
Presidential Documents

Title 3—

Proclamation 7019 of September 12, 1997

The President

National Week of Food Recovery, 1997

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

The American people are blessed with rich natural resources and an agricultural sector that is the most efficient and productive in the world. It is a tragic reality, however, that in this land of plenty, many of our fellow Americans still go hungry each day. This statistic becomes even more heart-breaking when we realize that about 27 percent of the estimated 356 billion pounds of food that America produces each year goes to waste at the retail, wholesale, and consumer levels.

Most of this loss occurs in the commercial food chain, as food travels from farms to wholesale markets, manufacturers, supermarkets, company cafeterias, and restaurants, and much of it is recoverable. Whether it be day-old bread at a bakery or an extra pan of lasagna not served by a restaurant or cafeteria, a significant amount of this food is perfectly edible and wholesome. Throwing away such food is an intolerable loss, because it both denies hungry Americans a vital source of nourishment and wastes precious resources. Municipalities across the country currently spend about \$1 billion a year in tax dollars to dispose of excess food.

There is a growing national movement to recover this food and distribute it to Americans in need. This movement, led by nonprofit groups and energized by new efforts at the Department of Agriculture, is making a noticeable difference in the amount of edible excess food that is finding its way to hungry people rather than ending up in dumpsters.

Every sector of our society—from individuals to large institutions—can do more to glean and recover excess food. Every person can have an impact. Individuals can donate canned and boxed goods to food drives; they can give their time and money to food recovery organizations; they can even encourage the places where they work—and the businesses they patronize—to get involved in this movement.

Food recovery efforts will never replace a strong Federal safety net that includes such critical programs as the Food Stamp Program; the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children; the National School Lunch and School Breakfast Programs; and nutrition education efforts. However, extra food, provided through food recovery, can serve as a vital supplement to the diets of millions of Americans in need.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, WILLIAM J. CLINTON, President of the United States of America, do hereby proclaim September 14 through September 20, 1997, as National Week of Food Recovery, to be held in conjunction with the National Summit on Food Recovery. I call on all Americans to observe this week by actively participating in and supporting efforts to recover food for distribution to hungry Americans.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this twelfth day of September, in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred and ninety-seven, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and twenty-second.

William Clinton

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