Bringing more fresh produce to table for people in need

Four-year-old James got two of his favorite treats while visiting The Greenhouse, a Second Harvest partner food pantry in Deer Park.

While James decided whether to eat the apple or the cupcake, his parents, Justin and Christina, selected fresh produce and other emergency food supplies.

“We like to make sure we have fruits and vegetables so that our son is healthy and eating properly,” said Justin, who suffered a back injury that left him unable to work until he has surgery. The family of three was already struggling to afford groceries when a $42-a-month cut in food stamps made it even harder to buy healthy food.

Thanks to many generous funders and food donors, Second Harvest continues to increase access to fresh fruits and vegetables for low-income families and seniors.

The Women Helping Women Fund Tri-Cities recently provided Second Harvest with a $20,000 grant that will result in thousands of additional pounds of produce for Mid-Columbia households in need. Second Harvest will deliver bins of seasonally fresh fruits and vegetables to food pantries and other agencies. The added produce will supplement the food the pantries already receive from Second Harvest and give clients the capacity to leave with additional apples, carrots and other nutrient-dense food that supports a healthy diet.

The Bank of America Charitable Foundation is another example of a generous funder that is helping Second Harvest get more food to where it’s needed most. The foundation gave Second Harvest a $10,000 grant in November that will make it possible for Second Harvest to secure and distribute additional food—including fresh produce—to feed hungry people in Spokane County.

Second Harvest’s push to get additional fresh fruits and vegetables to hungry children and adults comes amid a growing concern about the link between poverty and obesity and preventable chronic health conditions.

Going from six-figure income to food bank line

Sally has a master’s degree in social work. Ten years ago, she was a medical social worker at a Tri-Cities hospital, and she and her husband enjoyed a combined six-figure income. But everything was about to change.

Sally was diagnosed with a very aggressive, late-stage cancer. Her prognosis was poor. She underwent chemotherapy and had just finished treatments, when late one winter night, her husband came home, woke her up and told her to leave. He said he didn’t want to be married anymore. She was instantly homeless.

“Suddenly I was on the other side,” Sally recalled.

Friends provided Sally with short-term housing while she applied for Social Security disability benefits. Her family was unable to help, and she was unable to return to work. She found a small apartment, but faced extreme challenges to survive, living on only $339 a month at her lowest point. Sally moved to Yakima to be closer to family, and she was helped by Second Harvest’s Mobile Food Bank in December.

“If I didn’t have food banks to help me, there is no way I could make it,” Sally said, noting she can’t get by on just $24 a week in food stamps. Although she is cancer-free, Sally can eat few foods because of other health problems.

“Second Harvest provides more produce and healthy foods I can eat,” Sally commented.

Sally reflected on the way her life changed so dramatically from her days as a social worker.

“I never thought that I’d be standing in line at a food bank with the people I used to service,” Sally said. “The people that work at Second Harvest have been so kind and nonjudgmental about my circumstances, too. I’ve been through so much, but I know I’m going to be OK.”
Dear Friends,

I wonder how many hours we all spend in one sort of line or another each year? There’s a line for just about anything you buy. We stand in line for a movie or to buy a few groceries at the local market. (My special skill seems to be picking the slowest line.)

I’ve also been thinking about all of the people who are standing in food bank lines these days. The reason someone is standing in line is usually unique, though an empty refrigerator is the common denominator. The role that Second Harvest plays in this setting is fairly simple: we need to fill those empty plates as best we can. We do that by shipping free food to local food banks and meal centers—over 250 of them. As long as the need remains at historically high levels, this must be the main thing that we do.

What else can or should we do? For a number of years now, we have been testing other ideas with a lot of success. We’ve been partnering with WSU Extension to provide nutrition education and cooking classes to literally, thousands of people. We’ve partnered with everyone from apple growers to cattle ranchers to put healthy food on our Mobile Food Bank truck to reach people in remote communities. Donors and volunteers have helped us expand “A Bite 2 Go” so that hundreds of hungry, school-age kids are taking home food for the weekend. We’re learning that we can make a lasting difference.

That food bank line isn’t getting any shorter, though. What if we could help even more families become self-sufficient? What if we could bring people together, around the same table, and learn together how to cook healthy and affordable meals? Could we use lentils from the Palouse, potatoes from Moses Lake and apples from Wenatchee to make healthy meals that can be shipped to hungry people throughout the region? What if all of that could help kids do better in school?

