



2021 IMPACT REPORT





The Best in Us

As I write this, more than 600,000 people in America have died due to COVID-19 — and the number facing hunger and poverty has grown by tens of millions. In 2020, the Oregon Food Bank Network saw nearly double the amount of people who sought assistance in 2019. And communities who have experienced disproportionate rates of hunger for decades have been hit especially hard — people of color, immigrants and refugees, trans and gender nonconforming communities and single moms and caregivers.

And yet, in many ways, this pandemic has brought out the best in us. In the midst of a massive public health and economic disaster, our community acted with and for one another. Staff and volunteers across 21 regional food banks and 1,400 food assistance sites kept food flowing to those of us facing hunger. The outpouring of community generosity through time, money and energy has been nothing short of phenomenal. We have cared for each other in large and small ways — and we have uncovered new power to drive collective change.

Even during the worst crisis of my lifetime, we made meaningful progress toward resilient communities that never go hungry. We advanced legislative changes that will improve the lives of millions of people in Oregon and across the country: a permanent increase in Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits; expansion of the federal Child Tax Credit; major

state investments in food and housing security; and a more inclusive Oregon for immigrant and refugee communities.

Internally, we recommitted our organization to the pursuit of equity and racial justice in all we do. We launched a Policy Leadership Council, made up entirely of community leaders with lived experience of hunger and its root causes, to lead our work in identifying and removing barriers to prosperity for all. And we raised our organizational minimum wage to \$21.50, so that no one who works here will ever have to make the impossible choice between food and other essentials.

This is the best in us — and there is so much more we can do together. With the challenges and opportunities ahead, there's no time to rest. If we continue as we have begun, I know that we will #EmergeStronger together.

With love and respect,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Susannah Morgan', with a long, sweeping horizontal line extending to the right.

Susannah Morgan, CEO

COVID-19 Escalates Food Insecurity

At Oregon Food Bank, we envision resilient communities that never know hunger — communities that have representative decision-making structures and that maintain strong safety nets. And we envision communities that are well positioned to overcome threats to our people's health, well-being and capacity to contribute to the common good.

It is no secret that together we've faced enormous, converging challenges over the past year. Yet we are proud of the resilience, resourcefulness and creativity of our community. Your support allowed us to remain responsive and reliable in meeting evolving community needs and creating profound, transformative change for people experiencing food insecurity.

In the pandemic's wake, thousands of families faced food insecurity for the first time, with no prior knowledge of emergency food assistance or government benefits like SNAP and Women, Infants and Children (WIC). Thousands more had long faced systemic challenges that drive hunger and poverty. The pandemic compounded all of these struggles, creating wider gaps between household incomes and essential needs. Making matters worse, nearly 70,000 essential workers were ineligible for enhanced benefits included in federal relief packages.

At its peak, nearly 1.7 million community members sought food assistance through the Oregon Food Bank Network — double what we saw in the prior year.

Alongside our community, we commit to navigating the many challenges of natural disasters layered on top of the ongoing pandemic — from radical operational shifts to keep food flowing, to our efforts to ensure the health and safety of staff, partners and the broader foodstream. Over the past year Oregon Food Bank leaned into flexibility, innovation and adaptation in response to the ongoing pandemic, wildfires and national momentum to bring about racial justice and transformational change.

Pandemic Response

Pandemic Innovation in Food Distribution

Public health restrictions and logistical challenges required an entirely new approach to many of our food sourcing and distribution strategies. We piloted new distributions for partner agencies that lack refrigeration — increasing high-volume access to fresh produce, dairy and other perishable, nutrient-dense products. To limit exposure among OFB and partner-organization staff, we closed our central docks and transitioned to a direct delivery model for partner agencies.

Oregon Food Bank has maintained a presence and key leadership role in support of the Office of Emergency Management's Emergency Service Functions in partnership with Department of Human Services (DHS), the virtual Emergency

Command Center and State Feeding Taskforce. Through ingenuity, hard work and care for our community, we have maintained critical services through supply chain disruptions, public health challenges and extended wildfires and natural disasters.

And with your support, Oregon Food Bank also tended to our partners with guidance, funding and infrastructure support. Our newly-launched Network Equity & Racial Justice team helps ensure the vitality of the anti-hunger movement's ecosystem throughout our region. For example, in the past year, we increased our grantmaking to exceed \$800,000 for organizations led by and rooted within Black, Indigenous and other communities of color — along with \$150,000 in financial relief for essential immigrant and migrant workers through the Oregon Worker Relief Fund.



