



2020 IMPACT REPORT





# The Pandemic has Tested Our Vision of Community Resilience

*Wow, have we been tested this year. And WOW! have we risen to that challenge.*

*A year ago, hunger in Oregon and SW Washington was decreasing. And now – due to the ongoing pandemic and recent wildfires, associated economic disruption and insufficient public safety nets – hunger is at its highest level in almost a century.*

*I'll say that again: we are currently experiencing rates of hunger that equal those of the Great Depression in the 1930s.*

*This year we have learned how fragile food security can be. Hundreds of thousands of us have newly experienced hunger and encountered what hundreds of thousands of us already knew – that hunger is horrible. That worrying about feeding yourself or your family can dominate your life and destroy your peace.*

*This year we have learned, once again, that the most marginalized communities in our society are hit the hardest during tough times. Our immigrant and migrant communities, who disproportionately pick our food and operate our food processing plants, have experienced especially high rates of illness from COVID-19.*

*This year we have also learned that our communities will rise. In the face of skyrocketing hunger, and in the midst of a pandemic requiring rigorous public health standards, we've kept food flowing. The Oregon Food Bank Network – comprised of local leadership and volunteers at 1,400 food assistance sites, 21 regional food banks, and the statewide warehouse of Oregon Food Bank – never slowed down. We adapted, we innovated, we built new and exciting partnerships, and we prioritized our neighbors experiencing hunger.*

*Oregon Food Bank's vision is to build resilient communities that never know hunger. This year we all learned together what resilience means. Resilience means interdependence – that I will be healthy and safe if, and only if, you are healthy and safe.*

*Thank you for being part of our community. With your support and partnership, we will continue to work to ensure every single person in Oregon and Southwest Washington can #EmergeStronger.*

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Susannah Morgan', with a long, sweeping underline that extends to the right.

Susannah Morgan, CEO

# COVID-19 Escalates Food Insecurity

Throughout the Oregon Food Bank Network, we've witnessed rising need in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic's economic impact. Before the pandemic, approximately 860,000 community members relied on the OFB Network for food assistance in a year. Oregon State University estimates that the total number of Oregonians experiencing – or are likely to soon experience – food insecurity has doubled. **This means as many as 1 in 4 Oregonians or an additional 540,000-800,000 of our neighbors are turning to local food pantries, many for the first time.**

Public institutions and businesses have shuttered. Families are reeling from lost wages, unpaid medical leave, and unplanned childcare and healthcare costs. Exhausted parents try to balance educating their children with providing for their essential needs. Before the onset of the pandemic, the Federal Reserve estimated that 40% of Americans didn't have \$400 in available savings for emergency expenses. Today, the unemployment rate in Oregon has doubled.

## We Cannot Allow Hunger to Become a Symptom of COVID-19

As we confront the likelihood of a prolonged economic recession, Oregon Food Bank is redirecting resources to keep the flow of food steady in an evolving and complex environment. Alongside countless community partners, we're moving forward with innovative solutions that ensure reliable access to healthy food while keeping our communities safe.

Since March, we have focused resources on community-based food access points including mobile, delivery and "pop-up" food distributions. We have supported our food assistance partners in adapting their distributions and contact-less pick-up options to reduce touch points and ensure safe physical distancing. And we have redeployed and expanded our transportation infrastructure to increase deliveries to food distribution partners across the Oregon Food Bank Network.

And throughout, Oregon Food Bank continues to hold people experiencing food insecurity at the center of every decision we make. Whether you're experiencing income loss for the first time or you come from a community that has faced disproportionate hunger and poverty for generations, we've invested deeply in outreach initiatives to ensure everyone knows where to access local food assistance options. Our public awareness campaign has reached millions of people across broadcast, digital and social media platforms – sharing information in 11 languages commonly spoken in the Pacific Northwest.

