

KEYS GETS ALMOST 10,000 POUNDS IN MEATS FROM CARGILL DONATION

By Jim McCarthy - April 1, 2020

Several local restaurants are stepping up to support the cause by offering meals to those who've been affected by closures from the coronavirus. On the mainland, a company that serves cruise ships with food is pitching in big time to feed the Keys.

At Mangrove Mike's Cafe in Islamorada, daily, midday meals for the Upper Keys community continue from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m., thanks to the many donations from the community. And just recently, Cargill's Miami facility pitched in to help feed the residents of the Keys through a donation of a whopping 9,888 pounds in meats — a \$60,000-80,000 value — to support the continuing meal drive.

How much food is that? Mike Forster, cafe owner who's running the daily meals outside his restaurant, said the eight pallets of meats, from chicken legs and pork tenderloins to turkey breasts and pork ham bones, is enough to feed the Keys for weeks.

So who helped make it all happen? His name is Mike Rempe. A former Cargill employee and a friend of Forster's who lives in Islamorada, Rempe knew the company had a large warehouse that supplies the cruise ship industry. And he knew how supportive they are of charitable organizations.

He ended up phoning Cargill to see what they were doing with all the meat now that cruise lines shut down. He got a rather quick answer.

"They put me in touch with the right people, and next thing I know, they gave me a list of meat to come pick up," Rempe said. "It was a super deal. I told all the guys how they were the stars in this whole deal."

“Our waitresses and bartenders and servers down here still aren’t making a living and don’t have any income,” he continued. “Mike (Forster) has been generous enough to open up a kitchen. That’s what the Keys are all about.”

Forster and Rempe picked up the pallets of meat items at the Port of Miami on Wednesday. All food donated by Cargill will assist in providing meals to residents not just in the Upper Keys, but also the whole island chain.



The truck is loaded with eight pallets of meats for shipment to the Keys. CONTRIBUTED

As a board member of the United Way, Forster said it’s easy for him to distribute to local food kitchens and charitable organizations.

“It’s a great thing how kind people and businesses have been through their donations,” Forster said. “This one from Cargill helps a lot, so now we can concentrate on to-go boxes and produce.”

For more information about the meal drive, visit mangrovemikesendeavors.com.



Upper Keys business providing meals
April 1, 2020



WE’RE THINKING OF YOU,
MIKE FORSTER
August 26, 2021



Free food at Brutus on Saturday
April 3, 2020

JIM MCCARTHY

Jim McCarthy believes in community reporting, giving back and life on the water. A workout fanatic, diver and a bogey-golfer, Jim loves chicken wings, Marvel movies and sports.

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