



**SLO  
FOOD  
BANK**



# 2024-2025 ANNUAL REPORT

# Leadership

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

***Bob Aiken***

Executive Chairman, Monterey Bay Spice Co.

***Matt Allen***

SVP & Director of Commercial Banking, Pacific Premier Bank

***Kim Bisheff, Board Chair***

Professor, Cal Poly Journalism

***Ryan Caldwell, Past Chair***

Regional Director, Partner, EP Wealth Advisors

***Andrea Chavez***

Creator (Retired), Talley Farms Box Program

***Ellen Cohune, Secretary***

Nonprofit Specialist, Salesforce

***Jazmin Cortez***

Partner, Connect Accounting

***Jared Salter***

Managing Attorney, Harris Personal Injury Lawyers

***Morgan Dewar Voss***

Operations Manager, JB Dewar Inc.

***Lisa Hamon***

Partner, Glick Haupt Marino, LLP

***Bryan Idler***

Principal, Idler's Home

***Erik Justesen***

President/CEO, RRM Design Group

***Mike Quamma, Treasurer***

Chief Executive Officer, SESLOC Credit Union

***Aasim Sajjad***

Owner, Shalimar Restaurant

## EXECUTIVE TEAM

***Molly Kern***

Chief Executive Officer

***Andrea Keisler***

Chief Operating Officer

***Madison Hinkle***

Finance and  
Administration Director



# Food has profound power.

Beyond the nourishment and strength it provides, food forges connections, creates memories, and cultivates a sense of belonging. Yet, for too many of our neighbors, food—and all its many benefits—is out of reach. That is why I am so grateful to be a part of the SLO Food Bank, and why I'm so glad you are, too.

This past year, the need for food assistance in SLO County has grown significantly. On average, we now serve nearly 45,000 neighbors each month, up from 39,000 last year. With your support, we've not only risen to meet this growing demand but have also reimagined how we provide access to nutritious food.

Key highlights from the past year include:

- **Expanded Services:** Our new pantry and community resource hub on Kendall Road offers a welcoming, grocery store-style experience where neighbors can select the foods that best meet their needs.
- **Nutrition and Cultural Relevance:** Through market-style distributions and partnerships with local farmers, we've provided more fresh, nutritious, and culturally relevant foods to our community.
- **Sustainable Support:** Thanks to a generous match from the Balay Ko Foundation, we've grown our Hunger Ending Action Response Team (HEART), creating a reliable foundation of recurring donors to sustain our work amidst rising demand.
- **Reliable Resiliency:** We completed the installation of solar panels and a generator thanks to the support of The Harold J. Miozzi Charitable Trust. This investment not only increases efficiency but also ensures that food remains safe during a power outage.

These initiatives, guided by our five-year strategic plan, reflect the SLO Food Bank's commitment to addressing food insecurity with sustainability, innovation, and compassion.

Thank you for your unwavering support and partnership. Your generosity ensures SLO County remains a place where all our neighbors can access food, hope, and dignity.

