

Second Harvest celebrates first stage of expansion

Food Bank
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15-year dream comes to fruition

REGISTER-PAJARONIAN STAFF REPORT

Second Harvest Food Bank doled out praise Thursday to volunteers and donors who helped raise more than \$4 million toward an expanded warehouse.

Guests at Second Harvest's warehouse facility at 800 Ohlone Parkway admired new distribution docks, a new freezer and learned about plans for a new cooler, which will allow Second Harvest to receive 60,000

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Tarmo Hannula/Register-Pajaronian

A new freezer is just part of the major expansion.

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pounds of fresh fruits and vegetables that the agency regularly has to turn away.

"I'm excited to stand with you today and celebrate this 15-year dream," Willy Elliott-McCrea, executive director of the Second Harvest, told the crowd of about 100. "This new facility is based on a vision backed by hard work and a lot of commitment."

Elliott-McCrea told the crowd how, when Second Harvest first opened at the current location in 1986, it was serving about 15,000 needy people. That number has now grown to 43,000.

When completed, the expanded facility will handle 10 million pounds of food per year, almost double the current capacity with the same number of staff, the organization reported Thursday at its ribbon-cutting ceremony for Phase One of Second Harvest's expansion project.

The immediate goal is to raise \$2.9 million by mid-September to qualify for a \$340,000 grant from the Kresge Foundation.

The new cooler and freezer addition will allow Second Harvest to fulfill an ongoing commitment to confronting a child-

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— **Willy Elliott-McCrea**, executive director of the Second Harvest

hood obesity crisis, diabetes and other food-related illnesses.

Major donors and key figures in the first phase of the project include Mary Solari, Rowland and Pat Rebele, Jack and Peggy Baskin, Plantronics, Driscoll's, Barry Swenson Builders, Granite Construction, SunRidge Farms, Dominican Hospital and other community supporters.

Second Harvest is selling tiles with inscriptions to raise additional funds. Anyone interested in buying a commemorative tile can call 722-0435.



Tarmo Hannula/Register-Pajaronian

Donors and special players in the expansion project at the Second Harvest Food Bank share the fun task of cutting the ribbon Thursday in Watsonville.