

# FOOD MATTERS!

SPRING 2025



SOS Center Executive Director Ali Ibrahim (left) at a community food distribution

## Partner Spotlight: Somali Oregon Service Center

On the first and third Tuesday of every month in Southeast Portland, a small crowd gathers outside the Somali Oregon Service Center (SOS Center). They've come to select from tables laden with dry and canned goods and fresh fruits and vegetables.

"When refugees arrive here, the two main things they need are shelter and food," said SOS Center Executive Director Ali Ibrahim. "Due to their circumstances, many don't have the money for either."

The SOS Center, one of seven community food pantries in Oregon Food Bank's Pathways to Partnership program, was established to provide Somali immigrants (and many other people – the center's doors are open to all) with food and free guidance on everything from housing and

employment to legal aid to social services. "We meet people where they're at, assisting them with all the things you'd need to resettle in America," said Claudia Al-Amin, managing director of the SOS Center.

Claudia and Ali are strong supporters of Food for All Oregonians, a coalition advocating for an Oregon where all people have access to food, including immigrants and refugees.

"The Food for All campaign is so essential," said Claudia, who hopes lawmakers will pass its policies in the current legislative session. "We can provide a few bags of groceries, but that's not going to get a family through the month." Read more at [OregonFoodBank.org/SOSC](https://OregonFoodBank.org/SOSC) ✦

# A brighter future for my kids and yours

As I step into the role of President of Oregon Food Bank, I'm filled with determination. The rising cost of food and housing is driving record food insecurity in Oregon and Southwest Washington. Last year, visits to food assistance sites in the Oregon Food Bank Network reached 2.5 million – a 31 percent increase from the previous year. These numbers remind us of the need for bold action.



When I walk into the Oregon Food Bank's statewide warehouse in northeast Portland, I'm greeted by a sight that grounds me in this work. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s words, "The time has come for us to civilize ourselves by the total, direct and immediate abolition of poverty," are visible through the glass entry doors, whether I'm standing outside the warehouse or in the lobby. They greet visitors and staff alike, alongside the vibrant, expansive garden our community tends together. Dr. King's words are a daily reminder of the core belief driving our work: equity is essential to ending hunger.

This reflection is especially powerful during Black History Month – a time to honor the leadership and legacy of Black communities in advancing justice and equity. At Oregon Food Bank, this legacy guides our work as we address the root causes of hunger, like systemic racism and poverty.

That's why we're asking Oregon lawmakers to pass Food for All Oregonians this legislative session, a policy to ensure all of us – including immigrants and refugees – have the food we need to thrive. At a time when the new federal administration has promised policies that threaten the well-being of so many, Oregon must lead the way in protecting our communities and demonstrating what's possible when equity and compassion drive public policy.

I'm inspired by the vision of a brighter future for all Oregonians – one where hunger is a thing of the past. Together, we can make this vision a reality, not just for our communities today but for future generations – including two of my favorite Oregonians: my kids!

*With gratitude and hope,*

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "A. Williams". The signature is fluid and cursive, written in a professional but personal style.

**Andrea Williams**  
President, Oregon Food Bank





# Act now: Lawmakers are listening

Right now, 1 in 6 kids in Oregon doesn't have enough to eat. Immigrant and refugee communities, People of Color, and other communities experience food insecurity at 2 to 3 times the rate of white Oregonians. And tens of thousands of Oregonians are unfairly excluded from vital food assistance programs because of where they were born.

The stakes have never been higher. The current federal administration has issued executive orders targeting refugees, immigrants, and trans and gender-expansive communities. The orders will worsen hunger — making the need for state-level solutions more urgent. That's why Oregon must lead the way.

This year, we're asking lawmakers to pass Food for All Oregonians, legislation that ensures all of us — including immigrants and refugees — can access the food we need to nourish our families and strengthen our communities.