**LET'S FEED SLO COUNTY. TOGETHER.**

With gratitude,



Molly Kern, CEO

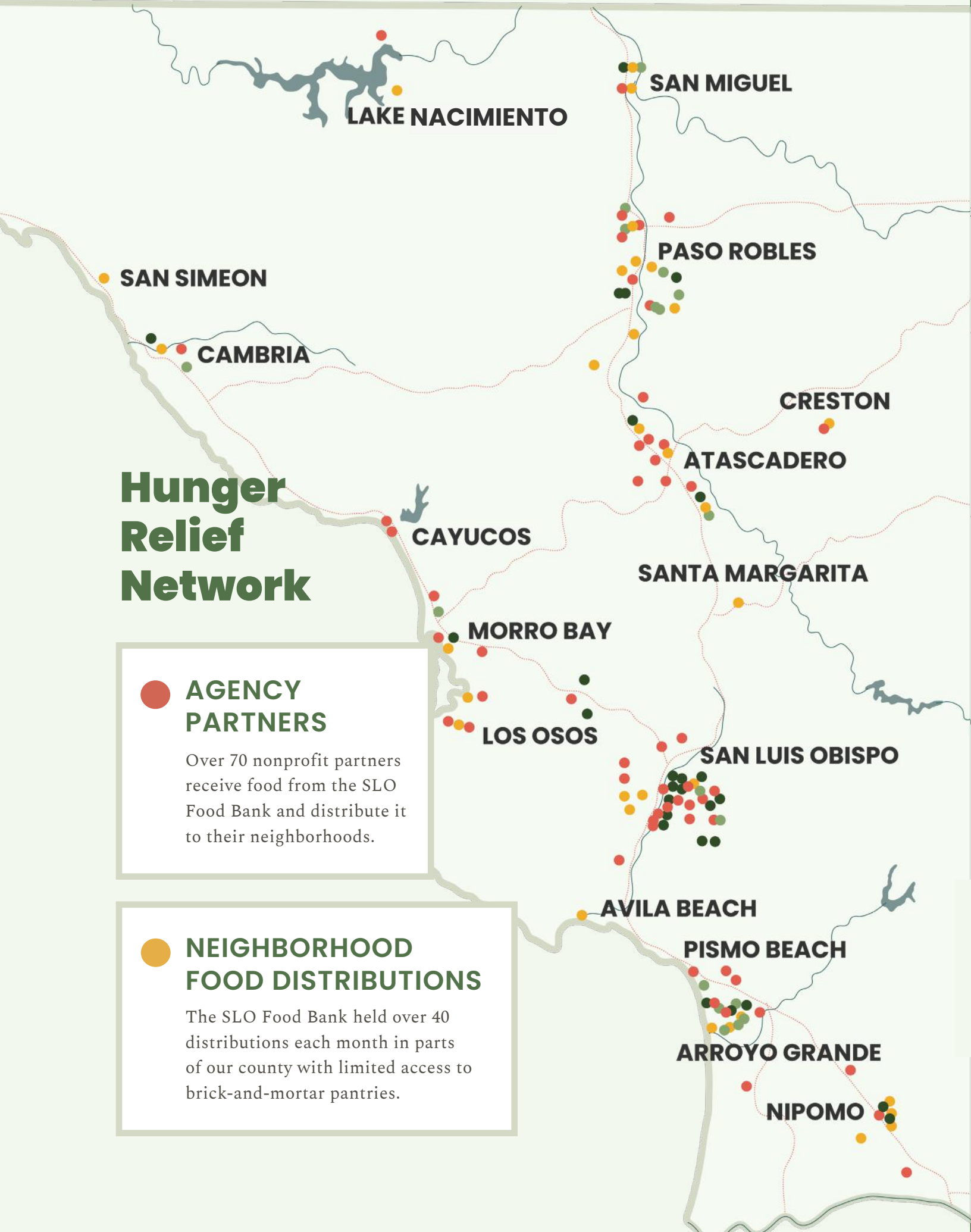
# Hunger Relief Network

## ● AGENCY PARTNERS

Over 70 nonprofit partners receive food from the SLO Food Bank and distribute it to their neighborhoods.

## ● NEIGHBORHOOD FOOD DISTRIBUTIONS

The SLO Food Bank held over 40 distributions each month in parts of our county with limited access to brick-and-mortar pantries.





**SHANDON**

● **CHILDREN'S & SENIORS' FARMERS MARKETS**

Each month, the SLO Food Bank served over 385 children and 410 seniors through our Farmers' Market programs.

● **SUMMER BREAKFAST & NO-COOK BAGS**

The Hunger Relief Network distributed more than 6,600 Summer Breakfast Bags to children and more than 31,200 No-Cook Bags to people experiencing homelessness.

**CALIFORNIA VALLEY**

**SENIOR HOME DELIVERY**

In partnership with Ride On Transportation, we delivered food to more than 300 homebound seniors each week.

# Our Impact

## VOLUNTEERS

1,266 volunteers  
worked for more than  
14,000 hours  
or the equivalent of  
7 full-time staff.

## MEALS PROVIDED

Total Meals	4,150,000
Agency Partners	2,959,246
Neighborhood Food Distributions	743,252
Pantry & Resource Hub	121,600
Senior Home Delivery	120,150
Seniors' & Children's Farmers Markets	83,486



Together, we served an average of

**45,000 neighbors  
each month,**

a 14% increase from  
the previous year.



# Increasing Access

## EMPOWERING CHOICE

---

Supporting opportunities for neighbors to choose the nutritious food they need empowers them to make informed decisions that best meet their family's dietary needs and preferences. At the same time, it helps increase the efficiency and decrease waste for our operations as a whole.

The SLO Food Bank has transitioned **15% of our Neighborhood Food Distributions and Seniors' Farmers' Markets** to market-style distributions, allowing neighbors to choose the produce they need.



