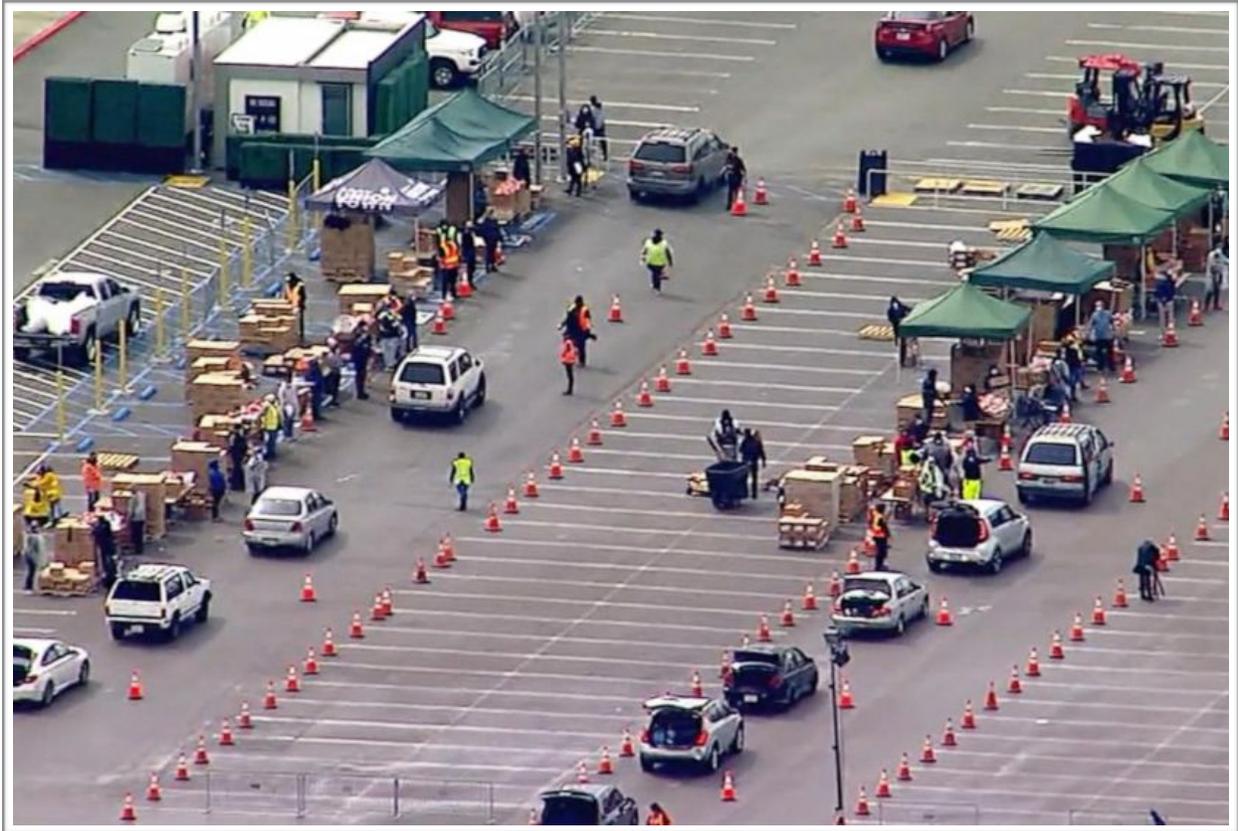


Yavapai County Emergency Food Delivery Jan. - June 2020

Response to the COVID-19 Pandemic



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August 25, 2020

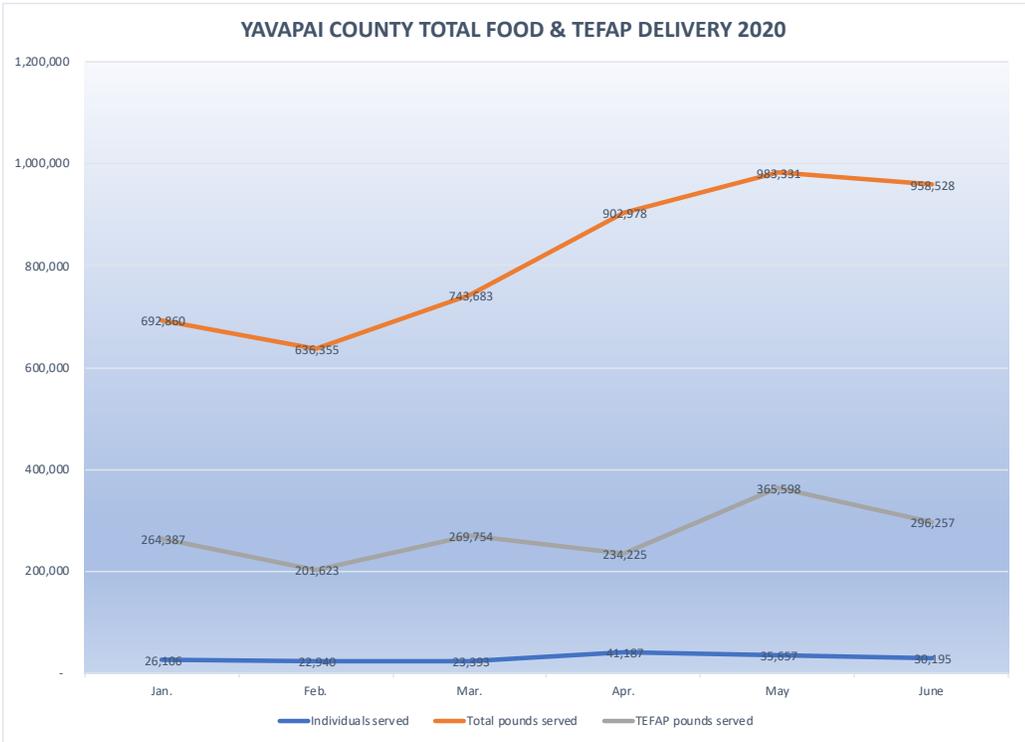
Challenge to the Emergency Food Network

When Arizona was impacted by the Covid-19 pandemic in February 2020, a major socioeconomic impact occurred when the Governor implemented stay at home and nonessential business closing as CDC-recommended actions for reducing the spread of the virus. These actions occurred in March, causing many persons to lose their jobs. With widespread job loss, individuals and families lacked immediate income for meeting basic needs of food, shelter and health maintenance.

The Arizona network for emergency food distribution was tested by the rapid increase in the numbers of persons relying upon emergency food providers. This brief report examines the distribution of TEFAP (The Emergency Food Assistance Program) and the Total Food including other DES sources of food to emergency food providers in Yavapai County during the initial impact of COVID-19 increasing food insecurity.

In Arizona, the state department of Economic Security (DES) is responsible for the distribution of emergency food and several other federal food programs, including new COVID-19 federal supplies of food provided by the CARES Act. The DES Coordinated Hunger Relief program orders bulk purchases of food through the US Department of Agriculture and Feeding America and contracts with St Mary’s Food Bank Alliance (SMFBA) to receive, store, and distribute emergency food to **sixty** food banks and pantries, hot meals programs, senior centers, and youth programs.

