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Plentiful Technology Acquired for New York City Enhancements and National Expansion

National Non-Profit HelpKitchen to Expand Food Access Through Digital Connection

NEW YORK, Feb. 23, 2023— Denver-based nonprofit HelpKitchen today announced the acquisition of Plentiful, a robust technology platform created by the New York City Food Assistance Collaborative to help pantries improve dignity and efficiency through digital tools for consumers and food providers. Since its launch in 2016, [Plentiful](#), co-owned and operated by City Harvest and United Way of New York City, has provided a reservation system for 576 pantries across New York City boroughs connecting more than 1.2 million unique users to available food. HelpKitchen also acquired and will maintain the Plentiful brand to build on the reputation and values New York communities have come to rely on.

“Few things are more important to our health and happiness than access to foods we need and love. Plentiful’s technology makes it easier for individuals to get what they need with efficiency and ease when food is limited or uncertain,” said **Catherine Compitello, a food systems expert and investor who co-founded HelpKitchen and will lead the new Plentiful organization as CEO.** “We’re thrilled to have the opportunity to build on Plentiful’s success, enhance service and access in New York City, and bring it to communities and neighbors nationwide.”

With the acquisition of Plentiful, the new ownership group intends to scale the reach and impact to individuals and families nationwide by building on the success of the platform through the integration of existing food access applications that put individuals and families at the center of the food ecosystem — a shift from the traditional models that center around food donors and funders. City Harvest and United Way of New York City will support new ownership as advisors to inform future enhancements and expansion alongside other key partners. Current pantry users will maintain licenses to use Plentiful free and uninterrupted to ensure the continued and long-term success in NYC. The Plentiful app will also remain free to individuals and families in New York City seeking to be connected to food providers.

“It was a great honor to work alongside the United Way for New York City team on developing and operating the Plentiful app,” said **Jilly Stephens, CEO of City Harvest.** “It has been wonderful to see Plentiful’s success, as it reduced wait times at our partner food pantries in New York City, facilitating more than 7.5 million visits and improving the experience of accessing free food for our fellow New Yorkers. We are thrilled to have found in HelpKitchen a like-minded organization to maintain Plentiful in New York City and expand it nationwide to help tens of millions of people across the country who are experiencing food insecurity access the food they need more efficiently and with greater dignity.”

"Our partnership to scale up the usage and impact of Plentiful on the lives of food-insecure New Yorkers has been immeasurable. With over one million unique users utilizing the app to connect with 576 pantries across the city, the next phase of Plentiful has the potential for growth and expansion that can impact pantry users beyond New York and beyond its current capabilities. That's why it was crucial for us to partner with an organization that embodies United Way of New York City's values and has the capacity to bring Plentiful to its full potential. HelpKitchen was the perfect match, as they share our commitment to providing dignified access to food for all New Yorkers in need," said **Grace Bonilla, President and CEO of United Way of New York City.**

HelpKitchen was founded in April of 2020 by Eric Ries, founder and CEO of the [Long-term Stock Exchange](#) and author of bestseller *The Lean Start-up*, as a response to the COVID-19 pandemic which put immense pressure on the food security system. HelpKitchen operates in San Francisco, Detroit, and Denver with the support of funders Jeff Lawson, co-founder and CEO of Twilio, and Erica Lawson.

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About City Harvest

City Harvest is New York's first and largest food rescue organization, helping to feed millions of New Yorkers who struggle to put meals on their tables. During our 40 years serving New Yorkers in need, we have rescued more than one billion pounds of fresh, nutritious food and delivered it—free of charge—to hundreds of food pantries, soup kitchens, community partners, and our own Mobile Markets® across the five boroughs. This year, we will rescue and distribute more than 75 million pounds of nutritious food to our neighbors in need. Named one of America's Top 100 Charities by *Forbes*, City Harvest works alongside our community partners to boost community capacity, expand nutrition education, and strengthen local food systems. Since our founding in 1982, City Harvest has always been there to feed our city—one day, one meal, one New Yorker at a time. To learn more, please visit cityharvest.org.

About United Way of New York City

For 85 years, United Way of New York City (UWNYC) has been at the forefront in the fight to ensure New Yorkers live with dignity no matter their zip code by taking on the toughest challenges and creating new solutions to old problems. We win by helping families shift from barely surviving to thriving. We unite by mobilizing the best ideas, relevant data, internal and external experts, and resources. UWNYC maximizes impact by coordinating and aligning service providers, companies, local government, and New Yorkers to help families eliminate barriers and gain the agency to improve their lives for the better. To learn more, visit [United Way of New York City's website](#).

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