



# 2020 Annual Report



The mission of the **SLO Food Bank** is to work with a network of community partners to alleviate hunger in San Luis Obispo County and build a healthier community.

## Board Directory

### Board Chair

Donna Lewis

### Past Board Chair

Steve Davis

### Vice Board Chair

Joe Simonin

### Secretary

Lisa Nicholson

### Treasurer

Mark Corella

### Members

Ellen Cohune

Tiffany German

Richard Hungerford

Jared Salter

## Staff Directory

### CEO

Garret Olson

### Directors

#### Development

Branna Still

#### Programs

Andrea Keisler

#### Operations

Emily Hansen

### Managers

#### Partner Services

Suzanne Freeman

#### Direct Services

Cliff Mendez

#### Food Rescue

Emily Wilson

#### Warehouse

Gonzalo Martinon

#### Inventory

Alexandra McPherson

as of 12/2020

# FROM OUR BOARD CHAIR



2020 will go down in history as one of the most extraordinary years in many lifetimes. The pandemic proved to be one of the greatest challenges to face our county, our country and the world.

The SLO Food Bank began the year with the challenge of searching for a new CEO to lead our organization which soon became overshadowed by the enormous task before us in preparing to feed the largest number of individuals and families in the SLO Food Bank's history. Our staff, our board, the county and the community came together in an extraordinary way to meet this need and the challenge before us.

In the very early stages of the pandemic, Garret Olson, now our CEO, immediately stepped up and stepped in with his business partner to provide assistance to the SLO Food Bank, coordinating the COVID emergency response with the County of San Luis Obispo. The collaboration that occurred with the county was unprecedented, which included both financial support and boots on the ground with county employees from various sectors reassigned to work in the warehouse.

Our amazing staff worked tirelessly to meet the increase in demand, creating efficiencies to stretch every dollar, while putting themselves at risk as frontline workers each and every day.

The community stepped up in a way that we could not have possibly imagined. The unbelievable generosity demonstrated to support those who needed our services most was beyond our wildest dreams and for this our staff and our board are forever grateful.

Lastly, I am personally thankful for our board who demonstrated the courage and leadership to lay a new foundation for the organization that proved to be essential when forces beyond our control required us to lean into a pandemic.

The SLO Food Bank ended 2020 stronger than it has ever been, having fed more individuals this past year than in any year in its history. On behalf of the board, we could not be more proud of our SLO Food Bank team and our community and look forward to expanding services in new and creative ways into the future.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Donna Lewis".

Donna Lewis, 2020 Board Chair



# HONORED TO SERVE ALL OF SLO COUNTY

The vision of the SLO Food Bank is a community in which every person has adequate access to nutritious food. From San Miguel to Nipomo and from California Valley to the coast, our community is the entire County of San Luis Obispo. With genuine compassion, we are honored to serve all who are hungry, regardless of their circumstance.

In the most simple terms, the operations of our mission involves three steps:

## FIRST, WE COLLECT FOOD, HARNESSING...



### Purchasing Power

We use donor funds to buy fresh produce and other nutritious food staples in bulk.



### Local, State & Federal Government Programs

We administer various 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.



## NEXT, WE SORT AND PACK FOOD, ENGAGING...

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

## THEN, WE DISTRIBUTE FOOD, BY TWO PRIMARY ROUTES...

### Neighborhood Food Distributions (more info on page 6)

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

### Agency Partners Network (more info on page 7)

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



# RISING TO THE CHALLENGE THROUGH

In 2020, our food safety net became more essential than ever before. **Together, with our network of Agencies** By providing hunger relief to all SLO County residents who experienced hardships during the pandemic, we w our food offerings, or deviated from our nutritional standards, due to our incredible partners and supporters.

## KEY MOMENTS



### 1. MARCH

The State of California issued a stay-at-home order. Our team's quick response included an expedited application process for nonprofits to join our food relief network, and we waived all customary service fees.

### 2. APRIL

A partnership with the County of San Luis Obispo provided emergency food relief for thousands of neighbors in need. This included a Home Delivery program for isolating seniors from April to June, the allocation of Disaster Service Workers to fill volunteer gaps, and an off-site warehouse location stocked with \$650,000 worth of emergency food.



### 5. JULY

A USDA funded COVID-relief program established a connection with The Berry Man LLC, a local produce distributor. This partnership delivered 16,000 fresh produce boxes to school sites across the county support children and families in need.



### 3. MAY

The Breakfast Bag program was extended into the Spring of 2021. Typically, this program runs only during the summer when school meals are less available for children. As education moved online, many families suddenly lost access to

these free and reduced-price meals they relied upon.

