



Chefs with Compassion

Press release

June 2020

Alliance based on compassion gives rise to surplus-driven movement

An alliance of five local and global organisations, backed by over 300 chefs, restaurant owners and volunteers has stepped in to play a small part in filling the massive need for sustainable production of meals for vulnerable communities around the country, igniting a surplus-driven movement that will extend beyond COVID-19.

Chefs with Compassion was born in early April, shortly after the declaration of a state of disaster by President Ramaphosa, when NOSH Food Rescue's Hanneke van Linge, in collaboration with Thava Indian Restaurant in Norwood, began turning surplus rescued produce that would otherwise have gone to waste into flavoursome, nutritious curries and stews. According to *Food Loss and Waste: Facts and Futures*, South Africa produces around 31-million tonnes of food every year. Of that, 10-million tonnes is wasted, 44% of which is vegetables and fruits.

In its first week, what was to become known as Chefs with Compassion, consisting of three 'kitchens', produced 2 355 meals for nine beneficiary organisations.

Hanneke van Linge comments, "In our six years of operation, we've come to understand the vital role that the restaurant industry plays in our food systems. In a country like South Africa that is marked by both a high-calibre hospitality sector and extreme hunger, we have to find innovative ways to work together and find real solutions to our social plights. A project like Chefs with Compassion has long been part of our bigger picture and the current lockdown situation realised and scaled our pilot project with Chef Philippe Frydman and Thava Restaurant faster than we could ever have anticipated. We now have solid proof of concept: it is a powerful and efficient way to distribute delicious, nourishing food to where it is needed most."



As word spread via social media and the media, the concept of providing rescued produce to compassionate chefs and kitchens to cook up for Joburg's vulnerable communities took root. The opportunity to expand the movement into a national initiative was realised with the formation of an alliance between NOSH Food Rescue NPC, Slow Food International, the South African Chefs Association, Slow Food Chefs Alliance SA, and Strategic PR. Subsequently, Chefs with Compassion, a new Not for Profit Company, was formed.

By the first week of May, the number of beneficiary organisations had grown to 28, receiving 11 749 meals from nine kitchens. With the potential to increase the volume of rescued produce as a result of the hospitality industry being shut down, the opportunity for expansion was limited only by human resource – also in plentiful supply due to the lockdown – and a suitable facility to receive the incoming produce.

“It was at this point that the call went out for volunteers and a warehouse from which we could expand the operation. The response was overwhelming. Chefs all over the country extended their hands and their hearts to assist, and the HTA School of Culinary Art provided the space for Chefs with Compassion to grow. Generous funding was allocated by the South African Chefs Association to provide the boost needed, and in its fifth week, Chefs with Compassion grew production by 212,2%, from nine kitchens to 22, and from 11 749 meals to 36 681 meals in a single week. The restaurant pioneer who began the wave, Thava Indian Restaurant, is today producing 1 500 meals a day.

The concept behind Chefs with Compassion is a simple one – to rescue produce, provide it to compassionate chefs and kitchens, and connect them with beneficiary organisations. The logistics behind it are more complex and, with the need growing daily, requires the intervention of an expanding network of volunteers.

The journey starts with a team of passionate food waste warriors from NOSH Food Rescue, through their relationship with farmers, retailers and produce agents at the market, rescuing a portion of the produce which would otherwise have been discarded and destroyed at the market. From there it is transported to the warehouse, where another team of volunteers sorts the true waste from what can be utilised to feed people who would otherwise go hungry. Says van Linge, “The supply of rescued produce is, by nature, unpredictable and subject to demand by buyers and the discretion of the agents who provide us with the surplus. This means that, for example, last week we received close to 1 700 tonnes of lettuce. You'd be surprised what creative chefs can concoct out of a few lettuces.”

In Week 7 of Chefs with Compassion, between 18 and 24 May, 24 112 tonnes of rescued produce was sent to 30 kitchen hubs run by compassionate owners, where volunteer chefs produced 42 220 meals. Nothing goes to waste as any produce that can't be salvaged is given to pig farmers. And stories of compassion and success abound – in Week 6, Chefs Carol Osuigwe and Jeanette Maseko began cooking for beneficiaries in the East Rand, anticipating that they would prepare 300 meals per day each. Through their network of community kitchens and their own catering operations they have collectively managed to serve over 12 000 meals in the last two weeks.