We’re starting to talk pretty seriously about how we can do these things on a bigger scale. It will need to start with a decent sized kitchen, a lot of volunteers and a bit of creativity. I believe a lot of good can come from it. I plan to share more soon. Until then, take care and thank you for your ongoing support.

Jason Luke Clark, President and CEO

Fresh produce
continued from front

A recent study by the Harvard School of Public Health found that it costs an additional $1.50 per person per day to eat the fresh produce and lean protein that promotes good health. However, spending more for groceries isn’t an option for the one in six people in the region who lives with hunger and has limited choices at the grocery store.

Jim Reynolds, director of New Hope Ranch, a food bank and meal center serving low-income families and seniors in Spokane’s Hillyard neighborhood, said clients appreciate getting potatoes, onions, peppers, lettuce and other fruits and veggies.

“We hardly ever see anyone turn down fresh produce,” Reynolds said.

Second Harvest nearly doubled the amount of fresh fruits and vegetables it distributed during the last four years. Second Harvest provided its network with more than 9.4 million pounds of fresh produce last year and is continuing on a path to further increase distribution.

The expanded produce distribution was made possible thanks to a growing number of volunteers who help sort and pack food at the Asuris Northwest Health Volunteer Center in Spokane and the Northwest Farm Credit Services/CoBank Volunteer Center in Pasco. In addition, many more generous farmers in the region have stepped up to donate a portion of their harvest.

Feeding Washington, a partnership between Second Harvest and the Feeding America member in Western Washington, Food Lifeline, is bringing even more produce to the table for hungry people throughout the state. Feeding Washington reaches out to farmers on behalf of Second Harvest and Food Lifeline, whose combined statewide network provides free food to a total of 500 food banks and meal programs that feed 880,000 hungry people annually.

“Once we help farmers understand the depth of need that exists in Washington and Feeding Washington’s ability to help meet that need, they are more than willing to help,” said Sherman Reese, executive director of Feeding Washington. “No farmer ever wants to see people go hungry.”

Thanks to gardeners, farmers and volunteer gleaners

Backyard gardeners in Spokane, North Idaho and the Tri-Cities donated 126,978 pounds of fresh fruits and veggies to Second Harvest’s network last growing season through Plant a Row for the Hungry.

AmeriCorps*VISTA member Kate Burke did a great job taking charge of the program, which encourages area gardeners to donate some of their harvest to local food pantries and soup kitchens.

Area farmers and volunteer gleaners brought in additional produce, including 19,666 pounds from Green Bluff Growers and 5,198 pounds from growers who participate in the Spokane Farmers’ Market.

Thanks to a partnership with Fields of Grace Ministries in the Tri-Cities, an additional 193,859 pounds of produce made its way to hungry families and seniors in the Mid-Columbia. Fields of Grace picks up donations from farmers and farmers’ markets and also provides volunteer gleaners to harvest excess crops.
Tom’s Turkey Drive recipients share their thanks

The 14th annual Tom’s Turkey Drive was record-setting.

More than 2,150 people volunteered for the drive, held on Nov. 22 and 23, and for the Tom’s Turkey Tuesday distribution at the Spokane Arena on Nov. 26. The drive raised Thanksgiving turkeys and meals for 11,624 low-income families and seniors. It also raised enough money for Second Harvest to provide 480,804 pounds of donated food to its core network of 22 emergency food outlets in Spokane County this winter.

Many thanks to chief meteorologist Tom Sherry and others at KREM 2, as well as to other event sponsors, including Rosauers, Numerica Credit Union, Itron, Franz Bakery and Rockwood Health Systems, which includes Deaconess Medical Center, Valley Hospital and Medical Center, and Rockwood Clinic.

The largest Thanksgiving food drive of the year helps so many people in need celebrate the holiday with their families. Their voices tell the story best.

Michelle’s husband Phil is one of many local construction workers who lost good-paying jobs when the market for new houses collapsed. Caught up in a bad economy, and with a 1- and 4-year-old to feed, Phil did what any responsible husband and father would do. He traveled the region working temporary jobs to earn an income and make connections to land a permanent job. At times, the family got by on as little as $700 a month. During the leanest months, Michelle spent $45 a week on groceries and visited a Second Harvest food pantry for help.

“Thankfully things are turning around for us,” Michelle said.

