



## **ReThink Hunger Discussions: Partner Agency Input**

Four ReThink Hunger discussions were held at the end of July 2015 where Partner Agencies were invited to provide their input on an incentive program that will align our network of partners to end hunger in Central Texas. The incentive program is based on the following goals of ReThink Hunger:

1. Improve the capacity of the network to handle and distribute large quantities of nutritious and perishable food
2. Increase availability and access to food for those in need
3. Engage in SNAP outreach to ensure that clients are receiving supplemental benefits
4. Collaboration with social services to address the root causes of hunger

Partner Agencies that attended the ReThink Hunger discussion were given an input handout that included the evaluation, rewards, and drawback metrics of the ReThink Hunger incentive program. Partner Agencies were asked to rate each metric 1 (lowest satisfaction) to 5 (highest satisfaction) and an open comment box was available. Detailed below are the quantitative and qualitative results of the ReThink Hunger discussions.

### ***Evaluation***

Partner Agencies were invited to consider the incentive program being evaluated on the following metrics: pounds distributed, nutritional content of product, hours of operation, frequency of distribution, SNAP outreach, and link to social services.

*Pounds distributed:* Total pounds annually ordered from CAFB or received through Agency Retail Pick-Up

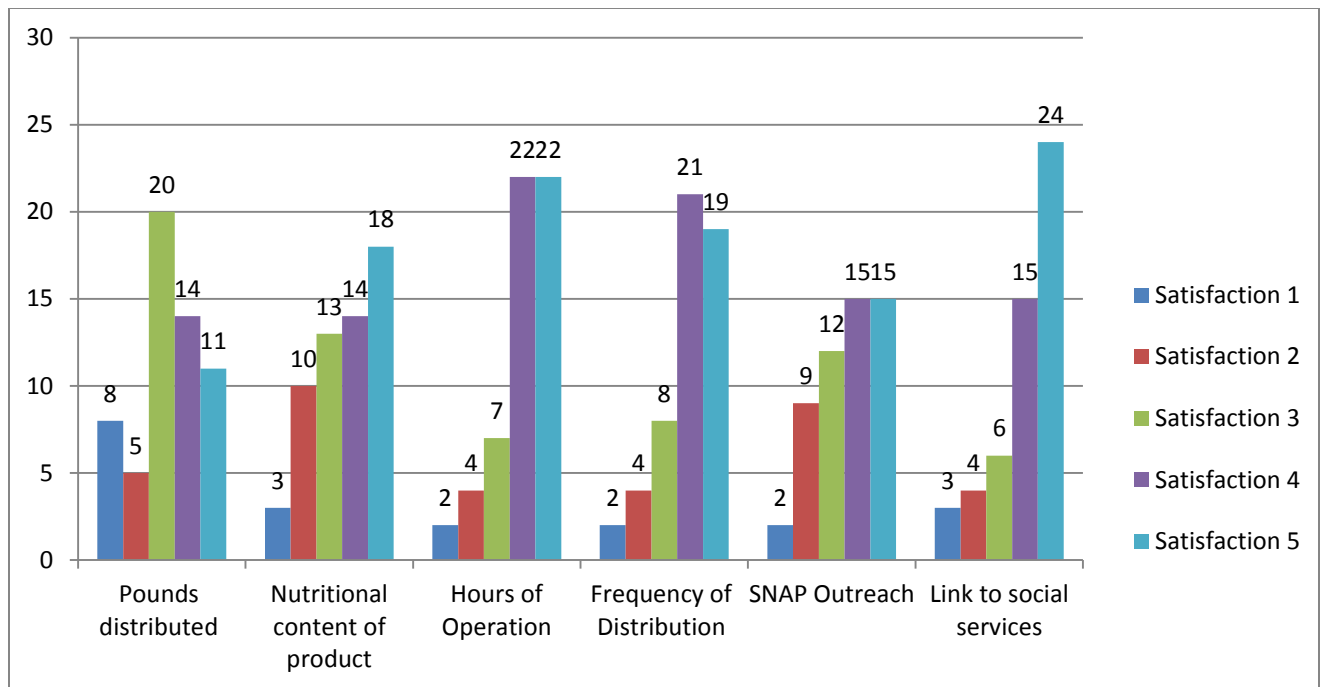
*Nutritional content of product:* Annual CHOP analysis of product ordered at CAFB by agency

