



“Times of chaos and challenge can be the most spiritually powerful... if we are brave enough to rest in their space of uncertainty.”

- Pema Chödrön

Dear *{{First Name}}*,

There can be no doubt that we are currently engaged in a time of chaos and challenge. Massachusetts ranks near the top of the nation's COVID-19 infection rates and the resulting social and economic disruptions are mounting. Unemployment is widespread, food and other supply chains are being interrupted, and frontline workers are in peril. Traditionally vulnerable people, such as the elderly and homeless, are facing increasing risks. In addition, as is often the case, the economically challenged communities of Massachusetts' Southcoast are particularly exposed to these conditions.



The Marion Institute is meeting these challenges head-on through its [Southcoast Food Policy Council](#) (SFPC). The mission of the SFPC is to “connect, convene, and advocate for local food producers, consumers, and community members who seek policies and systems that strengthen our regional food networks, improve community health, and eliminate food insecurity”.

With the COVID-19 crisis raging around us, we have focused on our SFPC program to meet the novel challenges confronting our families and communities by leading and coordinating a range of responses designed to safeguard communities and ensure our most vulnerable and deserving citizens are supported.

Our responses to date include:

- We launched an initiative called, [Cooks for Community](#), to provide funds to local restaurants, so they can prepare hot meals for our most at-risk individuals, thereby ensuring they have access to good food from safe sources. The funds also are a life-line to local restaurants struggling to maintain their viability in the face of mandated “take-out-only” policies. Supporting the private sector to activate kitchens that can serve the people is key to heading off both an economic and food crisis.
- In Wareham, MA, we have teamed up with local restaurants Marc Anthony's and Dan Minkle Catering, Community Youth Empowerment and the Gleason Family YMCA to create and distribute 150 hot and nutritious meals a day to financially insecure seniors and members of the unsheltered (homeless) community. Due to safety concerns, many homeless shelters have been closed, resulting in that group's need to resort to open-air encampments without water or cooking facilities. This Cooks for Community initiative, which runs Monday - Friday is presently scheduled to continue for six weeks and will ultimately provide 4,500 much needed meals.
- In Greater New Bedford, we launched a second Cooks for Community initiative. With food provided by New Bedford restaurants Izzy's and David's Restaurant, we will be delivering meals to financially insecure, immune-compromised patients and their families identified by the Southcoast Health Cancer Center. Working with the New Bedford YMCA, additional meals will be distributed for families that are struggling because they have either lost jobs or are front line workers in need. A total of 125 meals will be disseminated daily, Monday – Friday, for four weeks, a total of 2,500 meals.
- Working collaboratively with all the amazing community partners along the Southcoast, we are addressing and solving the information and logistical challenges of matching supply and demand with distribution.
- We have worked closely with Southcoast Health, to launch an initiative that will provide discounted family-style meals to front-line medical workers.
- And created a comprehensive COVID-19 Local Resource List to help Southcoast residents navigate the current resources that are available to them during this uncertain time. This document is continually being refined and updated on a daily basis and is [accessible here](#).

Together, through the Southcoast Food Policy Council, we can create the necessary infrastructure to build a robust local food economy that supports regional control of our food supply chains. Only then will we be ready to combat food insecurity that is always real, but even more prevalent during a public health crisis.

Please make sure to thank and support participating restaurants, farmers and community groups that are working hard to meet the surging needs of our communities.

With gratitude,

Elizabeth Wiley
Executive Director

[Click to Donate to the SFPC.](#)
Thank you for your generosity!



BioBlog: "Coffee with Dr. Hennie" Provides a Weekly Dose of BioMed Knowledge & Immune Support

By: Cheryl Radford | Do you feel like you need a virtual holistic house call? We did too. To fill this need, we have partnered with the BioMed Center of New England to create “Coffee with Dr. Hennie” every Thursday in April at 9am (EST). Dr. Hennie Fitzpatrick is the Medical Director of the BioMed Center which is located in Providence, RI.



During these live, informational sessions, Dr. Hennie addresses and answers your most pressing questions in regard to COVID-19 with her signature integrative, biological medicine approach to whole body health.


Our first two “house calls” have been extremely well received. They provided an opportunity for participants to ask many health related questions about [click for more](#)




RECIPE OF THE MONTH: Buttered Turmeric Rice with Crushed Almonds & Herbs

From Alison Roman's latest cookbook, Nothing Fancy Shared by Liz Wiley | On last week's Coffee with Dr. Hennie, she stressed the importance of turmeric in one's diet, recommending that adults take 1/2 teaspoon twice a day. If taking a spoonful of turmeric does not sound palatable to you, try what I do in my house. To make sure my two teenage boys get their dose of turmeric, I like to cook with it and add it into recipes whenever possible.

One of my favorite e-chefs is Alison Roman, a contributor to Bon Appétit and the author of the Dining In column for the New York Times food section. She has a way of making simple recipes taste rich and complex; this is one of those that's climbed to the top of my "go-to" healthy cooking list. [Click here](#) for the recipe and get cooking!




"Coffee with Dr. Hennie"
Every Thursday in April @ 9am



A weekly virtual holistic "house call" with Dr. Hennie Fitzpatrick from The BioMed Center New England.

4/24: Focus on pediatric healthcare

Click here to register for Zoom log-in
Space is limited.




What's GROWing On? News from Grow Education

By: Adam Davenport | Our Farm-to-School project rests on the foundation of our amazing partnerships. In this month's newsletter, we wanted to give a shout out to heroic efforts of the New Bedford Public Schools Food and Nutrition Services Team who have seamlessly altered their production system to serve over 50,000 meals in the past month!



Leading up to the outbreak of COVID-19, we heard many concerns about food equity issues if schools were to close. Students across the nation, coming from areas of poverty, rely on meals they are served in school – what would they do without those meals if schools shut down? The NBPS Food and Nutrition Services Team jumped into action and answered the call immediately, so that... [<< click for more >>](#)



School is out for the remainder of the school year; we want to support food security in our schools' neighborhoods by planting their gardens this Spring (pending District approval)
We need experienced garden volunteers to help (at a safe distance of course). If you are interested please [click here](#) to email Grow's program manager, Adam.



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