

## NOURISHING SOULS IN TROUP COUNTY, WITH YOUR HELP!

Every fourth Sunday, like clockwork, after church services, the parking lot of New Community Church in LaGrange is a hub of activity. **The banner announcing “Food Pantry this Sunday” is a message of hope for many people in the community, drawing cars in line, ready to receive assistance.**

As the clock strikes 11:30 a.m., adult church members fill grocery carts, and youth volunteers wheel out carts filled with essentials, distributing bread, canned goods, meats, and fresh produce to those in need. Adult church members fill trunks with bags of food.

**THANKS TO YOU, New Community Church can feed bodies, nourish souls, and foster a sense of community and compassion that extends far beyond the church doors.**

It's about connecting with people. Volunteers take time to chat, offering prayers and support to those facing hardships. Angela Kenyon, a church Elder and pantry volunteer, explains their mission goes beyond providing food. “We want to be sure people know that we are here for help if someone has other needs besides food,” says Angela. “We can offer some emergency services or at least refer someone to an agency that can help them.”

**“None of this could happen without Feeding the Valley supporters like you,”** says food pantry leader Tyrone Billingsley and his wife, Janis.



*Tyrone Billingsley  
and his wife, Janis*



**The Southern Oregon Softball team returned to volunteer with us!** They are participating in the NAIA Championship, and as part of this experience, they dive into a community service project for a half day. We were happy to see them again!

## FRESH THOUGHTS

From Frank Sheppard, President & CEO

I hope you'll take a moment to look at the Impact Report in this newsletter. **Our Partner Agencies, our volunteers, our team, and YOU made a difference in the lives of so many families during our last fiscal year.**

Your support has been especially important because Feeding America data shows that **food insecurity has increased by 7% across our 18-county service area**, driven by inflation and rising grocery costs. With your help, we've been able to step up to this challenge.

Local foundations and individual donors like you also helped fully fund our \$5.7 million expansion project. While funds from the American Rescue Plan and CARES Act kickstarted the project, we relied on our community for 40% of the funding, and you came through!

**During the first half of this year, we cut the ribbon and opened our new Aflac Hunger Action Center (HAC) at our Columbus facility.** This state-of-the-art center boasts expanded warehouse space, increased cold and frozen storage, and a brand-new volunteer center. With these enhancements, we're better equipped than ever to meet the growing demand for hunger relief in all of the counties we serve, providing more nutritious options like lean meats and healthy, fresh produce.

Our volunteers are the heartbeat of our organization. We invite you to enjoy our climate-controlled volunteer center and help us feed neighbors in need.

To our generous grant providers and private donors, we extend our sincerest thanks.

**Through your support, you are tackling the urgent issues of food insecurity head-on, reaching more families, children, seniors, veterans, and homeless individuals in our community than ever before.** Together, we're making a real and lasting difference in the lives of those who need it most.



# FOOD AS MEDICINE: A Lifeline for Health

Food insecurity is not just about hunger; it's a major health crisis. Poor nutrition can cause serious health issues like diabetes. According to the National Library of Medicine, diabetes rates jump from 10% in mildly food-insecure households to 16.1% in those facing severe food insecurity.

**Recognizing the critical link between diet and health, Feeding the Valley has teamed up with our partner agency, Food Mill, to offer a lifeline.** Together, we're providing free, nutritious meals to healthcare patients who need them most, thanks to a generous grant from the Elevance Foundation. Patients with diet-related illnesses can also attend healthy cooking classes, learn how to shop for healthy food on a budget, and receive delicious, nutritious recipes.

**WITH YOUR SUPPORT, we can turn the tide against food insecurity and diet-related illnesses, one meal at a time.**



## DID YOU KNOW?

**FOOD BANKS** are the backbone of the hunger relief system, ensuring a steady supply of food to smaller, community-based food pantries. **FOOD PANTRIES** are the critical frontline service points that directly assist individuals and families facing food insecurity. Both are part of a comprehensive network working tirelessly to combat hunger in our communities.

FOOD  
BANKS

Typically operates at the regional level, serving numerous local pantries and other organizations.



**OPERATION:**

Operates at the community level, often run by churches, non-profits, or community organizations.

FOOD  
PANTRIES

Receives donations from food manufacturers, retailers, farmers, and community food drives.



**SOURCE OF FOOD:**

Receives food from food banks, local donations, and community food drives.

Equipped with large warehouses capable of storing vast amounts of food, including refrigerated and frozen items.



**STORAGE:**

Typically has limited storage space, focusing on distributing food as quickly as possible.

Supplies food to food pantries, soup kitchens, shelters, and other community programs.



**DISTRIBUTION:**

Offers food directly to clients, often through scheduled pick-up times or appointments.

# 2023-2024 OUR IMPACT!



More Than **15** Million Pounds of Food Distributed



**4,537,460** Pounds of Fresh Produce Distributed

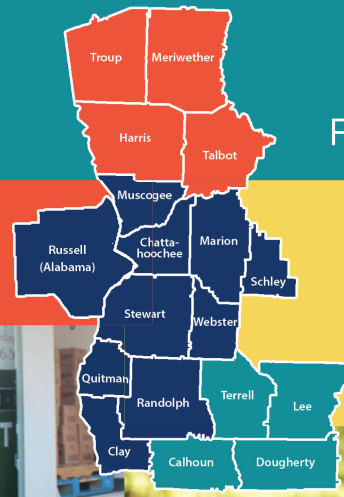
**62,428** Volunteer Hours

**110** Food Donors



**38,757** Senior Meals

Serving **18** Counties



**5.2** Million Mobile Pantry Pounds Distributed



**41,250** Buddy Packs

**141,925** Kids Cafe Summer Meals

## LOOKING TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE?

Visit our website [feedingthevalley.org](http://feedingthevalley.org) for ways to get involved! You can donate food, start a food drive, volunteer at the Food Bank, or make a donation. Join us in ensuring that no one in our community goes hungry.