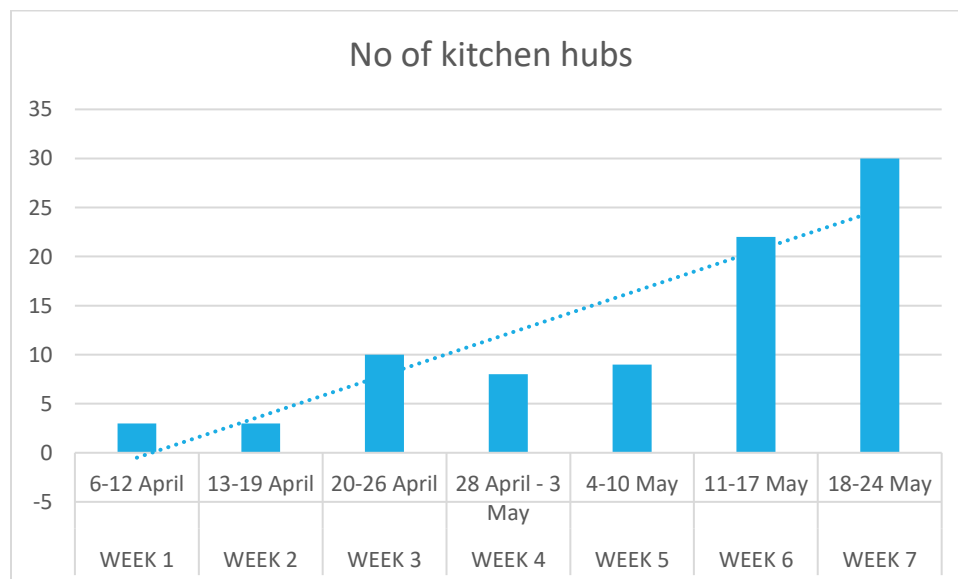
In Johannesburg, the chefs, kitchens and restaurants preparing meals as hubs in the Chefs with Compassion initiative are Alra Park Community Forum, Bizza's Liestyle, Bun's Out, Busisiwe – B TwalaB, Carol Osuigwe, Chef Mahlamola Thamae, Chef Pinky Maruping and Tebogo Ramatsui of Unilever Food Solutions, Chef Raynor Damons, Chef Citrum Khumalo, Disoufeng Pub, Ejardini, Hospitality Cares, Jackson's Real Food Market, Jeanette Osuigwe, Chef Lance Williamson, Love Me So, Love Me So, Perron, Saigon Suzy, Swiss Hotel School, Taste-Buds Cooking Club, Thathimvuyo Caterers, Thava Indian Restaurant, The Curry Boss, The Local Grill, The Noble, and V8 Roadhouse.

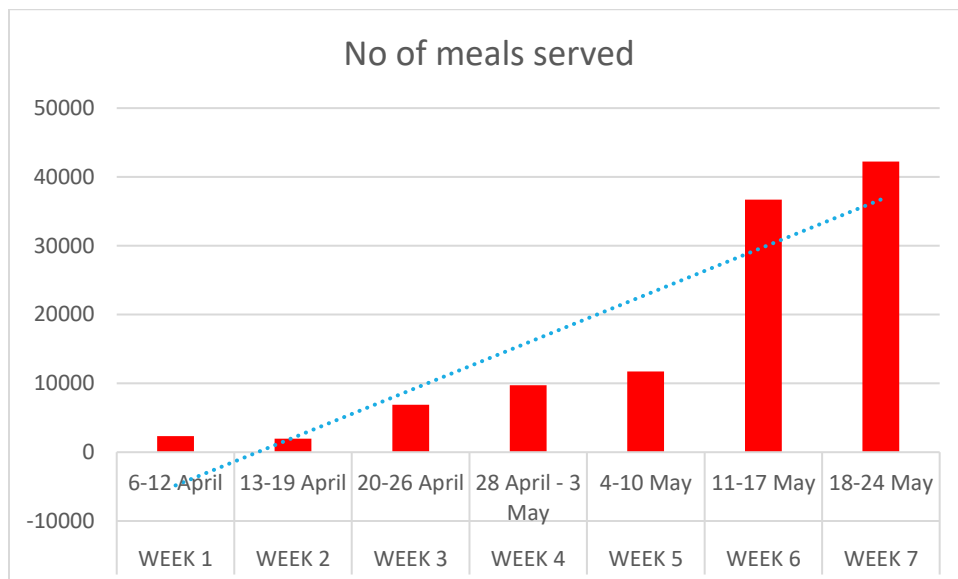
Next stop for Chefs with Compassion: Cape Town, Pretoria, Durban and Bloemfontein, followed shortly by Vereeniging, Makopane, Potchefstroom and Port Elizabeth. Says Coovashan Pillay, National Project Manager for Chefs with Compassion, "Our need in these areas is for food waste warriors to champion the rescue of produce from the markets and farmers, a warehouse facility where produce can be sorted and dispatched to kitchen hubs, and volunteers in the form of chefs to cook in the hubs and hands to fulfill the warehouse- and sorting functions."

Nationally, Chefs with Compassion's greatest need is for four-tonne trucks to transport the produce from the markets to the warehouses and to collection donations of staple ingredients. In Johannesburg alone, the cost for a vehicle to do the market run five days a week is around R5 000. "Our funding will quickly run out without the vehicles to make the entire chain work, and we're calling on logistics companies, truck rental companies, and suppliers who have vehicles that are currently not being used to assist us in ensuring the sustainability of this initiative," says Chef Co.

Donations can be made via Zapper or EFT and corporate donations qualify for a Section 18A certificate. For more information and to make a contribution go to www.chefswithcompassion.org.za, or email info@chefswithcompassion.org.za.

