



SLO
FOOD BANK

ANNUAL REPORT:

Feeding SLO County in 2021

2021



Working with a network of community partners to alleviate hunger in San Luis Obispo County and build a healthier community.



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LETTER FROM OUR PAST BOARD CHAIR

2021: Raising the Bar

While the sun set on 2020, we entered 2021 with mixed emotions: sadness for the loss of so many loved ones, concern for our neighbors whose businesses and livelihoods had been affected by the COVID-19 pandemic, and, at the same time, appreciation and gratitude for the time spent with family, our friends, and our beautiful community.

While the pandemic lingered in the background, the SLO Food Bank met the moment and continued to serve the individuals and families of SLO County in a historic and unprecedented time of need. Our small but mighty Food Bank team came together to solve challenges, create efficiencies, and supplement and start new programs while simultaneously planning for the future.

Operationally, we created numerous efficiencies, including the implementation of a new inventory system that better serves the organization and our Agency Partners. We leased new trucks, paid the leases in full, and had them beautifully wrapped with images showcasing the healthy and nutritious produce we distribute countywide. And perhaps, most significantly, we retired our mortgage, providing for a more financially sustainable future.

A new program was created in partnership with Wilshire Community Services and Ride-On Transportation to deliver meals and fresh produce to homebound seniors in need. And our first ever on-site pantry was established to not only serve the needs of those in the local area but also to allow us to understand better the needs of our agency partners and those we are honored to serve.

Administratively, our CEO, Garret Olson, celebrated his first year with our organization with a laundry list of achievements that are too many to mention . . . thank goodness for Garret! We welcomed ten new board members to our team, hailing from all over the County and from various sectors, providing support and input in ways that have been immeasurable.

And our community continued its overwhelming support of the organization both financially and by volunteering more hours than ever before, even in the face of COVID-19. It's important to note that nearly 87% of our operating budget comes from individual donors and businesses, and we saw our community raise the bar in ways we've never seen before. Our Hunger Ending Action Response Team (HEART) Network and sustaining membership grew by leaps and bounds, with businesses stepping up, fundraising for our benefit, and providing special experiences to our recurring donors as a way to show our appreciation for their dedicated support.

In 2022, we'll embark on a countywide Health Equity Project which will allow us to better determine where our energy should be focused in the future.

I am so proud of this organization, the SLO Food Bank team under Garret's capable leadership, and our community. It's truly been a pleasure to be a part of the evolution of this amazing and vital organization.

With gratitude,

Donna Lewis
2022 Past Board Chair

4,154,100+

Pounds of Food Distributed
Across our Programs in 2021

31,100+

Individuals Served Each
Month Across our Programs

3,461,800+

Meals Provided to
Neighbors in Need in 2021

OVERVIEW OF SERVICES

Honored to Serve SLO County

The SLO Food Bank believes everyone has the right to nutritious food. With reliable access to wholesome food, we are all healthier, happier, and more productive members of our communities.

OUR MISSION

Our mission is to work with a network of community partners to alleviate hunger in San Luis Obispo County and build a healthier community.

In the simplest terms, accomplishing our mission involves three steps:

- 1 We acquire food.**
- 2 We sort and pack food.**
- 3 We distribute food and education.**

1 We acquire food.

We utilize a diverse range of programming and harness our community influence to obtain nutritious and efficient food resources.

MAXIMIZE PURCHASING POWER

We use donor and grant funding to buy fresh produce and other nutritious food staples in bulk at a greater value.

LOCAL, STATE, AND FEDERAL GOVERNMENT PROGRAMS

We administer governmental food assistance programs.

GLEANSLO HARVESTS

Our GleanSLO program harvests fresh produce from backyards, farmers markets, and farms.

GROCERY STORE RESCUES

We rescue healthy surplus food from participating grocery stores.

FOOD DONATIONS

Individuals, local businesses, and community organizations hold food drives and donate non-perishable food goods to us.

2 We sort and pack food.

Staff and volunteers pack food orders at our warehouse in San Luis Obispo.

3 We distribute food and education.

We distribute food and nutrition education into our community through several impactful programs.

NEIGHBORHOOD FOOD DISTRIBUTIONS

Our staff and volunteers facilitate recurring food distributions throughout SLO County.

AGENCY PARTNERS NETWORK

85 nonprofit agency partners source food from our warehouse so that they can distribute it to their clients.