*Hours of operation:* Agencies opening up at least one day a week or on nights/weekends

*Frequency of distribution:* Agencies distributing to clients more often by removing restrictions on service

*SNAP Outreach:* Agencies using CAFB or their own internal program to provide SNAP assistance to clients

*Link to social services:* Agencies engaged in providing onsite social services or referrals to social services (health, employment, housing, etc.)



1 (lowest satisfaction) to 5 (highest satisfaction)

## Results

Link to social services was the most popular evaluation metric with the highest average rating (4.1), followed by frequency of distribution (3.9), hours of operation (3.6), SNAP outreach (3.6), nutritional content of product (3.5), and pounds distributed (3.2).

### **Pounds distributed** (Average metric rating 3.2)

- It is always good to give more, we like this
- We would distribute more food if we had additional cold storage
- We would order more if your food met our strict nutritional guidelines
- It is difficult to receive all food from CAFB because of limited product available
- This metric is mislabeled, should be pounds “ordered” from CAFB because outsourced food is not considered
- Why do agencies report other pounds sourced if the information does not count?
- We receive food from other sources and would like to find a way for this information verified for inclusion in poundage
- We do not agree that an agency would not receive points for outsourcing food
- Cuts to orders on regional deliveries can affect total pounds
- Food on agency express is not balanced from one end of the week to the other
- Saturation of pantries in one area could affect this
- Will local agencies be able to order produce instead of only shop-for?
- Pounds per client might be a better measurement, balance with clients served

- Establish two baselines for rating, top agencies in terms of ordering food- 9% and bottom agencies 91%. Otherwise there are too many variables amongst the agencies.
- Bigger pantries will get cuts on prices, not fair to smaller sites
- Will this be in proportion to the size of our operation?
- Could this be evaluated with the target population being served taken into account?
- I don't think this variable can be scored accurately. There are several variables (pantry size, storage space, volunteers, other donations)
- Regional delivery only allows us to order twice a month

### **Nutritional content of product** *(Average metric rating 3.5)*

- We love giving fresh food
- Choosing healthier options should be encouraged
- Will CAFB be able to assist partner agencies in the transition to perishable nutritional product? (providing cold storage, etc.)
- Need to account for outsourced food from local farms/community gardens, etc.
- Healthy products offered from CAFB are limited
- Clients do not like some of the healthy food
- Produce is limited and spoils quickly
- USDA healthy product is more expensive
- Fresh produce should be directly donated to agencies from farms
- Why does the food bank accept items that are rated a 3 on CHOP?
- Why offer un-nutritious food if you will penalize pantries for ordering it?
- Retail pick-up food is not ranked
- We should not be judged on if the only food available isn't nutritious from ordering it
- Most canned goods are rated a 3 on CHOP

### **Hours of Operation** *(Average metric rating 3.6)*

- Clients need more access to food
- The more the better
- Lack of volunteers is a barrier
- Distribution revolves around regional delivery schedule and prevents agency from being open more often
- We have restricted hours when our church space is available
- Why penalize agencies that can't open more than twice a month? We serve a lot of people those 2 days

### **Frequency of Distribution** *(Average metric rating 3.9)*

- Lack of volunteers is a barrier
- Limited funds is a barrier

- Distribution revolves around regional delivery schedule and prevents agency from distributing more
- Storage space (cold and dry) is a barrier
- Does fresh food for families or hope count as another distribution?

