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Partner Agency Newsletter - January 2022

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Agency News



Spotlight: Please welcome our Partner Services Manager, Tara Sinicropi

What a better way to ring in the New Year than welcoming Tara Sinicropi as she accepts promotion to Partner Services Manager! Tara has been working towards the mission to nourish the hungry and lead the community in the fight against hunger since 2017. Tara originally joined the Food Bank as a Mobile Pantry Coordinator on the Programs team serving food to those in need, out in the field. She then transitioned to the Mobilizing Communities team where she gained data management and fundraising experience on the Community Engagement team. Her growing passion for the mission and experience on both the Programs and Mobilizing Communities teams are what led Tara to Partner Services. Her favorite task so far as the Partner Services Manager has been the overall building and leading of the team. While the Partner Services team accomplished so much in 2021, Tara's main goal for 2022 is to improve and expand support to other teams here at the food bank with the goal of creating a strong system of processes, internally, that will ultimately help us better serve you all and our neighbors. Tara is a leader of compassion, hard work, and is ready to serve partners and neighbors alike in the fight against hunger. When she is not leading at the food bank, Tara enjoys preparing yummy vegetable dishes to share with her family, discovering the best places to eat in Austin, and enjoying local breweries.



A big thank you to Tara for leading the way as we all work passionately towards closing the hunger gap day by day. If you ever need to reach out to Tara with questions, comments, or concerns, you may do so by email tsinicropi@centraltexasfoodbank.org or by phone [512-684-2542](tel:512-684-2542).

Resources



Recipe of the Month



This month our Nutrition Education Team is featuring a recipe with broccoli. Broccoli is associated with cruciferous vegetables related to cabbage, kale, cauliflower, and brussels sprouts. Like the other cruciferous vegetables, broccoli contains high amounts of vitamins and nutrients.

Broccoli is also a good source of potassium and dietary fiber, with 15 calories per half-cup serving. Broccoli is a cool-season vegetable, but it is available all year round.

Broccoli is one of the best vegetable sources of vitamins A and C that build healthy skin and resistance to infection. In addition, cruciferous vegetables contain antioxidants to protect your cells from damage and that can help reduce the risk of developing many cancers.

Broccoli should have fresh-looking, light green stalks with compact, dark-green heads. Avoid broccoli with open, flowering, discolored, wet or wilted heads and tough, woody stems. Store broccoli, unwashed, in loose plastic bags in the

refrigerator. It can be refrigerated for 3-5 days. When ready to prepare, wash thoroughly under running water or soak for 3 to 5 minutes. This green veggie can be enjoyed both raw and cooked. Eat with the stem! While the outer skin is relatively tough, stems can be peeled and sliced for dipping in your favorite vegetable dip or cut into smaller pieces. Broccoli is easily steamed or stir-fried in 6 to 12 minutes. Do not overcook, as the texture can quickly become “mushy” and unappealing.

Today, we are happy to add a simple but warm recipe with very common ingredients that any kitchen may have. This broccoli frittata is delicious and easy, and you can enjoy it for brunch or as a weeknight dinner option. Please visit our website for this recipe, along with many other seasonal **recipes to share with your clients.**

To learn more about our FREE Nutrition Education Classes at <https://www.centraltexasfoodbank.org/get-help/nutrition-education> and find more recipes such as this one, [here](#).

[Click here for more recipes.](#)

Food Sourcing Forecast

Below, you will find a list of foods that will be available on the shopping list soon. On the hyperlinked items you will find easy recipes that can be shared with your clients. [To find more recipes, visit our website!](#)

Meat & Dairy	Shelf Stable
Eggs Milk - 1% Pacific Whiting Fillets	Carrots Cereal - corn flakes Corn - canned Mixed Fruit - canned Pasta - spaghetti Pasta - whole grain rotini

	Potato - white slices Peaches Tomato - canned
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Free CTFB Gardening Classes – Austin Area Only

The Garden Team here at CTFB would like to extend an invite to our Travis County neighbors who are interested in learning more about food gardening or cooking from the garden. Classes are offered in English and Spanish and participants must be able to pick up food or attend in-person at an Austin-area location. More details and registration information below.

