Autumn Harvest

A message from Chief Executive Officer Shelley Rotondo

This time of year, kids begin to sense the approach of a new school year. The leaves turn brilliant reds and yellows, and the nights get colder. Around our state, the summer sun is steadily replaced with sounds of late summer frogs and back to school sales. Autumn has landed.

The season brings fresh celery, squash, kohlrabi, and cabbage. At Northwest Harvest, the generosity of our many donors is on full display as truckloads of fresh produce arrive at our warehouses. In addition to distributing food, we help our partners educate parents and schools about ways to address the need in their community through programs that help drive demand for healthier food. After all, good food is good health.

As I read this newsletter, I am reminded of the commitment of our supportive community here in Washington. Without your help, as volunteers, food or monetary donors, or as advocates, our work would be impossible.

When seasons change, stock markets swing, or the job market shifts, our community is called upon to do even more. We are proud that, in these events, our community comes together to support those in need. And the need continues to be great. Like you, we hear about a recovering, even thriving, economy. But many are not yet feeling the effect. After all, one in eight people in our state still struggles with hunger.

In all of our work, throughout the year, our most important partner is you. Your contribution—whether it’s a donation in support of the Hunger Stops Here Challenge, a food drive you organize, or hours spent helping at a local food bank—is critical to those we serve. They, and we, thank you.

Shelley

Help Twice As Many People With The HUNGER STOPS HERE CHALLENGE

How would you like to double your donation power to help provide nourishing food for our neighbors in need? That’s what happens when you support our Hunger Stops Here Challenge.

Your gift will be matched, dollar for dollar. Your $25 becomes $50. Your $100 becomes $200. And each dollar provides more than four meals!

Our grand goal, with the match, is to raise $750,000, which will provide more than 3.4 million nutritious meals for seniors, families, and kids all across our state.

Last year’s goal was met thanks to our donors, and we need your support to reach it again. Let’s make sure our kids have enough food as they head back to school.

▪ Give online at northwestharvest.org/hshc.
▪ Mail a check to Northwest Harvest, P.O. Box 12272, Seattle, WA 98102. Please write “HSHC” in the memo line.
▪ Call Jeff Peterson, Donor Relations Coordinator, at 206.923.7480.

Thank you!

“A young man was brought in by another one of our food bank clients to show him that there was help for him. The young man was brought to tears of joy and overwhelmed by the amount of food he was able to get. He shared that he just moved out on his own for the first time and struggled getting food. He was very grateful and thankful for all the help.”

—Plateau Outreach Ministries, King County

Available Now:
Northwest Harvest Annual Report to the Community

Learn more about the work of Northwest Harvest and the broad support of the community that makes it all possible.

Read our latest annual report to the community, available now online at northwestharvest.org/financials.
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**Turning 50: Northwest Harvest Reflects, Refocuses**

Fifty years leading the fight to end hunger in Washington State. It’s quite an accomplishment.

Starting as a coalition of local social justice advocates, Northwest Harvest today is the leader in fighting hunger in Washington State. When it comes to the movement to end hunger, we look to stop hunger at an individual and a systemic level.

A 50th anniversary is often a time for reflection. For Northwest Harvest, the anniversary is a call to a future at the intersection of food and health, where we work with clients and community partners to form a movement to address the health of our community and become an ever more efficient, inspiring, and impactful leader in the fight to end hunger in Washington.

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**ADD IT UP!**

Small gifts throughout the year make a big impact

One way to make a year-round impact is to set up a recurring (monthly) gift online. Another way is through your workplace payroll deduction program. People are hungry throughout the year—and Northwest Harvest is here to help in every season. Donating through your workplace allows you to make a single gift all at once or to spread your donation throughout the year.

For example, a gift of just $10 per pay period results in a gift of more than $1,100 in a single year and is enough to feed a family of three a meal every day for a year.

It’s safe, easy and can help you make an even bigger impact. And many employers will match your contribution, doubling your gift.

If you have contributed through your workplace in the past, thank you! Please consider contributing again this year. If you haven’t given before, please talk to your company’s HR department to find out more about your options and matching gift opportunities.

**Workplace Giving Campaigns:**

Many corporate and government workplace campaigns allow you to designate Northwest Harvest as your charity.

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“Fresh food is so expensive and so healthy, we would not be able to afford to buy them, so we truly appreciate all the fresh foods coming from Northwest Harvest. Thank you.”