**SNAP Outreach** *(Average metric rating 3.6)*

- I like this because the food bank can come do this
- Currently ,we would like to have our SNAP CAFB staff member come more
- Most of our clients already receive SNAP
- Clients may not want SNAP services
- CAFB should consider the percentage of clients already receiving SNAP in the county
- We need room/privacy to do this type of outreach
- We are a community partner
- Contingent upon availability of training for volunteers
- Will this be scored by the number of applications filled out or by the number of times you allow SNAP CAFB employees come as often as possible?
- We are willing to participate more in SNAP but need additional information
- We don't do SNAP assistance directly but refer our clients
- Should not be based on the number of applications but the availability of service
- The money is there and the government is willing to give it out. Food pantries should be taking advantage of that and should be rewarded if they do
- The CAFB SNAP outreach team has trouble starting and maintaining coming to our agency
- How do you deal with agencies that are in urban areas and there are other SNAP resources that clients can take advantage of?

**Link to social services** *(Average metric rating 3.6)*

- Give us a list to share with clients, especially help with utilities
- How can we link to social services?
- We do some referring and could do more
- New clients need information about the community!
- I think this is vital, if we are not also trying to connect people to services to help them become self-sufficient, we're simply perpetuating hunger.
- If the goal is to rethink and eventually eradicate hunger, the root causes need to be addressed
- We run a clothing closet and housewares as well as food.
- Lack of volunteers is a barrier
- If you provide the workers
- Depends on saturation of social services in the community
- Larger agencies have high level of services (case management) and smaller agencies do not
- This would benefit larger agencies because they have more resources

- Higher score should be given to agencies that do case management
- Do not think this would be able to be graded or regulated. We guide our clients to information by giving them a document showing where to go for different services.

### **Additional Comments**

- Incentives or evaluation may need to be divided by agency size or type. Agencies should not be evaluated against each other if they do not serve the same mission.
- Separate paid vs. unpaid staff
- We need more hands on training so we can operate more efficiently
- Need an evaluation as to how much community involvement there is with obtaining food. Evaluations should be on pantries similar in size.
- Should consider client choice or using Oasis Insight as an evaluation factor
- Partnerships: It'd be great if food pantries who make partnerships with local businesses/churches/other pantries are rewarded for their collaborations
- Can you measure how well pantries are collaborating with other food sourcing organizations?
- What about pantries that offer client choice as a goal for pantries?
- It just seems small pantries in small communities are going to be penalized
- Is there any way of ensuring that food is going to more people, instead of more food going to fewer people?

### **Rewards**

Partner Agencies considered the following rewards for the incentive program:

*Priority for grants:* Agencies would be rewarded with first priority for internal CAFB capacity building grants and other external grants received by CAFB.

*Reduced SMF:* Agencies would see a reduction in shared maintenance fee on the food they order.

