

FOOD MATTERS!



SPRING 2023



Solving Hunger through Policy Change

From an early age, Matt Newell-Ching has known the importance of caring for our neighbors and making sure everyone has what they need to thrive. Today, as the Public Policy Manager at Oregon Food Bank, he draws on those early lessons to advocate for change and achieve our vision of communities that never know hunger.

“We don’t have to live in a world where there’s hunger. We don’t have to live in a world where there’s homelessness. We don’t have to live in a world where our kids aren’t in safe places when we go to work. We can build these things if we demand them.”

Read more at OregonFoodBank.org/MattNC 

“[Hunger] is immensely solvable if we demand it — if we make sure our elected leaders know it’s a priority,” Matt shares.

Our 2023 Legislative Priorities

Between the sunset of pandemic emergency support and the rising cost of food and housing, we expect a sharp increase in demand for food assistance throughout the region. Legislative action is more important than ever as we work to meet evolving needs and address hunger at its roots. And this session, Our Policy Leadership Council has endorsed policies and investments across a host of anti-hunger priorities, including:

- **Strengthen Food Assistance for Oregonians:** One in eight kids live in a household that struggles to afford food. Strengthening food assistance improves outcomes in education, health and our economy.
- **Homelessness Prevention and Stable Homes:** Everyone deserves a safe place to call home. We need action to address the skyrocketing price of housing and make sure that no one has to choose between rent and food.
- **Healthy Environment, Healthy People:** The most resilient food systems are built on clean, sustainable and healthy food production strategies. We support legislative action to promote healthy, food secure communities.
- **Re-Imagine Community Safety:** There is a clear line between inequities in our legal system and higher rates of hunger. Through key reforms and investments, we can build safer communities for all of us.
- **Racial Equity and Inclusive Democracy:** Oregonians of Color experience hunger at over twice the rate of those who are White. We can address systemic inequities by ensuring everyone has a voice in decisions that affect us.
- **Increase Cash Assistance to Oregonians:** Direct assistance is the most effective path to ending hunger and poverty. Through targeted investments, we can help Oregonians make the best choices for our families.
- **Gender Justice:** Single moms, trans and gender-diverse Oregonians face significantly higher rates of food insecurity. By ensuring access to quality childcare and a full range of healthcare services, we can help close the gap and ensure everyone has the opportunity to thrive.

Find legislation details and get involved at OregonFoodBank.org/Advocate 🐾



Help Ensure Food for All Oregonians!

Food is a Human Right — and everyone in Oregon should have access to food, no matter where we were born. Despite significant investments, state food assistance policies continue to leave more than 62,000 Oregonians behind.

Senate Bill 610 is a major component of our movement to ensure Food for All Oregonians. Through expanded food assistance, culturally-responsive programs and benefit navigation, we can make sure everyone in our communities has access to the food we need to thrive. Take action at FoodForAllOR.org 🐾



Breaking Ground

I'm thinking about breaking ground — and groundbreaking.

I recently joined leaders from Central Oregon to break ground on an exciting new food bank facility in Redmond. Johnson Bill from the Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs blessed the ground with drum and song. We each got a shovel and ceremonially moved a bit of earth.

I thought about the very first documented groundbreaking ceremony in China in 113 BCE — and how our human desire to honor the land, mark new beginnings and seek strong foundations crosses time, space and cultures.

NeighborImpact is the outstanding Community Action Agency that owns and operates the current food bank in Redmond — and the one that is about to be built. NeighborImpact says it was “created in 1985 to represent and serve economically disadvantaged residents of Deschutes, Crook, and Jefferson counties and the Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs.” With a mission “to support people and strengthen communities,” NeighborImpact is one vital node of the broader Oregon Food Bank Network.

Our human desire to work collaboratively and support one another in times of need also crosses time, space and cultures.

And while I was literally breaking ground in Redmond, a groundbreaking legislative campaign led by Oregon Food Bank, Partners for a Hunger-Free Oregon and more than 70 incredible allies was getting fully underway.

Once the legislation is successfully enacted, Food for All Oregonians will ensure that where we were born is not a barrier to nutrition assistance. For the first time in Oregon's history, all our low-income neighbors will have access to food safety net benefits.

That will be a glorious new foundation for us to build on. Because our human desire to build a better world for our children and grandchildren crosses time, space and cultures, too.

With hope and love,

Susannah Morgan
CEO, Oregon Food Bank



Black Liberation and Food Justice

Throughout the month of February, Oregon Food Bank celebrates and observes Black History Month to appreciate and recognize the achievements, contributions and sacrifices of Black Americans across the country. We understand that addressing the policies and systems that negatively impact Black Americans is critical to our efforts to ensure everyone in our communities – no matter our race, gender, ethnicity or religion – has access to the resources we need to thrive.

