



FEED THE  
HUMAN  
SPIRIT





**THANK YOU**

— Susannah Morgan, CEO

As I write this letter, my heart is hopeful. I have been a food banker for 22 years, and throughout this time the rates of hunger have risen and steadied and risen again—always trending toward more and more hunger. But this year, for the first time in my career, hunger in Oregon is decreasing. Let's celebrate! We are winning!

My heart is also determined. Even as I rejoice, I remember that nearly 13% of our neighbors in Oregon and Clark County, Washington still worry about feeding themselves and their families—and that the rate of hunger is still higher than it was before the Great Recession. Our lead on hunger is small and fragile.

My heart is also proud of the work the Oregon Food Bank Network has accomplished in partnership with donors like you.

This year, we opened the Columbia Gorge Food Bank in The Dalles and began the collaborative work of seeding new food assistance programs. Just one day after wildfires spread through Wasco and Sherman counties, we opened a new food pantry in Rufus, a tiny community located at the base of the John Day Dam, because hunger doesn't belong in rural Oregon either.

This year, our Screen and Intervene program—through which people visiting health clinics are screened for food insecurity—reached

350 clinics across Oregon and was adopted nationwide by the Veterans Health System. This year, fresh fruits and vegetables comprised 24% of all the food flowing through the Oregon Food Bank Network, much of which was distributed at outdoor Free Food Markets, allowing us to support some of the most vulnerable in our society.

My heart is yearning for the day when hunger is a distant memory—and I believe we will live to see that day. Why? Because we hold people experiencing hunger in the center of all we do. Because we acknowledge and collaborate despite differences—geographic differences, political differences, racial differences, linguistic differences. Because the Oregon Food Bank Network is unique and unmatched with 21 regional food banks and more than 1,200 partner programs serving our neighbors experiencing hunger.

But especially because Oregon Food Bank is only as powerful as the community that supports us—and our community is powerful beyond measure. Thank you for your passion, your commitment, your investment—and for believing with us that *no one should be hungry*.

Susannah Morgan



Chief Executive Officer







## 2017 was our biggest year yet

Together, we distributed 74 million pounds of food to 260,000 individuals accessing services each month and increased the amount of fresh produce we move by 84% compared to just five years ago. Here's some additional highlights we are proud to share with you.



**1.2 MILLION PEOPLE**  
were screened for food  
insecurity by their doctor



**7,446 SUPPORTERS**  
signed on to protect  
SNAP benefits



**2,974 PEOPLE**  
participated in our  
gardening and nutrition  
education classes



**40,000 VOLUNTEERS**  
donated 201,513  
hours of service





## Flor's story

“I came here the first time, to the food bank, in 2001,” says Flor. “I remember because that’s when my husband had the car accident and, at that time, he was the only person that worked.” Flor recalls she was pregnant and caring for a toddler at the time of the accident, and that’s when a neighbor suggested visiting the food bank. “That helped us a lot because that way we could use our money to go to the doctor.”

Her children are teenagers now, working and attending school, but she says it can be tough because of how much they eat! “And especially because their friends feel comfortable coming to my apartment and they expect that I am going to feed them all,” says Flor. She likes being able to

help her neighbors this way, many of whom are working mothers. She also likes giving back. Flor often volunteers at the food bank near her home.

“I just try to help my Latino community because I know a lot of people when they come here, they feel embarrassed,” she explains. “That’s why I try to help... because I received help before.”

Flor’s story is an example of how Oregon Food Bank is building community and nurturing people-centered food assistance, in which it doesn’t matter if you are on the giving or receiving side of the table. At the food bank, she says, “It feels like you have a really big family here in town.”



**“I help because  
I received help  
before.”**





## Free Food Markets offer a hand up

What's in a name? Quite a lot, as we discovered this year with the launch of our new Free Food Markets, which consolidated several existing community food programs under this new moniker. Our goal with Free Food Markets is to ensure that people have equitable access to the type of food assistance they need, when and where they need it—knitting together food distribution with opportunities for social inclusion and community building.