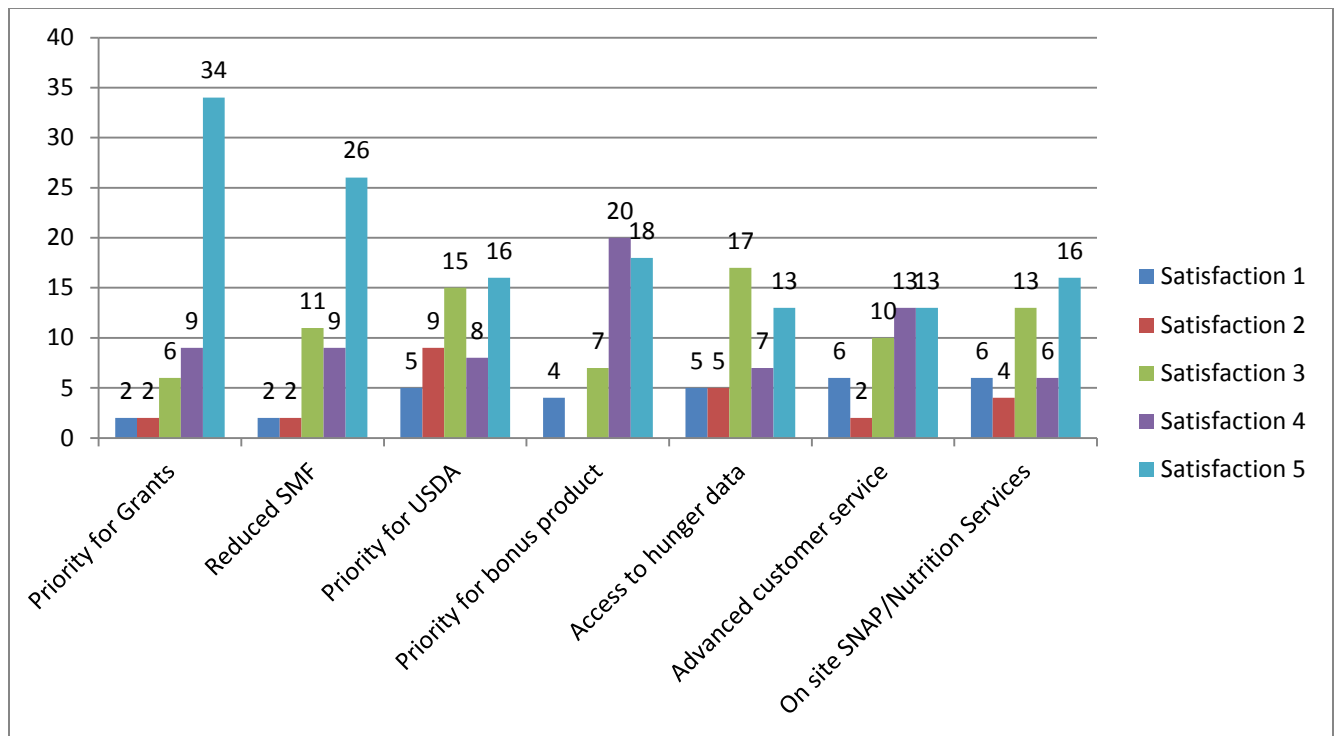
*Priority for USDA:* Agencies would see more USDA food on their shopping list.

*Priority for bonus product:* Agencies would have first access to specialty donations such as non-food items and cold storage.

*Access to hunger data:* Agencies would be provided with hunger data for their specific community or county to use for grant writing or marketing.

*Advanced customer service:* Agencies would be offered special workshops or training on skills such as grant writing or volunteer sourcing.

*Onsite SNAP/Nutrition Services:* Agencies would be given priority on receiving services from the CAFB SNAP outreach and nutrition teams.



1 (lowest satisfaction) to 5 (highest satisfaction)

## Results

Priority for grants was the most popular rewards metric with the highest average rating (4.3), followed by reduced SMF (4.1), priority for bonus product (3.9), advanced customer service (3.5), onsite SNAP/nutrition services (3.4), priority for USDA (3.3), and access to hunger data (3.3).

### Priority for Grants (Average metric rating 4.3)

- Another great reward would be grant writing classes and assessment on types of grants that would be helpful
- Our agency is maxed out on space to accept new items
- We would like to access funds/grants through Feeding America
- We need cold storage
- We need help with grants
- Agencies that are doing a great job should be rewarded for it
- We would like to know more about CAFB grants
- Assistance in grant writing should go to struggling pantries

### Reduced SMF (Average metric rating 4.1)

- This would be ideal for our agency
- We would be able to give out more food because of our limited funding
- Not important to us because we are a small agency
- Consistent ordering from CAFB shows a need for your services. Any way to stretch our budget is great.

