

Client: Redwood Empire Food Bank

## CAPITAL FUNDRAISING FOR A NEW FOOD DISTRIBUTION CENTER

The Redwood Empire Food Bank in Santa Rosa is the primary food procurement and distribution hub for Sonoma County north to the Oregon border. They serve more than 78,000 people each month, through a network of nearly 200 low income-serving organizations.

### The challenge

REFB's warehouse capacity was not sufficient to handle the demand for emergency and supplemental food assistance. They were especially unprepared to provide cold storage for the millions of pounds of fresh produce they procured each year.

Their \$7 million capital campaign for the purchase and retrofit of a new warehouse facility had been stalled at \$1.6 million for nearly two years before PRG came onto the scene.

### The solution

REFB reached out to PRG for two reasons. First was PRG's familiarity with food banks, having previously facilitated a merger between the San Francisco and Marin Food Banks. Second was its track record with capital campaigns in the North Bay and experience with campaigns that were struggling after launch.

PRG assessed the problem through a complete audit of previous campaign activity. The audit concluded that problems were three-fold:

- the campaign had lost focus by concentrating on more available but smaller contributions
- the fundraising talents of the Executive Director were not maximized
- the primary messaging needed to shift from a new warehouse to addressing hunger in the community

### The result

The campaign achieved its initial \$7M goal in less than 9 months, a new warehouse was purchased, and a Phase II campaign was launched that raised an additional \$2.5 million.

"Without Elliot Levin and his senior associate Andy Eber we would have never achieved our vision," said Bill Friedman, President of Friedman's Home Improvement and co-chair of the REFB Capital Campaign. "They helped guide us onto a viable path, then supported our efforts every step of the way. It was unbelievable that we not only met our initial goal but raised enough to create one of the most modern and effective food banks in the country."

To learn more about the Redwood Empire Food Bank visit [refb.org](http://refb.org).