

oregon business **hunger** initiative



“Now more than ever we have a responsibility to **work together** to help feed hungry people. When people are able to meet their most basic needs we create a stronger community. It only takes a little bit of effort to affect change, so it’s my hope that businesses will do their part to help end hunger in Oregon. ”

- Lisa Sedlar, President
New Seasons Market

The Oregon Business Hunger Initiative will help move the community's standard from charity to dignity. We will support emergency food services and programs while they are needed. And we will work to ensure that families don't live in a constant state of food emergency.

hunger is a business issue

Hunger impacts the work force. Oregon employers are experiencing a shortage of skilled labor across sectors, from engineers and technicians to building trades and health care. Hunger contributes to this shortage by robbing future employees of their ability to learn and succeed.

Hunger is prevalent in working households. Twenty percent of households making between \$16,000 and \$30,000 still struggle to meet their basic needs and feed their families. More than 41 percent of those receiving food stamps are working and 46 percent of households receiving emergency food have at least one working member.

Record numbers of Oregonians are seeking help. Recent statistics from the Oregon Food Bank Network confirm that emergency food box distribution is up 12 percent statewide, and as much as 40 percent in some communities.

Hunger impacts our future work force. Each month, more than 75,000 children eat meals from emergency food boxes. Medical research has shown that hungry children are more likely to have health and behavioral problems. Children who are hungry have more trouble learning in school. Our communities experience lost productivity and increased social costs over their lifetimes.

Hunger is an income issue. Oregonians are hungry because they don't make enough money to cover basic living costs. All Oregonians deserve the opportunity to make an adequate income and live with dignity - not to be the recipients of continuous charity.

While each individual is responsible for making the effort to gain and maintain employment by being a hard and honest worker, we are all responsible for helping to ensure that hard and honest labor offers families the dignity to be able to meet their basic needs.



your support fuels efforts to provide emergency food and long-term public-policy solutions

Join state leaders and anti-hunger advocates to address the root causes of hunger. Current activities include:

Investing in Oregon's Earned Income Tax Credit and affordable housing.

Expanding farm direct programs to serve more women, infants, children and seniors while supporting local farmers.

Making school breakfasts available for more low-income children.

Providing fruits and vegetables in school lunches to increase child nutrition and support Oregon farmers.

We encourage you to:

- Educate business leaders about hunger in Oregon. Tell them that hunger threatens our state's economic competitiveness.
- Increase the volume of nutritious food available through the Oregon Food Bank Network and improve the capacity of local hunger-relief agencies.
- Expand summer food, after-school, and school breakfast programs for children.
- Support food stamp outreach activities.
- Support the Childhood Hunger Initiative's efforts to educate health care professionals and address hunger in the clinical setting.

Get Involved. If you would like to support this initiative, please contact Jon Stubenvoll, jstubenvoll@oregonfoodbank.org or (503) 419-4175.

Questions? Contact Judi Johansen, jjohansen@marylhurst.edu (503) 699-6266 or Patti Whitney-Wise at patti@oregonhunger.org. (503) 595-5501.

“ In light of the current financial crisis, **Oregon businesses need to engage in fighting hunger** on both the legislative front and the emergency food supply front. Many working families are no longer able to make ends meet, placing a greater strain on hunger-relief agencies like Oregon Food Bank and compelling us, as community, to look at hunger systemically.”

-Judi Johansen, President
Marylhurst University

The Oregon Business

Association supports legislation to increase the amount of affordable housing in Oregon. Housing costs are taking a bigger bite out of household incomes, putting families at risk of hunger.

In 2005, **Providence** responded to news of a major food shortage at Oregon Food Bank by providing a \$200,000 grant to purchase emergency food. The funds helped OFB purchase about five semi-trucks of nutritious food to fill the shelves of hunger-relief agencies throughout the Oregon Food Bank Network. In addition, Providence employees volunteer to repack food to be distributed to hunger-relief agencies and donate funds through employee giving programs.

Oregon Business Hunger Initiative early endorsers:

Burgerville
Columbia Sportswear
EC Company
Geller Silvis and Associates
Kaiser Permanente
Kuni Automotive
New Seasons Markets
NORPAC Foods
NW Natural
Pacific Power
Portland General Electric
Providence Health & Services
Shiels, Obletz, Johnson
Schwabe, Williamson and Wyatt
Stoel Rives LLP
The ODS Companies
Weyerhaeuser Company