Austin-area partners: please share these opportunities with your clients! [Click here for Cooking from the Garden flyers \(English/Spanish\)](#) and [click here for Organic Food Gardening flyers \(English/Spanish\)](#)

Cooking From the Garden

Learn to cook seasonally using produce harvested in the Food Bank Gardens. This class pairs basic gardening information with weekly boxes of food and live cooking demonstrations by CTFB staff.

- Available in Spanish and English.
- **Virtual only.** All participants must have stable, reliable internet access and a Zoom capable device to participate in this virtual class series.
- Participants who want to receive weekly grocery supplement with recipe ingredient must pick it up from the food bank at a pre-scheduled time. Grocery pick up is encouraged, but not required to participate in the virtual class.
- This class is suited for Adults, Seniors, and Families.

- Participants should have access to cooking facilities with refrigeration, stove/cooktop, oven, pots and pans, blender, and cutlery.

Have clients register here for

English www.centraltexasfoodbank.org/cookingclass; January 12 - February 16

Have clients register here for

Spanish www.centraltexasfoodbank.org/cocinardeljardin; January 13th - February 17

Introduction to Organic Food Gardening

Get your hands dirty while learning in depth gardening skills. This class pairs monthly gardening lessons with all the materials you need to start your own portable container garden to grow fresh, seasonal produce.

- Available in Spanish and English.
- **In person only. Participants must travel to the class location.**
- This class is suitable for Adults and Seniors.
- Participants should have access to a space where they can place a 1 sq ft container garden. Space should have ample sunlight and convenient water access.
- COVID protocols for in-person classes include masking at all times, and maintenance of 6 ft social distance from all participants not in the same household. In addition, this class will be conducted 100% outside (restrooms will be available).

Have clients register here for

English www.centraltexasfoodbank.org/gardening-classes; February 22, March 22, April 26 - held at Hill Country Community, Leander

Have clients register here for

Spanish www.centraltexasfoodbank.org/clasedejardineria; February 26, March 26, April 23 - held at CTFB Garden

Free Culinary Training Program

The Culinary Team at CTFB Community Kitchen would like to extend an invite to our neighbors who are interested in a career in Food Service, have a passion for food, and are ready and willing to learn. This hands-on job-training program is designed to teach basic culinary skills, cooking techniques, knife skills, equipment operation and professional development.

The CTFB Culinary Training Program is a free, 8 week training, and open to all members of the community (subject to eligibility requirements). Our program is a hybrid of in-person training and online lessons. Students attend in-person class 3 days a week, while completing our extensive online program through the Rouxbe Culinary Training Platform.

- Application due: 1/27/2022
- Interviews: 1/20-2/01/2022
- Start Date: 2/14/2022
- Graduation Date: 4/15/2022

You can find out more about the for Culinary Training Program at:

www.centraltexasfoodbank.org/kitchen.

Open Enrollment Resources

Enrolling in health insurance can be complicated, but CTFB Partner Agency Foundation Communities is here to simplify the process! Open Enrollment starts Nov 1 and runs until Jan 15, 2022.

Monday through Saturday during Open Enrollment, Foundation Communities simplifies health insurance enrollment in Marketplace insurance plans, for free. Please help spread the word by referring clients or community organizations to our services. English and Spanish outreach materials including flyers, posters, email banners, and social media posts can be found [here](#).

Three easy steps are all it takes to get enrolled:

1) Complete the initial "Get Ready" form or phone appointment. This can be done [online](#) or over the phone. To complete the form over the phone, clients can call 512-381-4520 or visit ProsperHealthCoverage.org to schedule a phone appointment.

2) Schedule an Enrollment Appointment. After completing the initial "Get Ready" form, clients will receive a link and phone number to schedule their enrollment appointment, which can be in-person at one of our two locations or online.

3) Upon completion of the enrollment appointment, clients will be enrolled in affordable health insurance! Foundation Communities can help them navigate healthcare all year.

If you'd like to request a staff training or additional information, please contact Clisha D'Souza at clisha.dsouza@foundcom.org.

