

Columbia County

Community Food Assessment



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Acknowledgements

To all of Columbia County:

Thank you for taking the time to tell us your piece of the food story of Columbia County. And to those who have taken a special interest in the improvement of the continuously unfolding story, I particularly thank you.

Foreward

When the first settlers came to Oregon they were amazed by the rich soil, abundant water supply and even the islands of productivity in Oregon's deserts. They were thrilled with the crops, fruits and berries they were able to raise, the rich pastureland as well as the streams teeming with fish and the bounty of wild game available to feed a growing population. It would have been impossible for them to believe that anyone could be hungry or food insecure in this land of plenty. It is incredible that hunger and food insecurity abound in Oregon nearly two centuries later. In fact, many of the areas that seemed so bountiful to those early settlers have the least access to food today.

Three years ago the Oregon Food Bank in partnership with University of Oregon RARE program began to conduct community food assessments in some of Oregon's rural counties. Very few community food assessment efforts have been undertaken in rural America with a county by county approach. The report you are about to read is a result of conversations with the people who make Oregon's rural communities and their food systems so very unique. These reports are also a gift from a small group of very dedicated young people who have spent the last year listening, learning and organizing. It is our sincere hope that these reports and organizing efforts will help Oregonians renew their vision and promise of the bountiful food system that amazed those early settlers.

Sharon Thornberry
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Introduction

In our social studies classes during grade school we learned that farmers grew our food and then somehow it would magically end up in the grocery stores cleaned, cut, packaged in boxes, cans or bags and ready for us to buy while on shopping trips with our parents. We didn't notice the gap from the farm to the little bag of potato chips in our lunch boxes.

Our view of food as adults has probably changed little since when we were children. Most Americans are almost as ignorant about where our food comes from as when we were in fourth grade. We will go to our local grocery store and think little about where our morning banana comes from, we probably won't consider what Genetically Modified Organisms (GMOs) are, and we might scoff at the price difference between organic, free-range chicken and conventional chicken breasts. In recent years, however, circumstances have forced many of us to think a little more about our food. Popular media has made the subject more accessible. Maybe one tame Saturday night at home a person watched the movie *Food Inc.* and resolved to make changes in what they chose to eat and buy. While flipping through T.V channels for something to watch a person came across *Jamie Oliver's Food Revolution*, which talks about the kind of food served in schools. Possibly one picked up one of Michael Pollan's best selling books that have pulled back the curtain on how food is approached by our government and major corporations. Or maybe a friend recommended the film *Forks Over Knives* which talks about the way a person's health is affected by the food choices one makes. These are all relatively recent and part of the growing local/good/slow food movements.

For others, food has become more of an issue for no other reason than because money has become an issue. Food prices have gone up and a family may have to work within a tighter budget than they did before. And for many others health reasons have forced people to change their diets.

Food is becoming something that fewer and fewer can take for granted, although for those living in poverty food is never far from their minds. From the general American perspective, hunger has been something that developing countries have had to struggle with. Recently, however, that

has become less and less true. Irregular weather has caused crop failures, higher occurrences of destructive natural disasters, changes in soil conditions, and rising fuel prices, as well as the general effects of the economic recession of the past four years, all play a part in the rising cost of food. When one is watching their pennies the rise in price of necessities does not go unnoticed.

Last year, Oregon Food Bank reported that it distributed 1 million emergency food boxes in a year for the first time ever. Even though hunger has always been present in the United States, it has commonly been perceived as an issue of an individual's poor decision making and then easily swept under the rug. Yet, in today's recovering economy, even middle-class families have to make tough decisions that they never expected to be in the position of having to make in order to put enough food on the table. Yet, despite the rise in hunger we in industrialized and developed countries throw away 40% of the food we produce after harvest according to a 2011 report done for the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations by the Swedish Institute for Food and Biotechnology.

All of these factors and much more, have influenced academia and there is an identified need for people to specialize in the way we grow, process, distribute, consume, and dispose of our food. Universities are offering newly minted graduate programs in sustainable agriculture and food system studies so that we may develop a group of professionals who understand the complex relationship of the political, cultural, and economical aspects of food. Conducting a Community Food Assessments, such as this, is part of the efforts to have a better understanding of the relationship people have with food in their hometowns.

There was a time when food was as simple as our grade school social studies textbooks would have us believe it still is, but those days have long passed. Science and technological advancements, politics, population growth, and the pace of life all have changed the way our food systems operate. Through long-term big-picture planning, collaboration, policy making and, most importantly, education, communities can maneuver their way toward strong food systems which will strengthen the food security and prosperity of its citizens.



Community Food Assessment

The purpose of this community food assessment is to present a picture of food in Columbia County and then to use the information as a basis for further action in creating a more secure food system. Food security is when, “all people, at all times, have physical, social, and economic access to sufficient, safe, and nutritious food to meet their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life” according to the United Nation’s Food and Agriculture Organization.

Through the collaboration with the Oregon Food Bank, R.A.R.E/AmeriCorps, and Columbia Pacific Food Bank research was conducted to highlight the unique strengths and challenges that Columbia County has for a better understanding of its resources. Many interviews and surveys were tools used to hear from residents about the role food plays in their lives and the community. Recommendations for future action in particular areas are made at the end of sections in order to serve as a starting point for further community planning.

The major areas that could bring about the greatest beneficial change are in food education and producer to business communication. Developing better educated consumers will, not only create more informed consumers, and in turn potentially benefit the community’s over-all health, but also strengthen local buying practices, save people money during these tight times and increase skills in areas like cooking and gardening. By creating a medium for producers and businesses to communicate with one another, a stronger economic link will grow through the mutual understanding of each groups’ challenges and potentially create more willingness to collaborate.

available from local, sustainable sources. Durable goods co-op style.

Produce To ~~Market~~ MARKET PLACE.

F.E.A.S.T

Large Scale Farm

LOCAL Food in local venues

A pivotal moment in taking an active role in planning for a stronger food system in Columbia County was the FEAST (Food, Education, Agriculture, Solutions, Together).

The Saint Helens Senior Center opened its doors Saturday morning of January 14th 2012 to the community members of Columbia County to take part in a Oregon Food Bank community organizing program called F.E.A.S.T. The event brought together around 45 people from various parts of the food system in the county to talk about ways to make nutritious, fresh food more available through communication, retail, school programs, emergency food agencies, gardening, education, and other community programming.

A panel spoke about their perspectives on their specific areas of experience with food. The topics ranged from the farmer's perspective, education opportunities, emergency food services, community opportunities for gardening, the retail business owners point of view, to food in schools. Community members learned the basics of what a food system is, what food insecurity is, and how the health of one has a direct impact on the other.

After listening to the challenges and opportunities that the panelist face in their respective areas the audience was asked to do a visioning exercise. "The local, specific knowledge was great," said a participant. A free meal, using ingredient all generously donated and prepared by local growers and caterers, was offered. The meal highlighted the county's wide-range of food producing capabilities. Virtually the entire meal was made from ingredients produced in Columbia County.

After the meal people chose a group and got to

work on practical steps that could be taken to tackle the challenges faced in the county but also how to better utilize already available resources. "I love how talk led directly to action," commented one community member.

Days later a short online survey was done and the response was overwhelmingly positive. "Well worth my time. I am a connector so this info will be shared! Also encouraged me to try a home garden," said one participant.

People felt better connected to others in the community who were also concerned with having better access to healthy food as well as more informed about the particular food system of Columbia County thanks to what the panelists said as well as talking with others who attended the F.E.A.S.T. "It was great to know there are others that are concerned with some of the same issues I am and possibly together we can

"It was great to know there are others that are concerned with some of the same issues I am and possibly together we can make a difference"

make a difference," commented one person.

Since the F.E.A.S.T many positive things have begun to happen. Local food businesses are finding growers to buy from, Turning Point food pantry has built a demonstration garden with the help of Becky White of Starry Sky Farm, farmers are starting to find new markets for their products, a group is still meeting to find ways to educate the public better on food and nutrition, the Saint Helens Farmers' Market is kicking off its inaugural season, and many other small movements toward greater food security are happening everyday. All of these things are coming out of the awareness and connections through the F.E.A.S.T. The goal of the F.E.A.S.T workshop is to serve as a springboard for grassroots community development of its food system and that is exactly what is happening in Columbia County.

