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Vermont Everyone Eats - April 4, 2022

Since August 2020, Vermont Everyone Eats has distributed 2.44 million meals from 270+ Vermont restaurants to vulnerable neighbors experiencing food insecurity. These meals have generated \$24+M in stabilizing revenue for these restaurants and funneled nearly \$2.5M in revenue to Vermont farmers and food producers. FEMA recognizes VEE as a critical part of Vermont's emergency response to COVID-19 and has reimbursed 100% of program costs. VEE is currently contracted through the VT Agency of Commerce and Community Development to continue programming through July 1, 2022; It is anticipated that VEE costs will continue to be reimbursed at 100% by FEMA through this time period.

Due to the unpredictability of the pandemic and its impact on our communities, we do not yet know what will happen after July 1. However, we are confident that the food insecure Vermonters and the Vermont businesses who have been aided by VEE, will continue to face hardship as a result of COVID-19 disruptions. We have received indication that it is possible that FEMA will shift from reimbursing emergency response costs at 100% on COVID related costs to implementing a 90%/10% cost share. In anticipation of that shift, VEE is requesting a \$1.8 million one-time allocation from the FY2023 budget to act as that 10% match empowering VEE to continue to provide emergency meals from July 1, 2022-June 30, 2023, should the emergency conditions persist for that period. This funding is intended to serve as bridge funding as the emergency conditions change such that FEMA's emergency resources decline and alternative federal funding sources continue to be explored. Per the current contract arrangements with ACCD, these funds would be authorized to VEE quarterly, which allows all partners to evaluate the program contract based on current COVID-19 conditions and FEMA's notice of available cost share for the subsequent quarter.

Though it is impossible to predict how conditions will change over the next year, we are confident that partners both in the state and beyond our state's borders will continue to learn from this innovative program even beyond the COVID-19 emergency crisis period. We are proud that Vermont Everyone Eats has been highly collaborative, bridging silos and bringing together the interests of community food security, local economic resilience, and vibrant local agriculture.

Additional information about VEE can be found at:

www.vteveryoneeats.org

www.instagram.com/explore/tags/vteveryoneeats/

www.facebook.com/hashtag/vteveryoneeats

Our Mission is to empower and partner with individuals and communities to alleviate the hardships of poverty, provide opportunities to thrive, and eliminate root causes of poverty in southeastern Vermont.

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