



211 Yolo Unveils New FreshText Service

(Woodland, CA) – In an effort to access and inform populations who are in need of food assistance, 211 Yolo has created a text program that allows residents in each of the four cities of Yolo County to receive automatic text reminders about food distributions in their area.

To enroll in this service residents will text a keyword assigned to the correlating locations in Yolo County to **888777**. This will opt users in to receive reminders and information about local assistance and distributions. Residents can opt in to as many cities as they choose and select from three languages, English, Spanish or Russian, to receive updates. The following key words are assigned by city:

- West Sacramento: GRAPE
- Woodland: OLIVE
- Davis: TOMATO
- Winters: ALMOND
- Capay Valley (Capay, Brooks, Guinda, Esparto, Rumsey) : WALNUT
- North Yolo (Yolo, Knights Landing, Dunnigan) : RICE

Food insecurity is a serious issue in Yolo County even though there are providers working to meet this need. The missing piece was a clear and easy way to connect providers with users. In order to meet this need and take advantage of new cellular legislation, 211 Yolo began an innovative project titled “**FreshText**” to connect people to food through technology.

211 Yolo is a resource hub for the community that has traditionally been accessed through a three digit telephone number. As technology trends have changed, the community and their expectations to receive information in different ways has evolved. Taking this need into consideration, and evaluating current research on cell phone usage, 211 Yolo felt that this new way to send the public relevant and meaningful resource information was necessary.

The Yolo County Food Bank and Health and Human Service Agency have collaborated about ideas and delivery systems to ensure that the content is available and programmable, and 211 owns the platform and will maintain the ongoing updates. This project soft launched mid-February in order to build the infrastructure and develop a process. It is fully operable now and all Yolo County residents can now take advantage of text reminders to learn about free food opportunities in their area.

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