## SUPPORTING LOCAL PRODUCERS

---

Working with local farmers, ranchers, and producers to deliver fresh, nutritious food to our neighbors also supports our local economy and invests in the success of local businesses.


We purchased and distributed over **135,000 pounds of food** from regional producers, including avocados, strawberries, blueberries, carrots, tomatillos, tortillas, and tomatoes.

## INFORMED FOOD PURCHASING

---

Ensuring neighbors have access to the nutritious food they are most likely to eat and that are important to them, their families, and their culture.

Informed by feedback and surveys, our team purchased and distributed **42% more** preferred foods this year including fresh milk, eggs, and corn tortillas.



*“Investments from the SLO Food Bank have been vital to our operations as farmers; I don’t think we could have survived the season without the food bank. The opportunity to sell locally in that manner wasn’t possible before.”*

- Miriam Olivera, co-owner of Hijas de la Fresa

# Cooking with Love: Barbara's Story

After a lifetime of community involvement, Barbara never expected to find herself in a position where she needed to rely on the SLO Food Bank. For eight years, she volunteered her time, even helping to sign up Nipomo Presbyterian Church as an Agency Partner in 2012.

When the COVID-19 pandemic disrupted her job in the hospitality industry, her life changed drastically. Unemployment benefits only covered half of her previous income, leaving her struggling to make ends meet as her bills remained the same.

*“I never expected to be in this position,” Barbara says. “I’ll tell you, there are times that without the food from the pantry, from the food bank, I wouldn’t be eating.”*

Today, the food she receives from local distributions in Nipomo and Five Cities has become a lifeline, allowing her to continue sharing meals with her family, including her daughter and granddaughter.

Cooking—her “love language”—remains a source of joy and connection. “I cook for whoever wants to eat,” Barbara explains, recalling her granddaughter’s recent request: “Grandma, can you cook some of your rice for me?”

Barbara emphasizes that food insecurity can impact anyone, regardless of background or circumstances.

*“I don’t fit the mold of what most people think poor people look like.”*

Barbara appreciates the welcoming, no-barriers approach of the SLO Food Bank, which enables her to care for her loved ones with dignity and ease.

*“It’s easily accessible and something that everybody at some point is going to need.”*



# Pantry and Community Resource Hub

In April 2025, the SLO Food Bank opened a new pantry and community resource hub at our warehouse on Kendall Road in San Luis Obispo. This space was designed to offer a welcoming, market-style shopping experience where neighbors can choose the nutritious foods that best meet their needs, from fresh produce and pantry staples to frozen meat and fish.