Pandemic Response (continued)

Ambassador Program

Oregon Food Bank's Ambassador program has expanded from a sole focus on garden-based programming to more holistic engagement in our systemic approach to ending hunger. In the past year alone, this effort has grown to encompass leadership development, organizing and civic engagement in the Congolese, East African, Karen, Palauan and Slavic communities. And many Ambassadors are now forming their own nonprofit organizations with formalized programming, from urban farming education to community-led farmers markets.



One of the outstanding Ambassadors in this year's cohort is Ner Moo, who works with fellow members of the Karen community, an ethnic group whose homeland is near the Thailand-Myanmar border. Like so many of his neighbors, Ner Moo's family are refugees who fled ethnic violence in their home countries. He's seen first-hand the positive impact local gardening and farming efforts can bring to a vulnerable community — leading a group that grows white eggplants, basil, water spinach and other culturally-relevant produce and herbs that were sourced from their home countries with Oregon Food Bank's support. Each month, their harvest forms the foundation of an incredible Free Food Market that

serves our local Karen community and beyond. And the farm will soon expand to an even larger plot of land in Boring, OR, with support from our friends at Outgrowing Hunger.

Community-led efforts like these are supported by a transformation of Oregon Food Bank's approach to philanthropy. We know our drive toward resilient, hunger-free communities is bigger than any one organization or initiative — and that the most effective solutions come from impacted communities. We hope you'll join us in strengthening regional food systems by supporting local organizations and leaders at the forefront of the anti-hunger movement!

By The Numbers

65,065 SUPPORTERS

donated financially, including 25,998 new supporters



281,000+ COMMUNITY

MEMBERS found resources in 14 languages via FoodFinder



52.5 MILLION MEALS

shared across our Network



6,000 GROCERY GIFT

CARDS distributed in BIPOC and immigrant communities



51% OF ALL FOOD

distributed as fresh or frozen produce, dairy and protein



7,000+ ACTIONS

to advance anti-hunger policy and systems change



10,350 VOLUNTEER

SHIFTS supported central food distribution efforts



\$350,000 DIRECTED

to wildfire recovery efforts





COVID-19 Puts Systemic Inequities on Full Display

The pandemic has shown us all how closely our health and well-being is tied to one another. Yet the disproportionate impact of COVID-19 among Black, Indigenous and all People of Color cannot be denied. Even before the pandemic, food insecurity among Black and Indigenous households was more than double the rate of white households in Oregon. Latinx families were three times as likely to face hunger than other families.

Black and Latinx workers are also more likely to serve in front-line essential roles, putting them at greater risk of exposure to the virus. And they are more likely to experience severe symptoms and hospitalization due to higher rates of underlying conditions that stem from generations of unequal access to healthcare and pervasive inequities in employment, housing and education.

These disparities leave too many of our neighbors vulnerable to poverty, illness and hunger. Which is why – in the midst of an ongoing pandemic – millions of people are taking to the streets, speaking out in the halls of power and turning out in massive numbers at the ballot box to demand justice.

Oregon Food Bank is proud to share a common vision with the many voices demanding that our communities be free from injustice, violence, poverty and hunger.

Systemic discrimination and oppression drive poverty, and poverty is the single biggest driver of hunger. When we are able to earn a living wage and access affordable housing and healthcare, we're far better equipped to buy fresh and nutritious food.

Yet there's no shortage of harmful policies and systems in place that create barriers to accessing these essential resources. As a result, serious disparities can be found across the board – especially in health, nutrition and economic outcomes. That's why racial justice work is food justice work – because the systemic inequities that continue to widen the racial divide are also the root causes of hunger.

Your support helps us meet both the rising need for food assistance today and advocate for the kind of systemic change we need to end hunger for good. We will emerge stronger when we address hunger together, as a community.

Emerging Stronger Together

Connecting Communities to Food and Resources

In the midst of supply chain disruptions, concerns about shutdowns and shifting regulations, we kept food moving to hard-hit communities throughout the state. Oregon Food Bank achieved the ambitious goal of connecting area families with more than 52.5 million meals worth of food — 63 million pounds in all — with a focus on sourcing food from local farmers, manufacturers and distributors.