The Numbers: Economy & Health

The Economy

Columbia County's land size is 687 square miles and is home to 49,430 people, with a population increase of 13.19% between 2000 and 2010, according to the 2010 U.S Census. Historically the area's economy has relied heavily on timber related industries and residents have enjoyed a low unemployment rate. However, in the recent past the economic recession has taken a heavy toll on the area, along with the rest of the country. In the mid-90s the county enjoyed a seasonally unadjusted unemployment rate that hovered just above 5%, but in the Spring of 2009 it was around 14%. As of February 2012 it is at 10.6% according to U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.

The rising prices of gas taking a larger chunk out of hard to find wages. Considering that 73% of Columbia County residents commute out of the county everyday for work it would stand to reason that our community as a whole is at a high risk of falling prey to quick fix food at home or on the road.

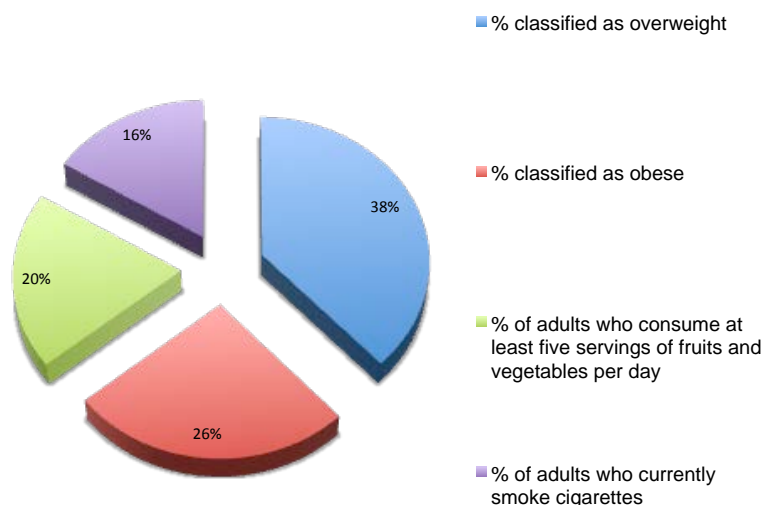
With the lumber and paper industries providing fewer work opportunities and increasing difficulty in finding jobs, many people to look to outside of the county to places like Portland for work, a 40 minute one-way drive. Many choose to live in Scappoose because they see it as a bedroom community of Portland. Providing affordable housing opportunities and the charm of rural living without the hassles of city life. With such a mass exodus every day, the opportunity for the local economy to benefit from the dollars spent on lunches, quick errands and larger shopping leave along with the commuters.

Not being able to find work can soon land one in a low-income, and at the same time, a food insecure situation. Along with those who've lost jobs there are other vulnerable groups like the homeless, children, those with disabilities and seniors, who might find themselves wondering where their next meal is coming from.

In a one night homeless count done by the Oregon Housing and Community Services in Columbia County in January 2011 found 285 homeless residents. Among this group, the top four reasons they gave for being homeless were related to the lack of sufficient income.

Health

Percentage of Adults in Columbia County Health Risk Factors



Having sufficient income is important to buying healthy food. Many times the cheapest choice the unhealthiest one and that can take its toll on one's health.

Food and health are intimately related. Many of the health problems that people experience are lifestyle based and therefore reversible. Of the adults in Columbia County, 40% are considered over-weight and 27.4% are considered obese, meaning only about 33% of the adults are at a healthy (or under) weight. One place people can begin to improve their health is with what they eat.

A diet heavy in fruits and vegetables is what is recommended for the average person, however the 2012 Oregon Overweight, Obesity, Physical Activity and Nutrition Facts report by the Oregon Health Authority finds that adults in Columbia county who consume at least 5 servings of fruits and vegetables per day is only 20.7%.

The Numbers: Economy & Health

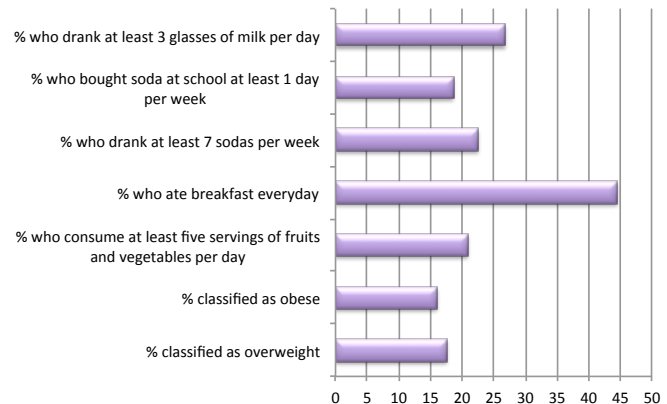
Health

Youth Health

In that same report, 17.5% of eighth graders were found to be overweight and 16% obese. Similar to their parents, only 20.9% of eighth graders in the report ate the daily recommended amount of fruits and vegetables. In addition to not eating enough fresh produce, eighth graders are at risk of consuming large amounts of sugar in the form of soda, which is high in empty calories but also damaging to teeth. The schools in the county have vending machines providing snacks and beverages with some proceeds benefiting various students groups. Many schools have substituted soda with athletic drinks and water in order to combat the amount of sugar students consume at school. The Saint Helens and Scappoose High Schools, however, are open campuses and students can easily walk to a coffee stand or local convenience store. Further nutrition and food education may curb student's choices towards healthier alternatives while off school grounds.

While there is some information there is still a need for more on the health of children in the county. In the next coming three years Oregon State University (OSU) will be working on gathering information about children in rural communities with the specific goal of preventing obesity. Through a USDA-NIFA funded grant named Generating Rural Options for

Percentage of 8th graders in Columbia County Health Risk Factors



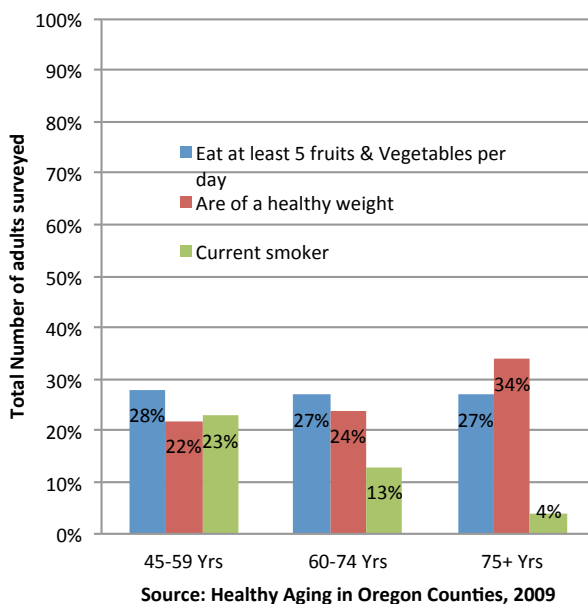
Weight-Healthy Kids & Communities (GROW HKC) they will try, "to understand how the rural school environment may influence children's health behaviors such as physical activity and healthful eating." Through this program, among other things, there will be direct food and nutrition, garden and physical education to students in grades K-5/6. The three year length time frame is to see if the GROW program will influence children's food and physical activity behaviors measured by body mass indexes and academic progress.