# Pandemic Response

**48,585 SUPPORTERS**

invested in our work, including  
17,828 new supporters



**12MM+ IMPRESSIONS**

across 11 languages on our  
Food Finder tool



**57.7 MILLION MEALS**

were shared with community  
members



**\$1MM+ INVESTED**

in BIPOC-led & Movement  
Building Partners



**31% OF TOTAL FOOD**

delivered was fresh or  
frozen produce



**7,429 ACTIONS**

to advance policies and  
campaigns that reduce hunger



**\$4MM+ INVESTED**

throughout the OFB Network for  
direct support



**\$8MM+ DEPLOYED**

for emergency food  
distribution since March 2020





# COVID-19 Puts Systemic Inequities on Full Display

The pandemic has shown us all how closely our health and well-being is tied to one another. Yet the disproportionate impact of COVID-19 among Black, Indigenous and other people of color cannot be denied. Even before the pandemic, food insecurity among Black and Indigenous households was more than double the rate of white households in Oregon. Latinx families were three times as likely to face hunger than other families.

Black and Latinx workers are also more likely to serve in front-line essential roles, putting them at greater risk of exposure to the virus. And they are more likely to experience severe symptoms and hospitalization due to higher rates of underlying conditions that stem from generations of unequal access to healthcare and pervasive inequities in employment, housing and education.

These disparities leave too many of our neighbors vulnerable to poverty, illness and hunger. Which is why – in the midst of an ongoing pandemic – millions of people are taking to the streets, speaking out in the halls of power and turning out in massive numbers at the ballot box to demand justice.

## **We Can't End Hunger Without Ending Systemic Racism**

Oregon Food Bank is proud to share a common vision with the many voices demanding that our communities be free from injustice, violence, poverty and hunger.

Systemic discrimination and oppression drive poverty, and poverty is the single biggest driver of hunger. When we are able to earn a living wage and access affordable housing and healthcare, we're far better equipped to buy fresh and nutritious food.

Yet there's no shortage of harmful policies and systems in place that create barriers to accessing these essential resources. As a result, serious disparities can be found across the board – especially in health, nutrition and economic outcomes. That's why racial justice work is food justice work – because the systemic inequities that continue to widen the racial divide are also the root causes of hunger.

Your support helps us meet both the rising need for food assistance today and advocate for the kind of systemic change we need to end hunger for good. We will emerge stronger when we address hunger together, as a community.

# Emerging Stronger Together

When *any* member of our community is at risk, we're *all* at risk – our health and well-being is tied to each and every one of our friends, colleagues and neighbors.

Our network of 21 regional food banks and over 1,400 hunger relief programs is working together across Oregon and Southwest Washington to meet the evolving needs of our communities. This regional service delivery model brings together network partners to collaborate around community engagement, to share resources, and to advocate for a food system that effectively and equitably meets the needs of our neighborhoods.

We are deploying new technology to more effectively engage in statewide logistical planning to keep the hunger-relief system running day in and day out. And we are investing in the staff and infrastructure capacity of local organizations to provide culturally-responsive assistance in local communities.

Alongside food assistance and advocacy partners across our region, Oregon Food Bank is working on creative and systemic solutions to hunger. Our collaborations and investments keep the local food system strong and address the *real* change needed to end hunger for good.

## By working together, we can emerge stronger and build communities where:

- **All of our essential needs are met.** We will ensure access to food, healthcare, housing and economic security so that every person can thrive, regardless of where they live.
- **Neighborhoods are resilient and free from the drivers of poverty.** We will develop community-centered solutions – from food systems to economic development – that sustain our people and our planet.
- **People come together because of what unites us.** We will build inclusive spaces to create solutions based on the values we all share.

Amplifying community voices and growing grassroots power are core parts of our mission to end hunger and its root causes. And it's especially important now, as we look to one another for support, that we see the incredible collective power that is being built within our communities.



Oregon Food Bank is organizing and moving communities into action toward more just and resilient food systems. By investing in solutions identified and implemented by our communities, we're improving access to healthy, culturally-relevant foods for all people.

# Emerging Stronger Together (continued)

As the pandemic, the economic downturn, and the resulting skyrocketing rates of hunger continue to challenge the resilience of communities in Oregon, we believe it's essential to invest in organizations and programs with deep roots in our neighborhoods. We know that we have the tools and local talent – we just need to invest more deeply in the work. Our success in ending hunger depends on strong partnerships with community- and culturally-specific organizations that are helping to create space for longer-term, systemic change.

