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the portland food project

Green Bag News • July 2024

Summer Love



Thank you to all the volunteers who were able to help staff the Portland Food Project table at the Woodlawn Farmers Market, helping us continue to grow our donor network!

It's definitely shaping up to be a hot summer. Did you know there are additional resources available for those in need?

- [Summer Meals Finder](#)
- [Oregon Summer Meals](#)
- [Hundreds More Schools Expected to Provide Universal School Meals](#)

Thank you!

Reminder: Our next pickup is Saturday, August 10.

What we've accomplished together!

June 2024

Food Donated: 17,925 lbs.
which makes: 14,938 meals¹

2024 Total

Food Donated: 54,576.7 lbs.
which makes: 45,481 meals¹

¹ The Oregon Food Bank calculates that 1.2 lbs. of food = 1 meal.

Meet Our Pantry Partner: Sharon Community Services

Sharon Community Services

Portland Food Project interviews John Olive, Sharon Community Services Food Pantry

What is Sharon Community Services?

Sharon Community Services works to make a tangible difference in the lives of our community members, creating a beacon of hope, unity, and love. For the last 20 years we have run a food bank through the church, distributing food to the community the last two Saturdays every month, from 2-4pm.

How much food do you distribute?

Our food distribution varies, but we typically serve 30-50 people every time we're open with some people picking up for 2-5 people in their household. During the pandemic we served the community through drive up. Since then we've moved to a box distribution approach. This lets community members work with our team to ensure they're getting the right food for their needs. It usually takes 5-10 minutes to fill up each box.



Who do you serve?

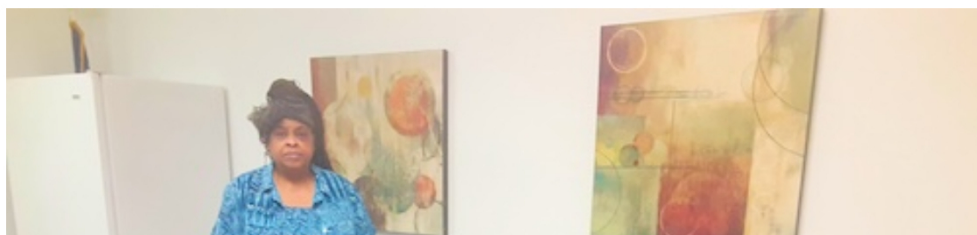
We serve all community members in need from our location in northeast Portland at NE 22nd, near the Alberta Arts District. We work to provide fresh and non-perishable foods in every box. We also provide information on additional support resources available for those neighbors in need.

The community we serve is diverse and includes Russian and Spanish speaking members. We have 6-10 volunteers on days we distribute food, and are often able to staff with multilingual volunteers. For the times we serve community members without a volunteer who is able to speak that language, we keep posters on the walls explaining our services in a number of languages.

How much does Portland Food Project impact distribution?

What Portland Food Project does is really incredible. I pickup and help each time the donations come in. The weight may vary, but it provides a lot of things that help us restock our shelves. It's amazing that people are filling these bags and making them available. We are so thankful that everyone wants to help those in our community who are hurting.

We get food for our community from Oregon Food Bank, Portland Food Project, and community members who sometimes contribute bread and desserts. During harvest time we are even able to get fresh vegetables from local farms. One of the things we love is the variety of food that people put into the green bags.





What are your greatest needs/challenges?

We're seeing a tremendous amount of need right now. Homelessness is all over the place and the cost of food is so high. There is a need for every donation that comes in. We get so much variety in the green bags, like canned foods, tuna, peanut butter, and cereal. One thing we don't get very often are cooking oils. Meal prep kits are helpful. Noodles and pastas are easy to fix. Soups are great. But any food that donors provide goes right back out to help our neighbors in need.

Why do you do this work?

We want to make a difference and connect with others. Make a tangible difference in their lives. It's great when we see people come in who are beyond excited. Sometimes people need help, but don't want to go to the food pantry. We make sure our space is a no judgment zone. People are coming in with nothing and leaving with abundance. If we want to make the world a better place, we need to be better people and make it real.

Volunteer Profile: Fred Rectanus, Donor, NC, and More

How are you involved with Portland Food Project?

I've been a food donor for almost 10 years, a neighborhood coordinator for 3, and I'm in my second year as a member of the Portland Food Project (PFP) Steering Committee. I'm currently working closely with a volunteer, Sandy Samuel, to organize more "tabling" events for PFP. Tabling events are street fairs, farmers markets, and other neighborhood gatherings where PFP sets out information about Green Bag donations on tables and volunteers work in pairs for 2-hour shifts speaking to event-goers about their experiences, handing out information sheets, and explaining the process of how the green bags are picked up and distributed directly to local food pantries. Our purpose is: 1. to enroll new food donors or neighborhood coordinators (NCs); 2. to greet current donors; 3. to increase community awareness of the Green Bag program; and 4. to enjoy time together supporting the important mission of alleviating food insecurity.

Why focus on "tabling"?

For me personally? I love developing community, connecting with neighbors, and

sharing how easy and important PFP is. For PFP, tabling is important because we have to continue expanding our donor network to meet the constantly growing needs of our community. Having a table at neighborhood events like farmers markets and street fairs is a great way to share PFP with more people.

Having a table at neighborhood events makes it so easy to start a conversation about all the great work we're doing. Many people don't know what PFP is. They confuse it with the Oregon Food Bank or think it's a food pantry. Some have even thought it's a resource for farmers. When they learn how our all volunteer organization has many neighbors coming together to each make a small contribution to help our local food pantries throughout the year, they're interested.



What's it like to volunteer at a PFP table?

It's a great opportunity to get out and get more involved. People love learning how others are helping the community and they often ask questions. A large part of doing tabling well is just bringing your passion for the work we're doing. **People love that it's neighbors donating and the food stays local. It's local, grassroots and everyone is a volunteer.**

What's next and how can people get involved?

This year we have 7 tabling events planned, spread across town: Hollywood Farmers Market, Hillsdale Farmers Market, Woodlawn Farmers Market, Fremont Fest, Kenton Street Fair, Belmont Street Fair, and Sunday Parkways SW Portland. With so many events we could use more volunteers to help staff the tables. To sign up for future tabling opportunities (2 hour shifts), please reach out to me at fredr@portlandfoodproject.org or speak with your neighborhood coordinator.

Share Your Skills and Experience

Portland Food Project is a 100% volunteer-run organization. [Contact us to volunteer today!](#)

We are currently recruiting neighborhood coordinators, steering committee members, and additional help with communications, social media, writing or photography/video. We would love to put your talents and enthusiasm to use!

Mark Your Calendar!

Collection dates for 2024 are:

- August 10th
- October 12th
- December 14th



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