Black Americans are discriminated against through and suffer from anti-Black institutional racism – the systems, laws and policies in place that benefit the dominant race and keep all others from vital resources, services and the right to exist. Recent reporting shows that the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic continue to fall hardest on Black communities here in Oregon, with only 39% of Black Oregonians reporting that they had enough to eat the previous week.

However, Black Oregonians are doing incredible work throughout our state to close the gap between those of us experiencing hunger and the decisions that affect us.

Across the country, Black communities have been organizing to reclaim access to land they have been excluded from due to historical violence and systemic racism. “Land Back” efforts fight food insecurity by building systems that create regenerative, community wealth – combatting root causes of hunger like poverty and racism. In addition, these efforts advocate for greater food security in Black communities through increased access to farming and sovereignty over food production.

Find opportunities for learning and action during Black History Month at OregonFoodBank.org/BlackLiberation 🌱



Significant Changes to SNAP Benefits Begin March 1

More than 720,000 Oregonians enrolled in the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (sometimes called “SNAP” or “food stamps”) will soon see a significant decrease in monthly benefits.

In response to the pandemic, many SNAP participants received additional benefits each month, based on household size. As the federal state of emergency comes to a close, funding for these SNAP “emergency allotments” will also expire. Though regular SNAP benefits received prior to the pandemic will not change, Oregonians will ultimately see a minimum loss of \$95 for groceries each month. Families will face a 40% reduction in benefits on average, even as the price of food and housing continues to rise.

We know many families will turn to free food markets, pantries and meal sites to fill the gap — and the

Oregon Food Bank Network is working hard to ensure that food remains available to all who need it!

Learn more and find resources at OregonFoodBank.org/SNAPchanges 🐾



Oregon Food Bank Honored with Local, National Awards

Oregon Food Bank recently joined anti-hunger advocates from across the nation for the “Hunger Free Communities Summit,” an annual event convened by our friends at the Alliance to End Hunger. Each year, movement leaders gather to explore local solutions to food insecurity alongside policy change initiatives to address hunger’s root causes.

As always, it was an engaging and inspiring event, filled with robust discussion of new ideas and best practices. What we didn’t expect was to be honored by our peers with the national Hunger Free Community Award, in recognition of Oregon Food Bank’s “outstanding work to end hunger in local communities”. In accepting the award, CEO Susannah Morgan credited the work of hundreds of staff and tens-of-thousands of grassroots supporters who are

dedicated to advancing the systemic solutions we need to truly end hunger in our communities.

The national honor came on the heels of the food bank’s recognition as one of the state’s “Most Admired Nonprofits” in 2022. Each year, Portland Business Journal surveys nearly 2,500 business and community leaders across Oregon and Southwest Washington, who are asked to identify organizations that have a significant impact in the region. We’re proud that our efforts to end hunger at its roots have consistently ranked among the top 10 most admired organizations in the area!

View the full remarks and and get involved at OregonFoodBank.org/Awards 🐾

Thank You for Your Support!



For over 17 years, the annual KGW Great Food Drive has partnered with Oregon Food Bank to fight hunger and its root causes. In recent years, hunger in Oregon has almost doubled. Throughout March, the Great Food Drive brings our community together to raise critical funds that keep food

flowing and support the systemic change we need to end hunger for good. Learn more about our longtime partnership with KGW and ways to get involved in this year's Great Food Drive at OregonFoodBank.org/KGW



Thank you for supporting education and action to fight hunger as the Presenting Sponsor of our Community Briefing series! We're grateful for our partnership.



Thank you Leatherman for your generous gift that helps build strong communities!



Thank you for helping co-create strong, resilient communities through equitable partnerships. We so appreciate you!

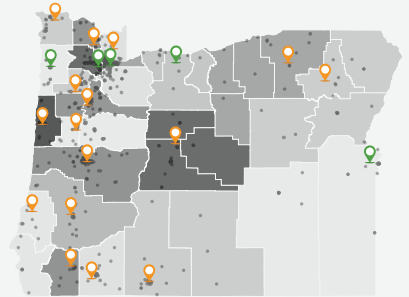


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Thank you for your gift that helps purchase fresh, locally-grown food for our community and address the root causes of hunger.

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Food is Available to All Who Need It!



Our Network includes 1,400+ free food markets, pantries and meal sites throughout Oregon and Southwest Washington — and many locations offer contactless pick-up or delivery options.

If you or someone you know needs support, know that resources are available to help area families with the rising cost of food and housing.

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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