

# Food Notes | The Newsletter of Food for People

## FALL ISSUE 2022

The Food Bank for  
Humboldt County



Our efforts to help those affected by the recent wildfires continue. More on page 7

### DOUBLE YOUR IMPACT IN THE FIGHT AGAINST HUNGER!

Now through the end of September, your gift to **Food for People** will double thanks to a \$20,000 matching challenge from Craig Hansen and Hansen Insurance Services.

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We feel it's important to keep you updated on our programs, policy work, and the progress we are making at the food bank. If you do not wish to receive a newsletter, please don't hesitate to contact us and have your name removed from our newsletter mailing list.

**Food for People**  
The Food Bank for Humboldt County

PO Box 4922, Eureka, CA 95502  
www.foodforpeople.org  
707-445-3166



# Adapting to Changing Conditions

## Notes from the Executive Director

As I was growing up, the “lazy days of summer” were always something to look forward to, with an extended break from school, vacation trips to the lake or the beach, time spent outside engaged in sports, picnics and barbecues with family and friends, and the feeling that it would last forever. Many families continue to enjoy those special summertime experiences, but must now plan more carefully to avoid areas affected by drought, extreme heat, and the threat of wildfires in order to keep their families safe.

Food for People and many of our partner organizations like Dream Quest, who recently pivoted from their role as a youth-serving organization to being a community resource for emergency supplies, have had to adapt to this new reality as well. We’ve always included disaster response as part of our service to community, but it was historically more conceptual as we talked about possible future earthquakes and tsunamis, and not something we had to prepare for as annual and sometimes long lasting events. Last year we provided support to people in eastern Humboldt and along the Trinity County line, and this year it has inched closer to home with the fires in Willow Creek. In a somewhat ironic twist, we provided emergency food assistance this past winter when heavy snow knocked down trees and power lines, cutting residents off from supply routes, and we are providing assistance once again as those downed trees fuel fires in an already parched landscape.

This experience highlights for all of us how much more difficult these experiences can be when limited resources translate into limited options, which is the case for any low-income household when an emergency arises. Living in an area vulnerable to fast-moving fires means being prepared to evacuate without any idea when you might be able to return and what might be left. Many people have pets they don’t want to leave behind, and most shelters are not set up to accommodate both people and pets. And if you evacuate and don’t

have friends or family to stay with, it can be very expensive or even completely out of reach financially to rent a hotel room and purchase meals for what could be an extended period of time. We’re grateful to our partners at the Red Cross, Dream Quest, the Willow Creek Community Resource Center, Pay It Forward Humboldt, and the Yurok, Karuk and Hoopa Valley tribes for being such great collaborators in providing food assistance and other resources for those impacted by the Willow Creek area fires. We’re also grateful for the food pantries in our Pantry Network that are providing food assistance for evacuees staying with friends and family members throughout Humboldt County, who are happy to provide a safe place to land but may not have the resources to feed extra people.

And I have to say once again that our staff makes us so proud in their commitment to our mission even when working conditions are less than optimal. Robert Sataua is our Emergency and Community Food Response Coordinator, and he and our Community Outreach and Mobile Produce Pantry team have been on the front lines in the affected communities, backed up by our Operations and Food Sourcing staff who coordinate the logistics necessary to make it all happen, and Development and Communications staff who make sure the community knows where and when they can get help. They have been determined to get food out to the affected areas even when the smoke has sent air quality into dangerous levels, prompting some difficult conversations about how to minimize health risks.

When faced with these circumstances, we’ve had to shorten distribution times to lessen exposure to particulate matter and work with local partners to drop off food supplies for those who couldn’t get there in time, but with their help we’ve served as many people as possible, including both those who were already relying on us for monthly assistance and evacuees who need our help until things stabilize. We try to share updates on changing conditions and special food distributions as widely as possible using media contacts and social

media so if you don’t already follow us on Facebook or Instagram, now would be a good time.

And of course a huge THANK YOU to our financial supporters who make it possible for us to be there when needed most. We couldn’t respond as quickly and effectively as we do without knowing that we have the resources necessary to extend our reach as the need arises.

