



FEATURE

# Expanding Community Servings' MTM Model

As a leading advocate in the Food is Medicine movement, Community Servings feels compelled to address the urgent need for medically tailored meals (MTM): not only in Massachusetts but also in other parts of the country where there is little to no access to MTM services. Despite the logistical challenges presented by COVID-19, we remain fully committed to advancing our work.

With studies showing that MTM interventions improve health outcomes, reduce healthcare costs, and enhance patient satisfaction, healthcare payers and providers are beginning to take notice and have started reimbursing for these services.

*Continued on page 5*



Dear Friends,

We are deeply grateful for our community's tremendous support as we continue responding to the COVID-19 crisis and meeting the needs of our most vulnerable neighbors in Boston and across Massachusetts.

With increasing rates of food insecurity throughout the state, the generosity of individual donors and corporate and foundation partners has helped us increase our capacity to serve more high-need, high-risk populations. This support has helped us keep those most susceptible to COVID-19 safe, healthy, and well-fed during these incredibly scary times.

Over the last five months, we have expanded the production of our medically tailored meals (MTM) by nearly 50% due to the unprecedented demand for healthy food sources and significant growth, due in part to MTM service integration into new patient-centered models of care. In partnership with the City of Boston, we provided 27,000 meals to food-insecure residents as part of our initial COVID-19 relief efforts.

We're welcoming new clients every week, and anticipate that we'll prepare and deliver 800,000 scratch-made meals over the next year. That's a 40% increase from where we were in 2019. Our projections show that our kitchen team will be preparing 16,000 meals per week in the coming months, feeding 1,600 people per day. At this rate, we may achieve our five-year goal of doubling the number of meals we prepare annually – in half the time.

Community Servings has also reached two significant milestones during the pandemic: 9 million meals made and our 30th anniversary. Founded in 1990 by the American Jewish Congress at the height of the HIV/AIDS epidemic, Community Servings began as the community's collective response to the rapidly unfolding crisis. Once again, we've found ourselves on the front lines of another public health crisis, and I couldn't be prouder of the incredible work done by my colleagues across the agency.

I also want to take this opportunity to reiterate my sincere gratitude to the many donors who helped us surpass the \$12 million fundraising goal we set for our *Food is the Foundation Capital Campaign*. Who could have ever thought that your generous gifts to fund the expansion of our kitchen and the construction of our new Food Campus would ultimately help prepare us for this unrelenting pandemic?

As someone who's been with Community Servings since the beginning, I'm humbled by the unwavering support we continue to receive. While nobody knows for sure what the coming months will bring, we know that with your help, we'll continue our fight to provide medically tailored, nutritious, scratch-made meals to chronically and critically ill individuals and their families across the Commonwealth.

Thank you for your continued generosity and ongoing support. Stay well.

Sincerely,

A stylized, handwritten signature in black ink that reads "David".

David B. Waters  
CEO

## Progress on the Massachusetts Food is Medicine State Plan

Since Community Servings and the Center for Health Law and Policy Innovation of Harvard Law School launched the Massachusetts Food is Medicine State Plan in June 2019, there's been exciting progress on its implementation.

In late 2019, Massachusetts State Senator Julian Cyr and Representative Denise Garlick introduced legislation to establish a statewide Food is Medicine pilot program. This pilot would provide funding to connect MassHealth patients that are both at risk for, or suffering from, diet-related conditions, to one of three Food is Medicine interventions: medically tailored meals, medically tailored food packages, or nutritious food referrals such as produce prescriptions. The goals of the pilot are to evaluate the impact of offering a suite of nutrition services on health care utilization and costs, expand access to Food is Medicine interventions across Massachusetts, and enhance our health care system's ability to provide appropriate nutrition services based on patient need.



*Public Hearing at the MA State House for the Food is Medicine Pilot Program*

Last winter, the Joint Committee on Public Health held a hearing on the bill. A diverse group of stakeholders from food and health organizations across Massachusetts attended the hearing at the State House to convey their support for the pilot program. The legislative sponsor and co-author of the bill, Senator Cyr, kicked off the hearing and spoke to the heart of the pilot's mission, insisting, "This program will make Massachusetts the first state in the nation to meet the nutritional needs of patients to survive, heal and thrive." Following his testimony, a panel that included Community Servings' CEO David B. Waters and Dariush Mozaffarian, Dean of

Tufts Friedman School of Nutrition Science and Policy, set the stage by highlighting the findings in the Massachusetts Food is Medicine State Plan.

The panel discussed the inextricable link between nutrition and health outcomes and reviewed research illustrating the impact of these critical interventions. Fourteen stakeholders - representing researchers, health care providers, community-based organizations, and Food is Medicine consumers - followed, providing testimony in support of the legislation.

