

FOOD MATTERS!

FALL 2020



Bringing Communities Together: Liban & RISEN

When Liban first arrived in the United States, he knew he wanted a career in community services. He learned of the Immigrant & Refugee Community Organization (IRCO), and was hired as a workforce specialist – helping refugees and immigrants connect to employment opportunities.

"I saw the need of people who have just arrived to the United States – the challenges they go through," said Liban.

After several years of working with IRCO, Liban realized there are still many community members unaware of the social services available to them: "I decided then, let me start a nonprofit organization."

Liban's organization, RISEN (Refugee, Immigrant, Social Engagement Networking) engages community members through workshops and networking. RISEN provides a host of services in the Swahili-speaking community, including resources on the 2020 census.

"We know a number of people, they thought census has nothing to do with them. Some of them have lived here for 20 years; they've never heard about [the] census," said Liban.

Liban is also one of Oregon Food Bank's Seed to Supper Garden Ambassadors, helping community members access local gardening spaces and teaching them how to grow their own food.

"With this gardening, it has brought a number of communities [together] and people are always interested to learn something new about the strategy of planting," said Liban.

"Oregon Food Bank has done a lot to make things much easier for the gardeners. We have interpreters... mentors... books translated into languages that we understand. So it's a lot... bringing the community together." Watch Liban's story: oregonfoodbank.org/liban 🌱

A Season of Action to End Hunger

Each September, anti-hunger activists across the country bring focused attention to the impact of food insecurity in our communities – and we all know that toll has been immense here in Oregon and Southwest Washington.



Unemployment is at its highest point since the Great Depression. We're approaching 30,000 confirmed cases of COVID-19.

The latest estimates show that food insecurity has doubled since the pandemic began – leading to a dramatic increase in need across our network of 1,400+ pantries and meal sites.

Thousands of families are experiencing food insecurity for the first time due to the pandemic. And for thousands more who have long suffered systemic oppression and pervasive inequities – single parents and caregivers, people of color, immigrants and refugees, and our trans and gender-nonconforming neighbors – the barriers to health and well-being have gotten even worse.

After years of serious progress, hunger's reach is now widening and deepening.

It would be easy to get dispirited, it really would. But strong community support and longtime partnerships have ensured that doesn't happen – not for one minute.

In fact, our community has come together in new and inspirational ways to meet this public health and economic crisis head-on. Our neighbors are joining the call for systemic change – making their voices heard not just on the vital food assistance needed today, but for the long-term investments and policy changes we know are so critical to thriving communities.

That's where Hunger Action Month comes in – and why your pledge to #VoteOutHunger is so important. Throughout September and beyond, we're shining a spotlight on the policies, systems and decision-makers that drive hunger and poverty. Because our decades of on-the-ground experience tell us that we can't end hunger if we don't address its root causes. We won't emerge stronger from this crisis if we don't forward policies that ensure all of us have the opportunity to earn a living, access to quality healthcare and education, and live in housing that's safe and affordable.

So I hope you'll take the first step and sign our pledge today at oregonfoodbank.org/voteouthunger. We'll connect you with plenty of options to get involved at share with fellow anti-hunger activists.

From the bottom of my heart, thank you for being part of our community. 🌱

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Susannah Morgan".

Susannah Morgan
CEO, Oregon Food Bank

September is Hunger Action Month

Hunger Action Month is a nationwide effort to mobilize supporters to volunteer, donate and make their voices heard in the fight to end hunger. And with food insecurity doubling in Oregon since the pandemic began, the actions we take throughout September take on even greater importance at the state and local level.



This public health and economic crisis serves as a constant reminder that policy decisions matter; program investments matter; the priorities of our elected leaders matter. With a million or more families facing income loss in COVID's wake, we know that today's emergency food assistance isn't enough to solve deep-rooted, systemic challenges that perpetuate hunger.

So we urge anyone and everyone who believes in anti-hunger efforts to get involved throughout Hunger Action Month and beyond. With an historic election ahead of us that will present many critical issues on the ballot, it is incredibly important that we all pledge to #VoteOutHunger.

Together, we'll not only continue to help people throughout Oregon and Southwest Washington access nutritious food today – we'll build the community power that is needed to dismantle systems and policies that drive hunger and poverty.

Get started by signing the pledge at oregonfoodbank.org/hungeractionmonth 🐦



Businesses Can Influence Public Policies!

Oregon Food Bank is partnering with local businesses to end hunger through advocacy and civic engagement activities. Together, we will be a powerful voice to influence public policies that affect our communities. Contact Yan Medice, Assistant Manager of Corporate and Community Relations, to learn more and join us! YMedice@oregonfoodbank.org or 503-853-8734.



