



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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County Food Bank Eyes Gyms, “Spoonتمبر” to Refuel Supplies

MIDDLESEX COUNTY – In honor of “Hunger Action Month,” for the first time, the Middlesex County food bank has recruited several local gyms to pump up donations by hosting on-site food drives throughout September. “Food donations taper off in the summertime; that’s just the stark reality, but this season’s donations have been exceptionally lean,” said Jennifer Apostol, project manager with the Middlesex County Food Organization and Outreach Distribution Services, better known as MCFOODS. “While our usual response is to ration the supplies that we do have for the 100-plus agencies that we serve, this year, we’re going to try something a little different.” In this case, MCFOODS is looking to the generosity of patrons and would-be donors of participating gyms. “What better place to promote the idea of taking ‘action’ than at a gym?” Apostol said. “So far, we have a string of businesses in north, south and central County locations onboard. We’re still holding out hope that a few more might sign up, but we’re so thankful for all the participation thus far.”

September’s Hunger Action Month is a 30-day-long initiative set forth by Feeding America, a national network on a mission to raise awareness for the approximately 48 million Americans, who are affected by hunger daily. “We all know someone who is struggling to make ends meet and to keep food on the table,” said Middlesex County Freeholder Deputy Director Carol Bellante, a liaison to the Middlesex County Improvement Authority, the entity tasked with MCFOODS’ oversight. “We all cross paths, many times unknowingly. I couldn’t be prouder to see that these Middlesex County businesses have stepped up to do something about it.”

While Apostol has cast her hopes on participating gyms to help refuel the food bank’s fading provisions, she has her eyes fixed on social media to watch the real awareness campaign unfold: “Spoonتمبر.”

Also the brainchild of Feeding America, this latest online movement encourages the public to perch a spoon from their nose while taking a “selfie” and hashtagging “Spoonتمبر” on their respective social media platforms.

“Again, the hope is to inform and motivate people,” Apostol said. “We’ll be posting and trying to share these pictures on our own Facebook, Instagram and Twitter accounts. We’re just reminding people to hashtag ‘MCFOODS,’ along with ‘Spoonتمبر.’”

To visit or to donate to one of the participating gyms, stop by: Retro Fitness on Center Drive in North Brunswick, Retro Fitness on Route 18 in East Brunswick, New York Sports Clubs on Route 18 in East Brunswick, LA Fitness on Route 18 in East Brunswick, Planet Fitness on Route 1 in Edison, Princeton Fitness and Wellness Center in Plainsboro, World Fitness on Main Street in Milltown and Master Yu’s Power Kick-Ultimate Boxing on Stelton Road in Piscataway.

Residents interested in donating nonperishable items may do so year-round at MCFOODS’ permanent drop-off sites, located at libraries in: East Brunswick, Edison, Metuchen, Milltown, Monroe, North Brunswick, Perth Amboy, Piscataway, Plainsboro, South Amboy, South Brunswick, South Plainfield, Spotswood and Woodbridge. For further details on MCFOODS or hosting a food drive, log onto www.mciauth.com, call 609-655-5141 or follow the food bank on Facebook at Mcfoods Network on Twitter @MCFOODSNetwork or on Instagram at [mcfoods_network](https://www.instagram.com/mcfoods_network).