Chefs with Compassion by numbers





The impact on human lives

“Good evening 😊 today we served 108 elders at Soweto Old Age home and 56 at home ko Dube 😊❤️👉 thank you so much Disoufeng and Chefs with Compassion” – Heavenly Pearls, Soweto (meals prepared by Chef Tebogo of Disoufeng Pub)

“Shalom, thanx for nice meals. People are truly enjoying them and relieves them from questions like what am I going to eat!!! May God bless all our sponsors” – Pastor Allan, Be Blessed Christian Church (receiving meals from Carol Osuigwe)

“Good evening. Thank you Chef for the delicious meal. It received raving reviews by our customers 🍴🍴🍴” – Bongani, Sandwich Angels, Soweto (meals prepared by Chef Mahlamola Thamae)

“Kopano ya Dikereke tsa Mapostola leratong La Modimo le jesu kreste like to thank you and your team for everything (15 vegetable packs, 7 tray eggs, 3 box of muffins, 50 packs of food, 50 cups of soup with bread/scones. More than 500 people manage to get and 15 families manage to cook for two days. Our Organisation like to thank Chefs with Compassion for the food. Let's keep on doing good job. We have 12 churches under our organization. Under one umbrella. God bless us all.” Pastor Fusi Radebe, Daveyton (receiving meals from Carol Osuigwe)

“Service in Motion 🙌 says thank you to you, the Nosh Food Rescue NPC team, Chefs with Compassion and the Thava Indian Restaurant chefs for affording SIM the opportunity to feed today in Waterval Newlands Johannesburg on 26.5.2020 🇿🇦. SIM was able to feed 156 meals of veg with rice. Many children and adults enjoyed the tasty meal prepared. 🔥 It is awesome to share the blessing with the many hungry people on

this cold day. God bless the hard work and effort of everyone who is adding value to our people.” Service in Motion (receiving meals from Thava)

The chain of compassion



PICTURES (low resolution only)



Kopano ya Dikereke



Kopano ya Dikereke



Sandwich Angels



Sandwich Angels



Sandwich Angels



Be Blessed Christian Church



Service in Motion, Westbury



Gospel Truth Christian Family Church



Meal produced by Chef Mahlamola

...ENDS

ISSUED BY CHEFS WITH COMPASSION. FOR FURTHER INFORMATION PLEASE CONTACT VANESSA NAUDÉ ON 083 271 600 OR vanessa@chefswithcompassion.org.za

[About Chefs with Compassion](#)

Chefs with Compassion is a registered Not For Profit company, founded in 2020 in response to the humanitarian crisis brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic. It is an initiative based on a collaboration between organisations and individuals whose greatest wish is to alleviate the hunger and suffering of

South Africa, taking surplus rescued produce and connecting chefs, kitchens, beneficiaries and supporters in cities and towns around South Africa.

Chefs with Compassion's founding partners are NOSH Food Rescue NPC (NOSH), the South African Chefs Association (SA Chefs), Slow Food International, the Slow Food Chefs Alliance SA, and Strategic Public Relations.

Long after the COVID-19 crisis ends, Chefs with Compassion will continue its vision of transforming surplus rescued produce into nourishing meals through the compassion of chefs. The long-term vision underpinning Chefs with Compassion is to streamline and entrench the model so that it runs post-Corona and inspires other industries to follow suit.

[About NOSH Food Rescue NPC](#)

NOSH Food Rescue NPC (NOSH) is a non-profit social enterprise which aims to reduce food insecurity by diverting and repurposing prepared and perishable surplus food that is still wholesome and nutritious and redistributing it to a widening network of soup kitchens, shelters and feeding schemes. In our 6 years of operation, we've come to understand the vital role that the restaurant industry plays in our food systems. In a country like South Africa that is marked by both a high-calibre hospitality sector and extreme hunger, we have to find innovative ways to work together and find real solutions to our social plights

NOSH has provided over 50 000 meals to soup kitchens and feeding schemes over the past five years, and, through the Kitchens with Compassion initiative, provided over 31 000 meals to vulnerable communities in just five weeks since the start of lockdown.

[About SA Chefs Association](#)

SA Chefs is a non-profit industry body, founded more than 44 years ago, that represents the interests of chefs, cooks and caterers at all levels, with a focus on skills development, the celebration of culinary professionals and transforming the industry. SA Chefs aims to have a significant impact on the careers of the chefs with whom we share the knowledge that our members have acquired through international food promotions, competitions, workshops, educational conferences and various other learning experiences. To date we have over 9600 members that include catering and hotel company directors, restaurateurs, chefs, cooks, culinary educators, apprentices and trainees who can be found in every type of catering field.

[About Slow Food International and Slow Food Chefs Alliance SA](#)

Slow Food is a global, grassroots organization, founded in 1989 to prevent the disappearance of local food cultures and traditions, counteract the rise of fast life and combat people's dwindling interest in the food they eat, where it comes from and how our food choices affect the world around us.

Chefs Alliance South Africa is part of the international network of Chefs Alliance of Slow Food. Over one thousand active chefs from around the world form a network community of chefs cooking good, clean & fair food for all promoting biodiversity. The founding co-ordinator is Arnold Tanzer.

About Strategic PR

Strategic PR has been servicing the hospitality, food and beverage and tourism sector since the company was established in 2001.