—St. Vincent de Paul - Bremerton, Kitsap County
Building The People’s Pantry

Ferry County occupies a swath of land in northeastern Washington that’s almost twice as large as Rhode Island. Despite its size, Ferry County has a population of just 7,646. And it struggles with a median household income that’s the lowest in Washington State.

Tiny Republic, nestled in the mountains south of the Canadian border, is the county seat in Ferry County. A town of 1,073 people and only one grocery store, Republic has been hit hard by the decline of local industry. Their troubles were magnified 13 years ago when the local lumber mill closed, eliminating 87 jobs from the community.

The fallout of the mill’s closure led Barbara Coyle to create The People’s Pantry in Republic. Coyle, who served as Pastor of the First Presbyterian Church in Republic, recalls an unexpected phone call.

“One morning that March, I received a call from someone I had never heard from before. This man called me from Moses Lake, and he said to me that ‘we heard you had some needs, and I’m on my way up there tomorrow with a car load of food for you.’”

With that, The People’s Pantry was born. The pantry started as “The Window,” a room in the bottom of the church that had an outside-facing window through which food was distributed.

Within a year, The People’s Pantry expanded, opening a satellite food bank in Curlew. This site ensures clients in Curlew, a town of 921 residents located 21 miles from Republic, won’t have to spend money on gas or risk their safety during the treacherous winter months to get food.

Today, the Pantry serves up to 80 households every Thursday. The Curlew site serves about 60 households per week every 2nd and 4th Thursday. Like many food banks around the state, The People’s Pantry finds that there are more clients towards the end of the month as social security benefits run out.

In addition to weekly food distribution, The People’s Pantry is one of two food pantries in the tri-county area that delivers to seniors and the homebound. Every month, Coyle’s team delivers food to 32 such households.

The impact the Pantry continues to have in Republic is remarkable.

“Every Thursday I get a chance to talk to a couple of clients, and that just makes my day. I just love them, I really do,” said Coyle. “Some of them will come back because they need to, or we’ll get a note that says ‘here’s a check because you helped me when I needed you.’ And some of them come in every week like clockwork, and they’ll say: ‘it’s your food that keeps us going.’”

Every other month, The People’s Pantry receives about 3,500 pounds of food from Northwest Harvest. In addition to donations, The People’s Pantry also grows food of their own. Three years ago, they built a small garden outside of the food bank. Currently there are plans to construct a greenhouse to supplement this supply.

The looming closure of the Buckhorn gold mine will likely mean the loss of 170 direct and ripple-effect jobs in Ferry County. Looking ahead, it seems likely that The People’s Pantry will only increase in importance. This, along with the continued reduction of SNAP benefits, will cause incredible challenges for those in need.

During the hard times, Coyle is reminded of the importance of empathy.

“When you get to know people—which is what I say to my volunteers—if you’re getting to talk to them face to face, you get to know them, and it’s hard to call them ‘us and them’ anymore, or ‘those people.’ You begin to appreciate them. We need more of that.”

SmartBuys Plus Fills Supply Gap for Partner Food Programs

There are times when 34 million pounds of food per year just isn’t enough.

Though statewide food banks and meal programs have come to rely on the 34 million pounds of fresh fruits, vegetables, proteins, and staples from Northwest Harvest deliveries, many require additional staples that aren’t always available. For many, the independent Food Buying Service was a critical support, providing inexpensive bulk food for statewide food banks.

When Food Buying Services closed their doors in April, emergency food programs around the state faced a crisis. Longstanding, sustaining food purchases disappeared at a time when food bank lines are still at record levels.

With leadership from our staff and community, Northwest Harvest was able to step up and fill the gap. In July, Northwest Harvest SmartBuys Plus launched statewide with nearly 25 different products. Over the coming year, the number and variety of bulk buy products are expected to increase as we build out the new system.

For our partner network, the new system will make their work easier and more impactful. Many will receive SmartBuys Plus purchases bundled with their deliveries of free Northwest Harvest food. Purchases are also billed after receipt to help already-stretched food bank budgets in times of greatest need. Programs not part of the Northwest Harvest network will be served too, allowing the best use of resources in fighting hunger statewide. The program itself is run at cost, ensuring that food bank partners are paying only the cost of the goods, warehousing, and transportation and not a penny more.
Warehouse Style Watch: What Your Hairnet Says About You

Volunteering is chic. The health, civic, and social benefits are undeniable. But when it comes to style, many ask: what about the hairnet?

It may not seem on trend, but the volunteers at the Northwest Harvest Kent Warehouse know how to make hairnets runway-ready. Why dread the net when it presents an opportunity to demonstrate your personal style while fighting hunger?

