

Making Sure Kids Get Healthy Food Even When School Is Virtual

TUKWILA, Wash., Sept. 17, 2020 (SEND2PRESS NEWSWIRE) – InnovAsian, a national supplier of Asian frozen food products, announced today a new philanthropic effort that will deliver healthy, tasty meals to students and the broader community through Seattle Public Schools (SPS) distribution sites. Because of the pandemic, schools are teaching remotely, and food insecurity is increasing.



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At the same time, more people are buying frozen food to cook at home. The combination of increased need and increased ability to help has resulted in InnovAsian stepping up to pledge food equivalent to 5,000 meals.

This donation will be delivered in partnership with two other Seattle-area organizations: FareStart, a non-profit feeding and food service training program and Gourmondo, a local catering company. InnovAsian will supply the food for operations, FareStart and Gourmondo will provide their chefs, labor and delivery infrastructure to ensure the meals meet nutritional guidelines, are delicious, and get delivered to the 26 SPS food distribution sites set up during the pandemic.

“InnovAsian is fortunate to see our frozen sales rise as consumers are shifting more food dollars to grocery stores as families are staying home. It is important to us to pay it forward and help connect families to meals in our local community who are in dire need of food resources during this pandemic,” said Debbie Curdy, vice president of marketing and innovation.

“We are incredibly grateful for InnovAsian’s support of FareStart emergency meals,” said Matt Gurney, vice president of enterprise development. “Due to COVID-19, food insecurity remains a huge challenge in our community – especially for youth and their families. Through this partnership, we’ll be able to provide thousands of nutritious, reheatable dinners for people in need.”

“This partnership with InnovAsian and FareStart is extremely important to Gourmondo- it is inspiring to work with both non-profit organizations and other food suppliers to support our community in a time when the need has never been greater. I am proud and grateful to work with both these organizations, to be able to do what we love and help provide meals to those who need them most,” said Alissa Leinonen, CEO and founder.

Three brands each bring unique skills and assets to meet growing need

With food insecurity on the rise and reaching historical high levels around the state, emergency food services such as food banks and meal programs like this are more urgent than ever before. The expectation is that the crisis will continue for months to come and according to No Kid Hungry one in four children in the United States could face hunger this year because of the coronavirus.

The three local brands coming together to create this partnership all have a legacy of charitable giving; Earlier this year, InnovAsian raised and matched funds to support Meals on Wheels for a total of \$30,000; Gourmondo has a robust, multi-faceted give back program which includes supplying over 200,000 meals since the beginning of the pandemic to our most vulnerable populations, and has previously partnered with FareStart in the SPS program. FareStart has now served more than 1.1 million emergency meals since their COVID-19 response efforts began in March. Amazon has been a consistent collaborator throughout the pandemic with both Gourmondo and FareStart and is partnering here to further provide financial support for the labor.

The skills each brings to this partnership reflect each organization’s strengths: FareStart has the relationship with SPS, skilled chefs to design menus that meet children and family nutritional needs, and a cadre of volunteers who help with distribution. Gourmondo is providing their talented chefs, cooking, expansive kitchen space, packaging, and delivery labor. And InnovAsian is donating generous quantities of their easy-to prepare frozen Asian food as the main ingredient to make this all possible.

Food will be delivered every Wednesday for four weeks starting September 23, 2020 to SPS for families and children to pick up at the distribution centers. Anyone in need is eligible to pick up meals.

About InnovAsian

InnovAsian® is a premium provider of frozen Asian food based in Tukwila, WA. One of the fastest growing Asian brands in the grocery freezer aisle, our line of entrees, appetizers and side dishes are available in over 20,000 grocery stores nationwide. Our company was founded in 1999 on the belief that bold Asian flavors should be accessible and easy to prepare for all busy American families. In addition to our line of ready to heat freezer meals, our delicious Asian flavors are available in select perimeter grocery delis, convenience stores, and national restaurant chains. Learn more at <http://www.innovasiancuisine.com/>.

About FareStart

FareStart is a James Beard Award-winning nonprofit organization that transforms lives, disrupts poverty and nourishes communities through food, life skills and job training. Since 1992, FareStart has provided opportunities for nearly 11,000 adults and youth, while serving over 12.5 million meals to Seattle area schools, homeless shelters and healthcare facilities. Ninety-seven percent of students who graduate from FareStart's Adult Culinary Program gain employment within 90 days of graduation. For more information, visit <http://www.farestart.org/>.

About Gourmondo

Gourmondo is one the Pacific Northwest's premier food companies, offering full-service, social and event catering, gourmet box lunches, wholesale bakery and a successful line of cafes located through the Seattle area. Back in 1996, Founder and CEO Alissa Leinonen started Gourmondo by refinancing her car and opening a 470-square-foot, four table cafe. Gourmondo has since grown extensively across all divisions and employs more than 250 individuals. Alissa is known for building her business around the working parent model, having led by example for many years raising her two children. The award-winning company has received accolades locally and across the country. <https://www.gourmondoco.com/>

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