Your elected representatives in Salem need to hear from you and everyone you know! The Oregon legislative session runs through June 2025 — that's plenty of time for you to make a difference.

Learn how you can help pass this vital legislation:  
[OregonFoodBank.org/LegislativeAgenda](https://OregonFoodBank.org/LegislativeAgenda) ✨



Claudia Al-Amin writing to the Governor in support of  
Food for All Oregonians

## A Year at OFB: The 2024 Impact Report



Oregon Food Bank made significant progress last year in addressing hunger and its root causes. In our review of 2024 you'll meet people like Liliana Beltran Torres, a community health worker committed to making sure rural Oregonians don't go without food or social services. You'll also find a recap of our anti-hunger policy wins and investments we've made to advance food justice throughout the region. And, of course, you'll learn how you can get involved. Read all about it at [OregonFoodBank.org/ImpactReport2024](https://OregonFoodBank.org/ImpactReport2024) ✨





## Transforming systems: the Policy Leadership Council sets an agenda for real change

Representing rural and suburban communities throughout the state, the Policy Leadership Council draws on its members' lived experience to shape the vision for Oregon Food Bank's policy and

advocacy work. Its 16 members, all of whom have been affected by food insecurity and the systemic injustices that cause it, are powerful leaders in addressing hunger at its roots.

"I'm excited about the immigration justice pillar of our work. I've been the most happy to be involved in Food for All Oregonians. That bill is going to be passed. No matter what, we're going to fight until it passes."

—ANDREA CISNEROS,  
OFB Policy Leadership Council



Together, the Policy Leadership Council has created the Systems Change Platform — an ambitious vision for communities where no one goes hungry. This platform highlights our shared goals, the solutions we're working toward, and the steps Oregon Food Bank is taking right now to turn food justice into a reality.

Explore where Oregon Food Bank and the Policy Leadership Council stand on housing, worker justice, Indigenous liberation, community safety, immigrant justice and more:  
[OregonFoodBank.org/SystemsChangePlatform](https://OregonFoodBank.org/SystemsChangePlatform) ✨



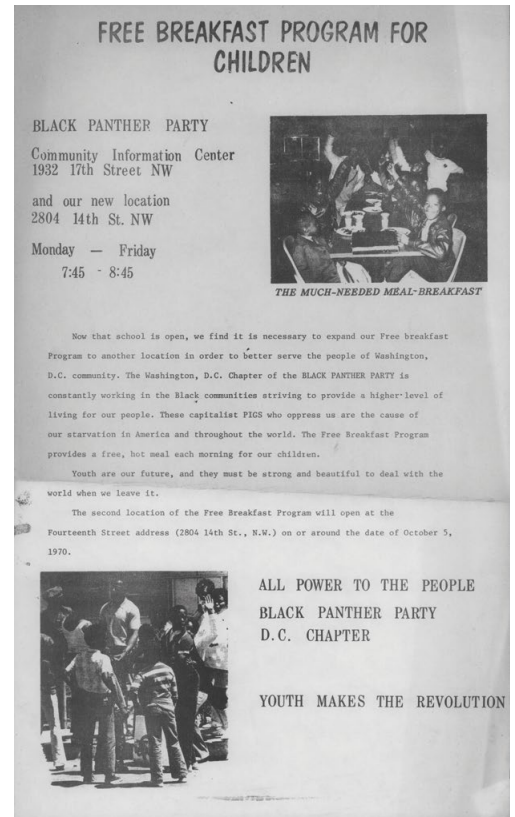
# Celebrating **Black History Month**

Did you know that the Black Panthers' Free Breakfast for School Children program, started in 1969, is considered one of the inspirations of food banking and school meals as we know them today?

And did you know that February was designated Black History Month because it's the birth month of Frederick Douglas and President Abraham Lincoln, two key figures in the abolishment of slavery?

In celebration of Black History Month, Oregon Food Bank compiled some facts and stories about the Black history of food justice and the history of Black History Month itself.