Garret Olson accepted the position of CEO at a time when the SLO Food Bank was caring for its community's needs at historic levels.



### 4. JUNE

The annual Hunger Awareness Day turned into a virtual event quickly pivoting from our traditional donation sites to *only* a large effort to be visible virtually. This annual event raise awareness about



# NEW PARTNERSHIPS AND SERVICES

Our Partners, we distributed over 5.1 million pounds of food — a 54% increase over the previous year. We worked to improve our community's overall health and well-being. Thankfully, we never ran out of food, rationed

## 6. AUGUST

Despite the cancellation of the Mid-State Fair, 48,000 pounds of locally-raised meat was donated thanks to The James W. Brabeck Youth Legacy Fund at The Community Foundation San Luis Obispo County, Central Valley Meat/Harris Ranch, Templeton & Visalia



Meat Markets, Rotary de Tolosa, and individual donors.

## 9. NOVEMBER

Turkey Trot, Turkey Drive, and Season of Hope took place virtually for the first time. Turkey Trot, typically held in Pismo Beach and Avila Beach, invited participants to participate at a location of their choice. We collectively traversed 1,139 miles across SLO County raising funds to provide over 335,000 Holiday meals.



## 7. SEPTEMBER

The SLO Food Bank is named Nonprofit of the Year by Representative Jordan Cunningham.



We welcomed new mascot Roman the Romaine to our team and said goodbye to Sandie the Sandwich, who gave us many years of service.



## 8. OCTOBER

GleanSLO, a program of the SLO Food Bank, celebrated harvesting two million pounds of fresh produce since its inception 10 years ago.

## 10. DECEMBER

SLO City Mayor Heidi Harmon and local Labor Unions joined together for a combined matching campaign and raised more than \$71,000.



# WORKING TOGETHER TO

In March 2020, as the pandemic health crisis accelerated across our nation and community, the rate of hunger pandemic tore through our economy and the lives of many thousands of our neighbors. The public health and safety crisis was unprecedented. **During the most challenging chapter in our 32-year history, the SLO Food Bank never ran out of food.** Through our Neighborhood Food Distributions and our 83-member Agency Partner Network, we met the increased demand.

## 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 compliment 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 units of food, which includes a variety of fresh produce and shelf-stable food sufficient for twelve meals per unit.



The pandemic dramatically changed many of our assumptions and protocols for direct distributions. Gone were the intimate interactions with our clients, replaced by physical distancing and drive-thru distributions.

Also gone was much of the limited data we gathered about our mission. Many of our walk-up distribution sites quickly pivoted to a drive-thru model and all food was distributed pre-bagged in response to public safety guidance. Additionally, when schools closed and transitioned to virtual learning, we lost the ability to host children's farmers' markets. Our team expanded the offerings of Breakfast Bags to locations that served families and provided an additional thousand pounds of fresh produce to address the needs of children. Thankfully, our Senior Farmer's Markets continued throughout the year. To adhere to safety guidelines, we began to distribute produce in bags instead of the traditional farmer's market style to minimize cross-contact.



**80+**

Number of Distributions

**3,300+**

Households Served per Month

**100,817**

Meals Served per Month

# SERVE OUR COMMUNITY

anger in SLO County skyrocketed. The face of hunger changed and deepened as the economic impact of the pandemic and safety concerns forced us to change how we procured, packaged, and distributed food to those in need. **And, nor did we ration food or deviate from our high nutritional standards.** Together, through 80+ monthly distributions, we provided food for food in our community.

## 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 and enable 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.

Beginning in March 2020, we supported our Agency Partners by dramatically increasing the volume of food we provided them at no cost, as well as offering guidance on new safety practices and performing weekly check-ins to preemptively identify and alleviate hunger gaps in the community. To broaden our impact, the SLO Food Bank expedited the enrollment process for nonprofits to join our vital network.



**83**

**Nonprofit Agency Partners**

**12,000+**

**Households Served per Month**

**244,441**

**Meals Served per Month**



A serious concern over access to food for isolated seniors was realized at the start of the stay-at-home order. The partnership we formed with the County during the height of the pandemic provided the support to implement a home-delivered grocery program and was the impetus for our team to create a long-term program to offer these services. Together with two other nonprofits, we successfully launched a Senior Home Delivery Program in early 2021.

# 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. When the governor issued the first shelter-in-place order in March 2020, SLO County augmented our anticipated, temporary drop in volunteers by deploying Disaster Service Workers (DSW), including a wonderful team of County librarians, to allow our operations to scale up as hunger surged in our community. We could not have done it without them!