Our Free Food Markets allow us to provide food to Oregon's most vulnerable populations in areas where gaps in services leave underserved communities at high risk of hunger. The programs require very little infrastructure to operate and are open to all—think pop-up farmers market with plentiful fresh produce available to communities speaking Chinese, Spanish, Russian and a myriad of other languages.

Oregon Food Bank operated 34 Free Food Markets in the Portland Metro area alone this past year, and future locations will include Clackamas County, Welches/Mt. Hood and Damascus. Our target is to provide as much as 10 pounds of fresh produce per family member, as well as pantry staples that can transform produce into culturally appropriate meals—items such as rice, cooking oil and canned tomatoes.

We know that fresh produce is expensive and not always easily available, especially in rural communities and food deserts. As one Free Food Market attendee shares with us, “Sometimes people fall in the cracks and just need a hand up. I don't know what I'd do without this place.”



# Coming together in the kitchen

Even if you're the one stuck doing the dishes afterward, there is a deeply rooted comfort that comes with the daily ritual of gathering, preparing and consuming food. Since 1999, Oregon Food Bank has partnered with the national anti-hunger organization Share Our Strength and numerous community partners to implement hands-on cooking and nutrition education courses for more than 9,500 people using the Cooking Matters® curriculum. Sustained growth of the program over the years means we're now teaching Cooking Matters in 62% of the communities served by Oregon Food Bank and the Oregon Food Bank Network.

In just six weeks, participants learn critical skills that promote a healthy lifestyle: how to prepare food in your kitchen, what to buy at the grocery store, how to make nutritious choices for yourself

and your family. It's a wonderful opportunity for bonding and connections too. The course creates opportunities for social inclusion and social capital—for friendships to be forged.

"Bit by bit, the class is expanding my consciousness about food, cooking and life," says a recent participant. "The class has opened my eyes to other ways of thinking and doing things in the kitchen."

This past year, we established two remarkable new partnerships to bring this programming to vulnerable populations: the Hacienda Community Development Coalition, serving low income Latinx families; and the Imani Center, a program of Central City Concern that provides mental health and addiction treatment for African Americans.



**It's donors like you who bring confidence-building programs to communities across the state.**





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## Because I know what it’s like

A monthly sustaining donor since 2002, Norma Silliman volunteered with us for the first time this past spring. “I knew that Oregon Food Bank did a lot, but it wasn’t until I was there that I realized how much!” She was impressed with the cooking, gardening and nutrition classes, as well as the diverse support from individuals, farmers and the food industry.

In her work as a registered nurse, Norma trains care givers and home health aides for people who are elderly or disabled. “Being a nurse I see the long term effects of poverty and I understand why good nutrition is so important.”

Supporting the food bank is also personal for Norma. “I was brought up to believe that we are responsible for helping those around us,” she says. “Hunger and homelessness are priorities for me, so that’s where I give.” When her children were young, Norma went through a divorce and needed assistance to get by until she got back on her feet. “I know what it’s like to not know how you are going to support yourself and your family.”

Oregon Food Bank’s monthly sustainers donated an incredible \$1,364,521 during our last fiscal year. Thank you!



# Corporate volunteers make a big difference

Corporate volunteer groups gave more than 30,000 hours of their time to help repack food or work in our gardens this past year, and we couldn't be more grateful. Many of these important partners also support us by hosting food and fund drives or workplace giving programs.

First Tech Federal Credit Union's Riane Sherman, who has chalked up more than 440 volunteer hours with us over the last five years, tells us, "I give back because I love it." She adds, "We're all a community, and we have to take care of each other."



## Join our Legacy Circle

Ensure that you make a lasting impact on those struggling with hunger by building your family's legacy through a planned gift



to Oregon Food Bank. You can designate a percentage or specific dollar amount and revise at any time.

Contact Jill Beidler, Associate Director of Development at [503.439.1950](tel:503.439.1950) or [jbeidler@oregonfoodbank.org](mailto:jbeidler@oregonfoodbank.org) for bequest information or other options for including Oregon Food Bank in your estate plan.





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