Follow the link below to read about the current state of food insecurity in Black Communities, the impact of COVID-19 and inflation on Black Oregonians, the intertwined struggles for Black liberation and Indigenous sovereignty, and much more, including opportunities to take action and resources for finding Black-owned and -led businesses near you. Learn more at [OregonFoodBank.org/BlackLiberation](https://OregonFoodBank.org/BlackLiberation) ✨



Washington, DC Free Breakfast Flyer, 1970.  
Photo courtesy of Washington Area Spark, some rights reserved (license: CC BY-NC 2.0 DEED)

## Thank you for your support in 2024

Take a moment to watch our video reflecting on the highlights of 2024 and celebrating our incredible community.



Discover the story of farmer Duane Lane, fifth great-grandson of Chief Owhi and founder of 1855 Plants. See how your advocacy and support helped secure funding for critical programs like food assistance for children, affordable housing and expanded child care resources. Get an inside look at our updated warehouse, now enabling us to distribute more fresh food across the Oregon Food Bank Network — and that's just the start!

This video celebrates everyone who contributed to our shared mission — by donating, volunteering, signing pledges, contacting lawmakers, spreading the word, supporting events or helping in countless other ways. Watch here! [OregonFoodBank.org/EndOfYear](https://OregonFoodBank.org/EndOfYear) ✨

# Join us for the 2025 KGW Great Food Drive!



For more than 20 years, the annual KGW Great Food Drive has partnered with Oregon Food Bank to fight hunger and its root causes. Last year, we saw 2.5 million visits to food assistance sites through the Oregon Food Bank Network – a 31% increase from the previous year. 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. Get involved today:

[OregonFoodBank.org/KGWgives](https://OregonFoodBank.org/KGWgives) ✨

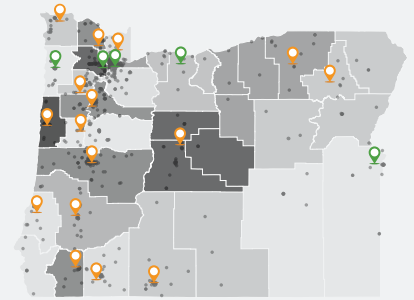
## Thank You for Your Support!



A big thank you to **Northwest Grocers** for their incredible support through their annual Charity Golf Tournament! We're excited to celebrate their biggest gift yet. With more than 10 years of partnership, we have deep appreciation for their ongoing generosity and commitment to our mission.

Ameriprise Financial • Applied Materials, Inc. • B.P. Lester and Regina John Foundation • CoBank • CoreGiving • Eastern Oregon Coordinated Care Organization • Edna Wardlaw Charitable Trust • Enterprise Mobility Foundation • Feeding America - Thanks to Kraft-Heinz Ontario • Feeding America - Thanks to Walmart • First Tech Federal Credit Union • Genentech • Goodwill Industries of the Columbia Willamette • Hayes Family Foundation • Hilltop Foundation • Intel Corporation • J.R. Simplot Company Foundation • Kaiser Permanente • Lam Research Corporation • Merle & Ellen Morgan Gift Fund • Multnomah County • NIKE • Northwest Grocers • Northwest Permanente, PC • OnPoint Community Credit Union • Portland Children's Levy • S.L. Gimbel Foundation • Safeway Albertsons • Starbucks Coffee Company • State Farm • The Hardison Family Foundation • The Renaissance Foundation • Wheeler Foundation

## Food is available to all who need it



Our Network includes 1,200+ free food markets, pantries and meal sites throughout Oregon and Southwest Washington – and many locations offer contactless pickup or delivery options.

Help is available to everyone – and no one in our network will ask you to show proof of gender identity or immigration status. Ever.

Find food assistance sites near you at [OregonFoodFinder.org](https://OregonFoodFinder.org) – now available in 19 languages commonly spoken in the Pacific Northwest.



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



@oregonfoodbank