

# You Matter to Us

## The Full Plate Newsletter | Fall 2017



*How (and when) did Tyson's partnership with Northern Illinois Food Bank come about?*

Our partnership with the food bank has existed for several years. What started as the natural relationship between a company that made food and its community food bank, has managed to evolve over time and become more and more relevant to our culture, our values and our desire to raise the world's expectations for how much good food can do.

Let me explain. As some may know, there has been a lot of merger and acquisition activity in the food industry. Our history goes back to our time as Sara Lee Corporation, when the company was a conglomerate that happened to produce some of the country's most beloved food brands and food service products. As the company evolved and narrowed its focus on food



production through divestiture and spin offs, it changed its name to the Hillshire Brands Company. All the while our desire to influence and support the food bank only grew. It included contributions of time, product and money. Our Team Members joined the board of directors, participated in mobile pantries, packed holiday meal boxes, delivered pro bono services, while we made donations of protein (a sought after staple for food bank clients) and cash to help the food bank reach the goals its leadership team sought to achieve.

When Hillshire Brands was acquired by Tyson Foods in 2014, that legacy of support became the bedrock of merged cultures and values. Our first activity as one blended company was volunteering at Northern Illinois Food Bank. We began to merge our culture and values over sorting food and packing boxes for our hungry neighbors. What became obvious was that at the heart of our merger was a common desire to do well by doing good and that through our culture of caring and a commitment to each other the support for the food bank would be critical to how we wanted to grow as Tyson Foods.

**Feeding Our Hungry Neighbors**

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*Why is important for companies like Tyson to support the Food Bank?*

Food companies have a unique synergy with food banks. We're both serving people that are hungry. We're both operating similar food supply chains. We're both at the epicenter of human experience over food and understand how much a meal can matter. Therefore we have a lot to give and to share with the Food Bank. Furthermore, food banks represent a consumer that is underserved by food companies. The more we learn about the needs of the food bank, its agencies and its clients the more we can help alleviate food insecurity in our community.

*What has been the best part about working with the Food Bank?*

It's somewhat cliché but it's true, the best part about working with the food bank is the relationship with the people. In a time when folks rarely seem to work collectively for community good, it's our relationship with our friends at the Food Bank that reminds us how much we can accomplish with mutual goals and a desire to create an impact with food that results in so many positive ripples in our community.

*You've been involved with many portions of our partnership—do you have a favorite moment or memory of working with the Food Bank?*

We've had many good moments with the food bank, but one stands out to me. Through Feeding America's National Office we established the Tyson Foods Protein Sourcing Innovation Fund. The fund provided a grant to the Food Bank that has helped it secure a reliable supply of chicken. On a recent visit, I was able to see the chicken that arrives at the food bank as a result of this sustainable innovative sourcing of protein. Knowing that the food bank will have access to this protein in an ongoing way was very satisfying and is certainly one of my favorite memories.

*Anything else you'd like to add?*

Among all protein processors, Tyson Foods is the largest donor of meat and poultry to Feeding America and its network of food banks. Tyson Foods has been an active participant in the fight against hunger since 2000, donating more than 100 million pounds of protein. In 2015, Tyson Foods pledged \$50 million in cash or in-kind donations by 2020 to fight hunger, with a special focus on innovative initiatives at the local level. In 2016, the company donated \$12.5 million for hunger relief.

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