

A Day Without Hunger

Each year in Los Angeles County, approximately 3.5 billion pounds of food is wasted and thrown into the trash, eventually making its way to landfills. Meanwhile, 1 in 7 individuals, or about 1.5 million County residents, are suffering from food insecurity. Food insecurity is defined as having limited access to obtain a sufficient quantity of affordable nutritious food to lead an active and healthy lifestyle. This can affect anyone from adults to children, women to men, perhaps even someone you know, and it is an issue Los Angeles County has been dedicated to solving.

Los Angeles County Public Works, under its Food Donation and Recovery Outreach Program (Food DROP), launched a year-long campaign tagged “A Day Without Hunger” in March 2019. County will collaborate with nonprofit organizations to host a series of food distribution and community outreach and engagement events at food recovery facilities throughout Los Angeles County. The Campaign and events will raise awareness of food insecurity in Los Angeles County, support the Homelessness Initiative efforts, educate residents about the value of food and encourage food donation instead of disposal. Public Service announcements are broadcast on ESPNLA, AM 710. Kyle Kuzma, Los Angeles Lakers forward, is the spokesperson.

On Friday, March 29, 2019, Public Works held the first A Day Without Hunger Event at Interfaith Food Center, a nonprofit charity organization located in Santa Fe Springs, providing regular food distribution service to the communities in need. Public Works partnered with Food Forward, one of the largest food recovery agencies in Southern California, who supplied the event with four pallets of additional fresh produce, including pears, lettuce, squash, and carrots. A total of 14,000 pounds of food was redistributed to approximately 180 families at the event.

The event was also comprised of information booths and free giveaways from Public Works and the Food DROP program, Department of Public Health, Department of Public Social Services, and Interfaith Food Center. Public Works provided educational information on how residents can effectively prevent and reduce food waste, food donation safety tips for businesses, and LA Homeless Service Authority’s list of local shelters for homeless people. The Department of Public Health partnered with Champions for Change to demonstrate a healthy food preparation in a simplistic and creative way and educate on food safe meal prep tips and storage guide to keep food fresher longer. Department of Public Social Services offered on-site Medi-Cal and CalFresh enrollment assistance, and Interfaith Food Center enrolled and renewed membership applications for the upcoming year.

A Day Without Hunger events are open and free to all residents in the county, regardless of eligibility of the nonprofit’s requirements or food insecurity status. Everyone is highly encouraged to participate at the events to show support and raise awareness of food insecurity in Los Angeles County. Together we can demonstrate change by redirecting our surplus edible food to a place where it would be most beneficial for those in need.

Join Los Angeles County in the fight against hunger. For more information on A Day Without Hunger and future events, visit FoodDROPLA.com.