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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**Community West Bank Awards \$150,000 Grant to FoodLink
for Tulare County's Food Entrepreneur Support Program to Help
Create a Resilient Local Food Economy**

Fresno, Calif. – November 24, 2025 – Community West Bank, in partnership with the Federal Home Loan Bank of San Francisco (FHLBank San Francisco), has awarded a \$150,000 AHEAD Program grant to FoodLink for Tulare County's Food Entrepreneur Support Program to empower small-scale food producers, home-based chefs and agricultural entrepreneurs to launch innovative food businesses.

FoodLink promotes equitable and dignified access to nutritious, healthy food, while addressing the root causes of hunger through education, advocacy and food systems change. The AHEAD grant will provide participants in FoodLink's Food Entrepreneur Support Program with food safety training, financial and business development advice, and access to commercial kitchen space where the entrepreneurs can create their products.

With this investment, FoodLink aims to help diverse entrepreneurs formalize their businesses and contribute to a resilient local food economy.

"We are thrilled to work with FoodLink for Tulare County to help local food businesses get their ventures off the ground and to get food to those experiencing lack of access to food," said James J. Kim, president and CEO of Community West Bank. "This partnership underscores our shared mission to cultivate a stronger small business ecosystem in Tulare County and to address food insecurity by expanding access to nutritious food for everyone."

"Thanks to this generous grant from Community West Bank and FHLBank San Francisco, local culinary entrepreneurs – particularly women and those from underrepresented groups – will get the skills and advice they need to navigate the food service business and grow their companies," said Andrea Kelly, executive director of FoodLink for Tulare County. "We're excited to put the funding to work to truly change lives."

The AHEAD Program empowers FHLBank San Francisco members, like Community West Bank, to provide critical funding for local programs and projects that directly address economic and social needs in low- to moderate-income communities.

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About Community West Bank

Community West Bank, headquartered in Fresno, has 26 locations in Central California serving communities from Greater Sacramento to Bakersfield and along the Central Coast. Committed to strengthening the communities it serves, the bank supports local businesses, nonprofits and residents through responsible lending, charitable giving and economic partnerships. Community West Bank has been part of the Exeter community for 23 years.

Visit communitywestbank.com for more information.

About FoodLink for Tulare County

FoodLink Tulare County aims to promote equitable and dignified access to nutritious, healthy food, while also addressing the root causes of hunger through education, advocacy and food systems change. FoodLink's Food Entrepreneur Support Program helps entrepreneurs formalize their businesses, increase income and contribute to a resilient local food economy.

Learn more at foodlinktc.org.

About the Federal Home Loan Bank of San Francisco

The Federal Home Loan Bank of San Francisco (FHLBank San Francisco) is a member-driven cooperative that helps lenders advance housing and economic development in Arizona, California and Nevada. Through programs like AHEAD, the bank invests in initiatives that promote financial stability and opportunity in underserved communities.

Learn more at fhlbsf.com.

Photo caption: Pictured left to right are Cassandra Phelps, FoodLink Development Director; Lee Johnson, Board Member and Co-President; Andrea Kelly, FoodLink Executive Director; Bridgette Bechtel-Board Member and Co-President; Stefani Woods, SVP Market Manager, Community West Bank; JR Delgadillo, VP Banking Center Manager, Community West Bank.