

Ideas for Successful Site Visits

Below are some topics for discussion when meeting with your elected official

- **Educate about the many factors that can cause someone to need food assistance.** Share stories of clients who have recently lost a job, had their hours cut back at work, experienced a family or medical emergency, or faced unexpected issues with housing or transportation. Dispel the idea that people who need food assistance just aren't trying hard enough.
- **Discuss the scope of hunger in Vermont.** Share statistics and figures from the Fact Sheet with your legislator in order to show the scope of the charitable food system in Vermont.
- **Emphasize the nutritional quality** of snacks, meals, and groceries provided through nutrition programs, and specifically through your program, including federal commodities from TEFAP and CSFP. Make sure to underscore the challenge that low-income families face in providing a nutritious diet with limited resources.
- **Demonstrate the diversity of people struggling with hunger.** Speak to the clients that you serve, such as seniors, two-parent households, or veterans.
- **Show how your program/s is helping participants move to self-sufficiency,** for example how because they have food for their families, a participant was able to enroll in a job training program or pay the rent.
- **Discuss your program's specific challenges.** Do you struggle to retain volunteers, is your physical space too small, do you need more food? This is important information to share with legislators. And be sure to articulate what a community without your services would look like.