



# Annual Report 2024



---

# OAFP History

The Oregon Area Food Pantry (OAFP) has served the residents of the Oregon School District for over 20 years. In 2017, the food pantry building at 107 N. Alpine Parkway opened. With more than 5,000 square feet to display and store perishable and nonperishable food and other essential items, the pantry greatly expanded its offerings and hours.

The vision of the OAFP is to reduce the impact of poverty on the residents of the Oregon School District by compassionately and humbly providing information, education and both tangible and intangible resources. The mission of the Oregon Area Food Pantry (OAFP) is to provide food and necessities to those in need who are residents of the Oregon School District. Our goal is to be a consistent, dependable resource for our clients, cooperating with other community agencies.

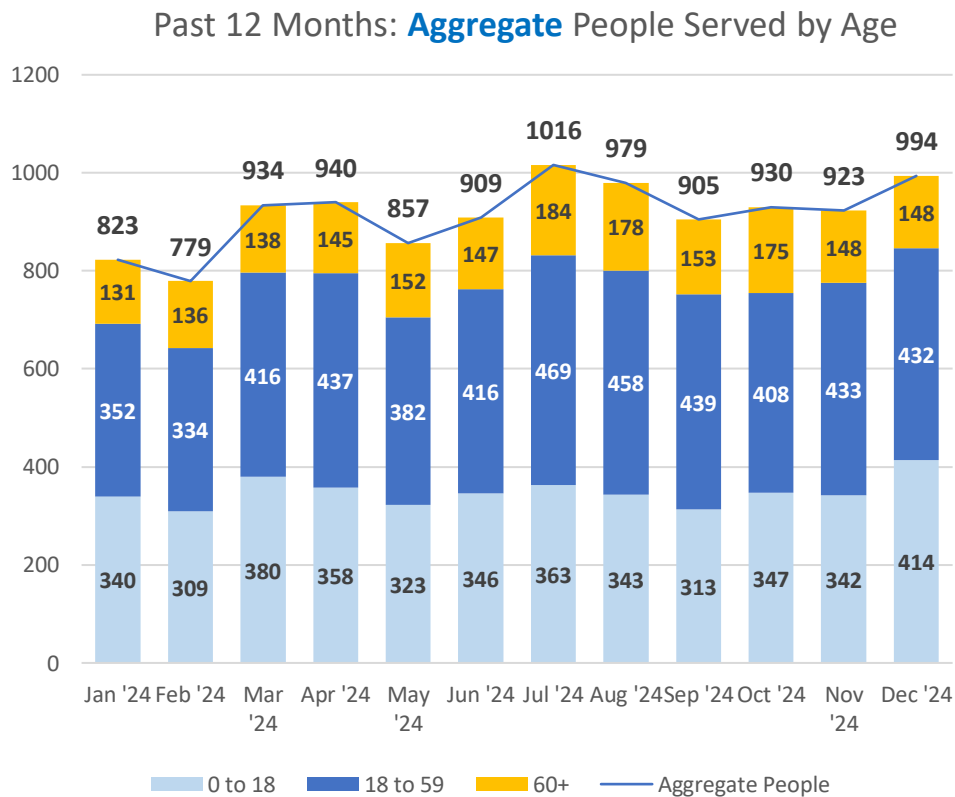
OAFP is a registered, 501c3 nonprofit, governed by a pantry board. After relying solely on volunteers, the pantry board decided in 2021 to create a part-time executive director position. Sheri Pollock has been the executive director since November 1, 2021. This enabled the pantry to expand its programs, outreach, and community partnerships to better meet the needs of our neighbors.

OAFP is proud to be a full choice pantry. This means that pantry guests shop in the store and choose among a variety of fresh seasonal fruits and vegetables, frozen and canned protein, frozen and canned fruits and vegetables, fresh dairy, eggs and cheese, pasta and rice, cereal, dried nuts and fruits, baking products, and personal essential items such as laundry soap, toilet paper, dish soap, toothpaste, etc. Guests are welcome to come to the pantry as often as needed. The pantry is open every Tuesday morning, two Thursday evenings a month and one Saturday a month.

# OAFP Operations in 2024



In 2024, the pantry served 1,200 unique people (406 unique households) and almost 11,000 total people (3,651 total households), and each household came to the pantry an average of about 9 times. As the year progressed, the pantry saw the number of people being served each month increase from 779 to 1,016. This was a 46% increase over 2023, which was also a record year. In 2024, 125 new families, representing 379 people, joined the pantry, a 16% increase over 2023.



In 2024, the pantry provided 215,275 pounds of food and essential items to our guests, 30,000 pounds more than in 2023. The food and essential items came from a variety of sources, with 84% being donated and 16% purchased. Items were

---

purchased from local grocery stores, meat markets, and Second Harvest Food Bank. Items were donated from food drives, church donation boxes, grocery bags purchased at Oregon Hy Vee grocery store, Second Harvest Food Bank, the Temporary Emergency Food Assistance Program, Greenfield Farms, food rescue from Oregon Hy-Vee and Brooklyn Dollar General, Oregon Food Pantry Gardens, local gardens, and miscellaneous donations from individuals.

The pantry relies upon volunteers. In 2024, volunteers contributed more than 3,100 hours to help serve guests, date check and sort food, pick up food from local stores, clean and maintain the landscape, and other miscellaneous chores needed to keep the pantry working. Volunteers come from all walks of life, ages, and organizations. They reliably show up, without complaint, and do whatever is needed to ensure we can serve our guests with dignity. It is impossible to overstate the important contribution of these unsung heroes of the OAFP!

Through the generosity of over 225 donors, \$240,000 was donated, including a \$40,000 anonymous donation to fund the OSD School Meal Program and the Food 4 Break program through the 2025-26 school year.

