

# FOOD MATTERS!

WINTER 2023



## Connecting Community for **Lasting Change**

When Olga Cherevatenko immigrated to the U.S. 20 years ago, she had to navigate a complex web of services and requirements by herself. “I failed so many times because of a lack of knowledge” of the system, Olga says. “I wish somebody would have shown up and said, ‘Go there. Speak with those people.’”

Today, Olga is that person — an incredible leader connecting new community members with essential resources in Washington, Multnomah and Clackamas counties.

As a co-founder of Community Pulse Association, a nonprofit in the Portland Metro area providing culturally-specific resources to Eastern European immigrants, Olga helps people in her community access food, register for schools and college, navigate housing issues and more.

“I remember my first few years in the United States were the hardest,” Olga says. “And I want everyone who’s immigrating right now to not experience this hardship.” Read more at [OregonFoodBank.org/Olga-EN](https://OregonFoodBank.org/Olga-EN) 🐾

# Advancing Food Justice During Hunger Action Month

Each September marks Hunger Action Month — a nationwide effort to mobilize communities to take action and help end hunger for good. This year, our community came together in an incredible show of solidarity by volunteering, advocating and donating to build a brighter future for families facing food insecurity throughout the region.

In our annual State of Hunger address, Oregon Food Bank President Susannah Morgan and colleagues highlighted the importance of pursuing food justice to counter the rising cost of groceries and housing, ongoing market disruptions and sunseting federal emergency support.

“Even though the official pandemic emergency has passed, hunger remains stubbornly high in our communities,” Morgan shared — a point underscored by recent USDA data showing a sharp increase in food insecurity nationwide. “Free food markets, pantries and meal sites throughout the region continue to report record-high demand. Combined, we expect over a million people will seek emergency food assistance through the Oregon Food Bank Network this year alone.”

Food justice — the belief that food is a human right — was at the core this year. And we were excited to share aspects of the work we’re doing together to build strong community partnerships, improve language access, focus resources in communities facing disproportionate hunger, and ensure people with lived experience are in the lead. Learn more and join us at [OregonFoodBank.org/StateOfHunger](https://OregonFoodBank.org/StateOfHunger) 🐾



## Facing Hunger as an Ongoing Crisis: Our 2023 Impact Report



Oregon Food Bank’s annual Impact Report is coming soon to your mailbox or inbox! Our look-back at 2022-23 includes reflections on the state of hunger in Oregon and local success stories from leaders working to eliminate food insecurity in our communities. You’ll also find a recap of anti-hunger policy wins and transformative investments we’ve made to advance food justice throughout the region — as well as ways you can get involved in the work ahead. Get your digital copy at [OregonFoodBank.org/ImpactReport](https://OregonFoodBank.org/ImpactReport) 🐾

# Cherry Orchards and Food Justice

Imagine a cherry orchard in winter, frost on the bare branches.

There is, of course, work in a cherry orchard this time of year — pruning, mowing, fixing equipment. But the work takes a small fraction of the time and people that are required during harvest.



My grandfather, Samuel Levering, was born in 1908. He chose to continue his father's work in the family orchard on the Virginia/North Carolina border. Grandpa Sam made this choice for two reasons: he loved the labor and tastes of the season of fresh fruit; and he craved the peace of winter, when he and Grandma Miriam could dedicate their time to work on justice.

Every summer, I joined my family on the orchard to help with cherry picking. And come winter, my grandparents were deeply engaged in peace movements — locally as leaders in their Quaker community, and even internationally as contributors to the United Nations effort to ensure the peaceful and cooperative use of the seas to benefit humankind. To them, the annual harvest and the broader community we build for ourselves were intertwined and inseparable.

Grandpa Sam would have instinctively understood our systemic approach at Oregon Food Bank — the necessity of our work to ensure delicious, culturally familiar food is accessible to everyone, and the importance of our dedication to achieve food justice. A concept and movement founded by women of color, food justice is the belief that nutritious food is a human right, and that we must all work to address the barriers that prevent people from having access to it.

Just as we are proud to partner with cherry orchards in The Gorge during harvest, Oregon Food Bank is proud to add our strength and reach to the food justice movement — partnering with everyone from immigrant leaders, to health systems, to our congressional delegation to help our communities thrive.

Our mission to end hunger and its root causes calls us to both food *distribution* and food *justice*. And we are fully engaged in both, this winter and throughout the year.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Susannah Morgan". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long, sweeping underline.

**Susannah Morgan**  
President, Oregon Food Bank





"Everybody has the right to food, whatever our immigration status. Food is essential; it's not something extra. Oregon has the resources and we can help everybody — so why not help everybody? Why not give everybody access to the resources we already have?"