Senior Health

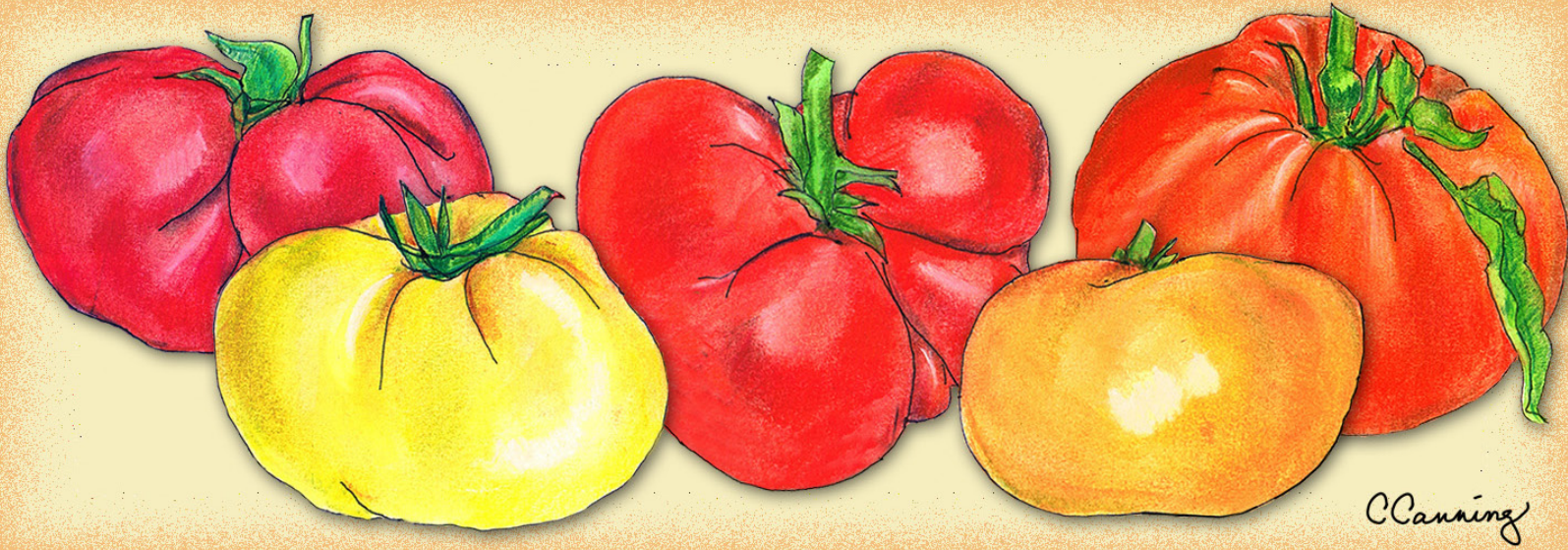
The greatest potential positive influence and is with the children but the senior population can't be ignored. The aging population of the county is expected to grow. As a larger portion of the population is comprised of seniors, chronic health issues such as high blood pressure, diabetes and cholesterol will become more prevalent as will the need for specialized diets low in sodium, sugar and fat to accommodate these problems. Highly processed foods, while generally more affordable, are high in both salt, sugar and fat, making it more difficult for seniors living on fixed incomes to find diet appropriate meals.

There are senior centers in all of the major communities of Columbia County that try to meet the needs of seniors but are under constant budget restraints.

Some senior centers find it challenging to meet both the dietary restrictions of the clients and tight USDA regulations. The centers rely on financial donations, membership with Columbia Pacific Regional Food Bank, and secondary sources of income like, thrift stores, to fund and run their programs.



The Food Cycle



The first inhabitants of the area were from tribes with names like Chinook, Clatskanie, and Klickitat. The first people subsisted on what was readily available such as fish, local game, berries, camas roots dug from meadows and wappato bulbs dug up from lake bottoms. Trading with neighboring tribes supplemented their needs.

When the first white settlers came they saw nothing but untapped natural resource potential. The perfect situation on the Columbia River, the abundant animal and plant life and the fertile ground were more than enough to get a young, ambitious man hoping to get his start salivating with anticipation.

Trees are what caught the first white settlers' eyes. They were lured by the promise of the coming railroad. Israel Spencer, an early settler, wrote in a letter that Vernonia was "The garden of Eden and the picture of Hell" referencing the fertile land and the difficulty of clearing it of the enormous trees in order to access it.

A visitor who comes to Columbia County today couldn't be blamed for seeing some of the same things, but left wondering what happened to a once bustling county and why all the potential seems to be waiting in furrow like so many of the fields that make up much of the land.

Eventually the railroad did come to Columbia County, and with it, the lumber industry exploded. With the access to the Columbia River, it is a natural spot for logging and all its complimentary businesses. Families came, schools and churches were built, stores sold goods, and slowly the local communities grew. As the populations grew, so did the need to feed people and the working animals such as horse and oxen who moved the massive logs. Agriculture grew beyond the family garden. Farmers came to grow food for people and animals.

As agriculture grew in the county, the local granges emerged as hubs of community activity and developed reputations for getting necessary things done and as a center of social activity. This is a common story to all the communities that have grown up along the Columbia River in the Northwest portion of Oregon. The other common tie is that over the decades as the logging, lumber, and paper industries gobbled up the trees, they found they could no longer operate at the level they had in the past and began to lay off workers. People began to leave the towns, and the supporting businesses like dairies, canneries, and butchers lost customers and had to close up shop. Fields that once were filled with strawberries, cabbage, livestock, cucumbers, grains and many other crops began to disappear as well. Despite having one of the oldest continuing granges (Natal/Mist) in Oregon, other granges couldn't maintain and began to close their doors due to dwindled member numbers. Repeat that process dozens of times and you find Columbia County in the place it is today - a county that relied heavily on one main industry that has all but run out of steam and the domino effect that followed.

It is not only the collapse of the logging industry that put Columbia County in the position it is in as far as its food system is concerned. The lure of easy and fast has bewitched everyone from busy parents to school food directors. Few can resist the siren call of the cheap tv dinner, the fast food take-out line, meal-in-a-box, and high fructose corn syrup laden "juice" drinks. Couple the lure of fast and easy, with the loss of domestic skills such as gardening, canning, and cooking. After over 50 years of eating in the car on the way to work, that is now in Portland, and grabbing something as we run out the door we are seeing the toll it has taken on our health, food systems, and local economies.

The Food Cycle

Agriculture

A history of commercial crops produced in Columbia County is rather long and diverse and shows the potential of future production and proven past success. Grains, seeds, virtually all temperate vegetables, mushrooms, warm season vegetables, endless berries, fruit bearing trees, and root crops of all shapes, sizes, colors have proved successful crops in the county.

Today the biggest selling crops are grains and grasses and the largest in acreage are also grass used for animal feed according to the 2007 US Census of Agriculture Columbia County Profile.

While there is a modest agriculture culture in the county today, most people buy their food from outside the county and buy their daily vegetable, grain, protein and fruit needs from large chain grocery stores, with the exception of berries during berry season. Many residents prefer to buy strawberries from local farm stands because of the strong history of the crop in the county.

The majority of the land in Columbia County is zoned for timber, between 83-86%. The land zoned for agriculture is between 4-6% and the rest for city, commercial, and residential uses said Glen Higgins, Director of Planning for Columbia County. "Just because you're zoned forest doesn't mean you can't grow food," said Higgins. He went on to say that most of the agriculturally zoned land is used to grow hay. The dike lands along the river are sandy and rich with nutritious sediment. Seely Family Farm, a 450 acre mint farm, is also located along the dike lands in Clatskanie. "Some of our ground is up to 50% organic and you just don't see that very often," said owner Mike Seely. Some of their farm brand products, such as mint candies, teas, and soaps, are sold through a variety of local stores in

the county and throughout the state. The vast majority of their mint oil is sold to larger buyers such as Wrigley's and Colgate. Mean's Nursery, located in Scappoose, is situated near the river and raises many landscape "shrubs and woody ornamental" plants that are sold in the eastern part of the United States to "big box" stores. The nursery's retail store in Scappoose sells some food start plants during the growing season, but they aren't grown by Means Nursery.

As many home gardeners in the area have learned, growing food in Columbia County can be a challenge. The biggest limitations are "heavy" soils, or soils with high clay content, and about 80-90% of the land in Columbia County is heavy soil. The best soil has a high sand content and that is why the soil by the river in the dike land is the best for agricultural uses and zoned accordingly. Heavy rainfall is also another challenge for growers in the county because of drainage challenges, as well as diseases that plants get. There are crops that thrive on lots of rainfall, such as grasses.

The Soil Conservation Service's survey shows that each part of the county has its own unique challenges. The elevation ranges from sea level up to 2,240ft. The annual precipitation ranges from 40 inches to 100. Those growing in Clatskanie, for example, face different challenges, such as higher elevation, which can affect the plants that grow as well as the length of the season. Those living in Vernonia may have to consider flooding due to the lower elevation, higher rainfall and the Nehalem River jumping its banks causing significant damage such as the floods of both 1997 and 2007.



