



Post-disaster Rural Community Based Feeding

A Best practice from Hurricane Michael

ABSTRACT

During the Hurricane Michael response in Florida, a pilot program was developed to support and mature a long term feeding program for the rural, financially-disadvantaged communities left devastated by the storm.

Background

During the Hurricane Michael response in Florida, a pilot program was developed to support and mature a long term feeding program for the rural, financially-disadvantaged communities left devastated by the storm. The program looked at innovative approaches to the transition from short term feeding solutions provided by National VOAD groups and the federal government, as well as the ramping up of Feeding Florida, which feeds these communities with a vast agency network during blue skies.

This pilot program resulted in stronger relationships between traditional emergency feeding partners such as state agency partners, The Salvation Army, American Red Cross, Southern Baptists, Catholic Charities and Feeding Florida enhance their capacity.

The program also integrated school superintendents, county emergency management, local food banks and community/faith-based partners in support of all available options to support mass care and congregate feeding, which resulted in the existing community partners supporting their citizens with minimal logistical support from their state and federal partners for a longer duration, as dictated by the devastation caused by Hurricane Michael.

Attached is the framework developed at the direction of the Mass Care Coordinator for the Florida State Emergency Response Team. This outline is designed to stand up a process capable of supporting long term feeding for up to nine months post impact from the State Emergency Operations perspective. It includes recommended team members, time lines and anticipated outcomes.

Development of a Rural Community Based Feeding Program

A best practice for future disasters

Capable of supporting long term feeding for up to nine months post impact

Original Long Term Feeding Taskforce Members

(Best Practice team is identified in advance of event, if not previously identified should be coordinated within one-week post event)

- Feeding Florida, overall management of community food banks in Florida
- EMAC Mississippi Mass Care Coordinator
- Department of Children and Families (DCFS)
- University of Florida/Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences (UF/IFAS) Extension, Family Nutrition Program (FNP) – Food Systems Specialist
- Former State Emergency Response Team (SERT) member with local relationships in Emergency Management
- USDA as manager of all commodities

Team Members for Long Term Engagement

(Recommend Long Term Engagement team identified and engaged within 21 days of impact)

- Department of Health – Funding streams for feeding programs, permitting, and health inspections
- Department of Agriculture – Regulation of school lunch/feeding programs and USDA commodities, requesting waivers for free meals
- Department of Elder Affairs - Home Delivered Meals and adult feeding programs
- Department of Children and Families – Waivers for childcare facilities feeding, which schools are not what
- USDA – Release commodities to various feeding programs
- FEMA Mass Care – Available funding
- Department of Economic Opportunity – Displaced Worker Grant – Provide salaries for additional staff needed to expand feeding mission and drivers for transportation.

Initial Outreach to Impacted Communities (consider Declared Counties)

- School Superintendents
 - o Assistant Superintendents responsible for Feeding
- Food and Nutrition
 - o Food Service Director
- County Emergency Management
 - o Either attended initial meeting or brief after meeting
- University of Florida/Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences (UF/IFAS) Extension
 - o County Extension Director
- Community Volunteer Leadership
- Ministerial Community Leadership

Post-Disaster Rural Community Based Feeding

Anticipated Outcome: week 1 – 2 (Anticipated outreach initiated 14 days Post Impact)

- School Food Service Directors evaluate usage of National School Lunch meal program (breakfast, lunch, At-risk After School Program (AMP), and Summer Food Service Program or Seamless Summer Option)
 - o Determine capacity to store and manage increased commodities needed to support the long term feeding operation.
- Send home survey to determine if the need for feeding has increased after the event due to loss of homes or co-mingling of households. More seniors, infants, etc.
 - o Establish the disaster driven needs
- Determine locations within the community for distribution of meals. Locations could be churches, libraries, community centers, fire departments, etc. Kitchens located at ‘hub’ sites will prepare meals. Distribution locations will serve as the ‘spokes’ for handing out meals to community members.
- For members of the community without transportation or with disabilities, develop a community-based distribution model for home delivery of meals from the community meal distribution points.
- Task Force will have identified all of the available feeding programs available through federal resources, state agencies, and other programs which can support the feeding operations as well as the required reporting structure.

Anticipated Outcome: week 3 – 4

- School and community-based leadership will have identified families with increased need due to the impact of the disaster and quantity/type of food needed to support them.
- Feeding coordinator, kitchens, kitchen staff, locations of distribution and home delivery systems are created and operational.
- Task Force will have identified support teams from superintendents association who can provide the logistical support to augment the locals for meal preparation, if there is a need, with mobile kitchens, delivery vehicles and reporting capabilities.
- Task Force will have identified schools willing to host pantries supported by local food banks to be accessible by parents when they pick up students.
- Start identifying the need to increasing the charitable food flow into the areas, i.e. identifying amount of palletized food boxes needed to supplement the institutional feeding enhancements.

Anticipated Outcome: week 5 – 6

- Supporting teams from unaffected school systems have deployed to impacted counties to assist the school staff with development of the expanded feeding programs, reporting requirements and staffing needs identified and filled
- Leverage the Displaced Workers Grant from US Dept. of Labor to hire staff from the impacted area to support expanded feeding mission.
- Leverage resources from unaffected counties to support transportation and distribution of increased meal output.
- Community support system engaged (Volunteer Fire Dept., Kiwanis, VFW Lodges, churches, libraries, etc.) acting as locations for distribution of food to impacted community.
- Community based feeding should be settling into a self-sustaining pattern with support as needed from the initial State EOC Long Term Feeding Task Force.