Double Up Food Bucks (DUFb) doubles the value of SNAP benefits at farmers' markets, grocery stores and farms offering Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) shares so shoppers can bring home more fresh fruits and vegetables. Through the expansion of Double Up Food Bucks and distribution of Grocery Gift Cards, we increased the purchasing power of food insecure households by over \$1,250,000. In addition to promoting agency and choice by supporting families in purchasing culturally and dietarily relevant foods, these programs also support regional economies — investing resources in local grocery stores and farms at a time when food systems across the state struggled.

At the same time, we are partnering with 58 culturally-specific and -responsive organizations to direct more than \$800,000 toward community-led solutions to hunger.

Among our partners in 2020-21:

- African Gardens Food Access project
- ARISE and Shine
- Beyond Black CDC
- Black Food Sovereignty Coalition
- Black Mental Health Oregon
- Black Parent Initiative
- CAMPO
- Causa Oregon
- Centro Cultural
- Centro Latino Americano
- Community Connection of Northeast Oregon
- Don't Shoot PDX
- Evulacree
- Food Roots
- Four Rivers Welcome Center
- Immigrant Mutual Aid — Clackamas
- Kairos PDX
- Living Islands Non-profit
- New Hope Day Shelter
- Next Door, Inc.
- Oregon Karen Association
- Oregon Rural Action
- Portland African American Leadership Forum
- RISEN Community
- Rural Organizing Project
- Southern Oregon Coalition for Racial Equity
- The Love Coalition
- Todos Juntos
- Urban League of Portland
- Utopia PDX



Oregon Food Bank is organizing and moving communities into action toward more just and resilient food systems. By investing in solutions identified and implemented by our communities, we're improving access to healthy, culturally-relevant foods for all people.

Emerging Stronger Together (continued)

Expanding Access to Fresh Produce

Over the past year, we've reached a significantly greater number of Double Up Food Bucks shoppers through continued expansion to new farmers markets and grocery stores — including culturally-specific grocers and rural retailers located within areas of low food access. Our 17 new grocery partners alone doubled the buying power for fresh produce across more than 34,000 transactions.

We are particularly excited about the launch of DUFB at several new stores — from culturally-specific stores with high SNAP redemption like Portland's Fubonn International Market, to Chester's Markets in John Day, where the program has grown steadily each month. A new DUFB Ambassador program will support outreach to identify and address barriers to DUFB and SNAP. And Oregon Food Bank is working to expand the Double Up Food Bucks program to more than two dozen stores across 15 counties, with a focus on culturally-specific stores and rural retailers serving populations within areas of low food access.

"Double Up Food Bucks has made healthy organic foods more accessible to me and is a wonderful way to enable people with low incomes to have the right to healthy foods. Health should not be reserved for the wealthy but something cultivated and celebrated by all!"

Astoria shopper

Community Food Systems That Sustain us all

Oregon Food Bank works in partnership with organizations and leaders throughout Oregon and Southwest Washington to build food systems that sustain everyone in our communities — from farmers and farmworkers, to grocery stores and their employees, to end consumers.

Alongside countless partners, our efforts strive toward food justice through programs that support beginning farmers of color, immigrant and refugee community leadership, partnering



with BIPOC, immigrant, refugee, trans and gender nonconforming and single mothers and caregiver farmers to provide food to their communities, and community action statewide.

Among these inspiring partnerships is Mudbone Grown's work to establish the Feed'em Freedom Foundation — a nonprofit with a mission to ignite and center Black Agriculturists to participate as owners and movement leaders in agriculture, land stewardship, regional food security and economic prosperity. Oregon Food Bank is supporting the foundation's effort to establish a food center to provide agricultural training, youth leadership development, economic development opportunities and an on-site food pantry for Black Oregonians.

In 2021, we launched a pilot called the Community Grower Support Fund. This program contracts with BIPOC, immigrant, refugee, trans and gender nonconforming and single mother and caregiver growers to provide locally grown food to communities impacted by hunger. The initiative funds land, inputs and infrastructure across 20 community projects — paying growers up front for food they then distribute to community members impacted by hunger. We work with growers who have established distribution outlets within their communities, and help to connect new growers to local food pantries, free food markets and community organizations. This effort builds on the successes of our Pathways to Farming program, which has helped to launch 15 new BIPOC-led farm businesses in recent years.