This graph shows the emergency food system’s response to the sudden rise in individuals having to rely on emergency food providers.



The Coordinated Hunger Relief Program in DES provided monthly numbers of individuals served. Table 2 presents the monthly number of individuals served by emergency food providers in Yavapai County.

The number of individuals served increased from 26,106 in January to a peak of 41,187 in April, a 58% rise, then declined in May and June to 30,195. Table 1 shows these monthly changes.

Table 1. Number of Individuals Served

	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	June
Individuals served	26,106	22,940	23,393	41,187	35,657	30,195
Difference by month	0	(3,166)	453	17,794	(5,530)	(5,462)
Percent		-12%	2%	76%	-13%	-15%

The number of individuals served declined 12% from January to February. In March, when COVID-19 anti-contagion actions were taken, the number of individuals served increased slightly by 2%. Then April saw a massive 76% increase over March when anti-contagion actions caused job losses.

Emergency food providers in Yavapai County experienced an additional 17,794 clients in April that for some providers *doubled* or *tripled* their client workload. Some providers were forced to close temporarily because their volunteers feared infection due to lack of PPE (professional protective equipment). All emergency food providers depend heavily on volunteer labor.

In the Verde Valley, Cornucopia created a Food Crisis Fund for public donations that allowed Cornucopia to purchase and distribute masks, gloves and hand sanitizers to the emergency food providers that requested them so that providers were able to stay open for service.