- Lower prices are always good!
- We like the idea of a sliding scale on SMF

**Priority for USDA** *(Average metric rating 3.3)*

- These staple items are very important to us
- We do not care about USDA product
- Should be available to everyone
- Our agency receives client complaints on certain USDA products
- These are staple items and generally nutritionally sound- all agencies should have equal access to them.
- We do not care about this as much because this product is more expensive
- Lots of extra bookwork required for this food

**Priority for bonus product** *(Average metric rating 3.9)*

- Not really interested in bonus product
- Depends on the product
- Larger agencies have too much advantage
- Non-food items would be great for our clients

**Access to hunger data** *(Average metric rating 3.3)*

- Not sure how helpful this would be for our agency
- Maybe some agencies that are not doing well could use this because they don't have enough income and need a grant.
- We would like CAFB to provide hunger data for display onsite
- Good for grant information
- Hunger data may help in gathering community interest and support
- My agency does not need this
- Data should be accessible to everyone

**Advanced customer service** *(Average metric rating 3.5)*

- We do not understand what this is
- This would be great, we need more training
- We would like assistance on how to find volunteers
- All pantries should be eligible for all services and receive the same customer service.
- We would like this if you can provide help with grant writing or volunteer sourcing

**On site SNAP/Nutrition Services** *(Average metric rating 3.4)*

- If this is a goal, it should be available to everyone, not a reward
- Most of our clients already have SNAP
- These services are available now and wouldn't be a reward
- We would like to have SNAP outreach from CAFB weekly if possible

- Agencies that score low should get these first

### Additional comments

- We would like a reward to be a mobile pantry/special event
- What are the 9% of agencies distributing 50% of the food doing that can replicated with other agencies? Who are they?
- We would like to receive funds directly from HEB super bowl of caring/scan tag donations, especially if a retail pick-up agency at that store
- Ability to participate in the Feeding America/Feeding Texas programs like milk drive and Go Texas, Canville, etc.
- Benefits should be geared towards smaller agencies
- We are very interested in the rewards
- Reward could be to have food delivery weekly instead of twice a month
- Potential reward could be discount on bulk product
- Potential reward could be discount on picking up at CAFB

### Drawbacks

Partner Agencies considered the following drawbacks for the incentive program:

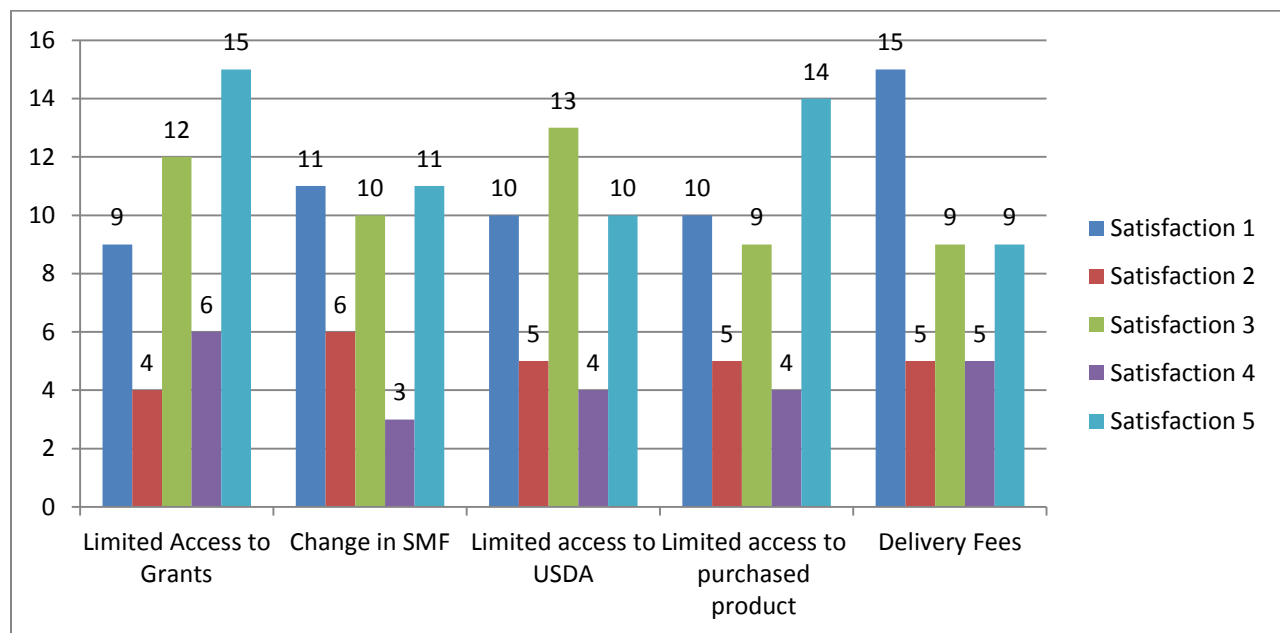
*Limited access to grants:* Agencies would have less access to internal CAFB capacity building grants and other external grants received by CAFB.