We extend our deepest gratitude to the businesses and community members who have stepped forward to help, and we send heartfelt wishes for the best possible outcomes for all those whose homes and livelihoods have been threatened. And here’s to the firefighters and those working alongside them who put their lives on the line to keep us all safe! Your efforts are nothing short of heroic. Thank you!



With Gratitude,

Anne Holcomb,  
Executive Director

## Late summer volunteer opportunities

By Julie Ryan, Volunteer & Direct Services Manager

Summertime at Food for People is a bustle of volunteer activity. As the need for food assistance increases in response to the higher cost of living, the more opportunities there are for you to join in the variety of weekly and monthly projects. In the warehouse, Mondays can host up to a dozen volunteers between two projects: packing for the Children’s Summer Food Program and bagging produce for Choice Pantry and the Senior programs. At Eureka Choice Pantry, a small crew of volunteers start their Mondays assembling non-perishable bags that are part of the food allotment during our walk-up distributions.

Tuesdays and Fridays the Eureka warehouse hosts produce sorting, donation sorting, and other packing activities ready for distribution throughout the county. Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Fridays, two to three volunteers are needed at each shift at the Eureka Choice Pantry to serve as many as 100 customers per day.

Each month through October, the Free Produce Market at Bayshore Mall’s north parking lot needs 12-15 volunteers to set up and then load cars for households in this busy drive-thru distribution. Other monthly projects include Senior & Homebound deliveries and the Senior Drive-thru distribution.

Summertime means that it is wildfire season in California and Food for People may need help with packing projects as we join community partners in disaster relief efforts. Summer is also fruit harvest time as fruit trees laden with ripe fruit and a handful of gleaners are needed to gather plums, apples, pears, and more into the fall.

Like a busy hive of bees, we keep buzzing and that makes summer a sweet time to volunteer at Food for People.

To volunteer, contact Julie Ryan at 707-445-3166 ext. 310 or [volunteer@foodforpeople.org](mailto:volunteer@foodforpeople.org).



Food for People staff and volunteers pack bags of food for the Children’s Summer Food Program.

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## MATCHING CHALLENGE







The Children's Summer Food Program serves children in rural areas of the county.

# Children's Summer Food Program Helping Kids in Rural Areas of Humboldt County

By Carrie Smith, Child & Senior Programs Coordinator

Our Children's Summer Food Program has adapted to fit children's food needs during the pandemic. This program is an expanded version of the Backpacks for Kids program and has served 200 kids at six sites throughout Humboldt County this summer. These sites are located in the more rural areas of our county that often need some additional food support for qualifying families. Participating children receive a bag of kid-friendly, easy-to-prepare food, packed with enough food to supplement their meals for a week. Foods include a quart of milk, a jar of peanut butter, tuna, canned soups, canned beans, macaroni and cheese, granola bars, 100% fruit juice, and a bag of fresh fruits and vegetables.

The Bridgeville Community Center is one of the sites that participates in the Children's Summer Food Program, to ensure that kids in their community do not go hungry when school is out. The Community Center is the main resource for locals to seek food support besides the school. It's hard to imagine, but the local store in the area does not accept CalFresh/EBT, and the travel costs for grocery shopping on the coast are high, as most families are more than 20 to 60 miles from the nearest grocery store.

"Being able to supplement our families throughout the summer has proven beneficial for the children getting the sustenance they need and also reducing stress in the home." Says Danielle Holway, the Director at the Bridgeville Community Center. "We notice that when the [participating] children get back to school, they are better equipped for school—meaning, their parents have been able to manage their resources with a little less stress and provide their kids with the tools needed to be successful in school."

Danielle says that her favorite part of participating in the program is "knowing that every week we are providing fresh fruits and vegetables for our local youth." She further explains that "Out here grocery shopping is likely once a month, which means veggies are usually in a can, because they go bad after a week. Our efforts are giving healthy choices to our kids and a wide variety of fresh vegetables and fruits for parents and guardians to cook with."