Starry Sky

Farm



Starry Sky Farm, a small organic vegetable CSA (Community Supported Agriculture) located in Clatskanie began in 2009 with a modest 30ft X 50ft garden. “The first year we failed pretty miserably,” said Becky White, farmer and owner of the farm, “my goal, really, is to be self-sufficient and to take care of my family, to go back to the idea that most of my food is coming from my own land.” Becky cut her teeth as a farm hand and CSA shareholder in her native Pennsylvania where she says she learned how to eat seasonally. Before living in Clatskanie, Becky and her family lived in Portland. The affordable land is what enticed her to leave in 2007 and start Starry Sky Farm. After trying to sell at the Rainier farmer’s market and struggling to break even on the cost of having a table, Becky moved in another direction. She filled baskets with her vegetables and they sold well. Those first buyers of her baskets later became her first CSA clients. She saw the CSA model as something better suited to her farm and business operations because in that model shareholders pay their season share cost upfront therefore eliminating the risk the farmer has of harvesting and not selling the produce. That first year she grew for three families, including her own. In 2010, her second year, she broke more ground and added two more families. In those first couple of years Becky listened to her clients, learned how much food to put into the boxes, how to plant so that there is consistent product, how to face the challenges of gardening above 1000 ft and began to see her role as a CSA farmer more clearly, not only as a producer, but also as a teacher of how to cook unfamiliar products and how to preserve excess produce. “My goal as a CSA farmer is to increase the connection people have to food,” said Becky. Besides providing recipes and preservation instruction, Becky also has asked her shareholders to give five hours of their time to taking care of the garden each season. This slightly reduces the cost of each share and, at the same time, lessens the work and time she has to spend maintaining the garden. “It puts them a little bit more in touch with reality with how their food grows,” said Becky. Shareholders pick their shares up at her farm and are also exposed to other producers in the area. Becky doesn’t have big ambitions to have tons and tons of shareholders, or sell to Portland her reason for farming is more philosophical, “My goal, in my opinion, should not to be feeding people in Portland, my goal is to feed people within a reasonable radius within my farm, and I think that if everybody keeps that in mind, that there is enough of us and land that it could be done.”



Livestock

While driving along the roads it is almost inevitable to find cattle chewing their cud on Columbia County grass. Almost 11,000 cows are born, raised and/or fed in the county each year, according to the USDA 2007 Census of Agriculture. Many of those cows have been brought in from other parts of the state to fatten up and then will likely be shipped out to be processed in the Fall. Steers are typically slaughtered at 1,100 pounds but after butchering and processing they each produce roughly 460 pounds of meat that we recognize as our steaks and burgers. Doing the math gives, that gives us just under 3,992,000 pounds of burger meat produced in Columbia County per year.

"The largest volume of food [produced] by pounds is meat, mainly in cows," said Chip Bubl, OSU extension agent, adding that a lack of USDA certified butchers prevents further production. Bill Holdner of Holdner Farms raising "Natural" beef feels livestock farmers have too many hurdles to leap through in the form of permits, "It's just a bureaucracy," said Holdner, "Little farms can't afford to take out permits." In the past Holdner Farms had around 300 head of cattle, but today have considerably less. He sells his cattle primarily as breeding stock to other farmers. He blames importing beef from other countries and state laws for making it difficult to raise cattle. He is unsure

if the farm will be able to survive, "We'd like to stay in business but we don't know for sure."

Mark Kuhn, an auctioneer and owner of a handful of cattle, said that there used to be many more people who owned livestock in the past, "Everybody had a couple of cows because they had 10 acres, they kept the grass down and put some meat in the freezer." Kuhn blames the decline of a large presence of cattle in the county on the rise of fuel, equipment, and the rise in the cost of animal feed.

"A lot of people got out of it for sheer economics." Another probable reason he suggests is that the children of farmers who used to have hundreds of heads of cattle didn't want to take over the family business and it was more profitable to sell the land off in smaller parcels. "It's just a terrible time to get into the cattle business. We're seeing the lowest prices since 1952." Kuhn also feels the high cost of processing is a deterrent to raising cattle and is also the reason farmers choose to sell their cattle at auction, to a buyer, or a broker.

Since there are few options for processing meat many farmers who raise livestock make money by selling their animals at auctions throughout the state, the most convenient to Columbia County is in Woodburn, OR.

The Food Cycle

Dairy

The legacy of cows in the area isn't only in producing meat. There used to be multiple dairies in Columbia County, but as each dairy closed its doors, it became less profitable for large dairy processors to come pick up the milk produced in the county, leaving the existing dairies more isolated. Today there is only one dairy left in the county, Looslea's Holsteins. The farm has been located in Scappoose since 1975 and was a conventional dairy until 2002 when they turned organic. When they operated as a conventional dairy they milked 300 cows, but today milk 150, and site the cost of organic feed as their biggest expense and reason for their current size. The dairy sells its milk to Horizon Organic Milk, a national organic dairy business, and has no local buyers.

Through interviews with many small farm owners in the county it became clear that while Looslea's Holsteins is the last dairy, there are a number who sell raw milk to friends and neighbors from their homes. Raw milk is milk that hasn't been pasteurized, a process that kills potentially harmful bacteria. Pasteurization is the process used for milk that is sold in stores. Proponents of raw milk believe the pasteurization process not only kills bacteria that could cause sickness, but it also kills beneficial health properties. Even though it is illegal to advertise the sale of raw milk for human consumption, it isn't illegal to sell it from one's home. There are a few laws that regulate the amount of animals in the farm allowed to be milked per home and be sold to a consumer from the farm. However, the fact that it is legal doesn't protect the person producing and selling it if someone gets sick from the milk being sold. Locating those who sell raw milk is done mainly through word of mouth.

Processing

The story of butchers in the county is similar to that of the dairies. In the past, there were many more butchers but slowly each sold their land for other uses, finding it more profitable than selling the businesses. Consumer education about buying meat from a local producer has also diminished as easy access to meat in supermarkets has increased.

Matt's Custom Meats in Kelso, WA is where most people from Columbia County go to get their meat cutting needs cared for. There are no USDA certified butchers or slaughter facilities in Columbia County, the closest are in Canby, Sandy, and Vancouver, WA. Residents of Columbia County who need an animal butchered commonly sell the live animal to a customer.

The seller then will call Matt's Custom Meats, or a similar business, and someone from the company will come and do on-site slaughtering. They will then take the meat back to their shop and cut the animal in the specific cuts that the customer wants. Livestock producers can sell live animals to customers as a whole, half or quarter animal, without needing to have the meat slaughtered and processed in a USDA certified facility. USDA certification is necessary when selling meat by the pound or in individual cuts such as steaks and chops. Many USDA meat-processing facilities are set up for dealing with larger

numbers of animals. "It's just a plant that puts through as many cows as possible, like burger cows whose meat ends up at McDonalds or Burgerville." said Matt Franett, of Matt's Custom Meats. Depending on the sort of cuts one wants, especially for smaller orders, the slaughterhouse must change its system which therefore adds cost to the processing. "It's a pain in the butt and super expensive," says Matt. There are currently no butchers in the county, USDA certified or not, who can slaughter and process animals. Not having local butchers is the hurdle to more consumption of

local meat, suggests Chip Bubl. The most common way meat is sold in the county is through buyers who come from out of the area, auctions, and buying the animal directly from the farmer and having it processed through a custom butcher.

Some people bypass commercial butchers altogether and do "black market" butchering, which is to say they have a knowledgeable friend or neighbor

slaughter and process an animal for them. Many people choose to purchase meat in this manner because they know who they're buying from, where the meat is coming from and how the animals were treated and that is what is most important to them. "People are afraid of commercialized butchers," said Sherry McIntyre of McIntyre Farms in Deer Island, "After the media runs a story about meat safety people who love their meat get on the phone and call us."

"After the media runs a story about meat safety people who love their meat get on the phone and call us."

The Food Cycle

Processing

Produce Processing

Meat isn't the only product that needs processing. Oregon Hill Farm produces jams, syrups, flavorings and other berry related products. The company processes and distributes products from their headquarters in Saint Helens throughout the Northwest and country. The company began as Luttrell Berry Farm, which grew 400 acres of strawberries. Many people had short-term employment from picking berries for the Luttrell farm. "After school let out for the summer then we'd look forward to [berry picking] because it was money in my pocket and it was fast," said one berry picker who worked in the strawberry fields from grade school until high school during the 60s and 70s. "It was hard to make much money. There was babysitting and there was that and that was all there was." During picking season a bus would come pick you up at your house. "They'd drive you out to the fields, you'd pick with all your friends and it'd paid for my school clothes for the next year."

