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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Volunteers Needed to Help Ensure Sonoma County Children in Need Get Summer Lunch

Santa Rosa, CA - (May 16, 2017) - The Redwood Empire Food Bank (REFB) is looking for over 100 volunteers to help ensure Sonoma County children receive healthy meals this summer. From June 5th through August 4th, children in need of food will have access to healthy lunch and exposure to enrichment activities through the REFB's Summer Lunch program.

Now in its 14th year, the REFB will team up with the Santa Rosa City School's Central Kitchen and the Healdsburg Unified School District Kitchen to ensure that more than 31,000 Sonoma County children who rely on free or reduced-price lunches during the school year won't miss a meal during summer break. There will be over 30 program sites this year offering nutritious lunch, many of which will also offer physical and educational activities for children. Serving healthy, well balanced meals while providing opportunities academic enrichment and physical play helps keep children remain active and engaged during the academic break. Program highlights this year will include visits from the Bookmobile - Sonoma County's roaming library and Marin-Sonoma Mosquito and Vector Control, and lessons in environmental stewardship.

"The summer months are critical time for children who participate in the National School Lunch program during the school year," said Itzul Gutierrez, REFB Senior Program Manager. "When schools break for the summer, these children lose access to free and reduced cost school meals. Summer Lunch addresses this meal gap by providing nutritious meals to children in our community, because let's face it, hunger doesn't take a vacation."

Volunteers are needed to help serve lunches at program sites throughout Sonoma County, and assist with physical play and educational activities. All those looking for a rewarding way to give back to our community should visit www.refb.org to learn more about the various volunteer positions available, and to sign up.

About Redwood Empire Food Bank

The Redwood Empire Food Bank (REFB) is the largest hunger-relief organization serving north coastal California from Sonoma County to the Oregon border. Since 1987, the REFB has provided food and nourishment to those facing hunger, currently serving 82,000 children, families and seniors in Sonoma County, while striving to end hunger in our community. The REFB collaborates with local and regional partners to obtain and distribute 15+ million pounds of food annually, the equivalent of more than 35,000 meals every day. Through more than 200 of our own direct service distributions and partnerships with 177 other hunger-relief organizations, we form a network of over 450 weekly and monthly

distribution sites serving low-income residents in Sonoma, Lake, Del Norte, Mendocino and Humboldt counties. Visit www.refb.org or call 707-523-7900 to learn more.