

Emergency Food Boxes

OUR VISION: Whatcom County Fire District 14 Stations are stocked with boxes of non-perishable food for distribution in emergency situations.

WHY THIS IS A PRIORITY: Emergency responders often are the first to identify and see the impacts of hunger. At the Foothills Food Summit, Fire District 14 Chief Jerry DeBruin shared his experience of responding to an emergency call of diabetic shock caused by the patient being without food for several days. It is becoming increasingly evident that this is not an isolated occurrence, especially among the elderly and homebound.

WHAT WE ARE DOING: FCFP Partners are coordinating with Fire District 14 staff to prepare and store totes of non-perishable food at Fire Stations.



Bus Stop at Saint Peter's

OUR VISION: A WTA bus stop is installed at Saint Peter's Church on Mount Baker Highway to improve access for Foothills Food Bank (FFB) clients.

WHY THIS IS A PRIORITY: The FFB is currently inaccessible by public transportation. The closest bus stop is at the intersection of Kendall Road and Mount Baker Highway, which requires walking for several miles along the highway each way. For residents without a car, this poses a major challenge to accessing FFB services, and often these are the same people who are most at risk for hunger. A bus stop at Saint Peter's Church that serves the Tuesday morning distribution in conjunction with the FFB's home delivery program would help to ensure Foothills community members are able to access the food they need.

WHAT WE ARE DOING: The FFB and Saint Peter's Church have been in communication with WTA, and WTA will make a decision about the bus stop during their strategic planning session in early 2016.

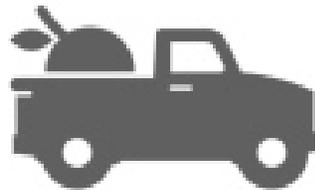


Twin Sisters Mobile Market

OUR VISION: Twin Sisters Mobile Farmers Market is supported by the community in bringing fresh, locally-grown produce to East Whatcom County.

WHY THIS IS A PRIORITY: Despite an abundance of farms in our region, there are few retailers in East Whatcom with the capacity to purchase and sell local produce to low-income consumers. Twin Sisters uses an innovative mobile market design to bring fresh, affordable produce to various community gathering points around East Whatcom County. By partnering with Twin Sisters, we are able to comprehensively address low food access while supporting East Whatcom's local farming economy.

WHAT WE ARE DOING: The FCFP and the FFB are partnering with the Twin Sisters market to seek and secure funding to support a farm-to-food bank forward purchasing program. This mutually-beneficial partnership would increase distribution of fresh, locally-grown produce at the FFB while increasing revenue for Twin Sisters farmers. Additionally, the FCFP, Twin Sisters, and the Opportunity Council are working to prepare for the implementation of Fresh Bucks, a SNAP-incentive program that provides up to \$10 match towards fresh produce.



Food Bank at the EWRRC

OUR VISION: The East Whatcom Regional Resource Center acts as a storage hub and home for a second Foothills Food Bank distribution.

WHY THIS IS A PRIORITY: The top priority of the Foothills Food Access Plan is to relocate the FFB to the EWRRC and create a hub for healthy food access and education. The new facility will be within walking distance of an area with a high density of residents living in poverty and will support increased storage and distribution capacity for the food bank. This change will enable FFB to dramatically increase access to fresh, nutrient-dense foods for food insecure individuals and families.

WHAT WE ARE DOING: The Opportunity Council is currently fundraising for the construction of a second building at the EWRRC, that will provide a permanent home for FFB storage and distribution. A design charrette is being planned for early 2016 to engage the community in the design process. In addition, we are assisting the FFB in seeking funding for paid food bank staff who would support the implementation of the Foothills Food Access Plan.



Winter & Spring Pantry

OUR VISION: The Winter and Spring Pantry program supplies low-income MBSD elementary school students with supplemental nutritious food to help prevent hunger over school breaks.

WHY THIS IS A PRIORITY: An estimated 54-74% of MBSD students rely on the free/reduced price meal system to meet their food needs during the school year; when school is not in session, it can be difficult for students to get enough to eat. The Winter and Spring Pantry program has been a huge success for families over the past few years, and an expansion of the program is supported by the community.

WHAT WE ARE DOING: The 2015-2016 Winter and Spring Pantry serves over 200 students, and has expanded to include Harmony Elementary. A part-time Pantry Coordinator has been hired and has worked to increase donations and sponsorships of the program, resulting on more healthy, food for local families. The FFB and FCFP are seeking funding to expand the Winter and Spring Pantry program to include a Summer Pantry that would coincide with the Summer Feeding Program at MBHS and the EWRRRC.



School Gardens and Educ.

OUR VISION: Mount Baker School District schools have thriving gardens and integrated food education programs.

WHY THIS IS A PRIORITY: Good nutrition and healthy eating habits at an early age support lifelong well-being. The benefits of school gardens are documented and significant, and provide a unique opportunity for hands-on learning that can be integrated into the regular curriculum.

WHAT WE ARE DOING: The FCFP is meeting with MBSD administration, parent volunteers, and community partners to develop a shared vision and action plan for integrated food and garden education. We are also seeking funding for a series of annual back-to-school "Harvest Dinners" that will gather school staff, parents, students, local farmers, and community resource providers together to build awareness and community around access to healthy foods.

