

IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Flint River Fresh Extends Produce Box Program in Response to COVID-19 Pandemic

Albany, Georgia — Flint River Fresh has announced a minimum two week extension to the Produce Box Pilot Program launched April 4th in response to the COVID-19 Pandemic. The initial 14-day long pilot program was extended after positive feedback and additional support from local businesses.



Figure 1: Produce and a hot meal delivered during the pilot Produce Box program Flint River Fresh launched in response to COVID-19. Produce features Georgia Grown and harvests directly from Flint River Fresh community sites.

“The response to our program has been emotional,” says Fredando Jackson, Executive Director of Flint River Fresh. “The gesture of providing a hot meal and fresh produce to those who have been impacted, isolated from family, have experienced lost wages, and who have been on the front lines of this response has meant more than we could’ve anticipated.”

Flint River Fresh, with generous support from an anonymous locally owned business, has served over 200 meals purchased from locally owned restaurants to those impacted by COVID-19. Each recipient also received a produce box with fresh, healthy produce.

Because of a diversity of scenarios in which local citizens have been impacted by COVID-19, Flint River Fresh worked directly with locally owned businesses in Albany to identify those in need. In the pilot period, this included hospitality employees with reduced wages, local church and funeral home staff, as well as county and urgent care medical personnel.

Produce provided includes an emphasis on Georgia Grown, including produce sourced from the State Farmers Market in Moultrie. Carrots, lettuce, spring onions, and kale in the produce boxes were all sourced directly from Flint River Fresh community farm sites located in Albany.

This 14-day pilot period highlighted the importance of a model with a three-fold benefit; supporting local farmers through purchasing their produce, supporting local businesses by purchasing meals from locally owned restaurants, and most of all supporting our local citizens who have been so heavily impacted by this pandemic. Southwest Georgia currently has the highest case rate of COVID-19 infections in the state.

Flint River Fresh’s relationships with local businesses and organizations led to inquiries by numerous local groups, such as the Humane Society and Dougherty County Schools, about how we can continue to serve people in need.

Currently, Flint River Fresh is seeking additional financial support to continue this program. Initial extension of the program is due to generous support from Fleming & Riles, Hayes LTI, SRJ Architects, Place on the Pointe, LRA, Hughey & Neuman, Logo’s Plus, and other anonymous businesses and individuals who have donated. Produce donations from Southern Valley in Norman Park will also support ongoing efforts.

Stewbos, a locally owned restaurant and hospitality business, will continue to be a key partner assisting in logistics coordination of providing meals and identifying local restaurant business recipients for this pilot program.

Flint River Fresh has also committed to serving community needs during this time by launching Community Farm Markets on the Flint River Fresh and Phoebe Putney Community Urban Farm site. This allows local farmers to sell produce directly to consumers in the community in a safe, secure manner.

Flint River Fresh has taken extra precaution to protect staff and the Albany community during this time by adopting stringent protocols. Currently, all volunteer and community events and workshops have been cancelled, and additional sanitation and social distancing protocol is in effect for both staff maintaining community sites and participants in Community Farm Markets. Please visit www.flintriverfresh.org/covid19 to read more about Flint River Fresh’s COVID-19 safety protocols, and to learn more about Community Farm Markets.

If you are interested in supporting Flint River Fresh’s work, donating needed sanitation supplies, directly supporting the continuation of the Produce Box Program, or if you are a local business in need, please contact info@flintriverfresh.org.

Flint River Fresh is a 501(c)(3) organization that aims to make fresh, locally-grown produce accessible and affordable for people throughout the Flint River Region, while empowering community and youth through education and outreach opportunities. Visit www.flintriverfresh.org to learn more.

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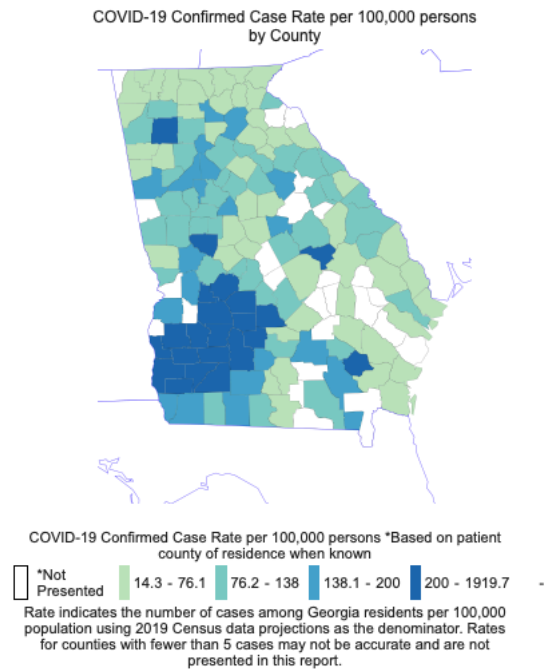


Figure 2: April 14th Georgia Department of Public Health COVID-19 status report, highlighting the highest population infection rate of COVID-19 in Southwest Georgia.