

PRESS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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GET MORE FOR YOUR GROCERY DOLLAR

St. Mary's Food Bank Alliance Program Helps Those Feeling the Economic Crunch

Phoenix, AZ ~ In the past few months, food prices have increased at the fastest rate since 1990. Those living below the federal poverty level are no longer the only ones feeling the pinch at the check-out line as prices for milk, eggs, bread, and produce continue to increase. Arizona food prices have increased 19 percent in the past year, which is significantly higher than the national average at nine percent. According to the USDA, the average American family is spending \$80 more a month on groceries. In addition to this, gas prices are setting national records, with Arizona, at \$3.30 per gallon, at the top of the list of states with the highest prices.

Traditionally, the majority of the clients served by St. Mary's Food Bank Alliance live below the federal poverty level. Recently the Food Bank has noticed a new kind of clientele, those in the middle class. These families suddenly find themselves faced with a financial crunch, unable to absorb increased gas and food prices. They may only need a temporary solution in the form of the Food Bank's Food Value Club.

Open to the general public, the Food Value Club offers a variety of food packages, including meat and shelf stable items. Purchased by the Food Bank from manufacturers and distributors, store quality items are offered in addition to donated food items included with every purchase free of charge.

The Food Value Club operates at three of the Food Bank's locations:

- **4211 N. 43rd Avenue in Phoenix** (43rd Avenue and Indian School Road)
Tuesday-Saturday, 8am-3pm

~more~

- **13050 W. Elm Street in Surprise** (south of Dysart Road and Bell Road)
Tuesday-Saturday, 8am-3pm
- **5605 N. 55th Avenue in Glendale** (55th Avenue and Bethany Home Road)
Monday-Friday, 8am-3pm

For more information, call (602) 415-5474 or visit us online at www.FirstFoodBank.org.

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For statistics on poverty and hunger, media inquiries, photos or interview requests, please contact Melody Hanna at (602) 343-3160, (602) 621-0526 or mlhanna@firstfoodbank.org.

St. Mary's Food Bank Alliance, the world's first food bank, is a non-sectarian, nonprofit organization that alleviates hunger by efficiently gathering and distributing food to 675 sites that serve the hungry. Serving 13 of Arizona's 15 counties, the organization is committed to volunteerism, building community relationships, and improving the quality of life for Arizonans in need. During Fiscal Year 2006-2007, the Food Bank distributed 51.5 million pounds of food to families and individuals, provided enough food for 200,000 meals every day, and garnered more than 230,000 volunteer service hours. Web site: www.FirstFoodBank.org, Phone: 602-352-3640.