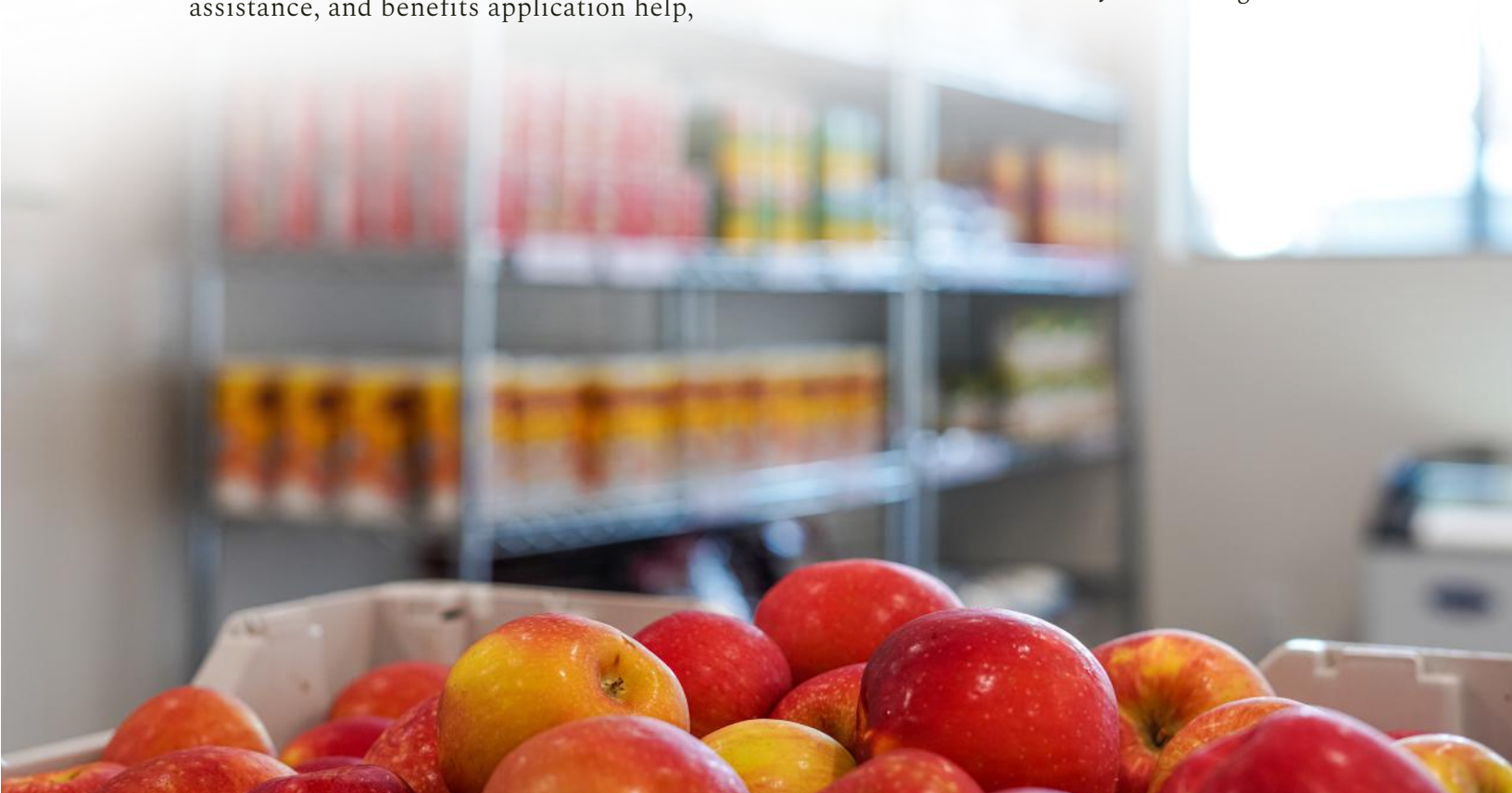
This new resource center is more than a place to access food; it's a step toward a more dignified and comprehensive hunger relief experience. Through the pantry, the SLO Food Bank's Outreach team is building relationships and gathering feedback to inform and improve services across our network. Additionally, partner agencies have already begun to offer complementary services, such as health care, housing assistance, and benefits application help,

during pantry hours, addressing multiple needs in one convenient location.

The hub also includes the Joan G. Sargen Nutrition Kitchen, where the Nutrition team creates instructional videos, tests recipes, and prepares food samples to build confidence in cooking and nurture a positive relationship with food. Joan's generosity made the Nutrition Kitchen possible, enabling us to build a warm, welcoming, and functional space to encourage nutritious choices.

*"I'm proud to support a space where neighbors can not only receive nutritious food, but also gain the confidence and skills to prepare delicious meals for their families."*

- Joan G. Sargen



# The Balay Ko Foundation and Susan and Craig Armstrong

At the SLO Food Bank, stability powers our mission. Through HEART—our Hunger Ending Action Response Team—individuals and businesses provide steady support, allowing us to meet growing needs and plan for the future.

In June 2024, the Balay Ko Foundation launched a transformative challenge: raise \$500,000 in recurring gifts by June 6, 2025, and they'll match every dollar up to \$500,000. Their generosity set the stage for one of our most impactful years ever.

*“We believe in creating lasting solutions to hunger, and that starts with stability. Our match was designed to inspire the community to invest in consistent, reliable giving.”*

- The Balay Ko Foundation

More than 300 new HEART members joined and dozens more increased their regular gifts to help meet the match. Longtime supporters Susan and Craig Armstrong answered the call.

*“We’ve seen firsthand how the SLO Food Bank strengthens our community. Being part of HEART—and helping multiply our impact—was a powerful way to give back in a time when it’s needed most.”*

- Craig and Susan Armstrong

With nearly 1,000 recurring donors today, the SLO Food Bank is sustained by those who give regularly. To the Balay Ko Foundation, the Armstrongs, and every HEART member—thank you for ensuring nutritious food is within reach for every local family.



# Our Community Partners

## SPONSORS

---



Joan G.  
Sargen



BANC OF  
CALIFORNIA



COLUMBIA BANK



HARRIS  
PERSONAL INJURY LAWYERS, INC.



