



2024 Sustenance Annual Report



...so that no person goes hungry.



Thank You From Our Leaders

On behalf of the Emergency Food Network Board of Directors and staff, we would like to thank you for supporting EFN in 2024. Your generosity helped EFN distribute 13.8 million pounds of food and support to our network of 75+ partner food pantries, meal sites, and shelters in serving 3.1 million visits.

Last year was a busy year for EFN. In May, we started using our new warehouse, The Greens. By increasing our storage capacity and allowing us to operate more efficiently, The Greens is transforming our operations. Thank you to all of the partners who made that project possible! 2024 was also our last year of growing food at Mother Earth Farm. We are grateful to have had the opportunity to grow food at Mother Earth Farm for over 20 years and are so thankful for the staff and volunteers that made that project a success over the years.

Unfortunately, as we have shared since 2020, food insecurity continues to be a growing problem in Pierce County. As our neighbors face rising costs of housing, transportation, and medicine, they are left with less money for food. The Washington State Department of Agriculture reported last year that 1 in 4 Washingtonians visited a food pantry in the 2024 fiscal year. This sobering statistic is a stark reminder of the essential role of a strong emergency food system.

None of us can solve hunger on our own. But by working together, we can ensure that food pantries, meal sites, and shelters remain a vibrant source of beautiful and nutritious food for our neighbors. Together, we can ensure that no person goes hungry.

Be well,



Michelle Douglas
Chief Executive Officer



Doug Baxter-Jenkins
Board of Directors, Chair



2024 Leadership

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Doug Baxter-Jenkins

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Ambassador Board

Members

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Lola Elford
Lisa Lennick
Marilyn Thompson

Statement on Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion

“At EFN we recognize and embrace the ever-changing needs of our community and are actively trying to better identify and meet those needs by ensuring equity, diversity, and inclusion in our staff, board, and partners.”

The mission of Emergency Food Network is “to provide Pierce County with a consistent, diverse, and nutritious food supply so that no person goes hungry.”

2024 Impacts



3.1 Million

Visits to our
Partner Programs
in Pierce County

17% higher than 2023.



75+

Partner Programs
in Pierce County



463,522

Pounds of Food
Delivered
Through EFN's
Home Delivery
Program



13.8 Million

Pounds of Food
Distributed by EFN



2.6 Million

Pounds of Food Purchased by EFN



\$915,532

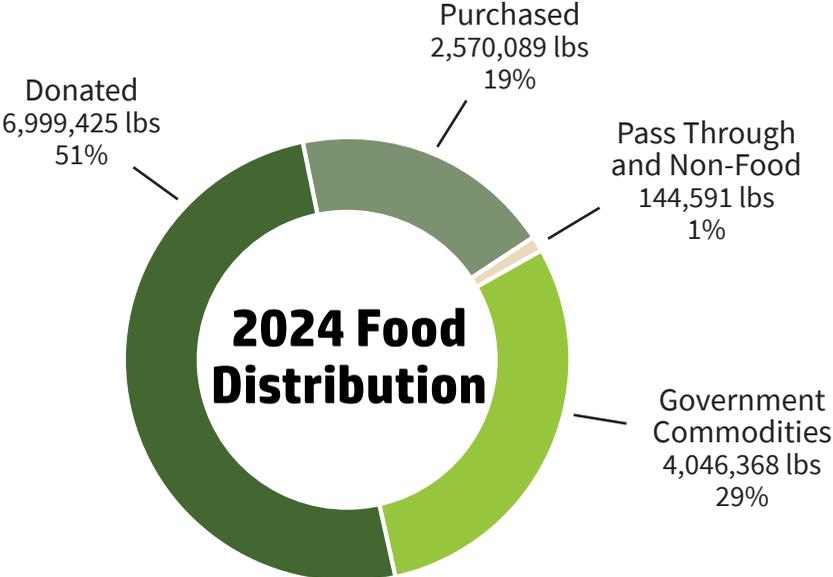
Provided in Pass-Through Funds
to our Partners

What We Do

General Distribution

In 2024, our network of 75+ Partner Programs served 3,143,622 visits from children, adults, and seniors experiencing food insecurity. This is the first time our network served more than 3 million visits in a single year and represents an increase of 130% from 2019. While the Covid-19 Pandemic is over, its impacts are evident across our community.

