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Meridian Health Plan and Food Bank of Eastern Michigan Team Up to Feed Thousands of Flint Families through September

FLINT, Mich. (March 29, 2016) — Today the Food Bank of Eastern Michigan (FBEM) and Meridian Health Plan (Meridian) announced a partnership to provide the residents of Flint with free, healthy foods high in iron, calcium and vitamin C. These nutrients help mitigate the effects of lead in the body caused by high levels of lead in the Flint water supply.

Last month, FBEM instituted a new program featuring four large, refrigerated delivery trucks that will each deliver 15,000 pounds of fresh food per day – enough for 400 families – six days a week. Governor Snyder’s recent supplemental budget request will cover the cost of the delivery trucks and food, while Meridian assists with additional operational costs.

Meridian has partnered with FBEM, Food Bank Council of Michigan, and the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services to lend additional financial support for two of the trucks in a program called, “Fueling Food for Flint.” The four trucks are expected to deliver almost 12 million pounds (320,000 meals) of additional nutritious foods to Flint residents through September 30.

“This is our second time partnering with Meridian to help provide healthy food for community members of Flint,” said William Kerr, President and CEO, Food Bank of Eastern Michigan. “The first opportunity included three health education events at different Hamilton Community Health Network locations, which featured healthy food distributions to assist in reducing lead in the bodies of those impacted by the water crisis. We are looking forward to continuing this work with Meridian.”

“This partnership is a continuation of our previous efforts to help those in Flint affected by this crisis,” said Jon Cotton, President and COO, Meridian Health Plan. “This is an incredibly crucial time for these families and Meridian is committed to assisting Flint, as every family and their health matters.”

Last month the Meridian Winter Blast festival in Detroit raised \$50,000, \$40,000 coming from Meridian, for the Flint Child Health and Development Fund. Meridian also plans to donate fresh fruits and vegetables from the 500-acre Cotton family farm in Metamora, Mich.

Learn more about:

Meridian Health Plan: <https://corp.mhplan.com/en/about-us/>

Food Bank of Eastern Michigan: www.fbem.org

Food Bank Council of Michigan: www.fbcmich.org

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