## 2024 Highlights

Below are highlights of 2024. This is not an exhaustive list of all programs and activities.

### Programs

*OSD School Meal Program* – On March 1, 2023, this program was created to pay for school meals for children at OSD whose families applied for free or reduced school meals but did not qualify due to making slightly more than the federal guidelines. The pantry continued to pay for school breakfast and lunch for about 45 students throughout the school year. It costs an average of \$1,800 per month to pay for these meals. The OSD Director of School Nutrition makes the final eligibility determination.

---

*Food 4 Break* – This program was transitioned from the Friends of Oregon School District to the OAFP at the beginning of the 2022-23 school year. Families who receive free or reduced school lunch or are otherwise identified by OSD school social workers are eligible for this program. The intent of the program is to help families provide nutritious food to students while on school breaks at the end of October (2 days), Thanksgiving (3 days), winter break (5 days) and spring break (5 days). Families are provided with grocery-only gift cards by the OAFP to their choice of Hy-Vee, Aldi or Kwik Trip, for \$5/day per student. Families are required to pick them up at the pantry during special distribution days. This allows us to encourage families to register for the food pantry and to provide an opportunity to shop for food. Approximately 200 students benefited from this program. It costs the pantry approximately \$15,000 per year.

*Gift Card program for guests* - OAFP has historically provided modest assistance to guests in the form of restricted gift cards to Kwik Trip to purchase fresh items such as milk, eggs, cheese, butter, bread, fruits, vegetables, and other items that are troublesome for the pantry to obtain and keep fresh on a regular basis. Once a month, the pantry provided grocery only gift cards worth \$25 to a household of 3 or less and \$50 to a household of 4 or more, to pantry guests who live in the Oregon School District. The pantry also provided a \$25 gift card for gas at Kwik Trip, once a month, to pantry guests who live in the Oregon School District. Access to gas helps guests navigate grocery shopping, work, medical appointments, school, and more in a community without public transportation options. The pantry purchases these gift cards from Kwik Trip at a discount to implement this program. In 2024, the pantry spent approximately \$119,000 on this program.

*Anderson Farm Pantry Gardens* – Anderson Park Friends operate the pantry gardens at Anderson County Park. They grow, harvest, and deliver fresh produce to the Oregon Food Pantry on Tuesday mornings. This provides a wide range of fresh, local fruits and vegetables from the end of June through October.

---

*Food Rescue* – Beginning in February 2023, the pantry began its food rescue program. Volunteers pick up overstock, close-dated food from the local Oregon Hy-Vee and the Brooklyn Dollar General twice a week. The food is sorted and provided to guests during open pantry hours. Excess food is also distributed to users at the Senior Centers on Wednesdays. In total, volunteers made more than 200 pick-ups and collected more than 26,000 pounds of food.

*Ever Ready Club* – The Ever Ready Club is a group of Oregon parents who provided bins full of essential household items, food and gift cards to school social workers. The social workers use the bins to help families in need. Beginning in 2020, the OAFP sponsored the bins by providing \$3000 per year to purchase the bins and essential items. The club provided gift cards.

## **Community Partnerships**

*Food Drives* – Several groups conducted food drives throughout the year, including large food drives sponsored by Oregon Youth Basketball League, the Boy Scouts, the US Postal Service, and the Oregon FFA, and smaller food drives by neighborhoods, service organizations, businesses, realtors, children birthday parties and many other events. In total, over 22,000 pounds of food were collected through food drives.

*School Liaison* – In 2023 the board added an official seat to act as the School Liaison. This board member is a school district employee and improves communication and coordination with the school district.

*School Organizations* – Oregon FFA provided the leadership to multiple food drives and fundraisers in the community. The National Honor Society provided over 100 hours of volunteer time to assist sorting large food drive donations.

*Hy-Vee Bags* - The Oregon Hy-Vee continued the service started with Bill's Food Center of assembling grocery bags full of food that the pantry identifies as high need. These bags are available for Hy-Vee customers to purchase. Two OAFP

---

volunteers make twice weekly pickups at Hy-Vee and bring them to the pantry. Customers purchased more than 22,000 pounds of food and essential items through this program.

*Anderson Park Friends* – Anderson Park Friends (APF) operate the pantry gardens for the benefit of the OAFP (and other local pantries). APF consults with OAFP when determining what produce to plant in the spring.

*Oregon School District* – The school district works closely with the pantry to implement the Food 4 Break and School Meal programs. In the fall of 2023, the school district included the OAFP on its payment portal to make it easier for school families to donate to OAFP School programs. In the first few months of this program, more than \$1,345 was donated through the portal to OAFP.

## **Outreach & Engagement**

The OAFP Director engaged with the community to reach more guests and donors. This included presentations to community groups and churches, interviews with OCA media and local news, membership in the Oregon Area Wellness Coalition, and collaboration with OSD social workers and administrators. The director is also actively engaged with Second Harvest, Community Action Coalition, Department of Health Services, and local pantries to share resources and learn best practices. She also advocated at the county and state level to encourage funding to these programs and efficient distribution of commodities to food pantries.

The OAFP Board engaged in the community in several ways, including participation in the National Night Out and conducting the Thanksgiving Neighborhood Food Drive, connecting with local contractors on capital projects, partnering with local business to hang and store lighting, increasing social media presence and running virtual food drives.

---

## CONCLUSION

OAFP had a very successful 2024. It met its goal to reach more people from more places within the service area. It expanded programs to assist people in combating food insecurity while respecting their dignity. This success would not have been possible without the volunteers and donors who continued to be generous with their money, food, and time.

Thank you to the Oregon Area Community for your support so that we may continue to support our neighbors in need!!