

The fresh food, donated by Florida's farmers, was distributed to local low income families, as well as Medicaid, SSI and food stamp recipients. Today's giveaway is part of a continuous statewide effort by Farm Share, to aid in the recovery, sorting, packing and distribution of nutritious fresh fruits and vegetables considered unsuitable for the retail market due to size or minor blemishes.

"This is a great opportunity to help families in need make their holiday brighter. Everyone should have the opportunity to enjoy a hot meal, and this effort today has made that possible for many families in our community," said Congressman Bilirakis. "I would like to thank the folks at Farm Share and Florida's farmers for their generosity and effort to make this event an overwhelming success."

He added, "I hope our efforts today help raise awareness about the need for greater food security year-round, not just during this special time of year." Upon his return to Washington, D.C. today, Congressman Bilirakis will vote in support of **H.R. 4220, the Federal Food Donation Act**, which would encourage the donation of excess food to non-profit organizations, like Farm Share, that provide food assistance to those in need.