Important Reminders

Upcoming Closures

IMPORTANT REMINDER – CTFB will also be closed on Monday, January 17 in observance of Martin Luther King Jr. Day. All regularly scheduled pick-ups, deliveries, and ordering will be cancelled during these times. Below are the modifications being made to the ordering schedule as a result of the closure:

If you are picking up or receiving delivery on:	Your ordering window opens on:	At:	Your order is due on:	At:
Tues., Jan 18*	Wed., Jan 12	10:00 a.m.	Thurs., Jan 13	9:00 a.m.
Wed., Jan 19	Thurs., Jan 13	10:00 a.m.	Fri., Jan 14	9:00 a.m.

*Note: Orders for Tuesday, January 18 are pulled on Friday, January 14 so produce may not last over 3 day holiday.

If your organization needs to reschedule a pick-up at CTFB during this closure, please reach out to your relationship manager to see what may be possible. Reschedule spots will be limited and are available first-come, first-served.

For the most up-to-date closure information, please refer to the [2022 Holiday Guide](#) and the [agencies page](#) of our website. CTFB will post and send out closure ordering guidelines 30 days prior so you can plan for your pantry needs.

[Click here to download the 2022 Holiday Guide.](#)

[Click here to visit the Agencies page.](#)

Extension Announcement: Temporary TEFAP Intake Form & Signature Waiver

Texas Department of Agriculture (TDA) has extended the TEFAP Signature waiver to remove the required signatures from participants/proxies on TEFAP intake forms until **March 31, 2022**. Please use this extension as a **transition period** to help your intake staff & volunteers transition back to collecting participant signatures on TEFAP intake forms by **March 31, 2022**.

Agencies must still obtain federally required intake criteria to properly determine and document eligibility. All information is self-declared by the participant and documentation to determine eligibility is never required.

Important Intake Document Links:

- Temporary TEFAP Intake [Form and Sign In Sheet](#) (Extended until 3/31/22)
- Temporary TEFAP Intake Form [Instructions](#)
- Regular TEFAP Intake Form ([English](#)/[Spanish](#))
- Regular Client [Sign In Sheet](#)
- TEFAP Intake [FAQs](#)

Please be sure to determine eligibility based on categorical and/or income first. If the participant does not qualify from those two, please utilize the household crisis option and document the reason: lost job, furloughed/laid off, etc.

As reminder, all partners must publicly post and/or share the [Participants Rights and Responsibilities](#) with participants during the intake process. All staff & volunteers collecting participant information must have a current Civil Rights Training on file with CTFB. You can find a link to this important training [here](#).

If you have any questions regarding the intake process or TEFAP eligibility, please reach out to your CTFB relationship manager or call the AR Hotline 512-684-2503.

Reminder: Monthly Report Holds

The reports partner agencies submit each month are crucial to the Central Texas Food Bank's mission and here's why:

- To source food accurately. The food sourcing team at CTFB analyze the data from partner agency reports to procure and forecast food purchases. Accurate monthly reports ensure our shelves are stocked and ready to serve the nutritious food our neighbors need.
- To inform national organizations. The food bank also uses the data from reports to provide cumulative information to the Texas Department of Agriculture, which reports consolidated statewide numbers to the United States Department of Agriculture and to Feeding America. Accurate and timely monthly reports have immediate and larger implications.

As we enter the New Year, we want to remind you of the report hold policy. Monthly reports must be submitted through the online reporting system by the eighth of the following month that is being reported (Example: November's report due by December 8). **If a Partner Agency does not submit their reports by the eighth, they are put on hold and may not place orders until all reports are submitted.**

Once an agency has accrued 4 report holds in a calendar year, the account will automatically be suspended until the first of the following month. The suspension will not be removed until the first of the following month, even after the late report is received. Every late monthly report receive after an agency has accrued 4 report holds in a calendar year will automatically be suspended until the first of the following month. Excessive holds in a

calendar year may lead to termination. Please let your relationship manager know if you have any questions.

Contact the Team

512.684.2503 | agencies@centraltexasfoodbank.org

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