



## Fresno County Economic Opportunities Commission

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**

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**Media Contact:**

Yahaira García-Perea

Office 559.263.1024

### **100,000 Meals to be Served to Underprivileged Youth this Summer**

**(Fresno, CA)** – Children who rely on free or reduced-price meals as their main source of nutrition during the academic school year shouldn't go hungry during the summer break. Fresno County Economic Opportunities Commission's (EOC) Food Services will help fill that void by providing meals to underprivileged youth at no cost via the Summer Food Services Program (SFSP).

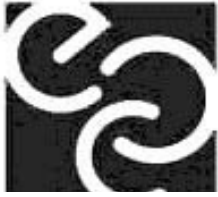
SFSP provides a nutritious meal – including two ounces of protein, two servings of fruit/vegetables, one serving of bread, and eight ounces of milk – to youth 18 years and younger at selected sites throughout Fresno County. Sites are located in needy areas where 50% or more of the children residing in the area are eligible for free or reduced price school meals. The meals prepared and provided by EOC meet strict United States Department of Agriculture and California Department of Education nutrition guidelines.

"Amid double digit unemployment rates, the water crisis on the west side, and the economy, we are anticipating our sites to be very busy this summer," says Gary Joseph, EOC's Food Services Director. "Parents facing financial hardships can rest assured that their children can receive a nutritious meal during the summer weeks."

According to a 2008 county profile compiled by California Food Policy Advocates, in Fresno County, 28.6% of children ages 0 – 17 years live in poverty. Though 111,053 Fresno County youth are eligible to participate in the Summer Food Services Program, only 18,633 take advantage of the program.

EOC began administering the Summer Food Services Program in 1991, with only two sites. Now 18 years later, the program has expanded to 70 sites, including 49 urban and 21 rural locations. The Summer Food Service Program is a federal program funded by the USDA and administered by the California Department of Education.

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To locate the nearest Summer Food Services Program distribution center, please call the Food Resources Hotline at 1-800-870-3663.

### **About EOC Food Services:**

EOC Food Services provides its clients with nutritious and well-balanced meals, using the freshest and most wholesome foods. The Food Preparation Center – a consolidated state-of-the-art food production facility capable of producing over 12, 000 meals daily - and our hardworking staff cook daily meals for children participating in Head Start, youth involved in educational and recreational activities, and the elderly that are active in senior programs. We also offer a gamut of catering services to large and small groups throughout Fresno County.

### **About Fresno County Economic Opportunities Commission (EOC)**

For over 40 years, Fresno County EOC – a private, nonprofit agency – has helped low-income Fresno County residents become self-sufficient. EOC offers over 30 comprehensive community-based programs that develop an individual's capabilities and places them on the path toward independence.

**\*Note: Please contact Randy Moens at 559-266-3663 to schedule an interview or schedule a date/time to shoot b-roll.**

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