1st Capital Bank / Santa Cruz Bank

American General Media

American Riviera Bank

Astound Business Solutions

Cal Poly

California Coastal Real Estate

CenCal Health

Coastal Pediatric Dentistry

Connect Accounting

Cuesta College

Dimes Media

EECU

French Hospital Medical Center

Glenn Burdette

Idler's Home

Islay Hill Dentistry

KSBY

Mechanics Bank

Miner's Ace Hardware

Morris & Garritano

Randy & Andrea Chavez

Rate

Residents of: Mesa Dunes Mobile Home Estates

Residents of: Morro Shores Mobile Home Park

Running Warehouse

St. Stephen's Episcopal Church

The May Firm

## GRANTORS

---

AgWest Farm Credit

Albertsons-Vons-Pavilions

B.K. Simon Family Charitable Foundation

Bank of America

California Association of Food Banks

Central Coast Funds For Children

Christine Allen Memorial SLO Food Bank Fund

Columbia Bank

Five Cities Meals On Wheels

John R Lindahl Foundation

Kharazi Family Foundation

Leo A. and Minta L. Brisco Foundation

MOCA Foundation

Paul J. McCann Foundation

PG&E Corporation Foundation

Richard and Julia Krejsa

Rotary Club Of Morro Bay

Rotary Club of San Luis Obispo

Rotary Club Of San Luis Obispo Daybreak

Rotary Club Of San Luis Obispo de Tolosa

Sereno 1% For Good Charitable Foundation

Sharon and Christopher Connors Charitable Fund

The Albertsons Companies Foundation

The Balay Ko Foundation

The Community Foundation San Luis Obispo County

The Harold J. Miossi Charitable Trust

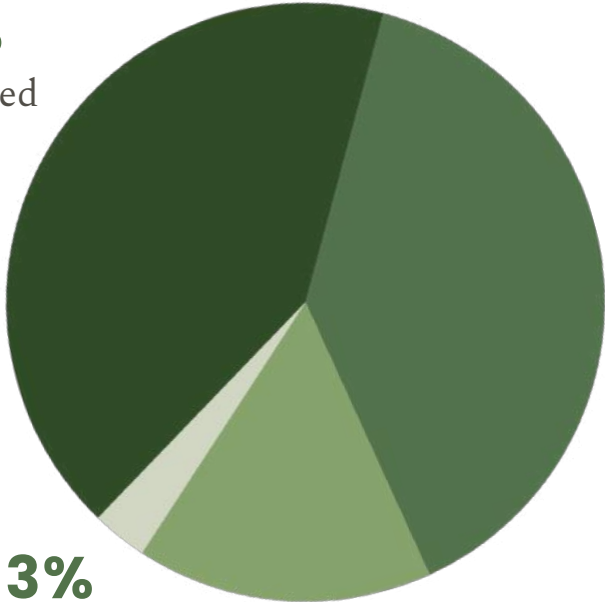
Wells Fargo Foundation

Wood-Claeyssens Foundation

# Where Our Food Comes From

**42%**  
Purchased  
Food

**39%**  
Rescued  
Food



**3%**  
Food Drives  
and Donations

**16%**  
Government  
Programs

## RESCUED FOOD

---

Our Food Rescue programs, Grocery Rescue, School Rescue, and GleanSLO, together redirected