Food, Education and Agriculture Solutions Together (FEAST)

FEAST is a community organizing process that allows participants to build a healthier, more equitable and more resilient local food system through informed and facilitated discussions and action plans. Our Union County FEAST Leadership Team is an impressive collection of organizers, farmers, service providers, healthcare workers and leaders from a number of organizations in the Pacific Islander community. Following a large virtual gathering, the FEAST team held one-on-one meetings with each participant to discuss and fund specific project plans. The virtual pivot allowed for stronger personal connections that fostered a host of new partnerships around longer-term projects. Just one example: members of La Grande's Pacific Islander community are now working with local farmers to grow and distribute culturally relevant foods like taro root.

Morrow and Umatilla County FEAST events focused on bringing together Latinx community members to discuss solutions to gaps in the local food system. Through monthly facilitated meetings, local leaders held virtual events in English and Spanish to connect community members to available resources such as WIC, local food pantries, cooking classes and more. Latinx parents were particularly interested in the inclusion of more culturally relevant foods on school lunch menus, which is now a key focus for local FEAST organizers and community leaders for the coming year.

Building A Movement

Community Action to Advance Anti-Hunger Policies

Oregon Food Bank is proud to support one of the largest food assistance networks in the country, made up of 21 regional food banks and more than 1,400 pantries, markets and meal sites. Even with this scale, we know we can't end hunger for good through emergency food assistance alone. We need true, systemic change to address hunger at its roots.



That's why we advocate for anti-hunger policies and investments at all levels of government. In September, we formally launched our Policy Leadership Council as a key step in shortening the distance between people who experience food insecurity and the decisions that affect us. The Council is made up entirely of community leaders who also have lived experience of food insecurity, systemic racism, gender oppression and other systemic inequities. Collectively, their leadership advances Oregon Food Bank's 10-year vision and belief that the strongest solutions to food insecurity come from community expertise.

Representing urban, rural and suburban communities from Astoria to Umatilla, Eugene to Grande Ronde, Policy Leadership Council members bring an incredible depth of local leadership and experience to the food bank's mission to end hunger and its root causes. Together, they'll determine Oregon Food Bank's grassroots advocacy agenda by identifying the policies and systems that drive hunger and poverty in our communities.

"Enacting a Policy Leadership Council that's not only Black, Indigenous and People of Color — but people from all walks of life — that have experienced some sort of oppression is so important. It brings our unique lenses into enacting policy changes that have an impact at the statewide or local levels."

Yaneli Hernandez-Tapia, she/her/hers | Salem

Establishing Year-Round Civic Engagement Initiatives

Through year round civic engagement, Oregon Food Bank is building a base of individuals and organizational partners that are cultivating a movement for racial, gender and economic justice across the state.

In spite of pandemic-spurred limitations, Oregon Food Bank engaged in a significant effort to promote participation in the 2020 Census — then built upon that foundation to establish an effective #EmergeStronger outreach program through the 2020 elections. Coalition efforts contributed to winning a new congressional seat in Oregon and helped to deliver victories in seven of eight endorsed ballot measures — including major investments in early childhood education, mental health services, public safety and police reform and other key resources that help communities thrive.

Combined, these victories will provide benefits and reduce barriers for individuals and families likely to experience food insecurity, and advance equity for Black, Indigenous and all People of Color.

“The system isn’t made for us; it’s made to exploit us as People of Color. How do we engage in the system, but also address the inequity in the system? It’s important to assess what causes the metaphorical fires for families and think bigger-scale — like policy change — in order to meet the needs of the community, especially those who have been marginalized for so long.”

Andrea Gonzalez, she/her/ella | Astoria





“Our communities need to make informed decisions. As leaders, we need to inform and promote political education.”

Liban Satu, ORCACL

Strengthening Community Partnerships

Through phone conversations, text banks, virtual gatherings and more, **over 5,600 community members engaged in 1-on-1 conversations** about the voting process and anti-hunger issues on the ballot. Combined, our broader civic engagement efforts were accessed more than 5.6 million times across email, social media, advertising and the our #VoteOutHunger action hub.