*Change in SMF:* Agencies would see an increase in shared maintenance fee on certain items they order. Fees would never exceed 19 cents per pound.

*Limited access to USDA:* Agencies would see limited USDA food on their shopping list.

*Limited access to purchased product:* Agencies would see limited purchased product on their shopping list (this is food CAFB has purchased internally).

*Delivery fees:* Agencies would see delivery fees on their regional delivery of food. Fees would never exceed 6 cents per pound.



1 (lowest satisfaction) to 5 (highest satisfaction)



## **Results**

Limited access grants was the most accepted drawback metric with the highest average rating (3.3), followed by limited access to purchased product (3.1), change in SMF (2.9), limited access to USDA (2.9), and delivery fees (2.7).

### **Limited Access to Grants** *(Average metric rating 3.3)*

- This is the most important thing for most agencies
- This is logical to limit grants to unengaged agencies
- Agencies need to work together for funds, most are competing for the same money in the community
- Our agency is struggling and need help, limited access to grants would not help my agency
- Smaller agencies need grants for part-time staff to grow
- Small pantries that are struggling to meet CAFB goals need grant funding

### **Change in SMF** *(Average metric rating 2.9)*

- Makes sense for agencies that do not order a lot
- SMF should be shared equally across all agencies
- We support this as long as there is a firm cap on SMF
- We are on a fixed income, any increase will make it harder to purchase food

### **Limited access to USDA** *(Average metric rating 2.9)*

- We don't order often because of limited product and further limits would decrease our partnership with CAFB
- We need more access to more food

### **Limited access to purchased product** *(Average metric rating 3.1)*

- It is already difficult to get certain items, I can't imagine what it would be like if we had limited access
- Need more information on this

### **Delivery Fees** *(Average metric rating 2.7)*

- This makes sense because of transportation costs
- We would work with this
- The extra funds would be difficult to come up with
- Smaller agencies pay their own fees for pick-up by volunteers
- As long as it's limited to low-rate pantries
- We would order less food
- I believe fees are ok and would be willing to pay if we need to at some point
- This could be a reward an agency that pick-up from the food bank

## **General Comments**

- We would like to understand more about food sourcing and operations. The Food Bank should provide input meetings where we can learn about how the system operates and provide feedback (issues with transporting, ordering, product, etc.)
- Share agencies name/addresses so that those who want encouragement, help, etc. can talk to actual food pantries. Also, send donors and food drive organizations, etc. directly to the food pantry. The donors are encouraged to see the food given and CAFB backs out of the “middle man” position (especially since you have limited space).
- Question: What is the cost of an ineffective food pantry to the food bank? However much the agency costs you- cut those costs. Map the agencies and see if there are two locations that can share resources.
- Sounds promising thought expanding/linking to social services may be tricky due to volunteer power/time. Excited for CAFB to increase in size but we may not be able to handle more product
- Thank you for the opportunity to provide input
- The food bank needs to decide between being fair or effective. We need effective partnerships to achieve the mission of CAFB.
- All in all, effective partners should be rewarded. Add a way to quantify community collaboration. We should be rewarded not for our dependence on the food bank, but for our efficiency in ending hunger.
- Need to contact head of organizations to get these wheels moving
- Don't abbreviate SMF we do not know what that is
- We need help recruiting volunteers
- We would like to know where we fall on the scale and then be given a 2<sup>nd</sup> opportunity for feedback
- Ready to dream and look for better ways to serve people
- Would you consider giving extra points to agencies that provide backpacks of food to school age children? Or any innovative distribution model?
- Agency mentorship programs should be encouraged where small agencies are partnered with larger agencies
- I like that there will be base standards- I am worried that you shouldn't have told the agency- it makes some discouraged.
- We appreciate all you do at CAFB! I love that we share the same goals to serve our community.
- Food pantries need to provide more access to food
- Small pantries are not happy- I want them to step up and feed more people but its physically not possible
- You cannot judge a smaller pantry with large agencies
- It seems that larger partners have better chance to receive incentives
- Many of these drawbacks appear to be punitive regarding smaller pantries. Giving assistance and suggestions to pantries, working with the agency directly to help achieve goals would be much more effective.
- Really do not think there should be any drawbacks.