As jobless persons received federal stimulus funds and regained employment, the number of individuals served declined 13% in May and 15% in June. The 30,195 individuals served in June were 16% higher than in January, an additional 4,089 persons expanding the emergency food provider client workload.

Finding 1

The Arizona emergency food network was able to expand on short notice to meet the emergency hunger needs of up to 41,000 food-insecure persons in Yavapai County. The flexibility of federal and nonprofit food sources offered

additional food when it was needed. The Arizona Department of Economic Security was able to mobilize major urban food banks to deliver extra truckloads of food. The St. Mary’s Food Bank Alliance was able to truck extra food to participating emergency food providers in Yavapai County based on weekly orders. And with assistance of Cornucopia in the Verde Valley, emergency food providers received PPE supplies for staff and volunteers on request that enabled them to stay open on a weekly basis.

The counts of individuals served declined 13% in May and 15% in June, for unknown reasons. This decline raises questions about the capability of the Arizona TEFAP program’s ability to address a possible “second wave” health crisis that might occur in October, November and December.

AMOUNT OF EMERGENCY FOOD SERVED IN YAVAPAI COUNTY

St. Mary’s Food Bank Alliance provided data on the monthly numbers of food pounds served for TEFAP and Total Food. The “Total Food” count includes TEFAP and other food sources.

Table 3 presents monthly counts of TEFAP and Total Food pounds.

Table 2. Numbers of TEFAP and Total Food Pounds Served

	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	June
Total Food pounds served	692,860	636,355	743,683	902,978	983,331	958,528
TEFAP pounds served	264,387	201,623	269,754	234,225	365,598	296,257
Difference Total/TEFAP	428,473	434,732	473,929	668,753	617,733	662,271
Percent TEFAP of Total	38%	32%	36%	26%	37%	31%

TEFAP comprised 38% of Total Food in January and declined to 31% in June as additional food sources were supplied to Arizona from federal sources.

From January through June, Total Food distribution increased more than TEFAP distribution with additional food supplies authorized by the CARES Act.

The federal CARES Act, authorized on March 27, 2020, provided economic impact payments to families, workers, businesses, and state, local and tribal

governments. It also provided additional food supplies that began to flow in April and May.

Both TEFAP and Total Food crested in May, and both declined in June. The crest for TEFAP rose to 365,598 pounds, and the crest for Total Food reached 983,331 pounds. St. Mary’s delivered almost one million pounds of emergency food to Yavapai County emergency food providers in May.

Table 3. Numbers of TEFAP Pounds Served Per Month

	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	June
Individuals served	26,106	22,940	23,393	41,187	35,657	30,195
TEFAP pounds served	264,387	201,623	269,754	234,225	365,598	296,257
Pounds per individual	10	9	12	6	10	10

TEFAP provided a monthly average of 10 pounds of food per month to individuals served by St. Mary’s affiliates in Yavapai County during the January to June period. TEFAP food pounds peaked in March, dropped to a low of 6 pounds of food a month in April, and regained its average in May and June.

Table 4. Numbers of Total Food Pounds Served Per Month

	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	June
Individuals served	26,106	22,940	23,393	41,187	35,657	30,195
Total pounds served	692,860	636,355	743,683	902,978	983,331	958,528
Pounds per individual	27	28	32	22	28	32

Total Food served an average of 30 pounds of food per month to individuals served by St. Mary’s affiliates in Yavapai County. Total Food pounds peaked in March and June at 32 pounds after a low of 22 pounds in April.

Finding 2

While some food-insecure persons may have a financial cushion that helps them survive a sudden loss of income, others do not. The COVID-19 crisis produced a loss of thousands of jobs that increased the number of persons seeking emergency food. The State of Arizona does not publish a count of the total number of persons applying for food assistance from different federal programs, so this report focuses only on emergency food.

The number of Yavapai County persons receiving TEFAP from January through June 2020 increased by 4,089 persons or 15%. Those food-insecure persons received an average of 30 pounds per month of Total Food that included 10 pounds per month of TEFAP.

Is that amount of food sufficient for maintaining health?

That question is difficult to answer. The USDA standard for a meal includes 1.2 pounds. So receiving 30 extra pounds of food a month offers an extra 25 meals, which is definitely better than no food but questionable for maintaining health.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, it is likely that an increased number of food-insecure persons in Yavapai County will experience health challenges and require intervention from the healthcare system in 2020 and following years.