Today the company sources the berries it needs from larger growers in the region, because they come packaged, cleaned, frozen and with a cer-

tificate of quality, which is more suited to the current needs of the company. They do rent out their processing and labeling facilities to outside businesses with similar process needs, but because of contamination concerns the company doesn't work with small batch businesses. "Since 2005, to compliment our business we broadened our services to include select private label and co-packing ventures, assisting other businesses in realizing their dreams and ultimately providing more fine, healthful food selections to you, our customer," says the company's website.

In the past companies such as Steinfelds, which was located and grew cabbage and cucumbers in Scappoose, made sauerkraut and pickles. Today there is still an annual Sauerkraut Festival, complete with cabbage bowling and sauerkraut ice cream, in Scappoose despite the industry having left the area many years ago.

There are a variety of locations with certified kitchens that could possibly be used temporarily for small businesses to utilize or for educational demonstrations.

Opportunities

Producer Opportunities:

- Create a list of certified kitchens available to the public for rent or free so that small operations could safely produce their product or simply if a mother wanted to bake some cookies for a child's party at school.
- Encourage producers to bring products up to retail & school safety standards and approach local markets.
- Encourage niche markets, like organic, for meat and dairy producers.
- Educate people on buying shares of locally raised livestock

The Food Cycle



Restaurants

As one drives along Highway 30 they'll see many restaurants. Most are chain restaurants that receive their food from designated large food distributors like Food Services of America, Sysco or Gordon Food Service which provide food products that have been washed, cut, frozen, packaged or processed in other ways to enhance ease of use for busy food businesses. However, there are a number of small, independently owned food-based businesses such as restaurants or bakeries that use some locally produced goods. The definition of "Local" varies from business to business. Some local restaurant owners suggested during interviews that local meant from within the county, some said Portland was their limit, others said they considered anything within the state and still others said local products could be from as far as Washington and Idaho.

Houlton Bakery in Saint Helens carries locally produced raw honey by Oregon Honey Works, uses potatoes produced by Stewardship Farm in Clatskanie, salad greens from Mizuna Gardens of Saint Helens as well as other local seasonal and non-seasonal products like salsas from Dancing Mantas Farm, also located in Saint Helens. The Black Bear Café in Vernonia has carried many local products in the past, but owner Dana Roach sites the inconsistency of small local farmers' products and ability to stay in business as one reason it can be difficult to buy locally. He also points out that

from a business perspective, it's difficult to pay the extra money that local producers need to charge to cover their costs. "Economics are just killin' everybody," said Roach.

Common concerns expressed by many restaurant owners through interviews (and school food directors), who are interested in using locally produced food, are food safety, handling and liability. While business owners admit to being unclear about the exact regulations, many prefer to stay on the safe side and order their food from large food distributors or make their purchases at warehouses like Winco, Costco or Cash and Carry. Besides the concern over food safety, the number one reason local restaurants don't use locally produced food is because they aren't aware of what is being grown and produced locally and where to procure local products. While they don't know where to find local producers owners and chefs are open to being approached by local producers wanting to sell in local markets.

Another concern some owners and chefs had was whether the products offered would be affordable, and what the logistics involved would be. While chefs and owners expressed frustration with having to follow purchase minimums with larger distributors, they feel that the products they receive from these sources are consistent and safe.

Blackbird

Catering



Trent Dolynick was one of the first on the chopping block during the first wave of lay-offs at the beginning of the recession in 2008. At the time he was working as a special projects manager at a re-tread company. For the rest of the year he looked for work but found that no one was hiring. In a past life he had gone to culinary school and worked in food service and a variety of other food related companies that had led him in a twisty-turvy way to his latest position. Trent and his wife had talked about doing catering in the past and this seemed like the perfect opportunity to give it a try while he was looking for work. In the beginning of 2009 Blackbird Catering was born, and soon took up most of his time leaving him little time to look for work, so he stopped. Working with the customer and making it easy for them is the modus operandi of the company, which tries to use locally sourced and organic products where possible in order to create the best product, "Being involved with the F.E.A.S.T project is really interesting for us because it helps us to source where some of the things are that we didn't know about," said Dolynick.

Blackbird is also a business and must keep the company budget in mind, as well as the clients, and sometimes those bumps in quality aren't worth the bump in price that local or organic products bring with them. "I'd rather sell a better product but I'm not going to lose a job to NOT sell them," said Dolynick. Through a mutual acquaintance, he began partnering with Grey Horton of Morgan's Landing Farm, of Sauvie Island. "I started re-writing my menus to just include fresh vegetables and just buy whatever he had. Whatever he had growing, that is what people would get," said Dolynick, "They knew they were going to get something farm fresh but they didn't know what it was going to be and they were fine with it." This works in favor of the customer who is trying to keep costs down if they are flexible. For example if beets are in season a beet salad not only will be fresher and thus tastier, but also cheaper. Like so many things, cost is a determining factor in choosing what products to buy, but also convenience. As is the case with many other restaurant owners and chefs, working with local small farms can be challenging because the farmers wear all the hats and cannot delegate tasks to employees, like making deliveries or launch effective marketing campaigns, for the simple fact that they cannot afford to hire staff. After looking around the county trying to work with other producers Trent gave up, "I've looked around but they're all so difficult," adding "It takes like, three or four calls to make any head-way. Once it takes more than two calls I just don't have that kind of time." When products aren't consistent or reliable it puts the purchasing business behind its schedule and many times that is unacceptable. Farmers lose customers and businesses don't get the local quality product that they'd like to offer to customers. "I'm trying to offer the best that I can offer to my customers." Donating or reducing the price for catered events that promote the community is one way that Trent likes to help support events and organizations that improve the community and it helps get Blackbird known, "We look at that as our advertising dollars."

The Food Cycle

Retail

The communities of Scappoose and Saint Helens enjoy the convenience of multiple retail grocery stores including Fred Meyers, Safeway, Grocery Outlet and IGA along with many smaller convenience “quickie marts” that dot Highway 30. The towns of Rainier, Vernonia, and Clatskanie enjoy fewer options. Sentry is the most easily accessible store in Vernonia however many people report through consumer surveys that they travel more than 25 miles in order to purchase their groceries at places like WinCo, and Costco on a regular basis where they can get bulk prices and more choices. Clatskanie has a Safeway but many residents report they also go to Astoria for bigger shopping trips or for the Farmers’ Market. Rainier has a discount grocer, J&R Sales but most Rainier community members

make the short trip across the bridge to Longview, WA where there are more options for their shopping needs.

Larger retail food stores with produce are beginning to label the product’s place of origin, or whether it is organic, in some way. Safeway stores will label their produce with the general location of origin or if it is an organic product. The store IGA advertises that it sells local food and labels produce’s place of origin. Since IGA stores are independently owned, they have more freedom in what they choose to sell; especially when it comes to offering locally produced food. For example, Oregon Hill Farms, which is located in Saint Helens and distributes its jams, jellies, and syrups throughout the Pacific Northwest and nationally, is sold at IGA but



Glen Heifort, Bee Sweet Honey

Columbia County Natural



Columbia County Natural is a weekly organic food buying club. It picked up where a former club in Scappoose ended in 2010. While the group was small, it was committed to continue finding farm fresh organic foods. It operates as a non-profit, and to cut costs they run the operation through Susan Baker's home. After word got out about the group, it nearly doubled in size in a matter of weeks. Members are able to select what they'd like to have ordered from a list of available items. The majority of the time people get what they want, unless there aren't enough people who want the same item to be able to buy it at a good price. "We want to grow because if we grow we can negotiate better prices," said Susan Baker, Coordinator, Columbia County Natural. Currently, it isn't a small club, but it also isn't really big either. Their orders are big enough, though, that the wholesalers are willing to work with them. All things considered, a person who buys through Columbia County Natural saves between 20-30% than if they were to buy the same things in stores.

Part of the mission of the club is "to be able to provide organic, good food to everyone regardless of income levels". The group has also recognized a lack of food education and cooking skills. In the future they'd like to be able to offer cooking classes and work with people in the community to know how to use and cook good food. They would like community members to be aware of where they can find good food and to know which tools they need to stock their kitchen with after they've begun learning how to cook. While there are around 300 members on the mailing list, the goal is to grow to 200 active buyers, a marked increase from the roughly 60 that currently buy on a regular basis.

"We don't want to stop people from going to local farmer's markets and buying from local farmers direct either, we're the fill in. We encourage people to have their own gardens. We're trying to make it so that we are another option for you. You don't have to use 100% you can use us 20%, 50%. You might use us 100% part of the time and then 10% part of the time because now your chickens are producing eggs, you've got your little gardening going...but then fall comes around and it's a little bit harder to be self-sustaining," said Baker.