Trish Oakes, the Director at Dream Quest, the youth center in Willow Creek, also really appreciates being able to participate in the program. They currently distribute about 50 bags of food each week. "Food for People's Children's Summer Food Program makes a huge difference for many families that are financially challenged to buy groceries. My grandchildren came to visit last month, and I realized that I had forgotten how much kids eat—especially teenagers."

Trish says that having the extra food has noticeable positive benefits for the children she works with. "The kids are happier and better able to perform when they are not dealing with food scarcity. Seeing their behavior when food scarcity is their normal can be heartbreaking."

The goal of Food for People's Child Nutrition Programs is to fill the meal gap for at-risk children in Humboldt County when school meal assistance is unavailable. As the summer winds down we are now planning ahead to launch our Backpacks for Kids weekend hunger relief program for the school year. If you have any questions about our Child Nutrition Programs please call Carrie, our Child & Senior Programs Coordinator, at 707-445-3166 extension 309 or email ChildNutrition@foodforpeople.org.

# BACKPACKS FOR KIDS

for Eureka School Children

**Help Children Facing Hunger in our community**

Next school year will be here before you know it and children in our community need your help. Backpacks for Kids provides a bag full of nutritious food for local kids on the weekends for the school year.

Cypress Grove Chevre					
Rotary Club of Eureka					
Rotary Club of Old Town Eureka			United Bikers of Northern California		
Howard & Peg Gardner	Malia Family Fund		Advanced Security Systems		
Nordic Aquafarms	Outdoor Cast Iron Cooking	George Peterson Insurance	Coast Central Credit Union		
Gina's Irish Shop	Alida & Dave Abell	Maggie Fleming	Mrs. Luther Cobb & Ellen Manoney		
Rich & Carol	Anonymous	Richard & Robin Marks	Your Name Here!		
Times Printing	Auto, Evans & Company, LLP	Kim Brown-Ming Truck	Rick McHosha & Rusty Goodlove	Melinda Wilson	Stewart Telecommunications
Kathy & Dave Wells	101 Things To Do	Dealy Store	Nancy & Bill Dean	Hunter, Hunter & Hunt	Doree & Nancy Quimby
Anda & Jude	Sun & Steady	Carl & Rick Grayney	Natalie DiCostanzo	Fary Cuda Other	Karla Fly
Ted & Marlene Johnsoner	Greg & Carol West	George & Kathy Hayes	Linda De Vries	Patrice & Honore Manoy	Ralph Davis & Jocaine Saperon
Betty Wilja	ed & Pat K.	Eva Janson	Jim & Sharon Reed	Jar & Jerry Nelson	Arnie & Richard Anderson
Bill & Corbin Denial	Deby Chermak & Teaching Annunziakita	Norman's Dry Cleaners	Joan M. De Pae	Your Name Here	
Eric Olson	Corp Robby	Joan Jensen	Steve & Lynn Lurie	Merly Suter	Lisa Usch
Ray & Colleen Lovel	Scott & Amy Rouse	Barbara & Ian Latta	Christine Medford	Paula Palmer	Eric & Cheryl Dett

**\$600**

**\$300**

will sponsor a child for a full year in the program!

**\$100**



Give Online  
[www.foodforpeople.org](http://www.foodforpeople.org)

Give by phone  
contact Carly at  
**(707)445-3166 ext. 306**

Join these Backpacks for Kids partners and help local children



Donate online  
[foodforpeople.org](http://foodforpeople.org)



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Food for People's new facility is on schedule to open in early 2023!

# Food for People's New facility

By Carly Robbins, Development Director

Times are tough in Humboldt County, as well as throughout the nation, as the rising cost of food, gas, and everyday living expenses are affecting us all. At Food for People, we have grown accustomed to adapting to meet shifting needs. The COVID pandemic increased the number of people experiencing hunger in Humboldt County. In 2019 — prior to the pandemic — 12,000 people were served monthly by Food for People. This number grew to 16,000 individuals monthly — and remained high in 2021. We adjusted our programs, expanded where we saw needs arise, and have kept a steady (and increased) level of service in the county. Now things are changing again. The average number of people seeking food assistance across all our programs has increased by 25% compared to last year's monthly average, and the numbers are continuing to climb.

