INSECURITY TO ELIMINATE FOOD

Food insecurity has remained a stubborn problem in Colorado and across our country despite the efforts made to eradicate hunger over the last 50 years. The COVID-19 pandemic has only made matters worse. According to a Hunger Free Colorado survey completed this December, almost two in five (38 percent) of Coloradans are food insecure and lack reliable access to nutritious food.

The business community must take action to ensure all people are able to access quality food and fresh fruits and vegetables. There are many local organizations for people in need. Delta Dental of Colorado partnered with Metro Caring to provide nutritious and healthy food to the community. In February, DDCO organized food for Metro Caring’s drive-up food distribution, and we held two virtual food drives. We’re proud of this partnership and of Metro Caring’s commitment to addressing the root cause of food insecurity, poverty.

For Conagra Foods, today’s Civic 50 spotlight company, taking action to end food insecurity is an important part of their community impact. Recently, they partnered with the Food Bank of the Rockies to purchase local peaches and sweet potatoes, supporting the local economy and providing clients with fresh foods.

There are various ways for businesses to play a role in stamping out food insecurity. Contributing to food drives or participating in advocacy and policy activities can involve employees at every level of the organization. Additionally, we should all examine our own contributions to food waste. There are many organizations such as We Don’t Waste, Denver Food Rescue, and Metro Caring, who do address that issue. The problem of hunger is one that we can solve, but we all must step up and play a role.

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GOOD WORKS

A look at corporate social responsibility and philanthropic efforts happening in the Denver region

PHILANTHROPY

FOOD GIANT’S CSR NOURISHES COMMUNITIES

Conagra Brands made a big grant to Food Bank of the Rockies

As spring arrives and businesses consider this upcoming Earth Day on April 22, 2021, one should recognize the importance of sustainability in regard to corporate social responsibility. Company dedication to the environment comes in various forms such as developing a business model centered on recycling or encouraging employees to take sustainable forms of transportation.

One especially unique commitment to sustainability is an effort to reduce food insecurity. Conagra Brands, a Civic 50 Colorado 2020 honoree, highlights the consumer-packaged-foods company’s dedication to CSR and efforts to address food insecurity throughout Colorado. Moreover, Conagra Brands is excited to share its 2020 Citizenship Report.

Why does your company engage in CSR?

Conagra Brands is passionate about the food we make, and firmly believes that everybody deserves access to delicious, high-quality food. However, extensive hunger research reveals that food insecurity is a pervasive issue; thus, we have a long history of taking action to address food insecurity in the communities our employees call home.

One example is our support of Food Bank of the Rockies. We made a capacity-building grant that helped the Food Bank purchase peaches and sweet potatoes grown nearby. This enabled the food bank to support the local economy while also providing clients with nutritious fresh foods.

What’s one thing that your company considers a CSR best practice?

We believe in the power of engaging employees. Conagra Brands and its employees care deeply about the communities where we live and work. Conagra employees play a pivotal role in providing their communities with access to nutritious foods and are always ready to respond, rallying to address Conagra’s strategic priorities focused on food insecurity.

Our commitment to our local communities is visibly demonstrated through direct personal actions including volunteerism, contributions and nonprofit board service. At volunteer projects in Colorado during Month of Service 2019, 22 employees donated 71.5 hours and loaded 31,553 pounds of food for distribution.

What will CSR look like in the future for your company?

For our consumers and employees, our communities and our planet, Conagra’s commitment is to nourish. Our commitment to being a good corporate citizen comes to life through our 18,000 employees and their daily actions that drive our robust environmental and social initiatives through our focus areas: Better Planet, Good Food, Stronger Communities and Responsible Sourcing. We look forward to making good food for generations to come, and doing so in a way that supports responsible sourcing, stronger communities and a better planet.

The Civic 50 Colorado 2020 award is supported by CSR Solutions of Colorado, which submitted this Q&A. CSR Solutions of Colorado, a project of Community Shares of Colorado and Spark the Change Colorado, provides companies with the best tools and practices to implement corporate social responsibility. CSR Solutions of Colorado connects companies to great causes, truly highlighting the power of volunteerism and collaboration. Denver Business Journal edited this story.