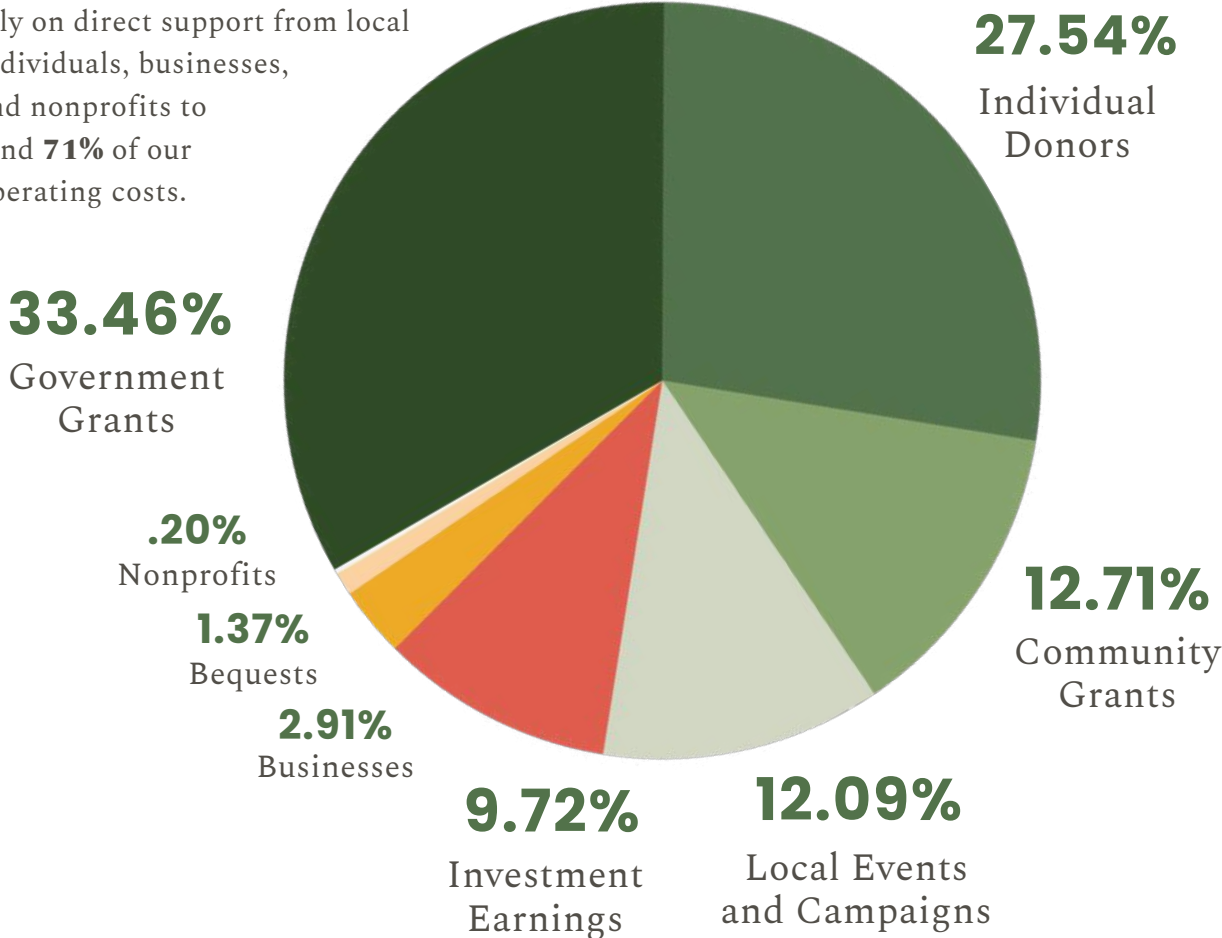
**more than  
2,000,000  
pounds of food**

from fields, backyards, schools, and grocery stores to feed our neighbors in need.



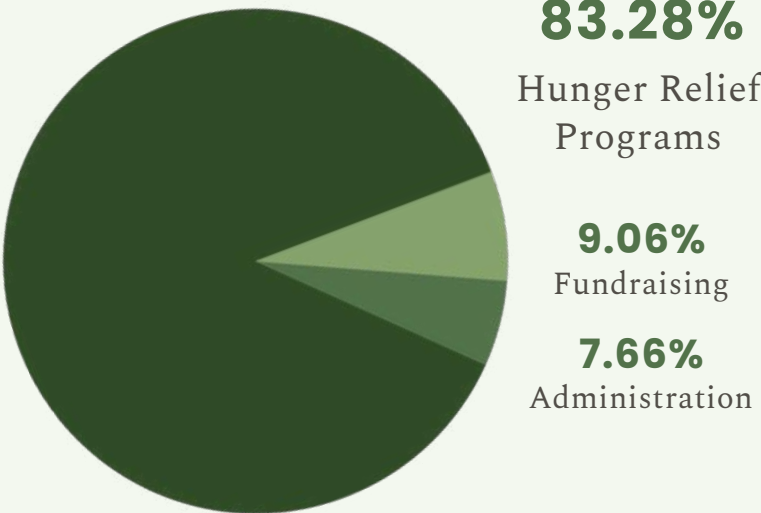
# Where Our Funding Comes From

As the community's food bank, we rely on direct support from local individuals, businesses, and nonprofits to fund **71%** of our operating costs.



# Expenses

**Over 83 cents** of every dollar given directly support hunger relief, providing nourishing food and support to those in need.





**SLO**  
**FOOD BANK**

County Partnership for Hunger Relief

805-238-4664  
SLOFOODBANK.ORG