

# FOOD MATTERS!



WINTER 2022



## Lourdez Estrada: Ending Hunger as a Latina Leader

There is little that Lourdez Estrada has not done as a leader in her community. From facilitating classes like Seed to Supper (Siembra la Cena); to distributing food, basic necessities and garden supplies to families; to educating community members on the importance of being counted in the census, Lourdez has impacted countless lives.

But it's not just the volume of work that Lourdez does in the community that has made such a difference. Her lived experience makes her a trusted person in the Latine community — she knows what it is like to

struggle with language barriers, need help and not knowing where to start, and feel disconnected in a new place.

“The ideal world for me is where no one is hungry,” Lourdez shares. “We start by educating children. We make them plant a tree and make it work until it reaches the sky... That is my dream, and it starts with education.”

Read Lourdez's full story and join the movement to end hunger at [OregonFoodBank.org/Lourdez](https://OregonFoodBank.org/Lourdez) 🌱



# Policy Leadership Council: Paving the Way Toward a Future Without Hunger

Representing rural, urban and suburban communities from Adams to Grand Ronde and Ontario to Astoria, our 16-member Policy Leadership Council (PLC) brings an incredible depth of local leadership and lived experience to our shared vision for communities that never go hungry. And it's these leaders who identify the best pathways to address hunger at its roots — through policy change in the legislature and at the ballot box.

In its first year of leadership, the Council put forward a bold agenda of key policy changes and investments to help our communities recover from the pandemic and begin to emerge stronger. Alongside allies and advocates across the state, the Council has helped to secure major anti-hunger policy and investment victories on:

- affordable housing
- access to transportation and early childhood education
- funding for food assistance programs and infrastructure
- improved pay and working conditions for essential workers in our food systems
- stronger accountability measures in community safety
- support for Oregonians who are immigrants and refugees, and
- reworked harmful drug policies to invest in mental health and addiction services

Together, our advocacy at the local, state and federal levels has helped us meet layered challenges head-on, no matter how big or small. Yet we know that many of the policies and systems we're working to change have been in place for generations — and it will take all of us to address these root causes of hunger.

Learn more about the Council and get involved at  
[OregonFoodBank.org/PolicyLeadershipCouncil](https://OregonFoodBank.org/PolicyLeadershipCouncil) 🐾

Learn more about the impact of policy change, food assistance investments and more in our 2022 annual report at [OregonFoodBank.org/ImpactReport](https://OregonFoodBank.org/ImpactReport)



## The Poetry of Winter

*When the winter chrysanthemums go,  
There's nothing to write about  
But radishes.*

— Basho, Japanese Poet and Haiku Master

Confession time: this is my least favorite season. The rain seems to fall ceaselessly. Everyone has forgotten how to drive in the wet dark. And even though I lived in Alaska for many years, I still feel cold as the damp seeps into my bones. Like Basho, it is easy to stare at radishes and mope.

Yet it's easy to rekindle my flame, simply by appreciating the amazing work of the Oregon Food Bank community. Just look at the amazing women of Mano Amiga. Lourdez lights up a room with her smile and determination to make her personal experience of hunger matter. I bask in the wisdom of our Policy Leadership Council members as they guide our anti-hunger policy agenda from all corners of Oregon. And soon we will open the new Columbia Gorge Food Bank in The Dalles — the culmination of seven years of work, organizing, planning and replanning as our original plans fell through. This re-envisioned regional food bank for Wasco, Sherman and Hood River counties is becoming a reality. Exciting things are happening!

It is also inspiring to see our long-dreamed-of expansion of the food safety net move from an idea, to a plan, to a

campaign for Food for All Oregonians. After all, food is a human right. So the only qualification anyone should need to access reliable, responsive food assistance is, well, being a human. Right?

And you also keep my hope alight — you, the community that supports Oregon Food Bank. You support us through so many expressions of love: your financial donations, your volunteer hours, your advocacy, your shares and retweets. Every action, big or small, adds up — and together we are a movement that is powerful beyond measure.

Thank you for taking another action today. Thank you for living our mission. Thank you for helping me, personally, change my attitude in this winter solstice season, and see the world as the poet Issa does instead:

*The snow is melting  
and the village is flooded  
with children.*

With hope and love,

**Susannah Morgan**  
CEO, Oregon Food Bank



# We Can Take Action Now to Guarantee **Food for All** Oregonians

Hunger was a crisis in our communities before the pandemic, and the health and economic impacts of COVID-19 have fallen hardest on newly-arrived Oregonians. Immigrants, refugees and Compact of Free Association (COFA) community members, in particular, have long faced higher rates of hunger and poverty in Oregon.

