



Mid 2022

Despite the pandemic, inflation, and global disruption, people must eat.

The past 2.5 years saw a sixfold increase in demand on the Food Bank. Community support helped us meet that demand. By providing tasty, nutritious food, including fresh produce grown on Orcas Island, throughout San Juan County, and in the Skagit Valley, OIFB reduces the financial pressure on island residents. For many, the surging prices of food, housing, utilities, gasoline, and other necessities create potential health-threatening compromises. OIFB ensures that our customers don't have to decide between eating and putting gas in the car, keeping the lights on, or buying shoes for their children. Many of our customers perform work vital to our lives. Through your support of the Food Bank, they can live here and live healthy.

Some of the new or expanded programs at the Food Bank

Meal kits! Blue Ribbon and HelloFresh sparked an idea. We partnered with a few other food pantries and the Washington State Department of Agriculture to create a 3-month pilot program that went live in May.

We assemble and distribute 200 meal kits per month. Each kit includes all the ingredients for a healthy meal. Six different kits help our customers learn new ways to enjoy food through culturally diverse recipes and cooking techniques.

Teen Tent

Each weekday, about 18 teens pick up snacks, including fruits and vegetables, at lunch time or after school. The teens worked on a design for the tent with an artist who donated his time and talent.



Weekend Packs for Kids provides two breakfasts, two lunches, and snacks to 62 kids K-8.

“My four housemates and I work on a construction crew. We were excited to hear that you served Hispanic meals. It’s nice to have a homecooked meal.”

On a typical visit to the Food Bank, a family of two saves \$106. A family of four saves \$150.



In 2021, OIFB distributed 170,000 pounds of food, with a value of \$356,000. This translated into 141,666 meals for our customers, the equivalent of \$2.51 per meal. As a result of relationships we've built and diligent pursuit of grants, 77% by dollar value of the food we receive is donated.

“Both of my grandsons are teens and have such big appetites. Now I’ve been able to provide them with all the food they need so they are not always so hungry! They love all the fresh fruit.”

¡Comidas preparadas! In 2020 and 2021, with input from our Latinx/Hispanic customers and grants for cultural outreach, we added two Spanish-speaking staff members and worked to stock the foods people in this community like to eat. We discovered that many of our Latinx/Hispanic customers work multiple jobs and/or jobs in landscaping or construction that can fill the daylight hours, leaving little time to cook. We hired a Hispanic cook to create prepared to-go meals. To date we have served over 500 traditional Hispanic to-go meals and increased our Latinx/Hispanic customers by 80%.





Plant starts in honor of Luka

We dedicate this year's spring plant-starts distribution to our dear friend and former AmeriCorps service member, Luka Palisaede. Luka was taken from us by a car accident last winter. Learning to grow food as a volunteer in the OIFB garden had a positive impact on Luka's life, and Luka in turn enriched the quality of our lives. Thanks to the 2021 Farm to Food Pantry Initiative, we are supplying 500 plant-starts to our customers in Luka's honor. Growing a garden, no matter its size, combats depression and provides a sense of purpose and accomplishment.



Luka Palisaede at work in the Food Bank garden in Spring 2021.



Our dedication to our customers' needs gets national recognition

In April, OIFB's dedication to serving our customers with culturally appropriate foods — and with dignity — was featured in *Food Bank News*, a national publication. An excerpt: “[Executive Director Amanda] Sparks said it’s essential that the food bank encourage...people to get the assistance they need rather than move away.... [The Food Bank] runs ads...that emphasize its doors are open for anyone and that no paperwork is required.... [They] reframe the concept of food assistance as an issue of food justice, rather than a handout.”

“Now that I’ve returned to the Food Bank — after 45 years! — I eat two vegetables each night instead of one. I feel like I have a new lease on life.”

OIFB's mission, “To work with our community to prevent hunger,” relies on your ongoing support.

Here's how you can help...

- Mail a check payable to OIFB in the enclosed envelope.
- Visit www.orcasislandfoodbank.org and click on “Donate.”
- Schedule a monthly contribution through the website or by mail or phone.
- Join our fantastic group of volunteers. Call OIFB at (360) 376-4445 or email orcasislandfoodbank@centurylink.net

The Orcas Island Food Bank Board and Staff:

Board: Bob Morris, Susan McBain, Margie Bangs, Tony Ghazel, Erik Koehler, Kevin Ranker and Rick Rhoads

Staff: Amanda Sparks, Mary Heydron, Alison O’Toole, Kellen Comrie, and AmeriCorps members Yesenia Armas and Rachel Barron

And Our Awesome Volunteers!



Our Monday volunteers stow the Food Lifeline shipment.

Thank you!



Orcas Island Food Bank

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 Distribution Hours: Monday 3:00 - 6:30, Tuesday & Friday, noon to 6:30
 OIFB is an equal opportunity provider and employer.