The club sources its food locally as much as possible, as well as from farmers and wholesale companies from the Pacific Northwest who are certified organic or use organic practices.

"I think we are seeing more and more people paying attention to their food and thinking, 'Maybe it is a big deal to buy organic,'" said Baker.

The Food Cycle

Waste

After buying food there is usually a bit of it that we don't use. This brings up the question of what to do with the waste our food consumption habits produce. The most progressive and institutional-based handling of waste is taking place in Vernonia at Washington grade school. In December 2011 the 5th graders began a systematic composting program in response to the food waste from each meal. "It's a huge waste... with USDA requirements [the kids] have to take a certain amount of each type of food whether they're gonna eat it or not, there's way too much food that goes to waste," said Aaron Miller, Washington grade school principal.

Student duties include manning the garbage stations and directing other students how to properly dispose of certain uneaten items from that day's meal and carrying separated food scraps to the outside composting bin. There are both free standing boxes in areas and crank composting barrels. The higher grades also made efforts but still need to make some improvements for smoother execution.

For the main population of Columbia County most opportunities for disposing of food occur on people's personal property. The most common method is using city services to pick up one's trash in designated trash bins. Many people recycle and separate the various materials of glass, paper products, and metals. Food is generally thrown in with the rest of the general trash and discarded products that can't be re-

cycled. While yard debris such as leaves, brush, and grass clippings are accepted by Hudson Garbage and Waste Management's curbside pick up in some communities; food is not allowed to be mixed in. A pamphlet about home composting is offered to Hudson Garbage's customers. The yard waste that is picked up is then taken to a local landscaping business like Beaver Bark in Scappoose to be chopped up and sold as compost to its customers. Each town has different services available to them through their garbage collecting service. Even though Waste Management also services Portland and accepts food scraps for composting, so far that service has not reached its customers in Columbia County.

Those who garden may have a small spot set aside on their land for composting household food waste to later be used on next season's garden or they may choose to buy organic compost at a local store with landscaping services and products. Chinnok Mini Storage and Landscape in Scappoose sells certified organic dairy compost, which is sourced from Washington. There are no commercial methods to sustainably compost one's food leftovers. One method is the Facebook group page Columbia County OR Food serves as a sort of community board to post a need, or an excess of, a spoiled food item. The Columbia Pacific Food Bank keeps certain pig farmers on file to be called when perishable items are no longer fit for human consumption.

Opportunities

Waste Opportunities:

- Encourage local restaurants to seek out local producers or grow their own food.
- Highlight items on the menu with food that comes from local sources as well as point out to customers the benefits of locally sourced foods.
- Educate chefs & restaurant owners on food safety law and regulations.
- Create an event for both local producers and business owners to meet and learn about one another to understand the challenges and concerns the other may have.
- Encourage and support local grocery, farmers' markets, growers and other food-based businesses through marketing and cross-promotion.

Community Food Need & Efforts

According to Feeding America's Map the Meal Gap study, 16% of the residents in Columbia County suffer from food insecurity, and of those only 57% are income-eligible for federal nutrition assistance. Of the children in the county 28% face food insecurity as well and 48% are eligible for federal nutrition program assistance. There are many programs and services in place to help assist hungry people in the county. The main source of local food assistance are from, schools, the community food pantries and meal sites.

16% of the residents in Columbia County suffer from food insecurity
28% of the children are food insecure

SNAP

The SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program) program, formerly known as the Food Stamp Program, is a federally funded program that was started in 1977 and has become the most effective anti-hunger program in U.S history. Those who qualify for SNAP benefits receive monthly funds put onto an Electronic Benefits Transfer (EBT) card that resembles a debit card. In Oregon it is called "The Oregon Trail Card." It works across state lines and funds can roll over into the next month if not completely used. SNAP benefits can only be spent on food items. To qualify for benefits an individual or family in Oregon must fall under 185% of the federal poverty guideline, which in 2012 would be \$42,643 annually for a family of four. For an individual feeding only themselves, the monthly benefit level ranges from as low as \$14 to \$200. Oregon's SNAP program has won awards for its high participation rate, payment accuracy, and for the swiftness of processing applications to the program.

While there is still a stigma attached to using SNAP benefits, Columbia County has a relatively high participation rate. Of the residents in the county that are eligible, 70% are receiving benefits and brought \$13,049,245 of federal dollars into Columbia County in 2010 alone. The amount of money that could be brought into the local economy, if all eligible people in Columbia County participated, would be an additional \$5,462,365. Last year alone the program brought \$1 billion dollars to the Oregon economy. For every \$1 of SNAP benefits spent in it is equal to \$1.79 of local economic activity according to Partners for a Hunger-Free Oregon and Oregon Food Bank 2011 SNAP par-

ticipation report.

Although Columbia County has an over-all high participation rate in the SNAP program, a group with a much lower participation rate than the general public is seniors.. Currently Columbia County only has a 22% participation rate of eligible people over the age of 65. The average benefit amount that seniors receive is \$121 a month. Of the 3,489 people in the county that qualify for benefits 1,223 are seniors. Two of the five senior centers in the county have recently received EBT machines so that they can accept SNAP benefits as payment for meals at the centers. SNAP benefits can be used towards lunches prepared at the centers which are designed specifically for the nutritional and health needs that many seniors have. However, despite the centers' attempts to educate their clients through announcements during meals and in newsletters, very few

seniors are taking advantage of the ability to use their SNAP benefits for meals at the centers or through the Meals on Wheels program.

"People haven't asked to use their cards" said a receptionist at the Saint Helens Senior Center, a comment repeated by all of the senior centers whether they had an EBT machine or not. The reason for seniors not taking advantage of using their benefits at the centers is not clear. "It hasn't been successful," said Juliann Davis, Human Investment Program Analyst, of Community Action Team of Saint Helens, "I think it has more to do with the stigma attached to it." Davis wonders if using the card feels more anonymous at the grocery store, but is too visible when used at the senior centers in front of friends and acquaintances.

The amount of money that could be brought into the local economy, if all eligible people in Columbia County participated, would be an additional \$5,462,365.

Community Food Need & Efforts

WIC

Another federally funded program that specifically helps specifically new families is the WIC (Women, Infants, Children) program. In 2011 the OHA reports that there was a 45% participation rate, or 2,202 women and children, in the WIC program in Columbia County. An additional \$881,545 was brought into the local economy by the participants using their benefits at one of the eight authorized stores or through farmers at the Scappoose Farmers' Market or six farm stands through the Farm Direct Nutrition Plan (FDNP).

Food Assistance

Community Food Pantries

One way hunger is gaged throughout Oregon is by the number of clients that frequent local emergency food pantries. The statewide organization Oregon Food Bank has many partnerships with regional food banks. In Columbia County the regional food bank is Columbia Pacific Food Bank located in the county seat Saint Helens. Through Columbia Pacific Food Bank there are five main pantries in Columbia County serving the five major communities along with smaller, less frequent pantries run by churches, resource centers, or grange.

Oregon Food Bank announced last year that, for the first time, it had distributed over a million emergency food boxes throughout the state. The increase of hunger is blamed on the economic downturn of the last four years. Columbia County, which has an unemployment rate higher than the state and county averages, saw its numbers rise as well. Through reporting of the five main pantries the county total of distributed emergency food boxes was 28, 633 in 2011, and increase of 1,503 boxes from the previous year.

Community organizations such as churches, food pantries, school districts and senior centers have chosen to address the hunger needs of its neighbors by offering meals for free or with suggested donations. The communities of Rainier, Clatskanie, Vernonia, and Saint Helens have regular free dinners throughout the year, which are provided for anyone who comes. The service is usually run through a local church independently or in partnership with Columbia Pacific Food Bank.

The Natal/Mist Grange is a new food drop site for those residents who are isolated from other services due to their location in the county. Monthly the regional food bank drops food and the grange hosts a free lunch for those picking up a box.

In Warren the Brown Bag program is run from the Grace Baptist Church on the last Wednesday of every month. People who participate pay a one-time annual fee of \$15 to receive about two grocery "brown bags" full of an assortment of food. There is also a lunch served on pick-up days.

