



Dear Ms. Fournier and Mr. Horvitz,

On behalf of Feeding America, I want to express our gratitude for your support and engagement in the upcoming **Women's Day Live Centennial Benefit Concert**, benefiting our mission to end hunger in the United States. Before the pandemic, 37 million Americans were facing hunger, and we know the number of people facing food insecurity has surged by millions due to the economic crisis brought on by COVID-19.

We are continuing to monitor the projections and the outlook as the crisis evolves so that we, along with our partners and supporters, can respond accordingly. Our network distributed more than 1.6 billion meals from April through June 2020 alone—delivering nourishing help to people in need. If the distribution continues at that pace for a full a year, our network's total food distribution would surpass 6.4 billion meals. According to a recent Feeding America study, we estimate that the total demand-supply gap for the next year—July 2020 through June 2021—will be equivalent to 8 billion meals. We are mindful of the potential impact of flu season in the fall and winter and how it could lead to a virus resurgence—resulting in a repeated spike in demand and sharp declines in supply. The fallout from the pandemic, including record unemployment rates, economic hardship and school closures, resulted in 40% of the people seeking charitable food assistance visiting a food bank for the first time in their lives.

According to an analysis by the McKinsey Global Institute, women's jobs are 1.8 times more vulnerable to this crisis than men's jobs. Women make up 39 percent of global employment but account for 54 percent of overall job losses. One reason for this higher impact on women is that the virus is significantly increasing the burden of unpaid care, which is disproportionately carried by women. In May 2020, The Washington Post reported that—until this pandemic—women have never experienced an unemployment rate in the double digits since the Bureau of Labor Statistics began reporting data by gender in 1948. The report cited Labor Department rates that showed women's unemployment in April 2020 was 16.2%—nearly three points higher than men's. Women are overrepresented in some of the hardest-hit industries, including leisure and hospitality, healthcare and education, and women—especially Black and Hispanic women—lost jobs in those sectors at disproportionate rates. This comes on top of research previously shared by the U.S. Department of Agriculture that revealed rates of food insecurity were higher than the national average in 2018 for: households with children headed by a single mother (27.8%) and for women living alone (14.2%).

So, while COVID-19 has presented an immense health crisis, our country also continues to grapple with a food crisis—a sustained level of increased demand since March 2020 with millions of more Americans seeking help to put food on the table. As the need for food relief persists due to the pandemic, our nationwide network of 200 food banks remains steadfast in our work to help ensure more of our neighbors have equitable access to the food they need.

Best regards,

Catherine Davis
Chief Marketing Officer, Feeding America