Adhering to our up-to-date COVID-19 Prevention Plan, our steadfast volunteer force continued 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 provided uninterrupted services despite once unimaginable obstacles borne of the pandemic.

**1,813**

Individual Volunteers

**13,812**

Volunteer Hours

**3,620**

Disaster Service Worker Hours





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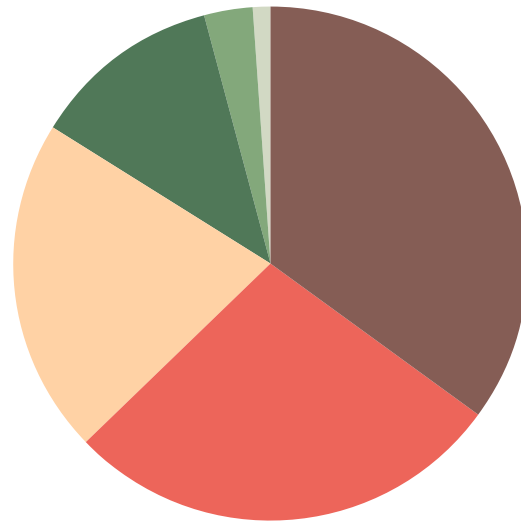
I started as a volunteer at the beginning of the pandemic. Initially, I helped for a few hours on and off every other day, but then it turned into coming every day. Why? Because there was such a need to get food to people in our community. I became obsessed with helping others. Giving back fulfilled me and made me feel wonderful.”

– Mark Z.

”

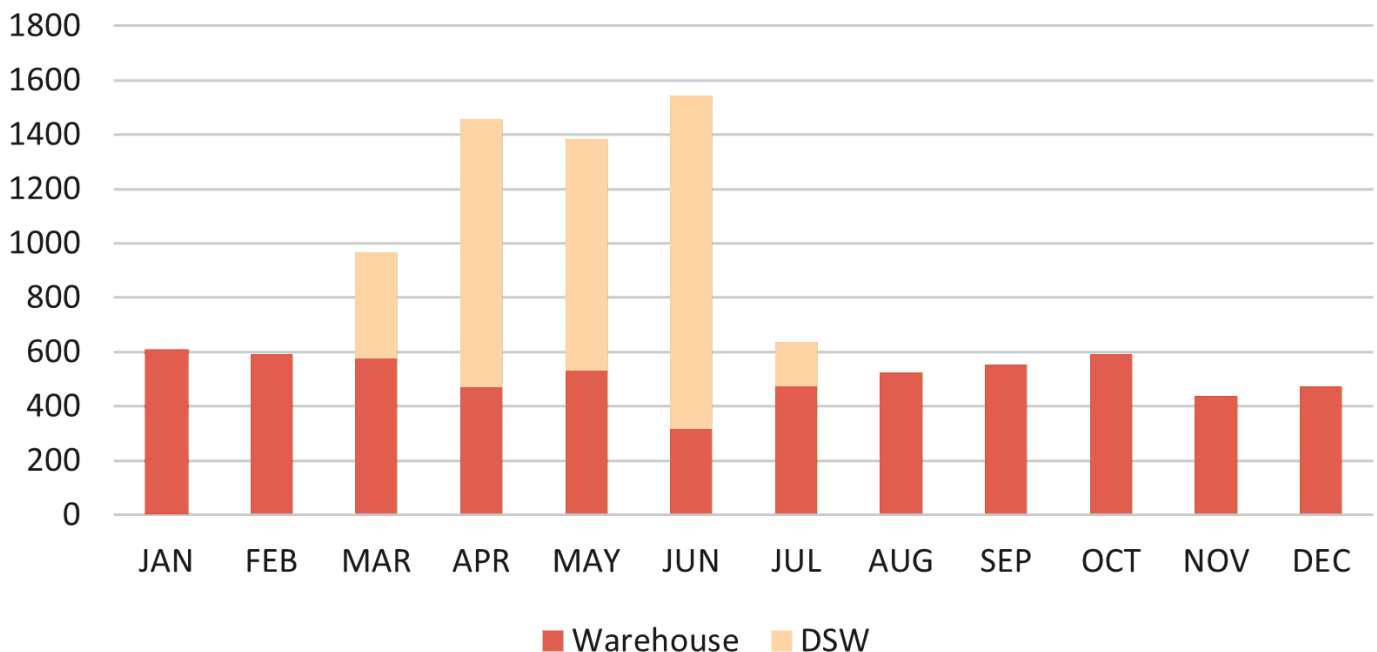
## VOLUNTEER AND DISASTER SERVICE WORKER (DSW) STATISTICS

### Volunteer/DSW Hours by Program



Warehouse **35%**  
 Distributions **28%**  
 DSWs **21%**  
 GleanSLO **12%**  
 Nutrition **3%**  
 Admin/Events **1%**

### Volunteer/DSW Hours by Month



# COMMUNITY SPONSORS AND PARTNERS

We extend special thanks to our Event Sponsors who support our annual community events.