EFN distributed 13.8 million pounds of food in 2024, with 80% of these pounds coming to us through donations or through federal commodity programs. Donated food can range from truckloads of food from grocery stores and farmers down to individual bags of food that are dropped off at our front door. These donated items add to the diversity of products on food pantry shelves, adding variety beyond regular staples like rice, oats, beans, and pasta.



EFN also manages federal and state contracts that support our network. In 2024, we provided our partners with nearly \$1 million in pass through state funding that they used for operating expenses, like rent and staffing, and food purchases. Federal programs also provided our network with more than 4 million pounds of commodity foods like fresh fruit, canned proteins, canned fruits and vegetables, and grains. We also purchased \$350,000 worth of fresh produce from Washington farmers through the federal Local Food Purchase Assistance Cooperative Agreement Program (LFPA).

Thanks to your generous support—whether through food or financial donations—EFN was able to collect, store, and distribute these resources across our network in 2024. By leveraging donated and government food with bulk food purchases, we continue to distribute two meals for just \$1.



Co-op Food Purchasing Program

EFN's Co-op Food Purchasing Program is vital to our strategy to provide Pierce County with a consistent, diverse, and nutritious food supply. The majority of the food we distribute each year comes to us through donation or federal commodities, which are unpredictable. We purchase food by the truckload in order to guarantee we have a consistent supply of nutritious food for our partners.

In 2024, we purchased 2.6 million pounds of food for over \$1.7 million dollars. We regularly purchase items like rice, oats, and pasta that are then repacked by our volunteers, saving thousands of dollars each load by purchasing in bulk. Other co-op purchases in 2024 included canned fruits and vegetables, chicken, turkey, and canned salmon.

We were also able to purchase fresh produce through the LFPA Program. We spent \$350,000 on fresh produce last year, buying over 900,000 pounds of produce from local farmers. Fresh produce is always one of the most highly requested items at food pantries. These purchases provided our network with beautiful and nutritious produce while also supporting Washington farmers.

Mother Earth Farm

For the past 25 years, Mother Earth Farm has been a vital part of EFN's mission. After careful reflection, we made the difficult decision to stop farming at the end of the 2024 season. Moving forward, we will shift from on-site cultivation to sourcing fresh, diverse produce from local, underrepresented, and first-generation farmers. These partnerships allow us to purchase high-quality produce at a significantly lower cost, enabling us to stretch our resources further and provide even more fresh food to our community.

We deeply appreciate everyone who contributed to the farm's legacy — especially the Hightower family, who generously leased us the land — and we look forward to this next chapter in our work to fight hunger. We are excited to pass the torch to new stewards, Living Well Kent, who will continue the farm's legacy of environmental stewardship and community engagement.





Break Bags

While many students eagerly await school breaks, some worry where their next meal will come from. In partnership with St. Leo's Food Connection and the Clover Park School District, EFN's Break Bags Program provides 6,000 bags to children in Tacoma and Lakewood, so they can enjoy their school break without the burden of hunger.

Each 13-pound Break Bag is packed with easy-to-prepare, nutritious foods like oatmeal cups, canned vegetables, soup, canned chicken, applesauce pouches, and granola bars. In 2024, EFN spent \$71,527 on food to ensure children don't go without. The generous efforts of 132 volunteers, who gave 351 hours of their time, made it all possible.

Yolanda Purcell, the school secretary at Lake Louise Elementary School, shared, "No child should go hungry. Emergency Food Network is making sure every student in need has the food and nutrition they need to thrive, not just survive."

Home Delivery

For neighbors with limited transportation or disabilities, getting to the food pantry can be nearly impossible. To bridge this gap, every week EFN's Home Delivery Program serves 300 households facing food access barriers. A team of volunteers load their vehicles with nutritious food and deliver it across the county.

In 2024, a dedicated team of 49 volunteers completed 13,352 deliveries, totaling 463,522 pounds of food delivered to our neighbors. We utilize a combination of purchased food, government commodities, and donated food to make up our deliveries. In 2024, we prioritized the distribution of fresh produce by buying pre-built boxes full of fruit, vegetables, dairy, and protein.

Additionally, thanks to our partnership with Virginia Mason Franciscan Health (VMFH), 99 patients with heart-related conditions and diabetes received medically tailored grocery deliveries in 2024. The VMFH team coordinates referrals, gathers feedback, and provides nutrition resources, supporting each aspect of the process. Results remain positive—patients are losing weight, seeing lower blood pressure, and requiring fewer hospital visits.