Importantly, the majority of person-to-person engagement was led by leaders in the Latinx, African and Karen communities. Just one example: for several years, we have partnered with Oregon Coalition of African Community Leaders (ORCACL), which includes immigrants and refugees from various regions in Africa. Together, we organized online community discussions about anti-hunger ballot measures — including dozens of new leaders recruited specifically to engage in the policy change efforts. We then worked to identify eligible voters in leaders’ communities and supported outreach, registration and turnout efforts.

Building A Movement (continued)

Advancing Our #EmergeStronger Legislative Agenda

Building off multiple 2020 ballot measure victories, we turned our focus to the 2021 legislative session as a critical next step in lifting community leaders and advancing the policies and investments to help our communities #EmergeStronger. Throughout the session, we remained focused on increasing food security; advancing economic, racial and immigrant justice; and ensuring that the state invests in relief for those who have been disproportionately impacted by the pandemic.

With many supporters no longer able to participate in on-site volunteer shifts due to COVID-19 precautions, we launched integrated phone- and text-banks as opportunities to contribute in an ongoing and meaningful way. This new corps of activists significantly increased our capacity to personally communicate with fellow supporters throughout the state. As a result, more than 2,500 OFB community members — from 132 cities and towns across all 36 counties — took action in support of policies that help to eliminate hunger and its root causes. Every State Representative and Senator heard support for the Oregon Food Bank legislative agenda from constituents in their districts.

“I am a worker who pays her taxes and I do not have the right to benefit from the Earned Income tax credit (EITC). During these excruciating times with the pandemic I am unable to receive benefits such as food stamps or health insurance. If HB 2819 is approved many families in the state — and me personally — would benefit greatly. In my case, I would not have to work two jobs to meet basic needs such as rent, electricity, healthy food and medical expenses....All workers, no matter their place of origin, should be able to earn enough to support their families and lead healthy and comfortable lives.”

**Areceli C, Latinx Leadership Group member,
testifying in support of the Leave No Worker Behind Act**

How You Can Get Involved

Our vision for resilient communities that never know hunger is only possible through the strength of our community partnerships. There are many ways for you to get involved in the fight to end hunger for good!

BECOME A PARTNER

Corporate & Organization Partners

Engaged, socially-responsible corporate and organization partners are key to ending hunger and hunger's root causes. We seek values-aligned collaborators that share our vision.

Food Industry Partners

The majority of the food we distribute comes through the generosity of our incredible partners in the food industry – from local growers, packers, retailers, manufacturers and more. We seek food industry partners that are looking for innovative ways to make their product or expertise stretch further to help the communities we live and work in. Our food resource developers ensure that the fruits of your labor support area families in need of food assistance, rather than being wasted.

Community Partners

Throughout the region, we work with a wide variety of community partners to advance our mission of eliminating hunger and its root causes. From running food pantries and free food markets, to supporting local BIPOC farmers, to grassroots organizing around anti-hunger policies, we are honored to work with so many passionate and committed individuals and organizations.

“As a child there were days when we had no or very little food in the house. We always got through it, but it is something I have never forgotten... I donate to the Oregon Food Bank because I don't want others to have this, and I feel incredibly thankful that I have the means to do this.”

Dolores, Monthly Sustainer



VOLUNTEER

Volunteer to support the nearly 1 in 5 community members who have faced hunger in the pandemic's wake. Through your time and effort, there are many ways to support the movement to end hunger and its root causes.

We continue to offer socially-distanced volunteer shifts at our warehouses and out in the community, along with opportunities to make a difference from the comfort of home. Please check our website for the latest shifts and events!



ADVOCATE

Join us to build a powerful movement. Oregon Food Bank's Advocacy team works year-round to advance anti-hunger policies at the local, state and federal level. Through the concerted efforts of people like you, we can ensure that decision-makers get the message: our communities need investments to keep food flowing today and we need systemic change to end hunger for good.



DONATE

Become a Monthly Sustainer as an easy, convenient way to support our work throughout the year. Set up your recurring gift and we will take care of the rest.

Join our Legacy Circle and ensure that your family has a lasting impact through a planned gift to Oregon Food Bank. You can designate a percentage or specific dollar amount and revise at any time.

Thank you for your continued partnership in our mission to end hunger and its root causes. The entire Oregon Food Bank team is here to help achieve our shared goals, so please don't hesitate to reach out!



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**Together, we can end hunger
and its root causes for good.**



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