

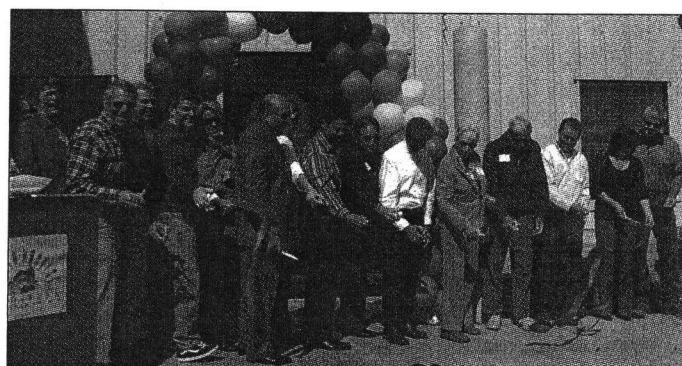
# Second Harvest Food Bank Expanding

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✓ **Food Banks**  
WATSONVILLE — Second Harvest

Food Bank is celebrating the \$4.3 million Phase II completion of its three-part expansion project with a ribbon cutting ceremony and barbecue at its warehouse on 800 Ohlone Parkway in Watsonville on Thursday October 8. Major capital campaign donors and key figures in the expansion project took part in the dedication of the Richard and Mary Solari Hunger Education and Training Center, among other additions. Current and past members of Second Harvest\* Boards attended, as were the construction industry leaders who contributed to the expansion.

"We are just so happy about how this phase has turned out," said CEO Willy Elliott-McCrea. "We are especially thrilled about being able to distribute more food to people in our community and to get our first-ever on-site nutrition education kitchen up and running. This expansion has been 20 years in the making, and none of it would have been possible without community donations and gifts of service from the construction industry, which were especially appreciated during this economic downturn."



Guests wander the newly expanded Second Harvest Food Bank facilities after the ribbon cutting.

The new Hunger Education & Nutrition Center will enable second Harvest to use 95 cents of every dollar to increase food bank services while increasing nutrition education along with the distribution of healthy foods. This expansion is more important than ever due to the poor economy and the increase in families needing assistance from the network of 180 agencies they depend on.

Second Harvest Food Bank moved into its current facility in 1986, just in time for the devastating Loma Prieta earthquake.

For over 20 years, they have continued to expand their services. The increased warehouse space and renovated facility will include improved distribution features such as:

- Increased freezer and refrigeration space so that donated food is not turned away

- Docks to efficiently unload and load trucks

- Pallet racks to easily store and stage food

The facility now includes the new Richard and Mary Solari Nutrition Education Center which houses: The Ralph & Joan Lane Volunteer Hospitality Room, the Driscoll's Conference Center and the Betsy Woolpert Nutrition Kitchen. Inside the warehouse is the new Plantronics Agency Distribution Center. This is part of the Northside Expansion Project that will expand to enclose the produce dock and the volunteer repack room to improve convenience and selection for our member agencies.

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For the first time all the office staff is working in the same building, which greatly facilitates communication, planning and operating efficiency.

Part of the expansion is the new 30,000 cubic foot Produce Cooler and the 20,000 cubic foot drive-in freezer that increased the ability to store and distribute by a factor of four. The increased energy needs are more than offset by the Jim Hayes solar array.

Second Harvest's phase three is a \$1.2

million project to be completed in 2010 and when completed is designed to distribute twice as much food without increasing its staff. It will include a paved parking lot, receiving docks for 18-wheel Semi truck-trailers, expanded volunteer repack center, expanded agency distribution center pallet storage racks for the warehouse. ■

For information on volunteering, call 722-7110, ext. 205. For information on donating to Second Harvest call 722-7110, ext 210. Website: [www.thefoodbank.org](http://www.thefoodbank.org).