To meet the increased need, Food for People is working to bulk up the food offerings in our network of food pantries and programs as well as add distributions to help affected areas. However, bulking up food offerings once again means we are running out of space—a story that has been all too common in our operations since the sewer disaster of 2020 that caused us to move out of our flagship building into multiple leased locations. This increased need for food assistance coupled with the recurring emergencies and natural disasters that plague our area — from wildfires and winter storms to the pandemic — has shed light on the importance of a strong emergency food network for our region. We are happy to say that with Food for People's new building under construction, Humboldt County will soon have a brand new food bank facility to meet these needs.

Construction is well underway with exterior walls erected and the roof in progress, and we are on schedule for completion late this year. One of our key priorities when designing the building was to plan responsibly for the future, which is why we have built in adaptable space for disaster response resiliency. Not only will we have the space to store emergency foods, we will have backup power to ensure that when a disaster strikes the food bank can remain operational. The new facility will also transform and streamline Food for People's operations. Not only will our staff be all under one roof again, eliminating our current transportation and logistics issues, but the added height and storage space will allow us to expand our services to ensure we can address the increasing food assistance needs of Humboldt County. With our longtime commitment to providing healthy food options to low-income community members, we will be adding more cold storage to allow us to store and prioritize more fresh produce.

In order to complete this project, we need to raise \$6.1 million. Thankfully we have already received strong support from the community and local partners, collecting \$5.95 million to date. One of our primary hopes now is to raise the remaining \$150,000 needed to finish the project so we will not have to take on debt to complete it, especially with the increasingly high loan interest rates.

If you would like to help us close this gap and realize our goal, you can send a donation to us earmarked for the rebuild, or contact Carly Robbins, Development Director, at (707) 445-3166 ext. 306 or [crobbsins@foodforpeople.org](mailto:crobbsins@foodforpeople.org).



# Wildfire Emergency Food Response

## Partnering to Bring Food to Fire Impacted Areas

By Robert Sataua, Emergency Food Response Coordinator

Food for People has been increasingly focused on emergency food response in the age of COVID, winter storms, and wildfires that have become part of our normal lives. This hyper-awareness of disasters has allowed us to focus on being prepared for the inevitable through grassroots organizing, academic research, and capacity building. Through a collective effort from stakeholders across the county, we've developed a strong foundation that has allowed us to address emergency food access effectively.

This summer's Six Rivers Lighting Complex wildfire was a call to action that we were prepared for, thanks to a flourishing local network that we work with. With unprecedented evacuation orders in the Willow Creek area, there was a large need to support those who were impacted by the fires. While people took refuge at the Red Cross shelter, stayed at campsites, or bunked with friends, we knew that demand for food would be high. Fortunately, we had some food resources in Willow Creek, thanks to our partners at Pay It Forward Humboldt, the Willow Creek Community Resource Center, and Dream Quest who responded immediately. This gave

us a little time to prepare for a more robust response, and we planned an emergency distribution that aligned with the Disaster Relief Pop-Up organized by Pay It Forward and Dream Quest.

The event was held at Dream Quest, which provided a welcoming space including activities for kids, homemade soup, and fresh baked cookies that made people feel at home while the fires burned within eyesight of the front doors. Pay it Forward procured supplies like brand new sleeping bags, air filters, toiletries, and clothes. There were a lot of volunteers that made easy work of unloading pallets of food and getting them delivered into people's cars. We served nearly 80 households with a variety of fresh and non-perishable food items including fresh fruits and vegetables donated from local farmers and gardeners, ready-to-eat food donations from Wildberries and the North Coast Co-op, MRE-style meals, and bottled water. In the midst of a disaster, we worked as a collaborative to create a little refuge filled with generosity and hope, which was just as important as the resources being distributed.



# Cooking with Sable Fish

## Grant Allows us to Purchase Local

Thanks to a grant from the Humboldt Health Foundation, Food for People has been able to purchase culturally appropriate foods to add to our distribution offerings to better meet the food assistance needs of the indigenous people we serve — specifically focusing on locally sourced foods. One of those items we were able to offer this year is locally caught sablefish!