Other regular sites for meals are at the community senior centers. They offer lunches and ask for a \$4 donation. The Scappoose and Saint Helen centers are

able to process SNAP cards to go towards the suggested donation. The senior centers ask for the donations because they are often operating on a limited budget relying on donations, endowments from wills, grants, and some have a supplemental agency like a thrift store to help bring in income. The senior centers that accept USDA food and meal reimbursements must follow dietary requirements that restrict what can be served to seniors given their special dietary needs often requiring food be of low-sodium, high-fiber, low-cholesterol and that can limit the food the senior centers are able to accept from the regional food bank and serve its clients. The senior centers also participate in Meals on Wheels program that delivers meals to those who are unable to leave their home due to physical limitations and often live alone. In 2011 the five senior centers in the county reported to have served 36,995 on site and 33,378 through the program Meals on Wheels.

Schools are another meal site and aimed at helping children receive enough nutritious food. During the school year eligible children are able to receive free or reduced-priced breakfasts and/or lunches. During the summer months when classes are out, the school districts run summer meal programs.

Meal Sites

Community Food Need & Efforts

School free and reduced-price lunches

In 2009 according to Partners for a Hunger-Free Oregon Child Nutrition Programs, the county had 3,200 students (38.9%) that were eligible for free and reduced price meals. Yet, only 2,000 received a lunch each day on average. If all students who were eligible for free or reduced price lunch were served, the local economy would have received an additional \$562,392 in federal dollars that year and would have fed an additional 1,200 eligible low-income children.

The National Lunch Program is a federally assisted meal program. It provides nutritionally balanced, low-cost and free lunches and must be offered for free or at a reduced-price for eligible children. They also must meet the Federal nutrition requirements in-line with the Dietary Guidelines for Americans. All of the school districts participate in the National Lunch Program during the school year. The percentage of students who qualify must be from households with incomes below 130% the poverty level, (130% of the poverty level is \$29,055 from July 1, 2011 – June 30, 2012 for a family of four). The number of children who qualify and those who actually take advantage of the program do not correlate. School nutrition directors suspect that the children fear the stigma that comes with the free lunch.

All of the school districts except Scappoose offer a summer meal program mainly in the form of a lunch, but some also offer breakfasts and activities. The requirement to run a program funded by the USDA is that the program be run in a district where at least 50% of the children are eligible for free and reduced-

priced lunches at school. These summer meals are prepared in the school district kitchens and brought to a centralized location, such as a park, and any child between the ages of 1 – 18 are able to receive a free meal. Parents are asked to pay a small fee or volunteer and get their meal for free.

Another school based food program is the Backpack program. The program provides children with bags of ready-to-eat food on Fridays so that they may have something to eat over the weekends. The program is a collaboration between school districts and other organizations such as churches.

Currently, there is a program in Clatskanie, which is run through the local pantry and the Clatskanie Baptist church, in Rainier, in partnership with the local pantry, and there are plans for one in Saint Helens to start in the Fall of 2012 in partnership with the school district, the Columbia Pacific Food Bank and the First United Methodist Church. The sort of food that goes to the children is under consideration because of its nutrition quality as well as the cost since it will be bought at-cost instead of the discounted price available to the regional food bank for the food it purchases for its emergency food box contents.

There is interest in the Farm to School program, especially from the Rainier and Vernonia school districts, but there is little knowledge of who is producing what products in the area that could supply a school. There is special interest in vegetables used in salad bars as well as other traditional foods like tomatoes and broccoli from the school nutrition directors.

Opportunities

Food Assistance Opportunities:

- Acquire EBT machines to process the Oregon Trail Card at the local farmers' markets and all of the senior centers.
- Increase efforts to enroll more seniors since they have so many numbers eligible but not participating. Both the seniors and the senior centers will benefit.
- Incorporate meal planning/budgeting along with partner agency programs and school life skills classes.



Community Meals

As a response to neighbors who were experiencing job loss, homelessness, tightened budgets, and general hard times, in June 2009 the first meal of Community Meals was served at the First Lutheran Parish Hall in Saint Helens. At first the meal was served only on Tuesdays, but the community response has convinced the meal coordinators that a second night was needed to provide hot meals to those going through difficulties. “This helps make ends meet and is a outlet,” said one regular patron of Community Meals. Columbia Pacific Food Bank, Community Action Team, and various church members, and local businesses work together with 90 volunteers to put on the meal. “I get way more out of this than I put in,” said a volunteer. Each Tuesday and Thursday over a hundred people are fed, a third of which are children, and it isn’t uncommon to see them come without guardians. As of May over 275 meal days have taken place at the hall. In 2011, 11,269 individual meals were served, a 3.2% increase according to Community Meals records however that doesn’t include second helpings or leftovers taken home. Recently, a grant was won for continued assistance to meal-goers through medical screenings for conditions such as high blood pressure and for possible cooking demonstrations in the near future. Community Meals provides a place for people to come and get a hot meal as well as the fellowship of neighbors who are in need of a helping hand and those who are more than happy to lend one. “The food is good,” said one man receiving a meal, “but it is also a cool social time.”

Community Food Need & Efforts

Community Food Education

As with any assistance there are some who worry that there are those who will become dependent upon those services and no longer try to help themselves. Pantry volunteers and staff sometimes become frustrated by the requests of above-and-beyond help and expectations of certain clients. However, those client are usually the exception rather than the rule of those seeking assistance and seem to have a misunderstanding of the assistance the pantries provide. There are some programs in place to teach helpful food skills in order that others may learn how to provide for themselves.

Currently, there is one formal food education cooking course in the schools in the county. Home Economics has been discontinued due to budget cuts. "It's a bummer. I think it's a real tragedy," said a Vernonia school employee. Food nutrition is covered in Health or possibly Physical Education classes. Saint Helens has a "Teen Cuisine" elective course and a small business group called Lion's Catering.

Often cooking is classified as a pastime for many, which suggests that it is a type of hobby one may participate in when one has the time. Since food education is only touched on briefly through formal school education classes it would seem that it isn't seen as a necessary skill to be able to cook and feed one's self, however other organizations disagree and are trying to fill the knowledge gap. The Oregon State University extension office offers the Master Gardener as well as Master Preserver courses, provides leadership for 4-H youth groups, and promotes it's healthy cooking recipes web site FoodHero.org. Not many people take advantage of the services simply because they aren't aware of what is offered. The staff at the Saint Helens exten-

sion office is willing to make arrangements to teach and assist people interested in food production/preservation and healthful eating, cooking and budgeting.

While the Future Farmer's of America (FFA) program has all but died in the county, 4-H clubs have had fluctuating numbers but have steadily stuck around. Tanya Schroder, a 4-H group leader with children in the program, believes the program teaches important life skills to children. "They learn a lot about self-confidence, leadership, and community service. They learn a lot about responsibility."

She goes on to suggest that involvement in 4-H gives children an advantage when they eventually apply for work because employers know that they know how to work.

The program historically has been an agriculturally and livestock based club, and still remains so, but it also has expanded to including topics such as electronics. There used to be a stronger agricultural presence

but now is mainly dominated by raising livestock.

A cooking class for children and their parents has been planned through the Food Education group that formed from the F.E.A.S.T event called *Kids in the Kitchen*. It is a collaboration between the Rainier School District and OSU along with support from other community organizations like Public Health Foundation, and H.O.P.E of Rainier food pantry, and community volunteers. Taking advantage of the time between swim class sessions offered at the Rainier High School and the free summer lunch Kid's in the Kitchen will teach 5 basic cooking classes for parents and children to do together with food donated by Columbia Pacific Food Bank.

"They learn a lot **about self-confidence,** leadership, and community service. They learn a lot about responsibility."

Pantry Demonstration Gardens

The food pantries in Clatskanie, Rainier and Saint Helens have demonstration gardens visible to clients picking up food boxes. Rainier has a series of raised beds, Clatskanie has a large organic raised bed maintained by Starry Sky Farm's Becky White, a partnership resulting from the F.E.A.S.T, and the Saint Helens has a small container garden as an example of how to grow herbs or small fruit bearing plants when land is not accessible.

Community Food Need & Efforts

Online Presence

The popularity and ease of use of social networking sites, such as Facebook, have been used for the burgeoning food consciousness within Columbia County. Both Vernonia and Scappoose have a Facebook page for their Farmers' Markets.

