OSU Extension Family and Community Health

YAMHILL FOOD PROJECT

Growing year-round food donations through neighborhood volunteer networks



Photo of YFP food donation bags; Photo Credit: Self
Image of Food Donor Outreach Card

THE NEED

A variety of factors are contributing to increased food insecurity in Oregon. Rising costs of living and changes to the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) as part of H.R. 1 are contributing factors. Over the past two years, food assistance visits increased by 51% in Oregon and Southwest Washington, and food available for distribution hasn't kept pace.[1]

This same issue has been shared by Yamhill County's regional food bank and partner agencies. In Yamhill County, about 1 in 7 people are food insecure and an estimated 48% of this population does not qualify for SNAP.[2]

FROM IDEA TO IMPACT

A subset of coalition members in the Nutrition Oregon Campaign Yamhill Hub decided to develop a year-round community food collection program supporting Yamhill County food pantries. This program is modeled on existing Neighborhood Food Projects in Oregon. Below are key highlights in the development process.

Program Initiation (August 2025)

- Formed a working group for this program with key community organizations. Staff from OSU Extension, Providence Newberg Medical Center and Physicians Medical Center served as leads, and staff from Yamhill Community Action Partnership, Yamhill County Health and Human Services, and Oregon Health and Science University are workgroup members.
- Consulted with the founding Neighborhood Food Project (NFP) and another food project in Oregon to understand best practices, adapt resources, and build connections
- Developed program name, gathered feedback and selected Yamhill Food Project (YFP)

Program Development (September-December 2025)

- Developed program framework including program goals and objectives, volunteer onboarding and paperwork, and evaluation and reporting
- Determined key roles and responsibilities for volunteer recruitment, communications, budgeting, logistics, and data tracking
- Developed the YFP logo, program and outreach materials
- Worked with regional food bank and a local food pantry to determine collection-day location, schedule, and additional logistics

Program Launch (January 2026-March 2026)

- Purchased branded green bags and outreach materials
- Launched outreach and recruitment efforts
- Onboarded volunteer Neighborhood Coordinators, distributed supplies, and finalized collection-day logistics

First Collection Day (April 2026)

- 5 NC Volunteers brought 35+ bags of food, collecting 860 pounds of non-perishable food

Growth and Expansion (May 2026-Present)

- Continued outreach and engagement
- Held 2nd and 3rd collection days in June and August
- Collaborated with the national Neighborhood Food Project (NFP) to create a YFP webpage on their national website
- NFP connected YFP with Oregon liaison for ongoing support

HOW IT WORKS

- Volunteers, called Neighborhood Coordinators, invite neighbors, friends, or family to become food donors. This is considered their *neighborhood*.
- Over two months, food donors fill a reusable bag with nonperishable food.
- Every other month, Neighborhood Coordinators collect the filled bags from their food donors and deliver them to the collection site.
- All food is transported to the regional food bank and distributed to food pantries in Yamhill County.



Photo of YFP Workgroup and Dayton Food Pantry Managers on a collection day; Photo Credit: Self



Photo of food donated on a collection day; Photo Credit: Self

OUTCOMES

- 3,325lbs of food collected = 2,771 meals
- 11 Neighborhood Coordinators and growing
- Donations are increasing. April 860lbs→ June 994lbs→ August 1,471lbs
- Workgroup is identifying ways to build community and exploring new partnerships with businesses and organizations

LEADERSHIP GROWTH

- Growth in collaborative leadership; sharing decision-making, fostering ownership of project goals, group problem-solving, and leveraging the groups strengths & resources
- Growth in program development and project management helping shape program structure, processes, partnerships and sustainability
- Enhancing skills in group facilitation, communication, and volunteer management

References

1. The Oregon Food Bank 2026 state of hunger report: Food insecurity across Oregon and SW Washington. Oregon Food Bank. February 5, 2026.
2. Hunger & poverty in Yamhill County, Oregon: Map the meal gap. Overall (all ages) Hunger & Poverty in the United States. Accessed September 8, 2026.

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