



Media Advisory

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

FOOD BANK CRACKS DOWN ON JUNK FOOD

The Capital Area Food Bank will dramatically cut back on the junk food, full calorie soda, left-over holiday candy, and sheet cake it receives and distributes as part of a broader effort to improve its food supply, the organization announced today.

“With so many of those we serve struggling with diabetes or heart disease, we have a real moral imperative to improve our food stream,” said Nancy E. Roman, CEO of the CAFB. “And we can’t do it without our largest food donors.”

Award-winning nutrition expert and advocate Ashley Koff RD has praised the move. “Bravo!” said Koff. “I applaud the Capital Area Food Bank’s commitment and leadership. Today we know clearly what better nutrition is and is not, and its role in enabling better health. This is an incredible step forward to provide better nutrition for all.”

On Tuesday, July 19, Roman will join the presidents of two major retail partners at a news conference explaining what led to the decision and what it will take to implement it.

Roman said that nearly half of those served by the food bank have high blood pressure or live with someone who does, and that another quarter have diabetes or share a household with someone who does. Observing that the country is becoming increasingly aware of the relationship between food and health, Roman cited a recent comment from former AOL executive Steve Case that “people are finally waking up to the fact that our health begins at the end of a fork.”

Shoppers Food and Pharmacy Bob Gleeson was first to embrace the effort. “It’s a privilege to help feed hungry people, but it’s a much greater privilege to feed them good food that will build their health,” said Gleeson. “We’re proud to be part of this effort”.

In 2014, the Capital Area Food Bank worked with Shoppers Food and Pharmacy to reduce sheet cake and other bakery items from its donation stream.

Last year, then-new Giant Food President Gordon Reid agreed to model a new program, “Retailers for Wellness”, that would allow for the next step in the food bank’s drive to improve its inventory.

“As a retailer committed to helping our community eat well, Giant is proud to be playing a role in making more nutritious food available to those served by the Capital Area Food Bank,” said Gordon Reid.

Under Retailers for Wellness, Giant is:

- Working to sort out leftover holiday candy, cakes, and pies
- Increasing protein donations
- Pairing food bank recipe cards with select produce in four pilot stores
- Engaging the community in the effort to donate healthier food. Earlier this summer it offered pre-packed donation boxes at its stores, which allowed customers to easily purchase and donate high fiber, high protein, low salt items.

The CAFB distributes 45 million pounds of food per year, fully one third of which is produce.

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The Capital Area Food Bank is the largest organization in the Washington metro area working to solve hunger and its companion problems: chronic undernutrition, heart disease and obesity. By partnering with nearly 450 community organizations in DC, Maryland and Virginia, as well as delivering food directly into hard to reach areas, the CAFB is helping 540,000 people each year get access to good, healthy food. That's 12 percent of our region's mothers, fathers, sons, daughters, sisters, brothers, and grandparents. To learn more, visit: capitalareafoodbank.org, or find the Capital Area Food Bank on Facebook at facebook.com/CapitalAreaFoodBank, and Twitter at [@foodbankmetrodc](https://twitter.com/foodbankmetrodc).