Farmers’ organization, Philabundance join forces with 10 Camden churches

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CAMDEN

More than 1,000 city families soon will get some help filling their cupboards.

Two local hunger relief programs — Farmers Against Hunger and Philabundance — will distribute a truckload of fresh food to 10 city churches on a weekly basis. The churches will then distribute the food to needy residents.

“Approximately 40 percent of the citizens of Camden are under 18 years of age, which makes this fresh-food distribution program even more important,” said Bill Clark, executive director of Philabundance. “Young people are our future, so we must work together to provide healthy and nutritious food so that our children have a fighting chance.”

The first shipment — which included potatoes, bread, bananas, apples and pears — arrived at Mt. Calvary Baptist Church on Tuesday afternoon. Officials from the other nine churches were there to load their pickup trucks and car trunks with produce.

Mt. Calvary was selected as the distribution site because of its central location (just off Federal Street) and its spacious parking lot.

“What has been missing from our community is help for our residents,” Mayor Gwendoly Faison said.

Doug Zee, owner of Zee Orchards in Glassboro, donated about 37,000 pounds of peaches to Farmers Against Hunger last week.

“We’ve always donated food to needy people, even before they had these programs,” said Zee, who also grows nectarines, pears and plums. “The good Lord put it there, and he didn’t say to keep it all to yourself.”

Kaighn Avenue Church has always distributed food to some of its neediest members on Thanksgiving.

See FOOD, Page 2B

Charles Palmer of Antioch Baptist Church prepares to transfer potatoes from the Mt. Calvary church lot.
Food/“The good Lord put it there and he didn’t say to keep it all to yourself”

Continued from Page 18

said church member John Ferby. Thanks to this program, the church now will be able to distribute food to its neediest members regularly. Deacon Harding Taylor said that people often donate canned goods during church food drives, but rarely fresh produce.

“It’s better for kids,” Harding said. “You don’t get the vitamins and minerals from canned goods.”

Martha Stuwart, who lives in the Whitman Park section of Camden, said it is difficult for her to go grocery shopping without a car.

“It saves me from a trip to the store,” said Stuwart, 79, who walks with the aid of a wooden cane. “When I can get something like this, it’s a godsend.”

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