Vote
out hunger
oregonfoodbank.org/voteouthunger

Key Issues to #VoteOutHunger this Fall

Poverty is the single biggest driver of hunger. When people earn a living wage, have access to affordable housing, healthcare and education, and no longer face the barriers of systemic discrimination, we are better equipped to buy healthy and nutritious food. We can emerge stronger together – and end hunger for good – by addressing the root causes of food insecurity and poverty. Join the effort to #VoteOutHunger by keeping these core issues in mind at the ballot box.

Support Education to End Hunger	Invest in Health to End Hunger	End Systemic Racism to End Hunger	Strengthen Communities to End Hunger
Access to a quality education lifts people out of poverty. When we invest in schools, we strengthen families across generations and build community power.	We can end hunger by investing in the health of our communities. All Oregonians should have access to nutritious food that supports our overall health.	By removing longstanding discriminatory policies and structures, we can help ensure that people of color do not face such disproportionate rates of hunger and poverty.	Access to affordable housing, transportation and other public resources strengthen communities, so that people don't have to make impossible choices.

Help #VoteOutHunger this fall and beyond. Sign and return the enclosed pledge today – and learn more about upcoming ballot initiatives at oregonfoodbank.org/voteouthunger. 🌱

Register to Vote – There's So Much at Stake!

Your vote this November can help decide the future of crucial programs like the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), how many kids get school meals, and whether ending hunger and poverty is a priority for lawmakers.

✓ **Register to vote at:**

feedingamerica.org/votetoendhunger
feedingamerica.org/votacontraelhambre

✓ **Think you're already registered?**

Triple-check at feedingamerica.org/check-your-voter-registration

✓ **Every vote matters!**

Remember, there is power in numbers. When we vote and get our families, friends and neighbors to vote, we can have a huge impact.

✓ **Don't let others decide for you!**

When we don't vote, we let others decide what issues matter. Our communities widely support critical investments in food security, affordable housing, quality healthcare and education, and more. But too many of us don't turn out to make our voices heard at the ballot box.

✓ **Send a message!**

High voter turnout sends a message to our elected leaders. It's our best way to hold them accountable to our communities' priorities.



✓ **Honor our history and our right to vote!**

Voting is one of our most important rights as citizens. As long as this country has existed, many people have had to fight for the right to vote. Even today, there are efforts underway to bar people from participating in the democratic process. So it's incredibly important that we all make our voices heard!

✓ **Can't vote in Oregon?**

There are so many important ways to get involved in the fight to end hunger and its root causes. Find opportunities for action at oregonfoodbank.org/voteouthunger. 🐦

Join us Virtually on October 17!

It's no secret that we are living in challenging times. With one in five Oregonians out of work and COVID cases on the rise, food insecurity has doubled throughout the region. Our communities face the worst hunger in at least a generation, and we expect the crisis to continue for a year or more.

Despite all of the unknowns, our community has come together in amazing ways to meet evolving needs. As we meet virtually for this year's Oregon Harvest Dinner, we invite you to join us and hear stories of impact from across the state during this incredible time – and recognize this year's Hunger Hero honoree. Though there is no cost to attend, there will be opportunities to support Oregon Food Bank's ongoing work, including an online raffle and auction.



Learn more and RSVP today: oregonfoodbank.org/harvestdinner

Thank You for Your Support!



New donors have helped to increase the amount of food that can reach our communities, including **CVS Health**, whose contribution brought as many as 75,000 meals to our neighbors.



Nike employees generously supported COVID-19 relief and Nike responded to the crisis by doubling its company match. Much appreciation for the Nike community!



Thanks to **Safeway Albertsons** for its support of the KGW Great Food Drive, where the community raised nearly \$600,000 to fight hunger!

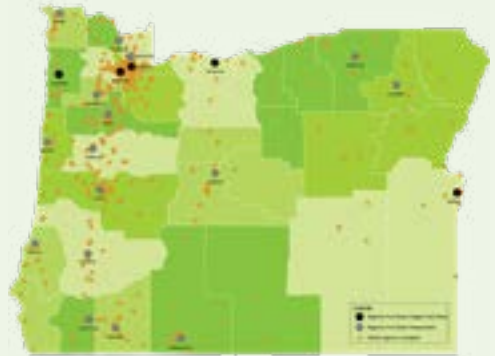


Support from **Tillamook County Creamery Association and Family Care Health** provided nutritious food to hard-hit communities, and helped ensure we all emerge stronger from this health pandemic.

Deep appreciation for **The Collins Foundation, Maybelle Clark Macdonald Fund, M.J. Murdock Charitable Trust, and The Oregon Community Recovery Fund** who demonstrated extraordinary generosity and moral leadership in response to COVID-19.



Food Is Available To All Who Need It!



Our Network of 1,400+ pantries 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 11 languages common to the Pacific Northwest!



oregonfoodbank.org | 503.282.0555



@oregonfoodbank