

FOOD MATTERS!



SUMMER 2022



Angelica Cortes: Lived Experience Leading the Movement

Based in Portland, Angelica (she/her/hers) is a member of Oregon Food Bank's Policy Leadership Council, helping to determine the public policy changes needed to end hunger for good. Angelica is a true community leader. An organizer, volunteer and mentor, Angelica has helped her community access affordable, nutritious food and inspired countless others to organize together to eliminate the root causes of hunger for good.

Angelica was chosen as Oregon Food Bank's 2019 Hunger Hero for her work as a Growing Gardens Community Organizer and her health equity work in

Promotores de Salud. Now, on the Policy Leadership Council, Angelica is interested in continuing to advocate for undocumented immigrants and farmworkers, by advancing policies like No Worker Left Behind, which changed laws excluding undocumented workers from receiving tax benefits in Oregon. "I would like more support for [farmworkers]," she shares. "Because you know they are working, even when it is raining, cold or hot. Even during the wild-fires, they were always there. They are the forgotten ones, and they are the first to be ready to work."

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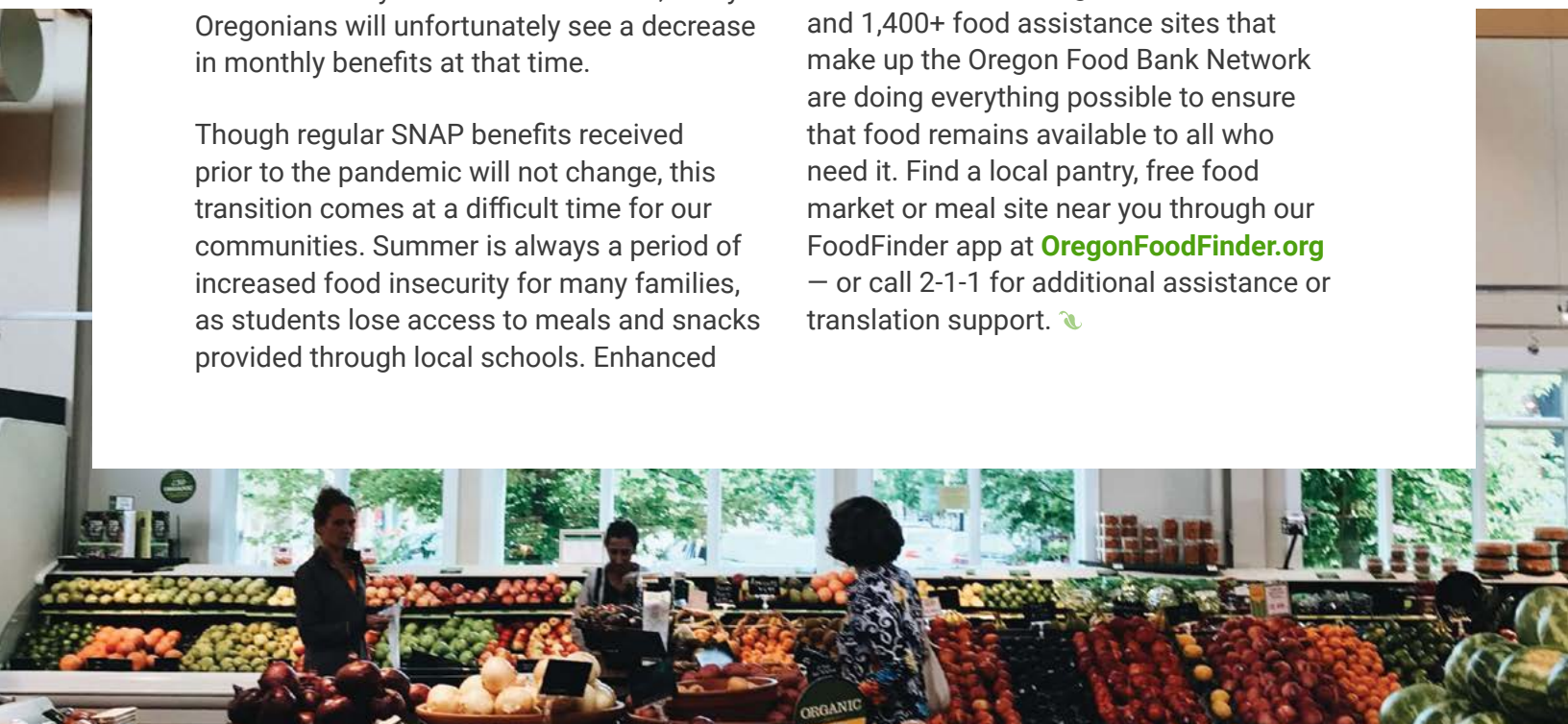
Upcoming Changes to SNAP's Emergency Allotments