SENIOR HOME DELIVERY

In partnership with Wilshire Community Services and Ride-On Transportation, we deliver nutritious groceries directly to homebound seniors.

SLO FOOD BANK FOOD PANTRY

2020-2021, our on-site Food Pantry offered shelf-stable foods and produce to meet the increased demand for food during the pandemic.



Neighborhood Food Distributions

Strategically located across SLO County, our Neighborhood Food Distributions provide participating residents with access to free, nutritious food. We strategically select distribution sites to complement the services and locations of our Agency Partner Network to maximize our reach and reduce redundancy. At many of these distribution sites, our small staff is supported by local volunteers in providing direct hunger relief. At these distributions, we provide household-scale units of food, which includes a variety of fresh produce and shelf-stable food sufficient for twelve meals per unit.

COVID-19 EXPANSION

SLO Food Bank Pantry

During 2020, the number of people who were new to food insecurity was heartbreaking. Many of our hungry neighbors searched online for “food bank near me” and subsequently appeared at SLO Food Bank’s doorstep. By the summer of 2020, we were assisting up to 25 households in a single day, which was five times the number of early 2020. Soon, we were moving wire racks and refrigeration units from the warehouse to our conference room as we transitioned that space into an onsite pantry.

With this space rededicated, we could then allow clients the dignity of selecting their own food from our pantry. Clients check in at our lobby, then are welcomed to the pantry one household at a time. When our team needed to reclaim the conference room, we relocated the pantry to a convenient place in our warehouse and we used temporary partition walls to provide privacy and safety for our clients.

Seeing that high utilization of our pantry was continuing through 2021, the SLO Food Bank successfully applied for a State grant to build a dedicated pantry on our property. We look forward to providing updates on our pantry as this project gets underway in 2022.

FOOD DISTRIBUTION

Working together to serve SLO County

Together, through monthly Neighborhood Food Distributions and in collaboration with our Agency Partner Network, we meet the critical need for food in our community.

65+

Number of Distributions Offered Each Month

6,400+

Individuals Served Each Month Through Distributions

60,600+

Meals Served per Month at Distributions

3,600+

Individuals Served Through the SLO Food Bank Pantry in 2021

44,700+

Meals Served Through the SLO Food Bank Pantry in 2021

Agency Partner Network

As a Partner Distributing Organization of Feeding America, the national coordinating entity for food banks, the SLO Food Bank leads the local hunger-relief network in SLO County. We supply food, equipment, trainings, and other resources to our Agency Partners, enabling them to serve families and individuals from San Miguel to Nipomo and every community in between. Our Agency Partners include after-school programs, community and church pantries, housing for vulnerable populations, and many other community service groups.



85

Other Nonprofit Agencies
Partnered With SLO Food Bank



21,500+

Individuals Served per Month
Through Agency Partners



197,280+

Meals Served Through
Agency Partners per Month

AGENCY PARTNERSHIP FEATURE

No-Cook Bag Program

Without secure housing in which to cook, our neighbors experiencing homelessness lack the tools and spaces needed to prepare many of the foods commonly supplied through regular food distributions and pantries. The SLO Food Bank created No-Cook Bags to address this challenge. Dedicated volunteers assemble No-Cook Bags in our warehouse using easy-to-eat foods such as peanut butter, tuna, shelf-stable fruit, and fortified cereals. Then, these nutrient-dense bags are picked up and distributed to those without consistent housing by over 30 different community organizations.



26,500+

Number of No-Cook
Bags Distributed to
People without Kitchen
Access in 2021



“These hunger relief programs are so crucial to facing food insecurity head on and making sure that children do not go hungry.”

LAUREN THOMAS, Food and Nutrition Services Director, San Miguel Joint Union School District



PROGRAMS FOR SPECIFIC POPULATIONS

Programs for Children

Children's Farmer's Markets

SLO Food Bank's Nutrition team leads Children's Farmers Markets at sites throughout SLO County. Participating kids select from a variety of fruits and vegetables and "purchase" them with Food Bank Bucks. Each child takes home 10 to 15 pounds of fresh, seasonal produce items and correlating recipe cards to enjoy and share with their families.

22

Children's Farmers Market Events Held in 2021

740

Children Served by the Children's Farmers Market Program in 2021

Breakfast Bag Program

During the summer and periods of pandemic distance learning, daily access to free school meals through federal nutrition programs is limited or nonexistent for children facing food insecurity. In order to address this meal gap, the SLO Food Bank partners with youth organizations, school districts, local housing authorities, and other social service organizations to distribute bags filled with 21 days' worth of nutritious breakfast foods, including cereal bars, instant oatmeal, cereal, peanut butter, milk, and shelf-stable fruit and juice. We provided this service during June, July, and August and while schools in our area were still providing instruction online.