## MAJOR SPONSOR



## PRESENTING SPONSORS



GLENN BURDETTE



**BHE**  
RENEWABLES

## PREMIUM SPONSORS



SPECIALTY CONSTRUCTION



PACIFIC PREMIER BANK



## SUPPORTING SPONSORS



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

## CONTRIBUTING SPONSORS



HICKS PENSION SERVICES  
RETIREMENT PLAN SPECIALISTS



VINA ROBLES  
AMPHITHEATRE

St. Stephen's  
Episcopal Church  
Welcoming Worshiping Working



THE TRIBUNE  
Newspaper of the Central Coast

We are grateful to have been chosen as the recipient of various grants supporting our programs.

## GRANTS OF \$2,500 OR GREATER

USDA • The Community Foundation San Luis Obispo County • Why Hunger (program of Albertsons Companies Foundation) • The Albertsons Companies Foundation • United Way Of San Luis Obispo County • Mark and Dorothy Smith Family Foundation • Inland Empire Community Foundation • PG&E Fire Event Grant • Dignity Health • Marin Community Foundation • B.K. Simon Family Charitable Foundation • Hearst Castle Preservation Foundation • Leo A. and Minta L. Brisco Foundation • Rotary Club Of San Luis Obispo de Tolosa • The Ripple Pie Foundation • MFUG Union Bank Foundation • MOCA Foundation • City of SLO GIA • Central Coast Funds For Children • Rotary Club Of Pismo Beach • The Peter & Mary Russo Family Foundation Inc. • Enterprise Holdings Foundation - Caliber Collision • Morgan Stanley • Paul J McCann Foundation • Stern Foundation • The Wonderful Company Foundation Inc (Justin Winery) • Robert H. Janssen Youth & Youth Sports Fund, A Fund of The Community Foundation San Luis Obispo County • The Merck Foundation • Coast Hills Federal Credit Union

# OUR YEAR IN NUMBERS

We had a great impact in SLO County thanks to our community's generous support.



WE DISTRIBUTED

**5,186,488** LBS OF FOOD

**47%** WAS FRESH PRODUCE



WE PARTNERED WITH

**83** NONPROFITS WHO DISTRIBUTED

**3,519,955** LBS OF FOOD



WE PROVIDED

**4,322,073** MEALS



GLEANSLO RESCUED

**312,947** LBS OF LOCAL PRODUCE



WE WORKED WITH

**1,813** VOLUNTEERS WHO GAVE

**13,812** HOURS OF THEIR TIME\*



WE DELIVERED

**21,770** NO-COOK BAGS

TO PEOPLE WITHOUT KITCHEN ACCESS



WE PACKED

**5,611** BREAKFAST BAGS

FROM MAY TO DECEMBER



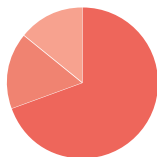
WE ENSURED THAT

**92%** OF OUR EXPENSES

DIRECTLY SUPPORTED OUR PROGRAMS

\*Includes volunteer hours from warehouse operations, food distributions, gleanings, nutrition programs and administrative support. Does not include volunteer hours from Agency Partners or DSWs.

## OUR PRE-AUDIT FINANCIAL REPORTS FOR FY2020



### Donations

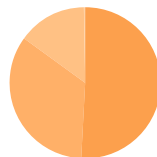
Direct Contributions **69.6%**

(Individuals, Businesses, Nonprofits)

Government Grants

& Reimbursements **16.4%**

Non-Government Grants **14.0%**



### Income

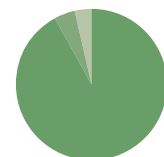
**\$14,261,390.27**

Donated Food **51.1%**

Monetary Donations **33.9%**

Grants **14.8%**

Other **0.2%**



### Expenses

**\$10,312,247.79**

Hunger Relief Programs **92.0%**

Within Programs - Food Procurement **75.2%**

Administration **4.6%**

Fundraising **3.4%**



## **SLO Food Bank**

1180 Kendall Road  
San Luis Obispo, CA 93401-8053

(805) 238-4664  
[slofoodbank.org](http://slofoodbank.org)



Visit our website for information on volunteering, donating, and connecting to resources.