

Alleviating hunger by creating access to food

PROPOSED CUTS TO SNAP PUT FAMILIES AT RISK

A federal proposal to tighten eligibility requirements for the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) would cause local families to lose access to food stamps.

More than 65,000 people in Lane County benefit from SNAP, the first line of defense against hunger in the United States. If this rule passes, as many as 10,000 people in Lane County who rely on SNAP could be affected, including seniors, working families with children and persons with disabilities.

In Lane County, where salaries and costs of living are higher than other parts of the state, many low-income residents use food stamps to help with meals while much of their income goes toward housing and child care.

Reducing the availability of SNAP benefits to low-income Lane County residents will increase the demand for food assistance



provided by FFLC and our partner agencies. However, FFLC does not have enough food to make up the difference for those at risk of losing SNAP benefits. For every one meal FFLC provides, SNAP provides 12 meals.

FFLC is actively engaging our community to submit comments opposing this rule change.

are getting the chance they deserve to grow up healthy, safe, economically secure and educated” (Children First for Oregon 2017).

For families already struggling to pay rent, the high cost of child care leads directly to food insecurity. The cost of child care in Oregon has spiked since the 1990s — 121% for a toddler, more than twice the rate of inflation (Children First for Oregon 2017). In Lane County, the cost of child care is higher than the average rent (ALICE Report 2016).

Single mothers are the most likely population to experience food insecurity. In Oregon, 48% of single moms experience food insecurity (OSU 2017). Households headed by women, with or without children, remain the most vulnerable to hunger.



49% of survey respondents live in households with children under the age of 18 (Hunger Factors Survey 2018, FFLC survey of Lane County food box recipients).



42% of survey respondents say they are unable to work due to the high cost of child care (Hunger Factors Survey 2018).



23% of survey respondents say that health care and benefits would make food assistance less necessary (Hunger Factors Survey 2018).

LOCAL FAMILIES STRUGGLE TO MAKE ENDS MEET

The 2017 County Data Book by Children First for Oregon found three troubling trends in Oregon — low rates of early education enrollment, a shortage of mental health services and persistent food insecurity. In 2013-2015, 16% of couples with children and 44% of single mothers in Oregon experienced food insecurity — 10% more than the national average.

“These trends combined with high housing costs, high child care costs and a lack of living wage jobs mean that too few children



DINING ROOM SPORTS A NEW MURAL

The 20x21EUG Mural Project is an initiative of the City of Eugene Cultural Services Public Art Program to create 20 or more world-class outdoor murals in Eugene in time for the 2021 International Association of Athletics Federations (IAAF) World Championships.

FFLC’s Dining Room was chosen as a site for one of the murals, created by local artist Kari Johnson. Kari’s was the 22nd and final mural to be installed.

Kari explains her work this way:

“Right now we’re at a crisis point. The Arctic is on fire. Fires are going to increase. It’s sort of a civilizational breakdown. There’s this petroleum plant that is on fire. That’s the background.”

“But I want to convey that even though we’ve got a world crisis we can spend our energy restoring the land. In the foreground people are responding to the crisis by tending the local landscape and restoring the health of the local environment so they can produce food for us and shelter animals and be a living environment that we can be part of.

“It’s about localizing food. Trying to learn the ways of native people. How they maintained the landscape here. Their land practices made the land really rich where it could support so much life.

“It’s about tending what we have and restoring what we have in the face of global crisis. That’s what this is about.”

FFLC’s Dining Room serves up to 200 hot, nutritious meals a night Monday through Thursday to diners with little or no income. FFLC Family Dinner Program Manager Josie McCarthy is thrilled with the response the mural and Kari are getting.

“The community response has been fantastic,” said Josie. “Not only from our volunteers and guests but from all the street traffic, too. Kari has combined her passion for addressing Lane County’s hunger crisis with her passion for Oregon-grown trees and flowers and her concern for global warming. It makes for an incredible piece of artwork. What a fine artist and an even finer human being.”



Kari Johnson

UPCOMING EVENTS

October 11-13

Lane County Home Improvement Show and Food Drive

October 30-31

Haunted Market at 5th Street Market

November 8-9

KDUK/US101 Stuff the Bus
Eugene/Springfield Walmart stores

November 23

Letter Carriers Food Drive

November 16-December 24

Holiday Market

November 28

Turkey Trot

January 24-26

Good Earth Home, Garden & Living Show

February 1-29

Governor’s State Employees Food Drive

February 1-29

Grilled Cheese Experience at participating restaurants

February 14

Dutch Luv at Lane County Dutch Bros

February and March

Love Your Neighbor School Food Drive

More info online at foodforlanecounty.org/events.

