

Building For The Future

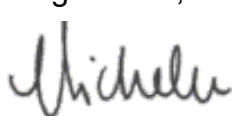
Food For Thought from Michelle Douglas, CEO

Emergency Food Network is Building for the Future! EFN has been at our current location in Lakewood for almost 30 years. Over that time, our warehouse has helped us serve our community through multiple recessions and a pandemic on top of the daily need that 1 in 10 of our neighbors experiences. Over the past few years, however, it has become clear that our current warehouse space is at capacity. We need to grow.

I'm excited to share that in 2023, EFN will be building an additional warehouse at our Distribution Center in Lakewood. Our current permanent storage spaces consist of our main warehouse and our vertical storage building (nicknamed the 747, thanks to generous support from the Boeing Employees Community Fund). To increase our storage capacity, EFN has been relying on trailers parked on our lot and offsite storage in Auburn. These solutions are costly and inefficient. For the past sixteen months, we have been raising money and preparing for construction of a 21,500-square-foot warehouse which will sit on the northern end of our property. We are now 98% of the way towards our \$7.7 million project goal. Most exciting of all, the building should be complete and ready to start storing food by the end of 2023. You can learn more about our Building for the Future Campaign [here](#).

This new space will ensure that EFN can continue to meet the rapidly growing need for food assistance in Pierce County. The last few years have shown that the need can suddenly change at any time, meaning we need to be ready to react and adapt quickly. We've also been fortunate to see that in times of need, our community rallies together and cares for one another. You can help us continue to ensure that no person goes hungry in Pierce County now and for years to come by supporting our Building For the Future Campaign.

In gratitude,



Hunger Awareness Month 2023

Thank You For A Successful HAM

As the summer months begin, all of us at EFN look back on Hunger Awareness Month and feel grateful for the community we are a part of and the many community members who chose one or more ways to address food insecurity throughout May. We started the month with GiveBIG, an online, annual, and statewide fundraiser held by Washington Gives. This exciting 2-day fundraiser brought in over \$7,700 in donations that will support EFN in helping our neighbors in need.



Just days after GiveBIG, EFN held our annual Hunger Walk at Fort Steilacoom Park in Lakewood. More than 600 people joined us to enjoy local vendors and a pleasant walk around Waughop Lake. All our supporters, including event participants and virtual walkers, brought in over \$40,000 in donations! Thank you, everyone, for joining us in taking steps to feed our neighbors in need.

Our last major event of Hunger Awareness Month is the annual "Stamp Out Hunger" Food Drive, the nation's largest single-day food drive, hosted by the National Association of Letter Carriers. This year alone, "Stamp Out Hunger" brought in an impressive 197,000 pounds of food donations for EFN's Partner Programs.

Thank you to everyone who was involved with Hunger Awareness Month 2023 and who partnered with Emergency Food Network to combat food insecurity in Pierce County and ensure that no person goes hungry.

From The Fields

Seasonal Updates From Mother Earth Farm

Mother Earth Farm is exploding with growth! May has been a particularly exciting month with so much going into the ground, including lettuce, kohlrabi, cabbage, radishes, collards, chard, fennel, green onions, fava beans, and tomatoes!

Every month we have a group from Harvest Pierce County called Farm Foundations come to help us with more large-scale and detailed tasks including turning over our high tunnel from winter to summer production. We are so grateful for our volunteers' help to do big projects like these so that we can get tomatoes in as early as May 12th. Large groups like Farm Foundations help us get our produce out to our partners and on to our neighbors' plates! Thank you, Farm Foundations, for your time and skill.

Our University of Puget Sound interns are here for the 2023 season! We are lucky enough to have three incredible interns who are passionate about learning about the land and getting food out to food pantries and their guests. We are excited to have their help for the next 10 weeks. As the production season continues at Mother Earth Farm, we look forward to collaborating with all our community supporters to grow nutritious food for neighbors in need.

Want to see what production at Mother Earth Farm looks like?

[Join us Fridays 9AM-12PM](#) to be part of organic farming in action!



Volunteer Spotlight

Thank You, Green Thumb Crew, For Your Amazing Support of EFN!



By: Rhylea Foehl Photography

Our Green Thumb Crew is a cohort of dedicated individuals who go above and beyond to support EFN's Mother Earth Farm. They assist on a regular basis with technical farm tasks like harvesting, managing irrigation, trellising tomatoes, and other jobs that require an experienced gardener's touch. Members of the Green Thumb Crew come out to the farm up to 4 times a week to volunteer during our peak season! We couldn't get all of this delicious fresh produce out without your help - thank you!

Voted The Best Nonprofit in South Sound 2023

EFN Featured By South Sound Magazine

It's always a delight to see our community spread awareness of our work and it is an honor to be recognized as South Sound Magazine's Best Nonprofit this year! South Sound Magazine has been a part of the Pierce County community since 2001, and it is the only lifestyle publication for South Puget Sound, WA, which includes 13 cities!



With the goal of informing, inspiring, and connecting their readers to people and places that are unique to the South Sound, this local publication is followed by thousands.

At the end of every year, they open online voting to ask the community to rank the "best of" restaurants, businesses, and more, and the winners are released in their May-June issue. We are grateful to be lifted up by the community in such a special way, and we hope to engage even more South Sound community members in feeding our neighbors in need.

To read the full article, visit [here](#).

Summer Break Brings Summer Hunger

Kid-Friendly Foods Needed

As summer approaches, many kids look forward to a break from the routine of school and homework. For the 52% of kids in Pierce County who qualify for free and reduced-cost lunch, however, summer also means a break from the routine of nourishing school meals. Their parents and families feel extra pressure not just to find childcare for the summer, but also to find the extra meals their kids would typically eat at school. To address this need, we're highlighting kid-friendly foods to donate to EFN or your local food pantry.

Wondering what foods are most kid-friendly? Here are some items to consider:

- Fruits: delicious and nourishing, fruits are a win with kids! Whether you choose applesauce, fruit cocktail, or dried fruit, take a look at the label to avoid products with added sugars.
- Ready-to-eat protein: peanut butter is also a kid favorite! Canned tuna and chicken are also great— these foods keep kids feeling full for hours, and they don't require preparation.
- Easy-prep foods: since many kids have one or more working parent, it's important to have a variety of foods they can make themselves. Ravioli, soup, and mac-and-cheese cups all allow kids to safely make a meal with just a microwave.
- Snacks: granola bars and trail mix are fun items that kids can eat even while they're at the park or playground. They're also prohibitively expensive for EFN and many food pantries to purchase, so donations are especially impactful!

Feeling motivated to gather donations to address summer hunger?

[Host a Food & Fund Drive](#) to increase your impact and rally your community to keep kids nourished!

Or contact EFN at info@efoodnet.org to Grow a Row for your local food pantry!

Join The EFN Team

Help Make A Difference In Pierce County

EFN has three seasonal AmeriCorps VISTA Farm Associate positions available!

Summer Associate VISTA members will learn about and carry out all aspects of organic fruit and vegetable production including seeding, cultivating, transplanting, weeding, harvesting, and packing. VISTA members also receive a monthly stipend and education award!

Positions and Applications

More open positions at EFN coming soon!



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