New construction has picked up and Phil recently landed a full-time position with benefits. He will work closer to home, too. Although the family had much to celebrate, a traditional Thanksgiving meal was out of their budget because Phil had just started his job and the family is paying off $10,000 in medical bills that piled up while the family was uninsured.

Michelle, who planned to cook a meatloaf on Thanksgiving, was overjoyed to get a turkey and other holiday fixings at the Tom’s Turkey Tuesday distribution.

“This will be a nice Thanksgiving that we can enjoy all together,” Michelle said.

Bernadette’s husband puts in long hours as a math teacher, but doesn’t earn a lot of money. With six children to feed, things are tough.

Bernadette’s family was thankful to receive a nice Thanksgiving meal provided by Tom’s Turkey Drive donors. Bernadette said that although they need help right now, they remain grateful for many things.

“My kids are thankful that we have enough to eat,” Bernadette said.

Carol is a Spokane senior with chronic health problems that affect her breathing and joints. She scrabbles by on $715 a month, as well as $156 a month in food stamps.

“I just can’t afford this food like I used to,” Carol said.

Tom’s Turkey Drive provided a holiday meal that was a rare treat for Carol.

“This is just wonderful and helps me out a lot,” she said.

Ray had a major shakeup in his life five years ago. The former teacher’s aide severely damaged disks in his back while helping a disabled student.

The married father of two recently completed job retraining to become a medical billing specialist and started looking for work in his new field.

“This is going to help a lot this year,” Ray said about the Thanksgiving meal. “We really appreciate it.”

Gifts by Inland Imaging make a difference

Inland Imaging radiologists donated to Second Harvest to honor the retirement of their friend and colleague, Dr. Xavier Zielinski.

The radiologists’ gift sponsored two Second Harvest Mobile Food Bank distributions, which were held in Dr. Zielinski’s honor and focused on feeding hungry children.

The Dec. 19 distributions provided free food to families with children attending Grant and Lincoln Heights elementary schools. A total of 4,600 pounds of free food helped 624 family members, including 343 children.

Best wishes to Dr. Zielinski, who is retiring after 15 years with Inland Imaging. Second Harvest is honored by the ongoing commitment of Dr. Zielinski and his family to help feed hungry people.

In addition, special thanks to the staff at Inland Imaging, who teamed up for a huge food and fund drive the end of November to help Second Harvest get food to where it’s needed most this winter. Their generous efforts raised $4,611 and 7,400 pounds of food for children, families and seniors in need.
Tri-Cities supporters come out for Night in the Warehouse

Second Harvest’s Pasco distribution center was decked out like a swanky restaurant for Night in the Warehouse on Nov. 8.

The event debuted to more than 100 guests, who watched a culinary competition between two top chefs while enjoying a dinner provided by C&Smoke Catering and beers from the Shrub Steppe Brewery.

Extreme Chef Challenge contenders were Chef Dan Thiessen, director of culinary arts of the Wine Country Culinary Institute at Walla Walla Community College, and Chef Mike McGee of The Waterfront Bistro at the Courtyard by Marriott Hotel at Columbia Point Richland. They had 30 minutes to create flavorful meals out of ingredients commonly included in food bank supplies.

Chef Dan Thiessen, director of culinary arts of the Wine Country Culinary Institute at Walla Walla Community College, won the Extreme Chef Challenge. Thiessen won the competition with a tasty stuffed chicken breast with chickpea puree sauce, Yukon gold potatoes and spiced yogurt sauce. Chef McGee made delicious turkey meatballs with pasta.

A raffle of fun items also was held, as well as a silent auction of photos from area farms, including AgriNorthwest, Alford Farms, Bolthouse Farms, Cow Palace Dairy, Judel Marketing, Middleton Farms and Sageland Farms.

Thanks to the talented chefs, volunteers, guests and donors who made this first-ever Tri-Cities event a success.

Thanks to those who help feed hope

A heartfelt thanks goes out to everyone who put fighting hunger on their to-do list this fall and winter.

More than 550 Spokane County businesses and organizations donated 82,326 pounds of food through the Winter Food Drive. In the Tri-Cities, 71 drives raised 27,000 pounds of food.

Albertsons brightened the holidays for more than 1,000 low-income households in Spokane, Idaho and the Tri-Cities, who received turkeys and fixings raised through the Turkey Bucks and Santa Bucks drives, held in November and December.

