

Black Diamond Foundation Fights Hunger with the Community Food Bank of Citrus County

by
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Lecanto, FL, October 12, 2013 – One of the newest organizations supported by the Black Diamond Foundation is the Community Food Bank of Citrus County. After many years of planning and fund raising, the Community Food Bank opened its doors in January 2013, with the mission of acquiring and distributing nutritious quality food to pantries, soup kitchens, and shelters within Citrus County.

After visiting the new facility in April 2013, and noting its positive community impact, the Black Diamond Foundation Board unanimously approved a grant of \$15,000 to help the Community Food Bank fight hunger in Citrus County.

The Community Food Bank collects, sorts, and prepares food for distribution that is gathered from area grocery stores, Feeding America Tampa Bay, and other donation sources. Currently the Food Bank distributes food to 32 agencies and Faith Based Ministries here in Citrus County. In the seven months since opening, it has gone from nothing to distributing over 75,000 pounds of food per month.

The Community Food Bank is a redistribution organization of Feeding America Tampa Bay and while some of the food does come from them, the majority is collected daily from area grocery stores. Each morning Tom Chancey, the Executive Director of the Food Bank, drives the refrigerated truck to area stores and loads up the food being donated. Upon his return to the food bank, volunteers sort and prepare the food for distribution. At the end of each day, the food not distributed is donated to local farmers to feed their livestock.

The agencies that are served in Citrus County have been inspected and approved by Feeding America Tampa Bay. One of the goals of the Community Food Bank is to be able to do these inspections themselves. This would speed up the process, and greatly help get the food to where it is needed most. And, we all know the need is great. Fully 17% of Citrus County residents are living below the Federal poverty level. Child poverty in the county is at 33%, versus the national average of 22%. In addition, 66% of the elementary school students in the county receive free or reduced price lunches.

Together with their volunteers and donors, the Community Food Bank is promoting public awareness, inspiring community involvement, and striving to end hunger and nourish hope for those in need of support. Although the Food Bank currently has 30 volunteers, more are needed. If you are interested in giving your time to “Make a Difference” and support this worthy cause, please contact the food bank at **(352) 628-FOOD(3663)** or visit their website at ***<http://communityfoodbankofcitruscounty.org>***