In response to the pandemic, many people enrolled in the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (often called 'SNAP' or 'food stamps') received additional benefits each month, based on household size. When the COVID-19 state of emergency ends later this year, federal funding for these SNAP "emergency allotments" will also expire. These initiatives are extended on a month-to-month basis during emergencies, and while we don't yet know the final date, many Oregonians will unfortunately see a decrease in monthly benefits at that time.

Though regular SNAP benefits received prior to the pandemic will not change, this transition comes at a difficult time for our communities. Summer is always a period of increased food insecurity for many families, as students lose access to meals and snacks provided through local schools. Enhanced

SNAP and Pandemic EBT (P-EBT) benefits are incredibly important in filling this gap and preventing even greater rates of hunger here in Oregon and across the country — and we are preparing for an increase in demand for food assistance when these programs expire.

While we continue to advocate for longer-term investments in federal food assistance, the 21 Regional Food Banks and 1,400+ food assistance sites that make up the Oregon Food Bank Network are doing everything possible to ensure that food remains available to all who need it. Find a local pantry, free food market or meal site near you through our FoodFinder app at OregonFoodFinder.org — or call 2-1-1 for additional assistance or translation support. 🌱



[Continued from Front] Angelica's connection to Oregon Food Bank began in 2013 when she accessed a food pantry in Portland. From there, she started providing gardening classes through Growing Gardens for local Spanish-speaking families to grow their own food. She was also a founding member of Mano Amiga 2020, a Latine leaders group that distributes food twice a month in Southeast Portland.

"When I was sick, the community was with me. There was always food in my house, someone to clean my

house. And I think you don't get to pay for that with anything. It is something that you cultivate, and it is your harvest. So, I thought, if this was my harvest with the little I have done, well, if I do more, I can harvest more. And when others need a resource, they call me, and I am able to help them. It is something nourishing for me, to help the community and be with the community."

Read Angelica's full story and join the movement to end hunger at OregonFoodBank.org/Angelica 🌱

Solving Hunger ... Through Democracy

Food alone will not solve hunger. Yes, I know that might not be intuitive. After all, if you have enough food in your kitchen when you're hungry, you walk in and get some food — and then you aren't hungry.

But many of us don't have enough food in our kitchens. Some of us don't have kitchens, or electricity to run kitchen appliances.

This is my 26th year in food banking, and here is what I've learned: hunger — as a chronic condition — is not a physiological symptom. It is a symptom of poverty. We face hunger when we don't have enough money to pay for all our essential needs — food, housing, medicine and so on. And poverty itself is rooted in



systemic inequities such as racism (and that link is clear in the history books, from "redlining," to broken tribal treaties, to internment camps).

So we have to match the scale of our solutions to the size of the problem. We need to change the systems and inequities that perpetuate hunger and poverty.

This challenge doesn't discourage me; it excites me. Because we humans built those systems in the first place... and we humans can change them. And that's where democracy comes in — not a political party, but the concept of government by the people, for the people. Nearly two-thirds of people in our country will spend a year in poverty at some point in their lives. Half of all Americans will receive SNAP benefits (sometimes called 'food stamps') at some point in our lives. We the people know hunger and poverty because we the people have lived it.

Right now, we the people can work to build a tomorrow with no hunger by participating in our democracy. The primary elections recently narrowed down the field of candidates, and we can ask each one of them where they stand on important issues. We can share our own lived experiences to make sure they understand the impact of their positions and decisions. And each one of us can support leaders who share our vision of communities that never go hungry.

At Oregon Food Bank, we reached out to candidates running for Governor in Oregon. We asked them what they think about policies and investments that can have a meaningful, positive impact on hunger's root causes. We published the candidates' responses, in their own words, at OregonFoodBank.org/Governor. Please take a moment to check out this non-partisan resource and learn more about the candidates. And when your ballot arrives in the mail this fall, be sure to vote.

Hunger is absolutely on the ballot this year, so let's show up!