7,200+

Breakfast Bags were provided in 2021

151,300+

Number of Meals Distributed Through Breakfast Bag in 2021

PROGRAMS FOR SPECIFIC POPULATIONS

Programs for Seniors

184+

Households Served Monthly through Senior Farmers Markets

1,130+

Deliveries Provided Through Senior Home Delivery in 2021

37,400+

Meals Distributed to Seniors Through Senior Home Delivery in 2021



Senior Farmer's Markets

For older adults, fruits and vegetables are vital for maintaining health. At the same time, seniors may have difficulty buying or accessing healthy food due to limited or fixed incomes and a lack of transportation and/or mobility. That's why, each month, the SLO Food Bank provides Senior Farmers Markets at local housing complexes and mobile home parks. These markets provide easy access to fruits, vegetables, and nutrition information to low-income seniors. Since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, SLO Food Bank has continued to distribute fresh produce at our Senior Farmers Markets sites in a "pre-bagged" format to minimize exposure for the seniors we serve.

COVID-19 EXPANSION

Senior Home Delivery

During the earliest days of the pandemic, seniors – who are particularly susceptible to the most devastating effects of COVID 19 – were advised to limit their public exposure as much as possible. Procuring groceries became a public health challenge for many older adults, and for approximately four months the SLO Food Bank and our County partners collaborated to implement a home delivery program for seniors who had no other means to procure food. As that program ended in mid-summer 2020, we discovered a group of individuals throughout the County who met our criteria for hunger relief services but who previously were not connected to our traditional operations due to a myriad of social, geographic, and transportation barriers. So, we applied for a grant to continue the program. Ever mindful of costs and the sustainability of

our operations, we used the grant to launch the program. In the meantime, we sought partnerships that would allow us to focus on what we do best, eliminate the need to add more staff and vehicles, and play to the strengths of other local nonprofits.

Today, our fully operational Senior Home Delivery Program serves the nutritional needs of approximately 100 seniors throughout SLO County every week! Wilshire Community Services helps to sign up homebound seniors, while Ride-On Transportation picks up food from the SLO Food Bank warehouse to provide home deliveries. This program is scalable, sustainable, and makes use of existing resources and expertise. It is one of many beautiful examples of the creativity, diligence, and focus of your SLO Food Bank team.



FOOD RESCUE PROGRAMS

Rescuing Food to Feed More

GleanSLO

GleanSLO, a food rescue program of the SLO Food Bank, organizes volunteers to collect leftover crops from farmers' fields, local gardens, and the backyards of community residents. We also benefit from donations of produce not sold at local farmer's markets. Gleaning, by definition, is the act of harvesting the remaining produce of crops that

were not economically efficient for the farmer or gardener to harvest themselves. Gleaning reduces waste for our environment, benefiting both local farmers and people facing hunger. It also celebrates our local agriculture and deepens appreciation for our food.

324,770+

Pounds of Local Produce
Rescued Annually

262,310+

Meals Harvested
by GleanSLO in 2021

Nearly 260

Sites Donated Harvests
in 2021

Grocery Recue

Grocery rescue is a sustainable solution to edible food waste and hunger in our community. With a network of Agency Partners and agreements with grocery stores around the county we are able to coordinate grocery rescue on a local level. This system of hyper-local food rescue benefits the

environment by cutting down on vehicle emissions and diverting methane producing organic waste from the landfill. Additionally, we combat food insecurity in the community by redistributing healthy food to our neighbors in need.