Never cooked sablefish before? Check out this tasty recipe from Food for People's Nutrition Education Coordinator Magnolia. Find the recipe at <https://www.foodforpeople.org/content/soy-glazed-sablefish-black-cod>





# State Budget Act Addresses Poverty and Hunger

By Heidi McHugh, CalFresh Outreach & Policy Advocacy Coordinator

The 2022 California Budget Act was signed by Governor Newsom on June 30, 2022. Food banks and anti-poverty advocates are encouraged by these significant investments that will reduce hunger, poverty, and inequity. As the economy reopens, **more than 20% of Californians report being food insecure**. The commitment to funding food banks, school meals, Supplemental Security Income, and addressing inequality in resource access will improve the quality of life for all Californians. Below are the highlights that pertain to these issues.

- \$120 million one-time allocation for **CalFood**. These funds allow food banks to purchase California-produced foods to be distributed at food pantries.
- Over \$2 billion to implement **School Meals for All**, make improvements to school kitchen infrastructure, enhance school food procurement, and related school meal investments.
- Expansion of the **California Food Assistance Program** to Californians age 55+ regardless of immigration status.
- Acceleration of **Supplemental Security Income (SSI) grant** increases from January 1, 2023, to January 1, 2024 (which in combination with the expected federal Cost of Living Adjustment will increase SSI/SSP grants by approximately \$107 per month). Nearly half of the people who visit Food for

- People's pantries and distributions receive SSI.
- Establishment of the **Tribal Nutrition Assistance Program**, which will award grants to tribes and tribal organizations to address food insecurity and inequities between CalFresh and the Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations (FDIPR). FDIPR participants are ineligible to receive SNAP/CalFresh.
  - A significant increase to **CalWORKs grants** by 21% – the biggest increase in the program's history.
  - A change in **child support policy** allowing families that receive child support payments to receive all of it and not have it redirected to the government.
  - Over \$205 million to ensure access to **reproductive health care**.

- **Expansion of health coverage** to low-income undocumented immigrants of all ages.
- A reduction of **civil assessment fees** from \$300 to \$100, and discharge of civil assessment debt that accrued prior to the change in the law.
- A change in tax intercept policy stopping the government from intercepting the **Earned Income Tax Credit** and **Young Child Tax Credit** for unpaid debts.
- \$100 million for **HOPE (Hope, Opportunity, Perseverance, and Empowerment)** accounts, which will benefit low-income children who have lost a parent or guardian to COVID-19, and children in long-term foster care.
- \$9.5 billion in **tax rebates** for tax filers, including people who file with an Individual Taxpayer Identification Number.

# PINTS FOR NON-PROFITS

## for Food for People

### Thursday, September 1st

### 4:30-7:30 PM




Taproom,  
1600 Sunset Dr.

Delicious food from



Jams by Kingfoot!



# ALL Are Welcome

## Insight from our Choice Pantry Coordinator

By Catherine Rippetoe, Communications & Events Coordinator

An increasing number of people have been accessing our food pantries this summer as we watch inflation, gas prices, and food prices rise across the country. At our Eureka Choice Pantry, the number of people seeking services has grown by more than 45% compared to the average last year and is continuing to climb. Many are new to the food pantry. "Not just new people, but people who have never visited a service like this before," says Erin Tharp, coordinator of the Choice Pantry. When it comes to making new visitors feel welcome, Erin focuses on the importance of a positive first impression. "I try to keep that in the forefront of everything we do, because if you ask for help and are made to feel bad, you're not going to come back, and you're not going to get the help you need. Sometimes the manner in which the service is provided is just as, if not more, important than the service itself."

The team at the Eureka Choice Pantry does its best to cater to all people who seek services, regardless of dietary needs or living situations. "We have vegan, vegetarian, and gluten-free options, as well as no-cook bags. There are a lot of people who are in some kind of transitional living space, so we have bags that have things like peanut butter, crackers and chips, canned chicken and tuna, canned fruit, and granola bars—Things you can eat directly out of the package. There are several program participants I know that have dietary restrictions, and when I see them I will pull out whatever box of options I know they will need, so that we can make food substitutions together," Erin explained. Pet food and hygiene supplies are also offered

when possible. "We have been seeing an increase in needs all across the board. In addition to food, program participants are sometimes seeking non-food items as well, such as pet food, hygiene products, pads and tampons, and toothbrushes. We get donations of these things, but they go really quickly. During the formula shortage, we got a lot of phone calls asking if we had any formula. We have some, but it's hard for us to buy what is on the shelf when there is so little on the shelves for everyone."

