

# Northwest Harvest

## INFORMATION SHEET



*Northwest Harvest strives to end hunger and address the root causes of poverty -- supporting a statewide network of 375 food banks, meal programs, and high-need schools. Focused on improving equity in our food system, Northwest Harvest believes everyone in Washington should have consistent access to nutritious food that nourishes the body, mind, and spirit. In addition to making sure those who suffer from hunger are getting enough to eat, Northwest Harvest aims to shift public opinion, as well as impact institutional policies and societal practices that perpetuate hunger, poverty, and disparities in our state.*

**Northwest Harvest has established a bold goal to cut the rates of food insecurity in half by the year 2028 and has developed five key strategies to accomplish this goal:**

**MAINSTREAM** the narrative that hunger results from unjust systems, not individual choices.

**DISTRIBUTE** food to alleviate hunger conditions.

**ACHIEVE** the Right to Food in Washington State.

**CENTER** the BIPOC experience in the emergency food system.

**SUPPORT** BIPOC market actors to secure more resources within Washington State's food supply chain.

### **It takes more than food to end hunger.**

- 9 Northwest Harvest strives to end hunger by addressing the root causes of poverty AND getting food where it is most needed.
- 9 Northwest Harvest believes ending hunger will take dedication, collective power and voice, and resources.

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## **Focused on improving equity in our food system, Northwest Harvest believes everyone in Washington should have consistent access to nutritious food that nourishes the body, mind, and spirit.**

- 9 In addition to making sure those who suffer from hunger are getting enough to eat, Northwest Harvest aims to shift public opinion, as well as impact institutional policies and societal practices that perpetuate hunger, poverty, and disparities in our state.
- 9 Northwest Harvest is focused on ensuring equitable access to nutritious food; building and strengthening partnerships in communities across the state; getting food to locations and communities where it's most needed; and creating a more equitable food system for all Washingtonians.

## **Northwest Harvest distributes food to every county in Washington, working with a statewide network of 375 food banks, meal programs, and schools.**

- 9 In addition to distribution, Northwest Harvest is building the political will to end hunger and address the root causes of poverty through advocacy to protect and strengthen nutrition assistance programs like SNAP, school meals, and WIC.
- 9 We build public policy to end hunger in collaboration with Washington communities, centering the expertise of those with first person experience of hunger, poverty, and systemic racism. These community groups continue to inform our efforts and drive important changes in how we operate and where we push for changes in the Washington State food system.

## **Facts on hunger in Washington**

- 9 Hunger is a result of overlapping forms of discrimination and inequities.
- 9 According to the USDA, 1 in 11 Washington households are struggling to put food on the table; however, food insecurity grew for some populations.<sup>1</sup>
- 9 For households with children and Black, Indigenous and people of color households, and for the households who also identified as transgender, non-binary, or other reached the highest levels of food insecurity.<sup>2</sup>
- 9 Reliance on food assistance has increased across Washington State. Among WAFOOD households, 37% relied on food assistance during the pandemic, up from the pre-COVID-19 usage of 30%.<sup>2</sup>
- 9 Washington very low food security or "hunger" rate for 2020: 3.4% of Washington households.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> USDA, Household Food Security in the United States in 2020 | <sup>2</sup> University of Washington/Washington State University, WA Food Study, Briefing 11