1,180,450+

Pounds of Food Rescued from Food
Producers and Distributors in 2021

832,000

Pounds Rescued Directly
by Agency Partners in 2021

44

Grocery Stores that
Donated Food in 2021



1,338

Individuals Volunteered
with the SLO Food Bank
in 2021



8

Equivalent of Full-Time Staff
Positions Provided Through
Volunteer Hours



16,570

Total Number of
Volunteer Hours in 2021

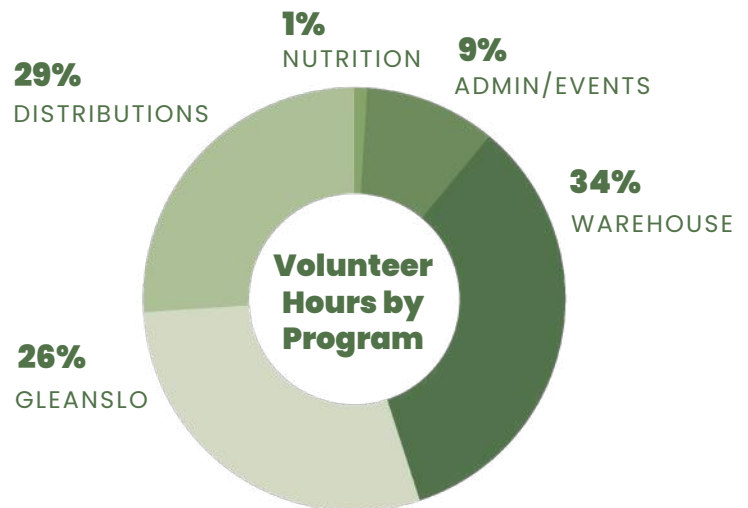
(Does not include volunteer
hours from Agency Partners)

VOLUNTEER IMPACT

Giving Back by Giving Time

Volunteers are the lifeblood of our operations. Our amazing volunteers support daily warehouse operations, coordinate and convene our neighborhood distributions, and rescue nutritious local produce from farms and backyards. Adhering to our up-to-date COVID-19 Prevention Plan, our steadfast volunteer force continues to serve, signing up for shifts many weeks in advance to meet our operational demands.

Thanks to this remarkable response from the volunteer community and our County partnerships, we continued to provide uninterrupted services despite the once unimaginable, yet persistent obstacles created by the pandemic.



VOLUNTEER FEATURE

Marv Daniels

Marv Daniels is known as a “super gleaner” in the GleanSLO community. He has completed hundreds of gleans since he began volunteering with GleanSLO in 2010 — the year the program first began! Often, he attends every glean available in a week, and once, he participated in three gleans in one day. In addition to his work with GleanSLO, Marv also volunteers teaching tree grafting to kids and community members and builds and restores trails across San Luis Obispo county. We’re so appreciative to Marv and his efforts to make our home a more beautiful place to live.

I like gleaning because you’re working with people that have the same intent as you — to help other people.

JANUARY - DECEMBER
2021 AUDITED

Financials

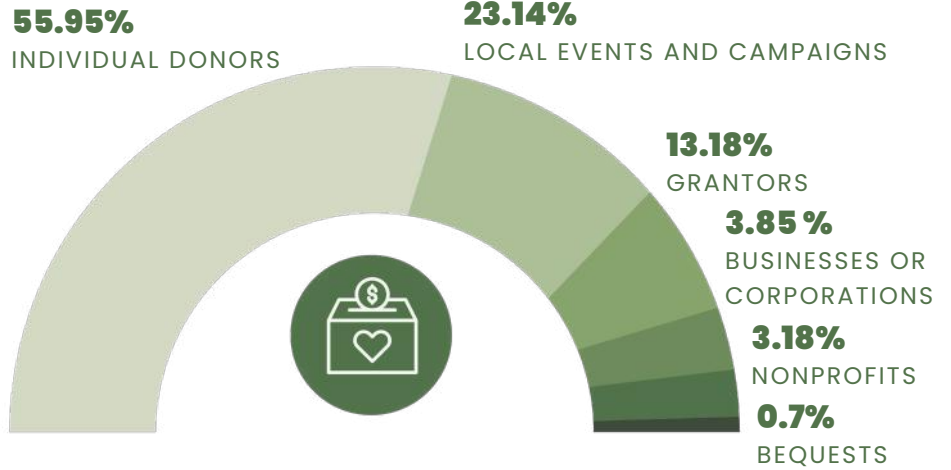
We're happy to be able to contribute
to your truly important service in
keeping people supplied with food.

LARRY AND PATTI KEYES, Donors

Where Our Funding Comes From

IT TAKES ALL OF US TO ALLEVIATE HUNGER.