According to Erin, "This pantry is a place where people can just come when they need to. It doesn't have to be every month or every year. There are USDA income guidelines for accessing food, and program participants self-certify that they are within the income guidelines. Income guidelines are adjusted every year to account for the rising cost of living. Even if someone is over those guidelines, we have other food sources we can provide so they won't leave empty-handed."

When asked what she would like people who haven't visited the pantry to know, Erin responded by saying, "I want new visitors to know that no one here is going to judge you. I see everyone just as members of our community. I don't see anyone who is less-than because they need help. That's not what it is. The stigma exists in the world, no matter what we do, but at our pantries, no one is here to judge you. We are Food for People. It's that simple."

Give in the name of a loved one

You can honor a friend or family member by making a donation to Food for People. Simply add a notation to your gift. If you include an address, we'll send a card to let that person know about the donation. It is a great way to celebrate and/or honor the memory of someone you love.

In Honor Of	In Memory Of	
<p>Andrea Eitelbird Anne Holcomb Annie Bolick-Floss Birthdays of Anne and Mark Harris Elizabeth Baker Helen Lewis</p>	<p>JoAnn Shomas' Birthday John McManus Kathleen Naghdi Mikenzie Paul &amp; Tammy's marriage Rotary Club of Arcata Sally Hewit</p>	<p>Jeffrey Blanck Ned Seely Ronald Lyons April Conant Barbara Stevens Bill Christensen Bruce Miller Charles Wallace Cindy Taylor Cora Lois Plant Dolores Martin Don &amp; Betty Hosterman</p>
<p>"In honor of all the children I have been privileged to work with over the years"</p> <p>"In honor of the the Humboldt and Trinity County residents affected by the Lightening Complex Fire"</p>	<p>Donna Brantly Doris Delashmutt Eugene Flocchini Frankie Stansberry Shea HSU Football Janet Nicklas Jim Goering Joe Myers Kelly L. Kyle Laurey &amp; Jay Sullivan Lynn Hubbard Leydecker Mrs. Marge Adams</p>	<p>Nellie Cruz Morantes Nicholas Motto Peter Hoijer Sara Turner Sue Alto Susan Fales Thea Gast Toni Martin Vernon Whitney Youko Ferguson Yvette Logan</p>





## New Senior Delivery at the Lodge Senior & Homebound Programs Expand

By Carrie Smith, Child & Senior Programs Coordinator

Food for People's Senior and Homebound Programs address the negative health impacts of food insecurity and social isolation often experienced by seniors in our community. One of the programs we operate is the Commodity Supplemental Food Program (CSFP) which works to improve the health of low-income persons at least 60 years of age by supplementing their diets with nutritious foods each month.

For many years this program has served sites in Eureka, Fortuna, McKinleyville, Trinidad, and Arcata. We are excited to announce that this year we were able to expand, adding a new site to our existing roster. Starting in June, we began delivering food to the doorsteps of community members located at The Lodge in Eureka. The food we deliver includes a box full of nonperishable foods, and a bag of fresh foods such as eggs, milk, cheese, frozen meat or fish, fresh produce, and bread. Many of the residents at The Lodge regularly visited our other locations in the Eureka area. One of our goals in establishing The Lodge as a new site in our Senior and Homebound Programs is to get food to income-

qualified seniors in a reliable and consistent manner. We are also hoping to grow the site there amongst other senior residents who might benefit but are not currently aware of services or able to travel to one of our other sites.