The volunteer team reminds volunteers that hairnets need to cover all exposed hair. But that doesn’t mean the opportunity to experiment with your hairnet should be ignored, especially in those precious few moments between orientation and handwashing.

Below, you’ll find some on-trend net fashions from around the warehouse and revealing insights from style experts on the deeper meaning of the net.

Party in the Back

**Caitlin**

embraces the hairnet in the back, with well-combed strands boldly holding the style up front. This wedding veil-inspired strand containment system was first made popular at deli counters, but Caitlin prefers the hairnet puffed out, to create a soft, cloud-like backdrop for her face. If this is your hairnet style, you are probably friendly, often think about others, and quick to connect with your fellow volunteers. Recommended Product to Pack: Mixed beans, ABC pasta, or citrus.

**The Good Listener**

Ben’s net covers almost everything — but he loves to feel the wind in his ears. A room full of food-packing fifth-graders can get noisy. Rather than stifle the din, Ben wants to embrace all the sounds of an efficient hunger-fighting operation, with his ears conspicuously net-free. Ears-free volunteers want to be where the action is and can respond quickly to changing directions. Recommended Product to Pack: Ears of corn, rigatoni pasta, or anything alongside elementary-school volunteers.

**Double-Duty**

In this busy world, many net styles are all business. Here, Al covers his hat and ears, finishing the look with a secondary net for full facial hair coverage. Al is here to pack food, and he’d probably be willing to wear a full jumpsuit if necessary. Double-net, or “double-duty”, volunteers are fully committed and will stay until the last box of food is ready for shipment. Recommended Product to Pack: Pumpkins or gourds, melons, or canned goods.

**Peek-A-Boo Bangs**

With side-swept bangs to frame her face, and a hairnet to frame the bangs, Sarah is ready to rock the warehouse. The bangs-out style is increasingly popular, especially with those keen to maintain some reminder of the hairstyle they sported when they walked in. With a few strands casually left in front, the look is softened, and the hairnet becomes more of an accessory. Volunteers sporting un-netted bangs are warm, set a steady but unhurried pace, and are great to share a cup of tea with. Recommended Product to Pack: Frozen corn, rice, or coffee.

**The Beret**

Beret-style hairnet style is anything but middle-of-the-road. Wearers use their hairnets to highlight their good side and are able to add a touch of the exotic in the sterile warehouse environment. Penny views her hairnet as a crowning glory—a final touch in her quest to give back! Beret-style hairnet wearers see everything as an opportunity to shine, and at the warehouse, they absolutely do! Recommended Product to Pack: Spaghetti, cranberry beans, or fresh apples.

**The Bun Lock-Down**

Toni has gathered together the bulk of her hair situation and netted it up, leaving the rest free flowing. Volunteers sporting netted buns are often energetic and eager to get started. They also have a healthy, roll-up-your-sleeves attitude when it comes to packing food for our partner food banks! Recommended Product to Pack: Three Squares backpacks for kids, green vegetables, or carrots.

“A young man (ending his Junior year in HS) came to see me. He wanted to do his Senior Project on the topic of food banks. [When] I asked him why he chose this particular topic, he said, ‘Because I experienced the food bank as a child.’ His mother, sister, and he utilized a local food bank during a difficult time in their lives. He now wants to learn more in order to educate himself and others on this topic and to give back for what he received. Outstanding young man.”

—Project Hope, Whatcom County
EVENTS
WASHINGTON
Western | Central | Eastern

FALL 2016:
EVENTS

CBS RADIO-SEAHAWKS HOMETOWN HANGAR
ALL SUNDAY HOME GAMES
CBS Radio hosts a fun-filled tailgate party before each Sunday ‘Hawks home game with all proceeds benefitting Northwest Harvest. Located across from the south entrance to the stadium, Hometown Hangar has music, games broadcast on giant TV screens and a beer garden. All proceeds will benefit Northwest Harvest.

SEAHAWKS TACKLE HUNGER
MONDAY, NOV. 7
The Seattle Seahawks host the Buffalo Bills for this annual event at CenturyLink. Staff and volunteers collect food and funds at all gates prior to the 5:30 kickoff.

KZOK ROCK THE HARVEST
THURSDAY, NOV. 3, 7 A.M. - 7 P.M.
The Rock the Harvest Radio-Thon returns! KZOK listeners are asked to call the Rock the Harvest phone bank to donate to Northwest Harvest.