With love and hope,

Susannah Morgan
CEO, Oregon Food Bank



Celebrating **Volunteer** **Appreciation Week**

At Oregon Food Bank, we hold people experiencing hunger at the center of everything we do — and we are incredibly grateful for the countless ways our volunteer community shows up to help end hunger for good!

Over the past year, Oregon Food Bank volunteers:

- Supported over 10,000 community-based food distribution events
- Took action more than 7,000 times to advance anti-hunger policy change — helping to pass our entire 2022 legislative agenda
- Made real progress on many root causes of hunger identified by our community — from racial justice and immigrant rights, to housing and economic insecurity

We know there are many options to get involved in important issues and causes throughout Oregon and Southwest Washington. If you have volunteered with Oregon Food Bank, thank you for spending your time and energy ensuring everyone has access to the essential resources we need to thrive. Find the latest opportunities at

OregonFoodBank.org/Volunteer 🐌

Hunger on the Ballot

Right now, 1 in 5 Oregonians are experiencing food insecurity. Nearly a million of us are struggling to make ends meet — to keep food on the table while paying for rising childcare, housing and healthcare costs. The Oregon Food Bank Network of pantries, free food markets and meal sites continues to see incredibly high demand for emergency food assistance throughout the region, and we're doing everything possible to meet these challenges head-on.

That's why it's so important that hunger and its root causes remain as a top priority for our elected leaders. Many of the supports tied to the pandemic state of emergency will wind down in the coming weeks — and those who represent us at the local, state and national levels need to pay attention to the evolving needs of our communities.

Food insecurity affects people of all backgrounds and walks of life; in rural, urban and suburban communities alike. Yet we know that many in

our community face disproportionate hunger and poverty: Black, Indigenous and all People of Color (BIPOC), immigrants and refugees, trans and gender-nonconforming individuals, and single mothers and caregivers. We need our elected officials to prioritize policies and investments that address these disparities and help build resilient communities that never go hungry.

So now is the time to make our voices heard at town halls, in our calls and emails to government officials, and at the ballot box. We need to talk to our families, friends and neighbors to ensure we all show up in our own way to communicate the solutions our communities need.

There are so many ways to get involved, even for those of us who aren't eligible to vote in Oregon. Sign the pledge to get started:

OregonFoodBank.org/ElectionPledge 🐾



New Corporate and Community Recognition Programs Launch Soon

Thousands of Oregon Food Bank volunteers pass the recognition wall in our Portland Volunteer Action Center each year — and even more check out our Corporate Donor of the Month posts and profiles online. Now we're excited to celebrate these incredible corporate and community partnerships through two new recognition initiatives: "Change Makers" and "Community Cultivators". These new programs have been crafted with care, in alignment with our 10-Year Vision to build a new wave of community power.

The transformation of our recognition programs reflects our broader vision and values while centering the love, equity and community support that fuel our efforts to end hunger at its roots. This fresh approach is also more inclusive of the wide range of companies and organizations that support Oregon Food Bank's mission through a variety of activities — such as advocacy, volunteerism and other types of non-financial contributions. Recognition opportunities will also be more interactive.

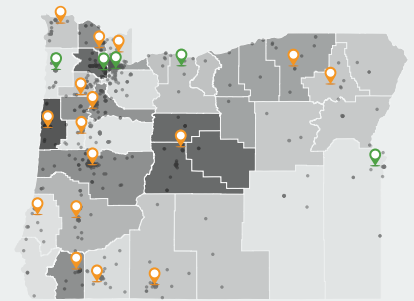
As our longtime partners at New Seasons Market observed, "The new recognition program is more relational — and truly embraces this paradigm shift that centers love and equity."

If you are interested in learning more about partnership and recognition opportunities, please don't hesitate to reach out to CCR@OregonFoodBank.org 🐾

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Food is Available to All Who Need It!



Our Network of 1,400+ pantries, free food markets and meal sites remains open throughout Oregon and Southwest Washington — with many locations now offering contactless pick-up or delivery options.

If you or someone you know needs support, know that resources are available. From SNAP benefits to housing assistance, program expansions and new initiatives are underway to support families who are struggling in the wake of COVID-19.

Find food assistance sites near you at OregonFoodFinder.org — now available in 14 languages common to the Pacific Northwest!



OregonFoodBank.org
503.282.0555



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