EDITORIAL

Making sure everyone has a holiday meal

In six days, most of us will sit down with our families and perhaps some friends for a Thanksgiving feast.

We wish it was a prosperous time for everyone, but we know it's not. The economy is stable, but too many are homeless. And many more must devote so much income to rent or a house payment that they must skimp on other necessities, even food.

The most recent Sonoma County Hunger Index report, released Wednesday, found that 34 million meals were missed in 70,000 at-risk households in 2015 because they couldn't afford enough groceries for three healthy meals a day.

The report is compiled by a coalition of public agencies and charity groups, many of which provide hot meals or groceries for people in need.

If you want to help others put food on their tables, here are some organizations in Sonoma County that provide holiday meals, groceries and other assistance for people in need:

■ The Redwood Gospel Mission will host its annual Thanksgiving dinner for 5,000 people on Wednesday. Then it will gear up to do it again at Christmas. Donate or download a shopping list online at srmission.org, or call 578-1830.

■ The St. Vincent de Paul Society will provide a special holiday meal from 11:20 a.m. until 12:30 p.m. on Thanksgiving Day, as well as daily lunches, at 610 Wilson St., Santa Rosa. To donate, go to svdp-sonoma.org, or call 584-1579.

■ Sonoma Raceway is collecting nonperishable food for distribution through Friends in Sonoma Helping (friendsinsonomahelping.org) and the San Francisco-Marin Food Bank. Donations are accepted through today at the raceway, Sonoma Market, Glen Ellen Village Market and RKA Motorcycle Luggage in Windsor.

■ The Redwood Empire Food Bank supplies 177 agencies around the region, including soup kitchens and food pantries. Donate online at refb.org, send contributions to 3990 Brickway Blvd., Santa Rosa 95403, or call 523-7900.

■ Friends in Service Here, or FISH of Santa Rosa, is an all-volunteer food bank that provides free groceries to 65,000 people a year in Sonoma County. Donate at fish-of-santa-rosa.org, 2900 McBride Lane, Santa Rosa 95403, or call 527-5151.

■ Catholic Charities distributes food through its rural food program, which serves communities away from pantries and food banks. Donate online at srcharities.org, or call 528-8712.

■ The Salvation Army is seeking non-perishable food for distribution to needy families. Donate online at santarosa.salvationarmy.org or at 93 Stony Circle, Santa Rosa 95401.

■ The Committee on the Shelterless provides shelter, transitional housing, training and meals and distributes food. Donate online or see a wish list and volunteer opportunities at cots-homeless.org, or send a donation to COTS at P.O. Box 2744, Petaluma 94953.

■ Food for Thought, a Forestville-based food pantry, serves AIDS and HIV patients at 6550 Railroad Ave., Forestville. Donate at fftfoodbank.org. To volunteer, email volunteer@fftfoodbank.org, or call 887-1647.

■ The Council on Aging delivers more than 285,000 meals annually to senior citizens and provides social, financial and legal services. You can volunteer or donate at council-onaging.com. Send donations to 30 Kawana Springs Road, Santa Rosa 95404, or call 525-0143.

■ Petaluma People Services Center assists with housing and job training and serves more than 42,000 meals through its Meals on Wheels and cafe programs. Send donations to petalumapeople.org, 1500A Petaluma Blvd. S., Petaluma 94952, or call 765-8488.