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FOOD *for* THOUGHT

■ NEWSLETTER ■ FALL 2019

Alleviating hunger by creating access to food



FOOD FOR LANE COUNTY

770 Bailey Hill Road
Eugene, OR 97402
(541) 343-2822

VISION

*To eliminate hunger
in Lane County*

MISSION

*To alleviate hunger by
creating access to food*

We accomplish our mission by soliciting, collecting, rescuing, growing, preparing and packaging food for distribution through a countywide network of social service agencies and programs, and through public awareness, education and community advocacy.

Editor: Denise Wendt

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MOM SHARES HER EXPERIENCE WITH FFLC'S PARTICIPANT ADVISORY COUNCIL

Bianca is food insecure, but she is more than that. She is a wife, a mother of two and a native Oregonian. She works full-time, she is a good cook and she is proud of her Mexican heritage.

She earns too much to qualify for food stamps or WIC, so to feed her family of four she turns to FFLC for a little extra help. She gets fresh fruits and vegetables — tomatoes, onions, potatoes and carrots — from an FFLC Extra Helping program at the affordable housing site where she lives and canned foods from an FFLC pantry at the Relief Nursery. She rounds that out with groceries from Winco.

“I’m the only income in my family right now, so I depend a lot on the help I get from FFLC. That’s how I’ve been able to sustain my family.”

She joined FFLC’s new Participant Advisory Council because she wanted to share her experiences — of being food insecure, of being a mom, of being a Latina in Lane County, of working full-time but still needing help. She wants people to know that it’s okay to ask for help no matter where you’re from.

“People are afraid to ask for help. Afraid that someone will ask about their status or their income. They’re afraid to be seen, so they stay under the radar. I know I was, and I was born and raised here. But I don’t care what people think. I need to feed my family.”

Her children are 8 and 5, but she is already looking ahead to college. She wants them to study, to succeed and not have to struggle.

“I make them speak Spanish at home and English everywhere else. Right now they don’t understand the benefit, but one day they’ll thank me. The Spanish culture is going to be lost within a few generations. I want them to always know where they came from.”





Barbara and Louise

PARTICIPANT ADVISORY COUNCIL ENGAGES THE PEOPLE WE SERVE

To be an effective ally we need to talk to the people we serve. We need to ask questions, and we need to listen to the answers. What are we doing right? What are we doing wrong? What could we do better?

FFLC’s new Participant Advisory Council was designed to do just that. The 12-member council met once a month for six months at FFLC’s Dining Room in Eugene. Each member had experience using one or more FFLC services. Over a meal they got to know each other. They asked questions. They took notes. They shared their experiences, and they brought opinions and new perspectives to the group.

Together, council members talked about debunking myths about the people we serve and about reducing the stigma that too often comes with asking for help. They gave their feedback on FFLC programs and services. They talked about the quality of food we distribute and obstacles to accessing food.

“If you’re food secure there are probably only a handful of ways you get food,” said Karen Edmonds, FFLC Programs and Services Director. “Grocery store, restaurant, dinner at a friend’s house. Our participants could list 26 different ways they get food in a typical month. It shows just how resourceful people are and how many different ways they need to go about getting their basic needs met.”

Council members and friends Barbara and Louise organize FFLC’s Extra Helping program at the affordable housing site where they live. For both women, getting by is about neighbors helping neighbors and casting a wide net. For Louise, that support was especially helpful when she was diagnosed with cancer.

“It’s really important to know your neighbors and make friends,” said Louise. “Building social capital can be as easy as knocking on your neighbor’s door and asking for a cup of sugar. It’s about building community and being open to making friends.”

SELCO SNAP MATCH MEANS MORE VEGGIES

For families with limited incomes, the cost of fresh produce can be prohibitive. Now SNAP dollars go even further at FFLC’s Youth Farm. Thanks to a generous match from SELCO Community Credit Union, if you use your Oregon Trail Card (EBT) at FFLC’s farm stands your purchase will be matched up to \$10. Funds from SELCO also provided signage and coupons at both stands that promote the match.

You’ll always get \$2 off your purchase of \$10 or more with coupon. WIC and Farm Direct Nutrition vouchers are also matched up to \$4. The farm stands are open Thursdays 2pm to 6pm at PeaceHealth RiverBend, 3311 Riverbend Drive in Springfield and Saturdays 10am to 2pm at the Youth Farm, 705 Flamingo Avenue in Springfield. Both farm stands are open through the end of October.



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LETTER CARRIERS FOOD DRIVE IS SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 23

Mark your calendars now. The Letter Carriers Food Drive is Saturday, November 23. Put a plastic bag with nonperishable food by your mailbox early that morning. Your letter carrier or an FFLC volunteer or staff person will pick it up.