The Lodge at Eureka is a 50-unit affordable housing complex for low-income seniors and folks with disabilities, featuring studios, and one and two-bedroom apartments. Managed by the Danco Corporation, amenities at the Lodge include on-site management, a large community room, an exercise room, and laundry facilities. To be eligible to live at the Lodge at Eureka, you must be at least 62 years old and meet certain income-level restrictions. Income levels are measured as a percentage of AMI, the county's Area Median Income. Tenants must have an income level at or below a certain percentage of AMI for the corresponding family size.

If interested in the CSFP program, please call Carrie, our Child & Senior Programs Coordinator, at 707-445-3166 extension 309 or email [seniors@foodforpeople.org](mailto:seniors@foodforpeople.org).

## Free Produce Markets

By Robert Sataua, Emergency Food Response Coordinator

Volunteer Tom sets up a Free Produce Market drive-thru.



Our seasonal Free Produce Markets continue to be popular for accessing fresh fruits and vegetables in Eureka, Fortuna, Garberville, and Redway once per month. These markets allow us to distribute summer crops that provide nutritional value for dinner tables across the county. In Redway, our partners at the Southern Humboldt Family Resource Center say that their community values fresh produce more than your average consumer. The produce is a big draw for community members in the region, and people look forward to this program every year. It turns out that fresh produce is popular at all of our sites, because we've seen increased participation throughout the program. In Eureka, we are seeing twice as many households this year than we did last year, and the increase has had us reassessing how we plan for these markets.

In addition to the produce we get from our partners in the Central Valley, we are now buying additional foods to ensure we have enough produce for everyone. We try to bring staples like onions, potatoes, carrots, and celery that are hardy enough to last a couple of weeks and often have a variety of greens, like

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cabbage, spinach, and lettuce. We never know exactly what we will have access to from month to month but tend to have foods that cannot be grown on the coast as easily, like corn and melons, which are always received with open arms.

With the growth of these distributions, we have had to adjust our systems to get people through the long lines quicker. When we realized that cars were waiting over an hour to get their food in Eureka, we knew a different model was needed to avoid people using a lot of costly gas to access food. By creating a more efficient loading system and recruiting more volunteers, we've managed to cut the wait time down to 25-45 minutes, and that was a welcomed change for all parties.

We could not have had the success that we've had without our dedicated team of volunteers. At each Free Produce Market site, hardworking volunteers are critical to the distribution's success. Some volunteers have been with us for more than 10 years. These volunteers offer their keen perspective and play a big role in identifying efficiency opportunities. In addition, Uplift Eureka and C.E.R.T. (Community Emergency Response Team) have contributed greatly to ensuring the distributions run smoothly. The efforts pay off when we see participants overjoyed and grateful for the foods as they drive through. If you would like more information on our season Free Produce Markets [www.foodforpeople.org/programs/free-produce-markets](http://www.foodforpeople.org/programs/free-produce-markets).

## Farmer Spotlight

### Ben and Aubrey - Fair Curve Farm

By Allison Kenney, Local Food Resources Coordinator

Fair Curve Farm was started in 2017 by Aubrey and Ben Thompson. The pair met in 2015 while working on other local farms, and realized they shared a passion for organic farming. Fair Curve Farm is unique in its location-- while Southern, Eastern and Northern Humboldt are saturated with small organic farms; the options are relatively limited for areas in the center of the county like Ferndale and Loleta. After recognizing this gap within our local food system, Fair Curve Farm was born, and Ben and Aubrey began tending a plot of land nestled between the corn fields and horse pastures of Ferndale with the mission of "providing high-quality, nutrient-dense, organically-grown produce for the Eel River Valley and surrounding areas."

Entering an established food system, especially a seemingly saturated one such as Humboldt's, is never easy, but Fair Curve Farm has been able to find a special niche by carefully considering how they can best serve their local community. While many new farms try their luck selling produce at the bustling Saturday Arcata Farmer's Market, Fair Curve Farm decided to keep business close to home and has partnered with the Ferndale business community to sell produce once a week at their own Saturday Ferndale Farm Stand – providing organic produce to a community that otherwise would have limited access. They also provide produce to several local restaurants and grocery stores.