## Oregon Food Bank investments to support the resiliency of our communities in the wake of COVID-19:

- **Food Distribution:** Delivering healthy, fresh, culturally-relevant food to communities impacted by COVID-19 – including through pop-up farmers market style food distributions, food support for migrant populations, purchase of culturally-specific foods, and direct-to-door deliveries for households at heightened risk of illness from COVID-19. **Oregon Food Bank distributed 57.7 million meals between July 2019 - June 2020 – an increase of 12 million meals from the year prior.**
- **Support for Culturally-Specific Partners:** Providing technical assistance, training, capacity-building, and financial support to culturally specific partners whose services are designed for, and led by, members of their community. This past year, we have had the honor of working with The Next Door, Black Parent Initiative, Mudbone Grown, Beyond Black CDC, Multnomah County's REACH program, UNITE Oregon and many others.
- **SNAP Outreach:** Increasing access to the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP – formerly known as “food stamps”) among communities of color; immigrant, migrant, refugee and LGBTQIA+ communities; college students and low-wage workers – through community engagement, strategic communications, resource navigation, and policy advocacy.
- **Oregon Worker Relief Fund:** Offsetting wage loss in immigrant communities during the COVID-19 pandemic. A collaboration with Causa Oregon, this fund staves off hunger by providing financial relief to Oregon families who, due to their immigration status, cannot access government assistance programs.

# We are Proud to Partner with Organizations that Envision Resilient Communities

## Oregon Community Food Systems Network

Oregon Food Bank is an active member of the Oregon Community Food Systems leadership team. This collaboration of 56 nonprofit organizations and allies is dedicated to strengthening local and regional food systems – working to deliver better economic, social, health and environmental outcomes across the state.

## Systems Change

Oregon Food Bank works in partnership with organizations that share our vision for change. We collaborate with Oregon Ready to build an immigrant-inclusive Oregon. We lobby side by side with the Housing Alliance to ensure that communities don't have to choose between food and rent. We strategize with Partners for a Hunger Free Oregon to leverage our strengths for big impact. And we amplify the work of the Oregon Coalition for African Community Leaders in engaging communities in the census and voting. Together with these and many other partners we are building systems to support resilient communities.

## Mudbone Grown

Oregon Food Bank and Mudbone Grown, a black-owned farm enterprise that promotes inter-generational community-based farming, are proud to partner on a host of regenerative agriculture initiatives addressing the root causes of hunger.

Among them is the Pathways to Farming program, working to build a more resilient, thriving and entrepreneurial food industry through culturally-competent farming programs and small business development services. Pathways to Farming strives to gain access to more land and resources for farmers of color, and is working to establish a more just and sustainable food system in the Portland Metro area through the incubation of small agricultural businesses.



# Building A Movement

## Connecting Community

At its core, a movement is made of people who are connected by a common commitment to create better communities – including addressing issues that divide us. Earlier this year, we facilitated conversations while volunteers repacked food for distribution by discussing food insecurity, the root causes of hunger – including racism, xenophobia, transphobia and more – and what we can do to end hunger. We hosted online community conversations to foster dialogue that can lead to community change. *“This was the first time we’ve ever had a community conversation about racial equity and it felt good,”* said one participant in a multiracial virtual town hall in La Grande. At another event with Multnomah County Commissioners, we discussed challenges and solutions from the perspective of communities of color.



## 2020 Census

The 2020 Census was our opportunity to clearly state “We are here and we count!” Census numbers are used to allocate federal funds for critical safety net programs including schools, unemployment insurance, SNAP and community infrastructure. That’s why we launched a multi-platform campaign to ensure communities across the state participated in the census. Over 50 community members – representing many ethnicities, languages and immigrant communities – became census leaders to help their communities

be counted. Alongside regional food banks and partner agencies in 25 counties, we organized to encourage our communities to participate in the census – including innovative outreach models like including census information in utility bills that reached more than 21,000 customers.



