



NEWS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Access Launches “Customer Choice” Food Pantry Shopping



Access Community Action Agency opened its doors to a new customer choice food pantry in Willimantic last month and the pantry in Danielson will soon follow the same model. The Willimantic pantry is open every Monday, Wednesday and Friday by appointment from 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. and in Danielson every Tuesday and Thursday by appointment from 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Previously, customers who came to the Access pantries received pre-packaged bags with the same food items for every family. “A lot of clients would receive food they wouldn’t use or their family didn’t need,” said Ian Matthew Harrington, Access Community Outreach and Resource Coordinator. “This style of pantry offers an opportunity to interact more with the customer and talk to them about their food and health needs and cuts down on food waste. Customers are more likely to eat the foods that they choose for themselves”.

The new format will provide clients with a grocery store atmosphere and allow customers to choose food based on their individual or family’s needs. The pantry will be divided into nutritional categories: grains, vegetables, fruits, dairy, meats and miscellaneous. Clients will also have the opportunity to pick items dependent on household size.

The Access Food Pantries recently received a large donation through the Vanilla Bean Café in Pomfret who hosted the Annual Benefit Show performed by Howie Bursen, and Sally Rogers. The virtual concert through Musea.me raised over \$9,800. All proceeds from the concert will be used to buy food from the Connecticut Food Bank. Each \$1 donated is used by Access to buy more than \$15 worth of food from the CT Food Bank for distribution to those in need throughout northeast CT.

Customers in need of the Access’s Food Pantries can call 860-450-7400 ext. 7495 in Willimantic and 860-412-1600 ext. 1647 in Danielson.

The Access Community Action Agency is designated by the federal and state government as the anti-poverty agency in northeast Connecticut. Access provides food, affordable housing, job readiness services, and other pathways to economic self-reliance for vulnerable limited-income families and individuals throughout the region.

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