REALTORS® RAISE MONEY FOR KIDS

Nutrition for every child! That was the rallying cry once again from Eugene Association of REALTORS® and Springfield Board of REALTORS® who came together in July for the Annual Charity Golf Tournament Fore Our Kids in Memory of Gary Rasmussen to benefit FFLC programs that feed kids. The event raised more than 68,000 meals for children. Thank you also to these sponsors.

Title sponsor RMLS • Re/Max Integrity • State Farm Mitch Hannan • Kendall Subaru • Landmark Home Warranty • Mortgage Express • Umpqua Bank Home Lending • US Bank • AmeriSpec Inspection Services • Finance of America Mortgage • Loan Depot • OREF • Peak Mortgage • Precision Capital • Berkshire Hathaway HomeServices • Ireland Inspections LLC • Oregon Mortgage Association • T&R Painting & Construction

DRIVING HUNGER OUT OF LANE COUNTY

Thank you to these drives for raising 500 or more pounds of food or \$500 or more to ease hunger in Lane County. For information on organizing your own drive, contact Stefani Roybal at sroybal@foodforlanecounty.org or (541) 343-2822 x124.

Bi-Mart Charity Golf Tournament • Dutch Luv • Elmer’s Restaurant • Emerald Bridge Club • Eugene Association of REALTORS® and Springfield Board of REALTORS® Annual Charity Golf Tournament • Eugene Disc Golf Club Ice Bowl • Grace Community Fellowship Kids Camp • Jahan Sabzalian Birthday Drive • Jersey Mike’s Subs Day of Giving • KVAL Can Do Food Drive • Lane County Fair • Lane County Home Shows • Letter Carriers Stamp Out Hunger Food Drive • Louise Smith & Neighbors • Northgate Liquor Store • Northwest Paella Fest • Oak Hill School • Oregon Community Credit Union • REALTORS® Food Drive at Bi-Mart • SELCO Employee Drive • Spicy Bowls • University of Oregon Spring Game • Waypoint Community Church • Willamalane Children’s Celebration



WAYS TO DONATE



DONATE ONLINE
foodforlanecounty.org/donate



MAIL GIFTS
770 Bailey Hill Road
Eugene, Oregon 97402



CALL
(541) 343-2822

EVERY DOLLAR MAKES A DIFFERENCE

We rely on financial support from donors like you to help the people who turn to us for help. Every hour, every dollar, every pound makes a difference. For every dollar you donate, we can access and distribute enough food to provide three meals. Here’s some of what you’ve made possible over the past year.

25

job trainees

6.6 million

meals provided

74,000

volunteer hours

8 million

lbs of food distributed

LETTER TO READERS



FOOD for Lane County is a remarkable organization. I knew that before I became executive director. Now that I’ve been in this role for several weeks, I am even more amazed and humbled by all of the good work that is done by and through this organization.

FFLC brings people together in a powerful way. The partner agencies — who distribute 70% of all the food we collect — represent a large and diverse group of local nonprofits, faith-based groups and community-based efforts, all working together to alleviate hunger by creating access to food.

Volunteers of all political, religious and ideological persuasions work cheerfully side by side — in our kitchen and warehouse,

at the Dining Room, at the Grassroots Garden and at the Youth Farm and at the more than 150 locations where partner agencies distribute food.

Donors like you make regular financial contributions to support this critical work.

FOOD for Lane County brings us together around a common cause to reduce and ultimately end hunger. Thank you for being part of such an inspiring and positive force for good in our community.

Tom Mulhern
Executive Director

BI-MART GOLF TOURNAMENT A HOLE IN ONE

Thank you to Bi-Mart for generously supporting FFLC with its 28th Annual Charity Golf Tournament in August. Bi-Mart also shared proceeds from the event with communities where they have stores. The tournament has grown to be one of the premier fundraising events in the state. We are grateful to be this year’s recipient.

Bi-Mart supports FFLC in many ways — with funds, with food, with volunteers and with transportation. Since 2004, Bi-Mart has donated more than 5.5 million pounds of food and other products to FFLC. Thank you to Bi-Mart and its employees for many years of generous support.



STATUS OF HUNGER IN LANE COUNTY 2019

15% of people food-insecure, 20% of children food-insecure

Source: Oregon Hunger Task Force

AUCTION PROVIDES A MILLION MEALS

This month, we celebrated our 16th Annual Empty Bowls Dinner & Auction at our new warehouse on West Broadway in Eugene. Thank you to everyone for raising enough money to provide one million meals for our neighbors in need! Thank you especially to chairs Karen and Boris Wiedenfeld-Needham, to title sponsor Hawes Group and to our many sponsors, donors, volunteers and guests who came together to make the evening a huge success.

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