—EMAN ABBAS, OFB Ambassador



## Immigrants and Refugees **Leading the Fight to End Hunger**

Poverty is a key root cause of hunger — and we know that systemic exclusion, racism and xenophobia drive poverty in immigrant and refugee communities throughout our region. One in five Oregonians born outside of the U.S. live in poverty. Almost 80 percent of Latine immigrant parents surveyed in Oregon report being worried whether food will run out before they have enough money to buy more.

The most effective strategies to end hunger come from those of us who have experienced food insecurity first-hand. Through the leadership of immigrants and refugees, we tap into a wellspring of knowledge that shapes impactful programs and investments to uproot hunger. Learn more at [OregonFoodBank.org/ImmigrantsRefugees](https://OregonFoodBank.org/ImmigrantsRefugees) 🌱

# Hunger, Healthcare and Humanity

Hunger and healthcare are directly connected — and the lack of access to affordable, comprehensive healthcare is a lead driver of hunger and poverty nationwide.

Across rural, urban and suburban communities, too many Oregonians struggle to access essentials like food and healthcare. When children and families don't have access to essential resources like nourishing food, it can lead to weakened immune systems, health challenges and, as a result, more expensive care. And for Black, Indigenous and all People of Color (BIPOC), systemic racism and discrimination in care take an even greater toll on health and well-being.

The impact on Oregon families is real — and too many of us have faced significant financial challenges due to the rising costs of care. In 2021, 1 in 3 Oregonians reported that healthcare costs led to skipped medications, canceled doctor's appointments or other actions that are detrimental to our health. And we know that meals are often the first thing families cut back on when budgets are tight.

We can end hunger by investing in the health of our communities. All Oregonians — no matter our identity, the language we speak or where we're from — should have access to nourishing food that supports our overall health! Learn more at [OregonFoodBank.org/Healthcare](https://OregonFoodBank.org/Healthcare) 🐾



## Protect and Expand SNAP Benefits

The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (often called “SNAP” or “Food Stamps”) is a critical anti-hunger program that has a major impact in our communities. Congress will soon introduce the Farm Bill that determines SNAP funding and eligibility guidelines for more than 720,000 Oregonians. Take action to protect and expand SNAP to ensure everyone has the food we need to thrive! Join us at [OregonFoodBank.org/FarmBill](https://OregonFoodBank.org/FarmBill) 🐾



# Thank You for Your Support!

## DAIMLER

Daimler Trucks North America

**Daimler Trucks North America LLC** goes above and beyond in the fight to end hunger — including sponsorship of OFB trucks that move food across the region to those who need it most. Huge thanks to the Daimler staff who volunteer in Portland and beyond to ensure food is ready and available for our community. We're grateful for your partnership!

SPIRIT MOUNTAIN  
COMMUNITY FUND

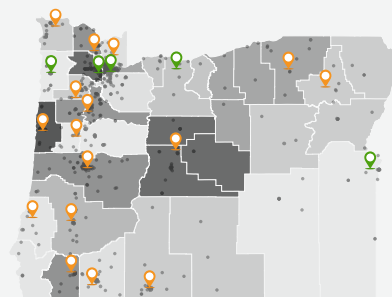


The Confederated Tribes  
of Grand Ronde

Thank you to **Spirit Mountain Community Fund** for your belief in food systems organizing. Your ongoing support helps to strengthen community leadership and resilience, while fostering culturally-specific solutions to hunger!

Gladys and Roland Harriman Foundation • New Seasons Market • Intel Corporation • NIKE, Inc. • Juan Young Trust • Maybelle Clark Macdonald Fund • Multnomah County • Portland Children's Levy • Providence Health & Services • Oregon Beverage Recycling Cooperative • Eagles Routes LLC • Revantage • The Jackson Foundation • Edna Wardlaw Charitable Trust • Eastern Oregon Coordinated Care Organization • United States Department of Agriculture • S.L. Gimbel Foundation • Daimler Trucks North America LLC • Feeding America — Thanks to Walmart • Feeding America • The Macauley Foundation • The Alberta S. Kimball — Mary L. Anhaltzer Foundation • Spirit Mountain Community Fund • US Federal Emergency Management Agency • MOD Pizza • OnPoint Community Credit Union • Sysco Portland • Portland General Electric • Safeway Albertsons • Combined Federal Campaign • TEGNA • Cambia Health Solutions • Kaiser Permanente • The Standard • Schnitzer Steel Industries

# 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](https://OregonFoodFinder.org)** — now available in 14 languages common to the Pacific Northwest!



**OregonFoodBank.org**  
503-282-0555



@oregonfoodbank