World-class vocalists Jonathan Mancheni and Isabella Ivy performed Harmony for the Holidays, a Dec. 20 concert benefitting Second Harvest and Catholic Charities Foundation. Jeff Mancheni organized the event, George Ivy played piano and sponsors included Avista, Garco Construction, Wendle Motors, Rosauers, Intermountain Community Bank, Heartland Payment Systems, Plese Realty, Plese-Fettig Properties, Banner Bank and Spike’s Phyllys.

Senske Services raised $3,873 and 1,137 pounds of food during the annual holiday light display and open house with Santa in December. Dutch Bros. Coffee donated $815 and Between the Buns gave $250.

The Yoke’s and KXLK/KVEW Season of Giving Food Drive, held Dec. 12 at Yoke’s Fresh Markets stores raised 20,532 pounds of food and $4,560.

The KNDU Family Food Drive, held Dec. 7, raised 10,455 pounds of food and enough money for Second Harvest to distribute 108,000 additional pounds of groceries in the Mid-Columbia. Hayden Homes’ employees donated $10,000 through its First Story program. HAP0 Community Credit Union employees and customers donated $5,586 and 300 pounds of food, winning this year’s “Battle of the Banks.”

The Journey to Bethlehem, held in early December at South Hill Seventh-day Adventist Church, collected $1,200 and 200 pounds of food.

The Bloomsday Road Runners Club’s Thanksgiving Day Turkey Trot at Manito Park raised 7,979 pounds of food and $5,764 for Second Harvest.

Washington Society of Certified Public Accountants traded Spokane Club orange rolls for donations, raising $8,108 during the Drive for Dollars on Nov. 13.

Local Scout troops collected 58,865 pounds of food and $491 during their annual Scouting for Food drive, held Nov. 9.

Students at Rogers, Shadle, Mt. Spokane and West Valley high schools raised $6,475 through Tackle Hunger last fall. West Valley won the $1,500 scholarship from Darigold. Mt. Spokane took the second place $500 scholarship.

The Jay and Kevin Show Food Drive in late October, raised money to provide 220,332 pounds of food. Inland Empire Toyota Dealers and Northern Quest Resort and Casino made a generous matching gift.

The Dairy Farmers of Washington and Yoke’s Fresh Markets teamed up to donate 1,200 gallons of milk to Second Harvest. During Butter up for the Holidays in December, for every three pounds of butter purchased, a gallon of milk was donated.
Fred Meyer ‘Bringing Hope to the Table’ for many

Thanks so much to Fred Meyer for making a donation that will ensure that thousands of Inland Northwest residents don’t go hungry this winter.

Fred Meyer’s Bringing Hope to the Table campaign raised enough money for Second Harvest to provide 328,000 pounds of free food. The donation will put more than 273,300 meals on the table at a time when cuts to food stamps are taking an average of 15 meals a month off the table for a family of four.

The campaign was supported by the company, its product vendors, employees and customers. Plus, Fred Meyer employees volunteered for Mobile Food Bank distributions in Spokane and Yakima, and Hormel provided hams for the clients.

“It’s a part of our corporate culture to give back to the community we serve,” said Travis Vanderpool, a Fred Meyer human resources administrator who helped at the Yakima distribution.

Fred Meyer’s donation included $20,000 that was offered as a challenge to encourage more year-end gifts. When Second Harvest supporters learned of Fred Meyer’s matching gift, they stepped up with donations to provide an additional 50,000 meals a week for people in need in December and January.

Thanks to Fred Meyer and all the companies and individuals who supported this fundraiser.
Our Mission

Fighting hunger, feeding hope:
Second Harvest brings community resources
together to feed people in need through
empowerment, education and partnerships.

Published quarterly by Second Harvest.
Volume 22, Edition 1. To remove your name
from our mailing list, please call
(509) 252-6261 or (509) 545-0787.

Get Involved

Volunteer at one of our upcoming food drives. Opportunities are available for people of all ages.

Give a gift. Every $1 provides five meals for hungry families.

Organize a food drive to help feed people and change lives.

Tour our distribution center. Please call to schedule a time.

Share this newsletter with a friend or colleague. Help the community learn more about how Second Harvest helps our hungry neighbors.

Second Harvest’s free food helps neighborhood food banks and meal programs feed more people. You can be part of the solution to hunger.

