The Northwest Harvest Growing Connections program offers many resources for building a successful Fresh-to-Food Bank (F2FB) program, with the goal of increasing the presence of fresh produce at food banks and meal programs. The following sections provide a brief layout of the resources available. Whether it’s a new or established F2FB program, you will find useful guides below! If it is unclear whether a F2FB program is right for you, see the What is a ‘Farm-to-Food Bank’? flyer at: northwestharvest.org → How We Fight Hunger → Growing Connections → Quick Tips

Plan a F2FB Program
When considering starting a fresh-to-food bank program, begin with Growing Connections: A Farm-to-Food Bank Toolkit & Resource Guide. Pages 5-19 explain the meaning of a fresh-to-food bank program and the steps it takes to developing one. The remainder of the document goes into further detail about the methods involved in making a quality program, as well as includes a couple of case studies. The guide can be found online at: northwestharvest.org → How We Fight Hunger → Growing Connections → Resource Guides

Build a Network for a F2FB Program
The document called Growing Connections: A Resource Guide for Farm-to-Food Bank Strategies offers an in-depth research report that identifies key strategies for building relationships with growers, which in turn leads to an increased access to healthy foods for programs. It starts with networking and marketing guidelines, and continues with tips to increase food donations and to draft purchasing agreements. The appendices contain resources such as a table of F2FB initiatives and an example of a F2FB purchasing contract. Find it at: northwestharvest.org → How We Fight Hunger → Growing Connections → Resource Guides

Supplemental Resources

Action Plan Worksheet and Consultation Guide:
northwestharvest.org → How We Fight Hunger → Growing Connections → Community Development

F2FB Checklist Step 1 – Research worksheet:
northwestharvest.org → How We Fight Hunger → Growing Connections → Quick Tips

F2FB Checklist Step 2 – Assess and Plan worksheet:
northwestharvest.org → How We Fight Hunger → Growing Connections → Quick Tips

The F2FB Checklist: Marketing, F2FB Checklist: Funding, and Reaching Out to Growers are all one-page overviews about building a network. Going a step further, you can lead conference calls to solidify connections and learn about strategies used by other programs, as outlined in the Host and Facilitate Conference Calls sheet. All four of the above documents can be found at: northwestharvest.org → How We Fight Hunger → Growing Connections → Quick Tips
Nutrition Enhancement

The Promoting Healthy Foods manual provides best practices promoting healthy foods when it comes to helping clients make healthy food decisions. It outlines methods of evaluating and implementing a variety of visual, interactive and atmospheric measures to nudge clients into choosing healthy options. These measures include informative labeling, food demonstrations, surveys, and many other easy initiatives. Read it here at: northwestharvest.org → How We Fight Hunger → Growing Connections → Resource Guides

Increasing Produce

A new resource for food programs is the Growing Connections Produce Portal. Gardeners and farmers list available produce for pickup in a local area either for donation or for sale. Food programs can then claim it and pick it up. The online board can be useful for both beginning and experienced food programs seeking to expand their supply of fresh produce, to streamline current relationships, or develop more local connections to growers. The Produce Portal is linked here: northwestharvest.org → How We Fight Hunger → Growing Connections → Produce Portal

Additional Resources

Growing Connections collects notes from workshops and conference calls with food programs implementing a F2FB program. These notes contain valuable experiences and lessons learned from F2FB programs already in the works. Find this information at: northwestharvest.org → How We Fight Hunger → Growing Connections → Community Development

Find more Quick Tips resources at: northwestharvest.org → How We Fight Hunger → Growing Connections → Quick Tips

In addition, case studies of F2FB programs can be viewed here: northwestharvest.org → How We Fight Hunger → Growing Connections → Notes from the Field

For more information about starting or developing your farm-to-food bank initiative, please email growingconnections@northwestharvest.org, or contact Laura Titzer at 206.923.7423