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Chefs and Farmers Join Together to Feed Puerto Rico

Abandoned older citizens, vulnerable communities, health workers, and police officers are some of the populations that **#ChefsForPuertoRico** has served by offering food during the COVID-19 crisis.

A World Central Kitchen initiative, **#ChefsForPuertoRico** has united local restaurants and farmers to offer more than 250,000 meals during this period in which food insecurity on the island has gotten worse. The project buys crops from local farmers while chefs keep their restaurants and employees working by preparing meals at a smaller scale.

"Through this initiative, not only do we offer an essential service to vulnerable populations, but we also support the local food economy and help restaurants and farmers maintain their businesses operating," explained Mikol Hoffman, Director of Plow to Plate at World Central Kitchen.

"When we started operations in March, we initially focused on serving health and emergency workers. However, we quickly readjusted to help a wider population," she explains. By redirecting their efforts, they now serve communities such as Cantera and populations in need in Caguas, Guaynabo, Vieques, and Las Marías, among others.

The work of #ChefsForPuertoRico, which was born in 2017 after Hurricane María, was reactivated in January to aid refugees from the earthquakes in the island's southern region. Once the shelters closed in March, the initiative turned towards the response to COVID-19. They were joined by 15 restaurants and food trucks to continue feeding Puerto Rico during this new crisis.

"For Triple-S Foundation, World Central Kitchen shows an organization's true commitment to its mission. Once more, they quickly mobilized to offer food to thousands of people during the crisis, while supporting our farmers and restaurants, which are key to the local economy," said Ivelisse M. Fernández, Executive Director of the Triple-S Foundation.

Mikol, whose focus at World Central Kitchen is to promote the development of local farmers and contain the country's food insecurity through resilient agriculture, claims that COVID-19 forced many farmers to reinvent themselves in the face of losing their usual customers, such as restaurants, hotels, school cafeterias, and farmer's markets. "We have witnessed the development of regional services for the sale and delivery of boxes of local produce, as well as partnerships to combine crops and products that allow them to continue operating."

"Through this initiative, not only do we offer an essential service to vulnerable populations, but we also support the local food economy and help restaurants and farmers to keep their businesses running." Mikol Hoffman

#CHEFSFORPUERTORICO PARTICIPANTS

The Meatball Company

- Yummy Dumplings
- Wings & Co
- Paellas y Algo Más
- Domplines Express
- Cocina Abierta
- En Plenitud
- Gallo Negro
- La Mancha de Plátano
- High Kitchen
- Paxx Caraballo
- La Vaca Brava
- Chef José Alfredo
- La Fonda Food Truck
- Chef Griselle M. Vila
- Bili Restaurant