Despite significant investments, state food assistance policies continue to leave more than 62,000 Oregonians behind, with programs that exclude huge portions of our communities. Shame, stigma and language barriers are built into existing rules, within a system that traces back to a long history of racism and White supremacy in Oregon. These systemic challenges are layered on top of specific exclusions from vital programs like SNAP (sometimes called “food stamps”) based on immigration status.

Hunger affects everyone in our communities in some way — and when we all have access to food, we’re all better off. Kids do better in school, our families’ health and well-being improves, and our economy thrives through support of local businesses. This is true in every corner of Oregon — in rural, urban and suburban communities alike.

That’s why the Food for All Oregonians coalition has introduced legislation to create a state-funded program that ensures everyone in Oregon has access to the food we need. This game-changing policy will:

- Make food assistance available to all Oregonians who are currently excluded due to immigration status
- Provide families with money for groceries that matches federal SNAP food assistance benefits
- Ensure everyone is aware of this vital support through community navigation and outreach, improved language access and more

Join us and get involved in the campaign to guarantee Food for All Oregonians at [FoodForAllOR.org](https://FoodForAllOR.org) 🌱



**FOOD** **FOR** **ALL**  
**OREGONIANS**

# A Strong Start, but Federal Leaders Must Do More to End Hunger

For the first time in more than 50 years, the White House convened a national conference to inspire coordinated efforts to end hunger and significantly improve public health by 2030. The conference comes in the midst of worsening food insecurity in Oregon and Southwest Washington, as food and housing costs rise and the pandemic's economic impacts continue to take a toll.

We applaud the White House for bringing national attention to rising food insecurity and meaningful solutions. At the same time, the conversation centered far too much on misplaced perceptions of "individual decisions" around diet and exercise, while

ignoring many of the policies and systems that drive hunger in the first place. We must do more.

To build communities that never know hunger, we need living-wage jobs, affordable housing and childcare, and expanded access to food assistance programs. We need investments in direct assistance to people and communities that disproportionately face hunger and poverty. And we need to take meaningful steps toward erasing the widespread disparities that drive food insecurity. Join us in calling on federal leaders to broaden their vision and prioritize systemic solutions that expand access to food assistance and address the systems that drive hunger. [OregonFoodBank.org/WHAction](https://OregonFoodBank.org/WHAction) 🐾

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## New Investments to Help End Hunger in the Gorge

Opening this winter, Columbia Gorge Food Bank's new 11,000-square-foot permanent home is a much-needed resource for the community. This new home will boast a learning kitchen for classes, space for volunteers to receive and repack donations from local farmers, and hybrid meeting space for community partners to host workshops, trainings and more.

The expansion of access to free, nutritious food and broader anti-hunger efforts comes at a critical time for local families. Columbia Gorge Food Bank currently serves over 5,000 families per month across more than 35 community partners. When complete, the new facility will dedicate five times more warehouse and community space to the local fight to end hunger and its root causes.

To learn more, donate to support the project or get involved, visit our website at [OregonFoodBank.org/CGFB](https://OregonFoodBank.org/CGFB) 🐾



# Make a Big Impact With a Future Gift

When you include Oregon Food Bank in your estate plan, your generosity builds community connections to help people access nutritious, affordable food today and build community power that will eliminate the root causes of hunger once and for all.

Our planned giving team would be happy to speak with you in confidence, with no obligation. To learn more about making a gift to Oregon Food Bank through a charitable gift annuity or a bequest in your estate plan, visit [PlannedGiving.OregonFoodBank.org](https://PlannedGiving.OregonFoodBank.org) or contact Matthew Maas at [LegacyGiving@OregonFoodBank.org](mailto:LegacyGiving@OregonFoodBank.org) or 971-223-3410 🐾

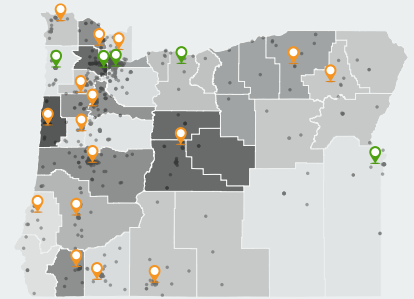


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## Thank You for Your Support!

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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 to help area families with the rising cost of food and housing.

Find food assistance sites near you at [OregonFoodFinder.org](https://OregonFoodFinder.org) — now available in 14 languages common to the Pacific Northwest!



[OregonFoodBank.org](https://OregonFoodBank.org)  
503-282-0555



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