

Week Ending Friday, September 19, 1997

Proclamation 7019—National Week of Food Recovery, 1997

September 12, 1997

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

The American people are blessed with rich natural resources and an agricultural sector that is the most efficient and productive in the world. It is a tragic reality, however, that in this land of plenty, many of our fellow Americans still go hungry each day. This statistic becomes even more heartbreaking when we realize that about 27 percent of the estimated 356 billion pounds of food that America produces each year goes to waste at the retail, wholesale, and consumer levels.

Most of this loss occurs in the commercial food chain, as food travels from farms to wholesale markets, manufacturers, supermarkets, company cafeterias, and restaurants, and much of it is recoverable. Whether it be day-old bread at a bakery or an extra pan of lasagna not served by a restaurant or cafeteria, a significant amount of this food is perfectly edible and wholesome. Throwing away such food is an intolerable loss, because it both denies hungry Americans a vital source of nourishment and wastes precious resources. Municipalities across the country currently spend about \$1 billion a year in tax dollars to dispose of excess food.

There is a growing national movement to recover this food and distribute it to Americans in need. This movement, led by non-profit groups and energized by new efforts at the Department of Agriculture, is making a noticeable difference in the amount of edible excess food that is finding its way to hungry people rather than ending up in dumpsters.

Every sector of our society—from individuals to large institutions—can do more to glean and recover excess food. Every person

can have an impact. Individuals can donate canned and boxed goods to food drives; they can give their time and money to food recovery organizations; they can even encourage the places where they work—and the businesses they patronize—to get involved in this movement.

Food recovery efforts will never replace a strong Federal safety net that includes such critical programs as the Food Stamp Program; the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children; the National School Lunch and School Breakfast Programs; and nutrition education efforts. However, extra food, provided through food recovery, can serve as a vital supplement to the diets of millions of Americans in need.

Now, Therefore, I, William J. Clinton, President of the United States of America, do hereby proclaim September 14 through September 20, 1997, as National Week of Food Recovery, to be held in conjunction with the National Summit on Food Recovery. I call on all Americans to observe this week by actively participating in and supporting efforts to recover food for distribution to hungry Americans.

In Witness Whereof, I have hereunto set my hand this twelfth day of September, in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred and ninety-seven, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and twenty-second.

William J. Clinton

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 9:04 a.m., September 16, 1997]

NOTE: This proclamation was published in the *Federal Register* on September 17. This item was not received in time for publication in the appropriate issue.

**Proclamation 7020—National
Hispanic Heritage Month, 1997**

September 12, 1997

*By the President of the United States
of America*

A Proclamation

Throughout our history, America's promise of individual freedom and opportunity has drawn millions upon millions of immigrants from across the globe. As these newcomers arrived, they gradually wove their own traditions into the tapestry of our Nation's culture and society. The world's economy is becoming ever more interdependent and competitive, and these changes and others brought on by the revolution in communication technologies are lowering many of the old barriers to economic, cultural, and intellectual exchange among nations. In this new global community, we benefit greatly from the contributions that Hispanic Americans bring to our economy and our society.

As the youngest and fastest-growing segment of our population, Hispanic Americans are an increasingly vital part of our economy. In the first 3 years of our Administration, more than 220,000 Hispanic-American-owned businesses were created, and in recent years the number of companies owned by Hispanic women, in particular, has grown at three times the overall rate of business growth. Our citizens with roots in South and Central America, the Caribbean, and Spain have inherited an entrepreneurial spirit and an intense work ethic that have helped energize the strongest American economy in a generation. The new head of the Small Business Administration, Aida Alvarez, is a symbol of that spirit and its importance to America. Along with Secretary of Energy Federico Peña, Under Secretary of Agriculture I. Miley Gonzales, and Ambassador Bill Richardson, the United States Representative to the United Nations, Administrator Alvarez reflects my Administration's continuing commitment to bring highly qualified Hispanic Americans into the highest levels of Government.

Our Hispanic citizens also are vital to America's success in expanding trade and developing closer ties with nations throughout

the Western Hemisphere. Sharing a rich cultural and linguistic heritage with Hispanic Americans, these nations are already among our closest trading partners, and we hope to further expand our relationships with them at the Summit of the Americas next March.

The contributions of Hispanic Americans to the life of our Nation are much more than economic. Their strong commitment to family, community, and country sets a shining example for all our people. Generations of Hispanic Americans have served and sacrificed in America's Armed Forces to defend liberty and advance democracy throughout the world. And Hispanic culture continues to deeply enrich our social, intellectual, and artistic life.

To meet the challenges of the 21st century, we must create a society that offers opportunity to all Americans, requires responsibility from all Americans, and nurtures a community of all Americans. Hispanic Americans throughout our country are working to build such a society. To honor them for their dedication to this endeavor and for their many contributions to our Nation and our culture, the Congress, by Public Law 100-402, has authorized and requested the President to issue annually a proclamation designating September 15 through October 15 as "National Hispanic Heritage Month."

Now, Therefore, I, William J. Clinton, President of the United States of America, do hereby proclaim September 15 through October 15, 1997, as National Hispanic Heritage Month. I call upon all government officials, educators, and the people of the United States to honor this observance with appropriate programs, ceremonies, and activities, and I encourage all Americans to rededicate themselves to the pursuit of equality.

In Witness Whereof, I have hereunto set my hand this twelfth day of September, in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred and ninety-seven, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and twenty-second.

William J. Clinton

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