for distribution.

We encourage you to support businesses that support the same causes as you. Discover more at **riverroadvineyards.com**.

# Maria's Story: Helping Hands to Healing Hearts

Before I was ever a client of Food For Thought, I was a volunteer.

After moving to Forestville in 2014, I was taking a walk and saw a building I had never noticed before. Curious, I approached to peek in the front windows and to my surprise I was standing before a little store! I went inside and asked, "What is this place?" That is how I learned about Food For Thought and started volunteering in the garden, planting and harvesting produce for the food bank.

Suddenly, my son got in a horrible accident and went to the hospital. At the time, he was not working and I was staying home to take care of him. Luckily, I knew exactly who to turn to for help. His doctor referred us to Food For Thought's Welcome Home program, which helped us access healthy food after his hospital stay. Every time I brought my son to the food bank—leg braces and all— we were greeted with the warm smiling faces of the wonderful people who work at Food For Thought.

Although I had spent time here as a volunteer, it was only then that I learned FFT has the best food! The fruit and vegetables that come from the garden and the good people who donate are great quality. It is as if you are shopping at Whole Foods or Oliver's Market.

Then I became a Welcome Home client. After my surgery, I did not have any money or anyone to cook for me. I asked to be referred to Food For Thought to help me get healthy food. The frozen meals I was given were delicious, fresh, and easy to prepare! I simply put them in the microwave and I had my lunch and dinner each day. It helped me get well faster because the food is better than what I have at home.

I love this program and I love everyone who works here. If someone I know needs nutrition support, I can recommend them to Food For Thought.

# Why I Give

I began volunteering at Food For Thought (FFT) on a regular basis in 2008. I immediately felt right at home. Like many of us, I'd lost so many loved ones to HIV/AIDS. I was eager to help in any way I could.

FFT soon became an important part of my life. I became close to my Wednesday volunteer shift gang and members of the staff. It was a privilege to be part of the steady transition that shifted FFT from solely HIV/AIDS clients to other folks in need of help with getting healthy food to their tables while enduring life-threatening illnesses.

When COVID showed up, I took a break from my regular shift. I began delivering groceries. I will continue as long as I can.

FFT is family. As a longtime FFT donor and volunteer I will keep volunteering and giving. It brings me such joy!! What a great organization.

Laurie Plant, FFT Donor and Volunteer

# Ways to Give

## Donate Online

Every online donation helps us to grow and to swiftly allocate resources to those in need.

## Give Every Month

Our GEMs create a reliable foundation, playing a critical role in our sustainability.

## Major Gifts

One-time, single donations of $1,000 or more are a vital source of revenue for FFT.

## Double Your Donation

Many companies will match charitable contributions made by their employees.

## Volunteer

Volunteers are crucial to our work. Take a hands-on role in our work by donating your time.

*If you have questions about any of the ways to give, please contact Ron Karp, Executive Director, at RonK@FFTfoodbank.org or (707) 887-1647 ext. 105.*

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