## Policy Advocacy

In a challenging policy year, we took unprecedented steps to defend against repeated federal attacks on the safety net that is vital for people who are food insecure. We mobilized thousands of people to protect SNAP from four major changes that significantly decrease access to food assistance for Oregonians. Despite significant fiscal challenges due to the pandemic, we worked with Governor Brown and legislative

allies to secure funding for critical pandemic response efforts – from allocating FEMA dollars to support emergency food assistance to limiting cuts to the Farm-to-School that brings locally-sourced food into our school districts.

## Allyship for Racial Justice

As the pandemic and prominent cases of police violence put our nation's deep racial inequities on full display, we have been grateful to partner with Black- and Latinx-led organizations in the fight for justice in our food systems and society overall. With food insecurity skyrocketing in immigrant communities due to systemic exclusion from the pandemic safety net, we were among the first major supporters of the Oregon Worker Relief Fund. The coalition built – from the ground up – a system to connect immigrant families with vital resources. This was an incredible accomplishment in support of many essential workers in the food industry, and we continue to push to eliminate policies that exclude immigrants and refugees from our social safety net.

In the aftermath of the murders of George Floyd, Breonna Taylor and so many others, we've worked to surface the criminalization of Black communities as a root cause of hunger. We organized in support of local Black-led efforts to divest from harmful policing practices and reinvest in food, employment, education and housing programs that strengthen communities. At the state level, we successfully advocated for key reforms put forward by the Legislative Black, Indigenous and People of Color Caucus. And we look forward to continuing our support for the broader Movement for Black Lives.



# How You Can Get Involved

Our vision for resilient communities that never know hunger is only possible through the strength of our community partnerships. Join us in the fight to end hunger for good!

## BECOME A PARTNER

### Corporate & Organization Partners

Engaged, socially-responsible corporate and organization partners are key to ending hunger and hunger's root causes. We seek values-aligned collaborators that share our vision.

### Food Industry Partners

The majority of the food we distribute comes through the generosity of our incredible partners in the food industry – from local growers, packers, retailers, manufacturers and more. We seek food industry partners that are looking for innovative ways to make their product or expertise stretch further to help the communities we live and work in. Our food resource developers ensure that the fruits of your labor support area families in need of food assistance, rather than being wasted.

### Community Partners

Throughout the region, we work with a wide variety of community partners to advance our mission of eliminating hunger and its root causes. From running food pantries to hosting Seed to Supper™ classes, from food insecurity screening in healthcare settings to grassroots organizing around anti-hunger policies, we are honored to work with so many passionate and committed individuals and organizations.

**“Hunger is year-round – we are glad to be able to provide year-round support. Monthly automatic contributions make that simple.”**

*Jeff and Erin F-B., Monthly Sustainer*



## VOLUNTEER

Volunteer to support 1 in 4 of our community members facing hunger. There are many ways to help contribute your time to our movement to end hunger and its root causes.

***Important Notice:*** *In the wake of COVID-19, we have retooled our volunteer shifts to account for social distancing to the extent possible. We encourage people to check our website for current information. Thank you for helping us keep the health and safety of our community at the core of our work!*



## ADVOCATE

Oregon Food Bank's Advocacy team works year-round on public policies that affect Oregonians who struggle with hunger.

Help us build a powerful movement. Through the concerted efforts of people like you, we can ensure that decision makers at all levels get the message: helping those in need is a priority today, and addressing hunger's root causes is vital to eliminating hunger for good.



## DONATE

Become a **MONTHLY SUSTAINER**. It's an easy and convenient way to give. Set up a recurring gift and we will take care of the rest.

Feed the future by joining the **LEGACY CIRCLE**. Ensure that you make a lasting impact on those struggling with hunger by building your family's legacy through a planned gift to Oregon Food Bank. You can designate a percentage or specific dollar amount and revise at any time.

Thank you for your partnership and we hope you will continue to invest in this critical work with a donation that is meaningful to you. Our philanthropic engagement team is here to partner with you to achieve your goals.



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