Who We Serve

Partner Programs

EFN partners with more than 75 food pantries, meal sites, and shelters in Pierce County, referred to as Partner Programs. With a commitment to dignity and care, these dedicated partners ensure essential food access across the county's rural and urban communities.



Program Partner Spotlight: Food Backpacks 4 Kids

EFN partners with Food Backpacks 4 Kids (FB4K) to fight food insecurity on the Key Peninsula. Since 2009, FB4K has provided students in the Peninsula School District with backpacks filled with nutritious food, ensuring no child goes hungry.

In addition to providing backpacks, FB4K operates a growing family pantry that offers both in-person shopping and delivery services for families in need. EFN has been instrumental in expanding this program, helping to increase its access to nutritious food.

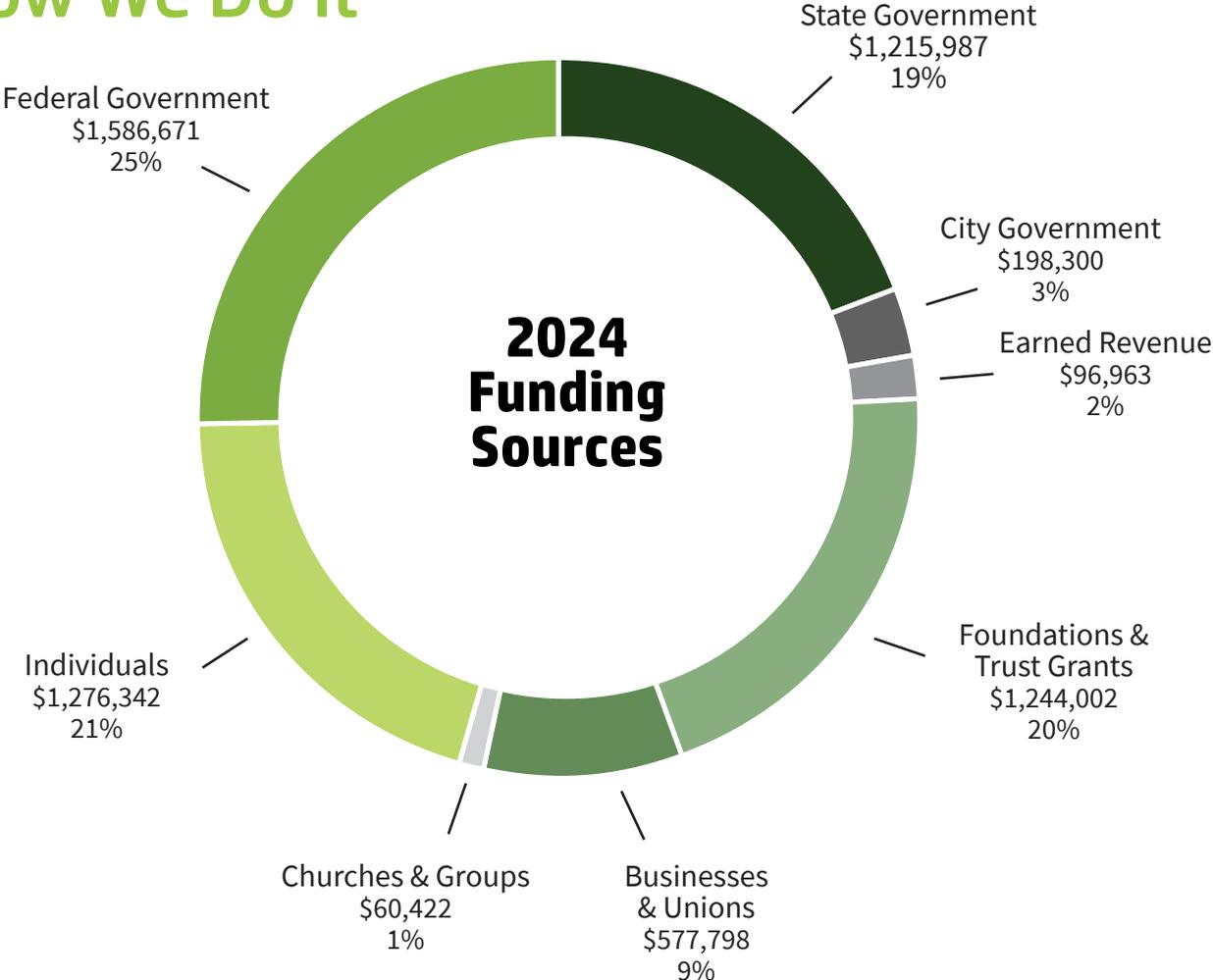
Executive Director Zaida Woodworth shares, “EFN has been an amazing resource and partner to us. Their efforts to add frozen meats and fresh produce have been invaluable to our community and pantry!”

