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**NORTHWEST HARVEST LAUNCHES FUNDRAISING CAMPAIGN TO SUPPORT NEW DISTRIBUTION CENTER IN YAKIMA**

*The construction of Northwest Harvest’s state-of-the-art campus in Washington’s agriculture heartland marks an important step towards a hunger-free future*

**YAKIMA, APRIL 22, 2022** – [Northwest Harvest](#) is inviting the philanthropic community in Washington State to support the construction of a new, state-of-the-art distribution center and free community market in Yakima. Following a land blessing by Yakama Nation, the nonprofit organization broke ground on the project in summer 2021. Today marks the launch of the capital campaign to raise \$15.4 million for this transformative project. The total cost to build the 10.6-acre campus – which includes the warehouse and a free community grocery market – is \$36.4 million.

“The Yakima Valley plays a unique role in feeding our state, and it is our hope that this investment will enrich the Valley’s ecosystem of small farmers and growers, address health and hunger disparities, and create new opportunities for every person who lives in the region,” explains Laura Perez Hamilton, Northwest Harvest’s Chief Advancement Officer. “Northwest Harvest is making a significant financial commitment to this step toward transforming our food systems, and now we’re asking the community to help us go the rest of the way.”

Washington state has committed significant support to the project, with bipartisan leadership from State Rep. Chris Corry, State Sen. Curtis King, State Sen. Jim Honeyford, State Rep. David Hackney, State Rep. Steve Tharinger, and State Sen. David Frockt. Northwest Harvest will complete the funding through a public fundraising campaign. Yakima local government officials and community leaders including Mayor Janice Deccio & Assistant Mayor Soneya Lund, Yakima City Manager Bob Harrison along with the Yakima County Development Association and the Yakima Valley Community Foundation have been very welcoming and supportive as well. Other significant supporters include Coordinated Care, Tree Top, Darby Foundation and Biella Foundation, among others.

The new Yakima campus doubles the distribution space – from 95,000 to 200,000 square feet – of Northwest Harvest’s current operation, quadrupling its capacity to distribute fresh fruits and vegetables

statewide. The new space will also bring up to 40 new permanent, living-wage jobs to the community, offer cold storage to local farmers, and a no-cost grocery store where families in Yakima can access fresh food and other needed supplies.

“Partnering with Northwest Harvest has elevated our ability to provide food on a regular basis to our communities in the lower valley,” said Lucy Smartwitlo, Interim Executive Director of [Peacekeeper Society](#) in Yakima and partner of Northwest Harvest. “As an organization that believes in feeding and protecting everyone, we strive to alleviate families’ hardship so they can focus on what they need to and not worry about where their next meal will come from. In 2022, we hope to double our efforts for the communities and expand our outreach services. Having Northwest Harvest as our partner and support system in the region, we have no doubt this can be accomplished.”

Currently, one in 11 households in Washington state do not have enough food to meet their basic nutritional needs, and the economic challenges presented by the pandemic worsened longstanding inequities of the state’s food system.

“At Northwest Harvest, we refuse to accept hunger as inevitable for our neighbors and communities,” says Thomas Reynolds, Northwest Harvest CEO. “This new Yakima campus will be a significant force in the movement for food security for all Washingtonians and a major investment in our local farms and communities.”

Joined by a robust network of partners in the movement to end food insecurity, Northwest Harvest has set the ambitious goal to cut hunger in the state in half by 2028. By shifting the center of its operations to the center of the state, Northwest Harvest will take a major step towards achieving this goal.

For more information and how to donate to the Northwest Harvest Capital Campaign, visit [www.northwestharvest.org/yakima-capital-campaign](http://www.northwestharvest.org/yakima-capital-campaign)

### **About Northwest Harvest**

Northwest Harvest strives to end hunger and address the root causes of poverty – supporting a statewide network of more than 300 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 feeds the body, mind, and spirit. In addition to making sure those who suffer from hunger are being fed, 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. For more information, visit <http://www.northwestharvest.org>.