CARVE OUT HUNGER - YAKIMA
SATURDAY, OCT. 22
A hit in its first year, this popular event returns for a second! Northwest Harvest hosts this western harvest-themed event at the Selah Civic Center in Yakima. It will feature celebrity pumpkin carving, beer and wine tasting and food sampling. Tickets and more information at northwestharvest.org.

KIMA KIDS FOR CANS - YAKIMA
NOVEMBER THROUGH JANUARY
Yakima area schools compete in a food and fund drive challenge to benefit Northwest Harvest. For more information, email Community Engagement Manager Sheri Bissell at SheriB@northwestharvest.org.

THANKSGIVING IN WINE COUNTRY
“TASTE TO FIGHT HUNGER”
NOV. 25-27
Enjoy wine from 40+ of the best wineries WA has to offer for this holiday weekend of fun! All participating Yakima Valley wineries collect funds to benefit Northwest Harvest. For more information, visit northwestharvest.org.

KING 5 HOME TEAM HARVEST
SATURDAY, DEC. 3
Your favorite KING 5 personalities broadcast live from several Puget Sound locations as Northwest Harvest volunteers and staff spend the day collecting food and funds at our largest one-day benefit of the year!

Send Seasons Greetings to Brighten the Holidays for Those in Need
When you donate and send our beautiful holiday greeting cards to honor your loved ones, you help put nutritious meals on the table for our neighbors in need. It’s as simple, real, and positive as that.
To learn more and place your holiday greeting card order today, go to: northwestharvest.org/greeting-cards or call Anne Salter at 206.923.7437.

THANK YOU, EVENT SUPPORTERS!
To everyone who contributed in any way, thank you for making a difference!

WSECU COMMUNITY SHRED & SHARE DAY-YAKIMA
This three-hour event shredded 27 bins of documents and collected enough food and cash donations to share almost 2,500 meals for the hungry!

“The need for dairy and protein is always a challenge. Our clients have told us that the abundant supply of fresh produce has been a real blessing. The nearest market is 20 miles away, and transportation is a concern for many. Seeing our clients being able to choose in a farmer’s market style atmosphere the produce they would not have access to otherwise is wonderful. I believe personally that I have seen an increase in the health and well-being in our clients and truly believe that is a direct link to the quality nutrition they now have access to.”
—Cusick Food Bank, Pend Oreille County

More events and up-to-the-minute details at: northwestharvest.org
Feed Spokane: The Birth of a Food Coalition

In most large cities, during any given month, the amount of good food thrown away (for whatever reason) is sufficient to adequately feed most, if not all, of those who do not have enough to eat. It is a story of waste and lost opportunity. How do we change this story?

Roughly nine years ago, a handful of people from several Spokane community agencies met to discuss a simple question: “How can we find more food to feed those in need in our city?” Gregory Edwards, an AmeriCorps/Vista volunteer with the Spokane Neighborhood Action Project, led the meeting. He had been assigned the task of finding new food sources for their Thursday night “sack dinner” outreach in downtown Spokane. All agencies and ministries present shared a common challenge: securing new supplies of food for those in need. Someone floated an ‘out of the box’ idea... why not form a “coalition” to approach local area restaurants and challenge them to donate prepared food which would otherwise be thrown away? The idea resonated with everyone present—and the Feed Spokane Coalition was formed.

The Feed Spokane Board noted that they wanted very much to emphasize their focus on food safety. They’ve not only partnered with the Spokane Regional Health Department but have facilitated a number of important educational opportunities for their programs and especially for their meal site kitchen supervisors.

Feed Spokane is now working with 30 meal sites, 30 coalition participants, and 25 grocery and restaurant operators who support eliminating hunger in Spokane. The goal this year is to take the story and the ideology outside the food industry and garner greater support from the community at large.

Longer-term benefits to the Spokane community include not only ‘rescuing’ food and feeding hungry people but also saving thousands of food pounds from ending up in the waste stream. Feed Spokane is an idea whose time has come. Along with partners like Northwest Harvest, Feed Spokane is quickly becoming a vital piece in the puzzle of eliminating waste and hunger by telling an alternative story of opportunity, community, and hope.

“A new client came in, mom with 5 kids. Had never been to food bank before and was very embarrassed. So much so, that her mother was the one that called us to find out when we were open, etc. When she came in, her children were with her. The little boy, about 8 years old, was so excited to see we had potatoes and hamburger buns! You could tell the boy hadn’t seen food for awhile because he was simply delighted to see the normal foods we had out on the counter; not just the goodies that kids usually go crazy for.”

—ROOF Community Services, Thurston County