



OREGON
FOOD BANK

Thank you for hosting and participating in The Table We Make!



Food brings us together at the table, and we're grateful you are gathering your people to talk about addressing hunger in our communities. Below are questions we will use to guide discussion for your group. We encourage authenticity, without pressure to share uncomfortable experiences. Right now 1 in 8 Oregonians experience hunger, so the odds that someone at your dinner has been hungry or knows someone who has, is high. Thank you for leading with care.

Suggestion: Start with a land acknowledgement ([use this link to search your address: native-land.ca](https://native-land.ca) to learn about the Native tribes that originally occupied and stewarded the land)

Before we begin I want to ground our conversation today in an important land acknowledgment.

[This house, address, building] rests on the traditional village sites of the [insert tribal names]. We thank the descendants of these tribes for being the original stewards and protectors of these lands since time immemorial. We acknowledge that Portland, Oregon has the ninth largest Urban Native American population in the United States with over 380 federally recognized tribes represented in the Urban Portland Metropolitan area. We also acknowledge the systemic policies of genocide, relocation and assimilation that still impact many Indigenous and Native American families today. We are honored by the collective work of many Native Nations, leaders and families who are demonstrating resilience, resistance, revitalization, healing and creativity. We are honored to be guests upon these lands. Thank you.

Appetizer questions

- How are you? No really, how are you?
- Have you volunteered or visited a food pantry or food bank before?
 - What was that experience like?
- What is your favorite food? Why?
- Do you have a particular recipe that is special / quintessential to your family or culture?
 - How important is this to our identities and our humanity?

Main course

- Would you consider food a human right? We need food to live. Does this make it part of the human experience that is an unquestionable right?

- If yes, why? If no, why not?

- What does food justice mean to you?

- Definition used by Oregon Food Bank:

Food justice

1. *Seeks to dismantle the underlying structures that create food apartheid (which is limited food access and disparities in nourishment also known as food deserts)*

2. *Decolonizes food systems by encompassing the preservation of traditional food systems (i.e. Indigenous practices), land stewardship and the recognition of cultural practices. And*

3. *Calls for sustainable, locally sourced and ethically produced food that benefits both people and the planet.*

- Does this resonate with you?

- People who are immigrants are disproportionately represented in the food production (like farmworkers) and food service industries while simultaneously experiencing very high rates of hunger. What beliefs, policies and practices cause this?

- Wages and job safety/security?
 - Broken immigration system?
 - Anti-immigrant sentiment?

- Immigrants are not the only group experiencing high rates of hunger.

- We are living in a critical moment where federal policies are targeting populations

that have historically experienced high levels of food insecurity. Recent federal policies like the Republican budget bill (HR1) slashes Medicaid and takes away SNAP benefits (formerly known as food stamps) from thousands of Oregonians.

Due to federal uncertainty, tariffs and trade wars, the Oregon legislature announced it has less to spend on safety net programs. Families already on the brink will most certainly feel the impact of these policies and economic realities.

- Imagine for a moment that someone outside your family has the power to take away your food and prevent you from accessing the resources needed to secure it, without any consideration for your or your family's needs.
 - How would you feel or what would you do?
- While we're facing drastic cuts to these support systems and experiencing an unprecedented increase in visits to our food assistance sites over the past year, the federal administration has slashed \$10 million in food and funding from Oregon Food Bank, with the potential for more.
- Hunger is a policy choice. But together, we can take action. We can put pressure on our lawmakers to be accountable to us. We can make sure Oregonians still have access to fresh, nourishing food that feels like home. Together, we can show up for our communities across Oregon.
- Join us to make sure our laws end hunger – not cause it: OregonFoodBank.org/BetterPolicy

Dessert

- What should we do now?
 - There are so many ways to continue supporting and working to end hunger!
 - Next actions list