FB4K’s pantry is open Wednesdays through Fridays from 12-6 p.m., making it convenient for families to access food after school and work.



*Zaida Woodworth, Food Backpacks 4 Kids
Executive Director*

How We Do It



\$6.3 Million

Total Revenue in 2024



\$24.1 Million

Total Value of Food Contributions

Thank You

Thank you to all the generous donors who made gifts in 2024!

Full financials are available on our website efoodnet.org.

EFN has been awarded a 4-Star Rating by Charity Navigator and Platinum Certification on Candid.



Building for the Future

The Greens Warehouse

In April 2024, we officially opened The Greens, a 21,780-square-foot warehouse that expanded our storage capacity by 40%. This project became essential after the pandemic resulted in a 36% increase in food distribution, forcing us to rely on costly and inefficient offsite storage.

In addition to the expanded storage space, which helped us cut costs and improve efficiency, this extensive capital campaign allowed us to renovate our main warehouse by installing a fire suppressant system. EFN is Pierce County's backbone of emergency food distribution and a major component of Pierce County's emergency response for food, so having these extra safety measures to protect the county and state's food is vital.



The expansion of The Greens has been essential in addressing the overwhelming demand for emergency food assistance while ensuring we are prepared for future crises. Thanks to our generous community and dedicated partners for making this project happen.



21,780

Square Feet of Added Space

Thank you to Coordinated Care for sponsoring our 2024 Annual Report!



coordinated care™

Committed to transforming the health of the community, one person at a time. Coordinated Care is proud to partner with Emergency Food Network in our shared work to make healthy food more accessible.



Learn more about how we're putting the health of Washington first.



How You Can Help



Volunteer

Repack Project (Lakewood)

Help prepare bulk foods for distribution to food pantries by repacking the product into smaller, family-sized portions. Bulk foods may include rice, pasta, oats, fruits, vegetables, and more!

Home Delivery Program

Pick up, drive, and deliver boxes full of fresh, nutritious food from EFN's Distribution Center in Lakewood to homes all over Pierce County.

Food & Fund Drives

Raise awareness of hunger in the community while collecting donations to keep food pantry shelves stocked throughout the year.

Partner Opportunities

Volunteer at your local food pantry to make a direct impact on hunger.

2024 Volunteer Achievements



2,096

Total Volunteers



1.1 million

Pounds of Food
Sorted & Repackaged



12,917

Total Hours
Volunteered



282,744

Total Meals
Provided Through
Food & Fund Drives

Register to volunteer today!

Call us at (253) 584-1040

Email us at volunteer@efoodnet.org

Visit our website at efoodnet.org



Donate

Give Funds

For every \$1 donated, EFN can distribute 2 meals to those in need. Make your donation today online at efoodnet.org, by phone at 253-584-1040, or by mail using the enclosed envelope.

Supper Club

Through EFN's Supper Club, your monthly donation helps EFN plan for the year and is a convenient way to support our work.

Host a Food & Fund Drive

Your food donations add variety to the staple items and fresh produce EFN distributes to our Partner Programs, ensuring a well-rounded supply for those in need.

Leave a Legacy

By making a bequest or other planned gift to EFN, you will leave an important legacy that emphasizes your commitment to ensuring that no person in Pierce County goes hungry. To learn more, email EFN's Development Director, Claire Aijian at claire@efoodnet.org.

Events

Hunger Awareness Month

May 2025

Hunger Walk

Saturday, May 3, 2025

Letter Carriers' Food Drive

Saturday, May 10, 2025

Abundance Dinner & Auction

Saturday, October 25, 2025

Empty Bowls

Saturday, December 6, 2025

Find more information about our giving options, events, and EFN emails at efoodnet.org.

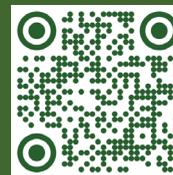
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**Donate
anytime,
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