Spokane
(509) 534-6678
2-harvest.org

Tri-Cities
(509) 545-0787
2-harvesttricities.org
Events and Volunteering

Jan. 6 through Feb. 10—Spokane and Tri-Cities

Dump Hunger
Western States CAT recently kicked off the sixth annual Dump Hunger food drive, which raises donated food and funds for Second Harvest and other food banks in Idaho, Montana, Oregon, Washington and Wyoming. Stop by any Western States, Wells Fargo branch or Albertsons to donate. To donate securely online, go to www.2-harvest.org/dumphunger.

Jan. 20—Spokane

‘Inequality for All’ Film Screening and Fundraiser
The documentary “Inequality for All” will be shown at Spokane’s Bing Crosby Theatre at 6 p.m. Admission is $10 and proceeds benefit Second Harvest’s hunger-relief work.

The film is being produced in honor of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. and shown on the holiday. The documentary demonstrates how the widening income gap has a devastating impact on the American economy. The Smith-Barbieri Progressive Fund—A Charitable Foundation and Ron and Debbie Reed are hosting the community screening.

March 15—Spokane

Friendly Sons of St. Patrick’s Parade and Food Drive
Enjoy a blast of Irish culture while participating in a great cause. The food and fund drive will be held in downtown Spokane in conjunction with the St. Patrick’s Day Parade.

April 6—Spokane

Bulldog Jog
Get a good workout while helping to feed hungry people in our community at the Bulldog Jog, sponsored by Gonzaga University’s Alpha Kappa Psi. The 5K costs $15 per person and racers receive an official T-shirt. Registration and check-in begin at 8 a.m. in front of the Crosby Student Center at Gonzaga University. A raffle will be held. Net proceeds benefit Second Harvest.

May 10—Spokane and Tri-Cities

Stamp out Hunger Food Drive
Local letter carriers will once again be out in full force for the Stamp out Hunger Food Drive. Second Harvest is looking for volunteers to pick up bags from porches along postal routes and to help out at collection sites throughout Spokane and in the Tri-Cities during this huge one-day food drive. Watch 2-harvest.org for more details.

May 21—Spokane

20th Annual Taking a Bite out of Hunger
Taking a Bite out of Hunger, the area’s premier food and beverage tasting and auction, will be held from 5:30 to 9 p.m. at the Spokane Veterans Memorial Arena. For more information about sponsorships, contact Melissa Cloninger at 252-6274 or mcloninger@2-harvest.org. To donate auction items, contact Shannon Kinney at 252-6242 or kinney@2-harvest.org. Watch 2-harvest.org for more details.

Learn more at 2-harvest.org or 2-harvesttricities.org. In Spokane, contact 252-6257 or volunteer@2-harvest.org and in Tri-Cities, contact 545-0787 or tcvolunteer@2-harvest.org.

Board of Directors

Chairperson
Jim Barry, 360 Consulting Group, Inc.

Vice Chairperson
Kevin Rasler, Inland Empire Paper Company

Audit and Finance Committee Chairperson
Paul Bridge, BDO

President and CEO
Jason Luke Clark, Second Harvest

Secretary/Treasurer
Jennifer Milnes, Second Harvest

Carla Altepeter, Numerica Credit Union
Mark Bray, Lydig Construction
Paul Davis, Lukins & Annis, P.S.
Philip S. DiPofi, Northwest Farm Credit Services
Mike Dunford, Moloney + O’Neill, Inc.
Michael Gadd, Clearwater Paper Corporation
Pastor Craig Goodwin, Millwood Community Presbyterian Church
Colleen McMahon, Gonzaga University
Bruce Nelson, Agricultural Producer
Ray Sprinkle, URM Stores, Inc.
Kimberly Thielman, Asuris Northwest Health

New Look Online

2-harvest.org
2-harvesttricities.org

Second Harvest looks forward to sharing its newly designed Web site with you soon.

The new site, redesigned by Spokane’s Zipline Interactive, will be launched on Jan. 20. The site has a new look and feel, and its mobile-friendly features will make it easier to navigate on smart phones and tablets.

Most important, we want it to be the go-to site for you to learn more about the hunger problem in the Inland Northwest and how you can help, including donating food and funds, and volunteering. There also will be more information about where to turn for food assistance.

We welcome your feedback about our new Web site. Feel free to visit the “Contact Us” page on the new site or e-mail your comments to contact@2-harvest.org.