To learn more about the Food and Health Pilot, visit [foodismedicinema.org](http://foodismedicinema.org).



## Upcoming: Pie in the Sky 2020

Because the hundreds of dedicated volunteers and bakers who come together annually to help us pull off the “world’s greatest bake sale” will likely still be social distancing in November, this year’s event will look a little different. We’re still finalizing details and looking into other delicious offerings to include, so please be sure to visit [pieinthesky.org](http://pieinthesky.org) for updates on how you can participate.



COMMUNITY  
**SERVINGS**  
**PIE IN THE SKY**

## Meals4Moms

Thank you to everyone who sent a special Mother’s Day card and made Community Servings’ *Meals4Moms* fundraiser such a success! Through our partnership with Boston-based **McCrea’s Caramels**, we raised more than \$38,000 to provide nutritious meals to moms who are too sick to shop and cook for themselves and their families.

Special thanks to our generous sponsors - Susy Pilgrim Waters, Franklin Printing, and Gold Star Studios!



## Dinners4Dads

Thank you to everyone who sent a special Father’s Day card or gift and made Community Servings’ first-ever *Dinners4Dads* fundraiser such a success! We raised more than \$27,000 to provide nutritious meals to dads and families who are too sick to shop and cook for themselves and their families.

Thanks to our generous sponsors - Eastern Standard Provisions, Susy Pilgrim Waters, and Gold Star Studios!

*Continued from front page*



## Upcoming: Learning Kitchen Live!

Because social distancing measures will continue for the foreseeable future, we launched a new online nutrition and cooking class that anyone can attend – *Learning Kitchen Live!*

Every Thursday at noon, one of Community Servings' Registered Dietitian Nutritionists broadcasts live from our Learning Kitchen to present a nutrition education lesson and cooking demonstration featuring fresh, seasonal ingredients.

In addition to leaving you with tips for healthy eating, our professionals take you through all the steps to make a delicious meal to enjoy at home.

We stream every class via Facebook Live, so all you need to do is go to our Facebook page at [facebook.com/communityservings](https://facebook.com/communityservings) and tune-in! Previous Learning Kitchen Live segments can also be found on our YouTube channel to view at your convenience.



This reimbursement has helped open the door to opportunities to sustainably scale the intervention, which will allow Community Servings and our partners to reach more individuals who will benefit from medically optimized nutrition. For nonprofit MTM providers, the reimbursements are a new earned income stream that will allow them to serve more people, reducing reliance on philanthropic support to implement this evidence-based, cost-saving health intervention.

Thanks to generous funding from CVS Health and The Eugene M. Lang Foundation, we are pleased to announce that Community Servings, along with God's Love We Deliver, the Food is Medicine Coalition, Nonprofit Finance Fund, and the Center for Health Law and Policy Innovation of Harvard Law School, launched a much-anticipated Food is Medicine Accelerator program in July. Together, we're working to refine, replicate, and broadly scale the MTM model to ensure that people coping with food insecurity and severe illness have access to MTM, regardless of where they reside.

Over the next year, the Accelerator's leadership team will continue leading a 12-month training program for four nonprofits located where there is a need for MTM services. Participating nonprofits include Feeding Tampa Bay, the Greater Chicago Food Depository, Meals on Wheels People (of Portland, Ore.), and the New Hampshire Food Bank. Upon completing the training, participants will be well-equipped to introduce MTM to critically and chronically ill individuals in their respective regions in partnership with local healthcare institutions.



## VEGGIE FRITTATA WITH ROASTED RADISHES

Packed with Vitamin C, fiber, and antioxidants, radishes are a small but nutritionally mighty root vegetable! In this healthy and satisfying frittata, they're a flavorful and filling addition. This dish is lightly seasoned but gets a bite from fresh herbs. It's also a protein-packed meal that makes for a hearty breakfast or a lighter lunch or dinner!

**Community Servings' Kitchen Tip:** You can easily substitute any greens on-hand in place of the spinach in this recipe.

Yield: Makes 4 servings

### Ingredients

3 Tablespoons olive oil	2 cups spinach or other dark greens, chopped
3 bunches radishes, trimmed, cut into wedges	1/4 teaspoon kosher salt
1 large leek, halved lengthwise, thinly sliced	1/4 teaspoon black pepper
1 large celery stalk, thinly sliced	8 large eggs, lightly beaten
1 jalapeno chili, thinly sliced with seeds removed	2 Tablespoons basil, thinly sliced
1/2 teaspoon curry powder	2 Tablespoons dill sprigs, torn
	2 Tablespoons feta cheese, crumbled

### Directions

1. Preheat oven to 350 degrees F.
2. Heat oil in a large, oven-proof skillet. Cook radishes on high heat for 3 minutes on each side, undisturbed, until golden brown in color.
3. Reduce heat to medium high and add leek, celery, and jalapeno. Cook for about 6-8 minutes, until softened.
4. Stir in curry powder and cook for 1 minute.
5. Add greens, salt, and pepper. Sauté until greens are just wilted.
6. Remove the skillet from heat and add the eggs.
7. Transfer the frittata to the oven and bake for 15 minutes, or until eggs are set.
8. Top the frittata with dill, basil, and feta cheese.

## WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO EAT CLEAN?

Eating "clean" means consuming whole foods that are minimally processed and close to their natural form. People also use the term to describe a lifestyle that excludes processed, store-bought items and focuses on preparing more meals at home from scratch. Examples of this could be choosing plain Greek yogurt and fresh-cut fruit instead of a muffin or breakfast sandwich in the morning, or grabbing an apple and no-sugar-added peanut butter instead of a candy bar for a snack.

These are essential principles to follow; still, consumers of nutrition information should be mindful that there is no official or legal definition of "clean" food or eating.

A better way to think about this is to consider adding healthy, less processed foods to your diet that make you feel good, and cutting back on less wholesome items.

Early fall can be a great time to start thinking about making meaningful changes to your diet through informed food choices and better eating habits. It's the season when locally-grown fruits and vegetables are still widely available, affordable, and varied, allowing better opportunities to add healthier foods to our diets.

Making dietary changes isn't always easy, but proper nutrition doesn't have to be restrictive or overwhelming. Small goals and changes can have a cumulative healthful effect. Rather than trying to overhaul your diet all at once, take it one step at a time. For example, if you find that you're not eating many fruits and vegetables, make a goal to have at least one serving of each, every day for a week or two. Over time, slowly increase this until you reach three to five servings of fruits and veggies daily. You can also do other simple things, such as switching to 100% whole wheat bread, or eating fish once or twice a week. Focus on the healthy foods you can add, rather than what you think you should take away. Here at Community Servings, we work hard to source fresh, local foods, and take great pride in providing our clients with beautiful, delicious, and healthy scratch-made meals.



## Thank You to our Kitchen Volunteers!



Pre-pandemic, in February 2020, our kitchen was producing and delivering 10,000 scratch-made medically tailored meals per week.

In just a few short months, we have increased meal production by over 50% due to the unprecedented demand created by COVID-19 and our recent expansion of services across Massachusetts.

None of this would have been possible without our dedicated volunteers showing up daily to help prep ingredients and package meals in our kitchen. We thank you for remembering the needs of others during a time of great uncertainty for all. Together, you helped bring nourishment and comfort to those most at-risk, during the most trying of times.

Kitchen volunteer shifts are currently 9 a.m. – noon and 1 p.m. – 5 p.m., Monday through Friday.

Please visit [servings.org/volunteer](https://servings.org/volunteer) for the most up-to-date information about our volunteer program and to sign-up for a shift.



## Tell Congress to Pass the RESTAURANTS Act!

The devastating effects of COVID-19 have hit Boston's hospitality industry especially hard.

Across the U.S., 500,000 independent restaurants and 11 million jobs are on the brink of going away forever. For restaurants to serve communities again and assist in reigniting the economy, Congress needs to pass the RESTAURANTS Act, establishing the \$120B Independent Restaurant Revitalization Fund, which would give restaurants access to the resources and support they need for the challenging months – and years – ahead.

Since our founding 30 years ago,

chefs, restaurateurs, and caterers have provided unwavering support to help us feed critically and chronically ill neighbors across the region. Now, we ask that you join us in returning the favor. We urge you to contact your representatives and encourage them to support this critical piece of legislation. You can do so easily and quickly with just a couple of clicks at [saverestaurants.com/take-action](https://saverestaurants.com/take-action).

In the meantime, you can help by purchasing a gift card, safely picking up take-out, dining distantly on a patio, or signing up for delivery. Your support is not only helping to ensure that our local restaurant industry survives, but that it can return and thrive.



While dining out isn't what it used to be, we hope that you'll consider doing whatever you can to show your support for this selfless group of owners, chefs, cooks, mixologists, servers, and other industry professionals.

To start planning your next meal, check out our list of restaurant partners open for business at [servings.org/dininginbos](https://servings.org/dininginbos).

## Join the Conversation

 [servings.org/fall](https://servings.org/fall)

 [Community Servings](#)

 [CommunityServ](#)

 [CommunityServings](#)

 [Community Servings](#)

# Thank you!

We are deeply grateful for the tremendous support of our community as we work to address the COVID-19 crisis and meet the needs of our most vulnerable neighbors.

The generosity of individual donors and corporate and foundation partners has helped us increase our capacity and serve more high-need, high-risk populations. Because of their support, Community Servings has been able to rise to meet the many challenges presented by the pandemic in Boston and across Massachusetts. Thank you!