



### What we do:

We work with hunger-relief partners in Sonoma Valley to provide healthy, fresh food and staple items to vulnerable populations. Over the last decade, the Redwood Empire Food Bank (REFB) has supplied 900,000 pounds of food for distribution by other organizations. REFB has also established senior programs at Vintage House and La Luz, a Backpack Program for children at Dunbar Elementary and the Boys & Girls Clubs, and a commodity program at several churches. Through these programs, an additional 4½ million pounds of food have reached people in need of sustenance.

### A single story:

The REFB Diabetes Wellness Program supports low-income adults living with diabetes and offers free screening events at food distribution sites throughout the Sonoma Valley. We first met Laura at one of our diabetes-screening events.

A young mother of two, Laura told us that she had been diagnosed with gestational diabetes during both her pregnancies. Lacking health insurance, she never received follow-up care after the births of her children. She also explained that both her children had been diagnosed with chronic diseases during infancy and that she struggled to support them with healthy foods as part of their care. Although she had not experienced any symptoms of diabetes, due to her personal and family histories, she was concerned about her risk.

The free screening revealed that Laura's blood sugar was indeed elevated, and a second test confirmed that she very likely had undiagnosed diabetes. We enrolled Laura into the Diabetes Wellness Program, which now provides monthly boxes of healthy, diabetes-appropriate foods for her and her family. We gave her a new blood sugar meter and supplies and demonstrated how she could begin monitoring her blood sugar at home. We provided educational materials and formally referred her to the Sonoma Valley Community Health Center to schedule an appointment for follow-up care and treatment. Despite receiving difficult news that confirmed her fears, Laura left the distribution site with a smile and expressed her gratitude for our services.

### Our future:

We believe the future will inspire new and innovative programs to create a strong and substantial safety net that ensures that no one in our community goes to bed hungry.

### Our start:

More than 30 years ago, conversations between a concerned group of citizens and the Sonoma Board of Supervisors brought attention to the surprising level of hunger existing in Sonoma County: one in six people experience a day, a week, or a year without the resources to eat healthy, balanced meals.

This awareness led to the foundation of the Redwood Empire Food Bank in 1987, which today operates 14 different programs and serves as the central source of food for 276 hunger programs in Sonoma County.

We accomplish our objectives through three major initiatives:

- Every Child, Every Day;
- Senior Security; and
- Neighborhood Hunger Network.

Together, these programs provide improved nutrition for children, seniors, and low-wage, working families, and individuals struggling to make ends meet.



**Impact100 Sonoma  
awarded an Impact Grant  
of \$100,000 to the**

**Redwood Empire Food Bank for its Diabetes  
Wellness Project of Sonoma Valley (2014).**