- These drawbacks seem to be contradicting helping pantries to do better. It seems that struggling agencies may need help to get better.
- I don't think this will materialize.
- Agencies are in business to help feed people. There should be no negative results of what they are doing.
- Just cut off the agencies if they are not participating or engaged. Increasing prices and drawbacks only push them further from being engaged. Increase capacity of medium size agencies who can then partner with smaller agencies.
- There is a need for small pantries, don't punish them with drawbacks
- Instead of a time and effort intensive evaluation of agencies use your team to solve this problem one agency at a time
- Totally do not agree with most of the point system rewarding some pantries and actually discouraging others. I think CAFB needs to look at how they can help all partner agencies to grow and help stamp out hunger.
- I would rather see a stronger emphasis on positive incentives and not disincentives which could affect a pantry's ability to operate
- Larger pantries have a distinct advantage and if the goal is to provide more food to more people than it might have an adverse effect on smaller pantries
- Incentive program should just be rewards
- How are low scoring agencies going to improve under these drawbacks? Is CAFB here to help or control? Is there a way to be opted out? This scoring program should be done in secret at CAFB. There is no reason to share this "idea" with all the pantries. You are already scoring us behind the scene, keep it that way.

## **Conclusions**

---

### *Evaluation*

- Partner agencies were most concerned that outsourced food would not be considered in the evaluation of their agency. The Food Bank has encouraged partner agencies to find a variety of ways to source food in the past and some agencies have excelled at finding other food sources. If the goal is to end hunger, the Food Bank should find a way to include outsourced poundage in the evaluation.
- Lack of nutritional product is also another significant barrier with agencies responding that the current shopping list has limited nutritional product. If the CHOP rating is used, agencies would need to be made aware of how much of CAFB product would be encouraged to order.
- In general, the evaluation metrics were met with positive feedback with an average rating of 3.6.

### *Rewards*

- Partner Agencies had the greatest interest in grant funding that would allow their operations to expand with cold storage capacity, transportation, and funding for staff and programs.

- Agencies also expressed the need for a reward that would offer training in grant writing, volunteer management/sourcing, and other needs.
- Partner Agencies that did not believe they would be receiving rewards (typically smaller partners) expressed concern that they are the agencies that need these rewards the most to grow.
- In general, the rewards metrics were met with positive feedback with an average rating of 3.6.

#### *Drawbacks*

- Reaction to drawbacks was spilt evenly with most partner agencies from larger or engaged organizations favoring drawbacks and smaller organizations feeling drawbacks are not needed.
- Some agencies felt that drawbacks would not incentive agencies to grow; rather it would prevent them from continuing to serve.
- In general, the rewards metrics were met with mixed feedback with an average rating of 2.9.

#### *General recommendations*

- Most agencies were grateful to be included in the ReThink Hunger conversation and would like the Food Bank to open up input on transportation and operation issues they are facing with regional delivery, variety and quality of product, ordering schedule, etc.