The farm stand, which is open from 10am-2pm on Saturdays, offers a couple different options for purchasing produce. In the beginning of the season, customers can purchase a CSA (Community Supported Agriculture) share. Community Supported Agriculture is a production model in which local community members support a farm by purchasing a "share" in the farm's harvests at the beginning of the growing season (when cash flow is typically lower for a farm), and the farmers utilize the funds to invest in the farm. In turn, members are entitled to the farm's harvests as they become available during the growing season. Fair Curve Farm's CSA model is unique in that it is a free-choice style CSA, where customers get to choose what produce they get as their "share" by shopping at the farm stand, rather than receiving a predetermined weekly box typically chosen by the farmer (and traditionally how many CSAs are run). Having freedom of choice in what we eat is very important to Ben and Aubrey, and offering a free-choice CSA share ensures that their clients are truly choosing and using the produce they want and need.

Food for People first met Fair Curve Farm at their stand at the Henderson Center Farmers' Market on Thursdays in Eureka and was drawn in by the friendly farmers and their vibrant produce display. At the end of market days, Ben and Aubrey generously donated their excess market produce to the food bank. Since then, Food for People has been contracting with Fair Curve Farm via the Locally Delicious Food Fund, which helps provide high quality, locally grown produce to our senior and homebound clients. They also make deliveries several times a month to be used by our countywide Mobile Produce Pantry, which serves rural areas of Humboldt that have limited access to fresh foods. Last summer, Ben and Aubrey worked with our Ferndale pantry site to provide produce for their monthly distributions. We are so thankful for our partnership with Fair Curve Farm and their commitment to helping us serve our community.



Aubrey, Ben and baby at their farm in Ferndale.



# New Food Pantry Serving the Community of Blocksburg

By Nora Lovell, Pantry Network Coordinator

Food for People's Pantry Network now consists of 18 pantries and 3 congregate meal programs throughout Humboldt County thanks to key community partners. Our newest pantry site is located in Blocksburg, 30 minutes south of Bridgeville. It is operated by the Bridgeville Community Center, which started distributing food in Blocksburg in July 2022.

The Bridgeville Community Center operates three different pantry sites—more than any of our other pantry partners. Their original pantry site is located at the Bridgeville Community Center, directly next to Bridgeville Elementary School. Then they added a mobile distribution in Dinsmore, to better serve those who are farther out on Highway 36. Their new mobile distribution in Blocksburg is set up at the Blocksburg Town Hall. The Bridgeville Community Center also participates in Food for People's Senior Brown Bag, Backpacks for Kids, and Children's Summer Food programs. With close ties on their campus, the Center's relationship with our children's programs ensures that students at Bridgeville Elementary School are fed during the weekends and summers when school meals are not provided.

In addition to these programs, the Bridgeville Community Center hosts a number of their own programs. They host a community potluck every month, as well as monthly vaccine

clinics, bi-monthly exercise classes, and community holiday dinners. They are also the umbrella agency for the local Fire Safe Council and Two Rivers Community Care Group.

The Bridgeville Community Center is looking forward to engaging our community with upcoming parenting classes, substance abuse support groups, a wide array of other support groups, and group counseling. They also work closely with the school to assist in engaging programs such as "Art Club" during the After School Program.

The Bridgeville Community Center relies on hardworking volunteers. They have five committed volunteers who help with their pantry needs every month, including making the food bags, driving the van, and passing out food to their local community members. The Bridgeville volunteers love working at the pantry distribution and taking the time to get to know individuals and families. It is through their efforts that the Bridgeville Community Center is able to serve an average of 55 households every month through just their Bridgeville and Dinsmore locations, and they are now expanding their reach further with the new Blocksburg location. This is an exciting new step in being able to better serve our more rural community members.

If you are in the area, stop by the Bridgeville Community Center and check out all they have to offer!



**Mission.** Food for People is working to eliminate hunger and improve the health and well-being of our community through access to healthy and nutritious foods, community education, and advocacy.

**Vision.** We envision a community where everyone has access to good quality, nutritious food, understands the consequences of hunger and poor nutrition, and is committed to creating a stronger, healthier Humboldt County.

**More.** For more information on Food for People and our countywide hunger relief programs or for ways you can get involved visit [www.foodforpeople.org](http://www.foodforpeople.org).



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