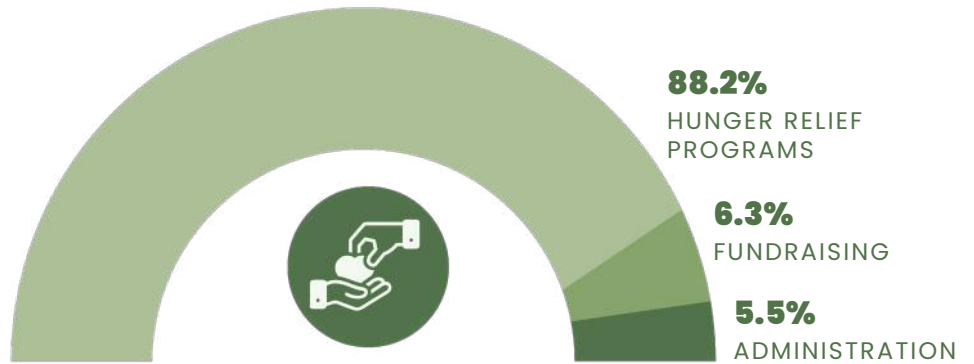
Nearly 87% of our donations come from direct contributions from individuals, businesses, and nonprofits.



How We Use Our Resources

YOUR DONATIONS MAKE A DIFFERENCE.

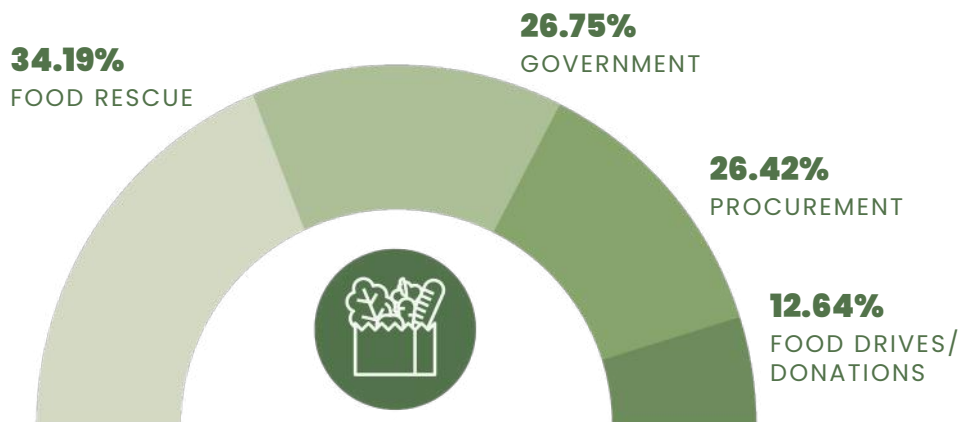
88 cents of every dollar donated directly supports our hunger relief programs.



Where Our Food Comes From

A COMMUNITY WORKING TOGETHER.

Nearly 47% of the food we distribute into the community is gained through local food rescue, drives, and donations.



SPECIAL THANKS

Community Support

Sponsors & Partners



PACIFIC PREMIER BANK®



*Richard Lasiewski, D.O.
and Kersti Lasiewski*



*St. Stephen's
Episcopal Church*
Welcoming Worshiping Working



*THE TRIBUNE
Newspaper of the Central Coast*



Grants \$2,500 and up

United States
Department of
Agriculture

County of San Luis
Obispo Public Health
Department

County of San Luis
Obispo

California Department
of Public Health

Feeding America

Hughes Charitable
Foundation

The Balay Ko
Foundation

The Albertsons
Companies Foundation

George Hoag Family
Foundation

Wells Fargo
Foundation

Mark and Dorothy
Smith Family
Foundation

Pacific Gas and
Electric Company

MOCA Foundation

City of San Luis
Obispo

The Community
Foundation San Luis
Obispo County

Bank of America, N.A.

B.K. Simon Family
Charitable Foundation

Marin Community
Foundation

MUFG Union Bank,
N.A.

Central Coast Funds
For Children

Guber Family Giving
Fund

John J. and Frank
Sparacio Foundation

Robert H. Janssen
Youth & Youth
Sports Fund, A Fund
of The Community
Foundation San Luis
Obispo County

Enterprise Holding
Foundation - Caliber
Collision

The Lubrizol
Foundation

William and Charlene
Glikbard Foundation



In 2021 . . .

*We never ran out of food,
we never rationed food,
and we never deviated from
our nutritional standards.
We stand on the shoulders of
our supportive community
in providing compassionate
care to our most vulnerable
neighbors.*

*Thank you for giving us the
strength and stamina to
continue providing our mission
during the most challenging
chapter in our 32 year history.*

**—YOUR TEAM AT THE
SLO FOOD BANK**



**SLO
FOOD BANK**

County Partnership for Hunger Relief

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SLOFOODBANK.ORG