The page Columbia County OR Food Facebook page has 71 "Likes" and gaining more weekly. The group wants to serve as a central location for people to go to in order to learn about food in the county. "We are local food producers and consumers in Columbia County, OR. Discuss local food. Post what food you have to sell or want to buy." During the F.E.A.S.T one of the main goals was to create a way for growers to col-

laborate, to have a place for people interested in finding local food, and to have a way to share knowledge and resources. In Vernonia there is a similar page Vernonia Gardeners for local produce and flower vendors wanting to share resources, and information about growing plants within their unique micro-climate.

Many small producers take advantage of the free medium of Facebook to have a presence and for people to learn about their products without having to pay for advertising. The online venue also connects the grower community by allowing each person to "Like" a fellow producer or business and in turn allows potential consumers to see who else is in the county.

Farmers' Markets

All of the communities in Columbia County, with the exception of Clatskanie, have a Farmers' Market. Saint Helens will kick off its inaugural market season in partnership with The South Columbia County Chamber of Commerce and organizers of the summer festival 13 Nights on the River every Thursday evening in the month of August, with the plan to extend the season in following seasons as well as plans to accept SNAP and WIC in the future. Initially the market in Saint Helens will be exclusively raw produce and plant based, leaving those with processed foods or non-food products to sell as part of the 13 Nights on the River festival. "This is awesome! I hope it goes well," said a community member on the Columbia County OR Food Facebook group page. The festival organizer Heather Ebert said that the most asked question during the opening night was when the farmer's market was beginning. The Scappoose Farmers' Market has started its 10th season and is the most visible, successful and oldest of the

markets in the county. It runs every Saturday from late May until early October. The vendors are able to sell food and non-food items. On average the market has about 25 vendors throughout the whole season with about 600 people visiting every week, depending on the weather. In 2009 \$3,093 worth of vouchers were redeemed through the Farm Direct Nutrition Program presumably mainly at the Scappoose Farmers' Market by seniors and families participating in the WIC program. Vernonia's Open Air Market hosts not only farmers every Saturday from mid-spring through the fall, but also local artists, crafters, small businesses, organizations. The Rainier Chamber of Commerce has resurrected its market after a two-year hiatus. "Originally it was in a building which cost more to have a table and that put strain on the vendors and it eventually fizzled out and died," said Mike Kreger, Event Coordinator. The market runs outside from late May to mid-September on the 1st and 3rd Saturdays of the month.

Opportunities

Education Opportunities:

- Offer showings of mainstream media about food and the various aspects of the food industry.
- Create a Buy Local campaign to educate consumers on the benefits of buying from their neighborhood food producers.
- Distribute and continue creating subsequent Local Food Guides to identify local food services and producers for ease of use for consumers.
- Advertise various services available through OSU and other community organizations.
- Create more convenient opportunities to learn hands-on skills such as cooking classes, gardening, or preserving.

Community Food Need & Efforts

Gardening

Gardening is a way many people supplement their food needs. “I garden for my own food,” said Bart, a Columbia County Master Gardener, “I take a great amount of pleasure in growing my own food. I know what’s in it.” In a food pantry client survey administered at all main community pantries showed that 32 of the 91 people who answered the question say they grow their own food. Similarly, a general consumer survey showed that just over 50% people supplement their food purchasing by growing food. A question gauging interest in home gardening in both surveys had 36 of 158 respondents expressing desire to learn more.

Chip Bubl suggests that theoretically home gardening and food preservation could provide a huge base for one’s family food needs. “If everyone had a 20X20ft size garden they could certainly provide enough food for themselves,” Bubl adding that supplements would need to be made for protein, if not done through growing complementary crops such as grains and beans. A large amount of planning and time would be necessary and adjusting one’s eating habits to the seasons.

The Master Gardener program hosted through the OSU extension office has had a steady stream of participants and graduates over the years and teaches people how to plan their gardens. Those who graduate are then required to volunteer a number of hours in their communities using the skills they’ve learned from the course. “There is a sense of satisfaction that comes with working with the soil,” said Bart.

The home garden is not an uncommon site as one drives throughout Columbia County. Those who own homes typically have enough land to create a small plot for gardening. However, there are challenges to gardening. Many have land that isn’t suitable for gardening due to being wetlands or heavily shaded by trees, others have said during interviews that the cost of city water is prohibitive and they wouldn’t be able to afford to water their garden. A good example is the local jail. It used to have a garden that the inmates cared for and various community businesses donated services to, and

the food was donated to the local food bank, but because of budget cuts the jail discontinued its garden program to save money spent on water.

There are those who live in an apartment type living situation and are those who could take advantage of a community garden. The Saint Helens Community Garden, instead of renting plots the garden runs as a crop share. Those who work in it get 25% of the produce and the rest is donated to the food pantry or to Community Meals to use in their weekly meals. Plots were rented out in the past but people were inconsistent with keeping up their plots.

The Columbia Health Coalition in partnership with the Saint Helens OSU extension office hosted a Community Gardens Forum on June 2, 2012. While the event had a small number of attendants due to the timing conflict with two high school graduation ceremonies on the same day, the event seemed appreciated. There are plans to possibly focus a future event to institutions wanting to create their own gardens either for demonstration purposes or to be used as a food source. The Scappoose senior center grows a garden and sells the food either at functions or donates the food to the local pantry. There have been concerns about the liability the senior center would be under if they were to cook the food they grew in their garden.

The Rainier School District held many planning meetings with various community members during the spring with the goal of creating a school gardening program that would integrate curriculum and student hands-on learning as well as an eventual production garden for cafeteria use to supplement school meals. A 1.5 - 2 acre plot of land (out of about 17 available acres) was already rototilled. A building has already been purchased with plans to place it on the garden grounds and used as a learning center. However, through the exploratory process, it was concluded that the land is too wet for further cultivation and plans have been put on hold until the new agriculture teacher, who was recently hired at the end of the 2011-2012 school year, is able to find a more suitable parcel of land or improve the current plot.



Saint Helens Community Garden



Vernonia Community Garden

The Vernonia Community Garden is kicking off its inaugural year after a number of years of planning. It is the chosen project of the Ford Institute Leadership Program that a number of community members participated in. Currently, one can rent “plots” which take the form of a cluster of five-gallon buckets filled with compost in half and full-size plots. The reason for the buckets is to eliminate the need to till and cultivate the ground but mainly for their mobility. After two devastating floods hit Vernonia in 1996 and 2007 FEMA has required the school district to move to higher ground. The whole area will be cleared of all buildings and made into parks, walking trails, and ball fields. Next season the community garden will move to its new location on the campus of the new school, but for the growing season of 2012 it is on school grounds.

The school district is making lemonade out of lemons by taking advantage of various funding opportunities linked with making schools more sustainable and “green”. “When the flood came in we didn’t have 40 million dollars to build new facilities,” said Miller. A bond for 13 million dollars, a FEMA buyout, foundations, fundraising efforts together are what is covering the costs of the new school. OSU extension staff approached the school district about opportunities for fundraising to re-make themselves as a district taking advantage of the natural resources that surround them. “We all decided that natural resources and sustainability was the focus that would be good for our school, good for our students and also generate some funding,” said Miller.

Not only will the community garden move up to where the new school is but there will also be a learning garden for the students to use in conjunction with courses in school, native plant garden and nursery, as well as a production garden which will be used for meals served at the cafeteria. Any produce left over will be donated to the local food pantry. Through the help from OSU over the past two years and its program, The Oregon Natural Resources Education Program, the school has developed a K-12 curriculum. “To know about all the steps, the whys, the science that’s involved in all aspects is critical or else it won’t help us meet the mission of teaching our kids,” said Miller, “The real important piece for us is the learning that takes place through that process. Yes, it’s beneficial for the environment. Yes, it’s more sustainable, it’s good for our health, all those benefits are there, but we have to get the academic punch out of it.”

The spaces utilized at first are $\frac{1}{4}$ - $\frac{1}{2}$ acre for the community garden, $\frac{1}{2}$ - $\frac{3}{4}$ acre for the production garden with plenty of room to expand. Adding berries, and fruit bearing trees may fill some of the ample space in the future. In phase three the plans are to build a Rural Sustainability Center however that will involve an additional 3 million dollars to the already remaining 3 million dollars still needed to cover the current building costs.

There are no funds for hiring a person to maintain the gardens. Those who have plots will maintain the community garden. Teachers with projects involving the garden, and students earning summer credit will care for the learning gardens. The production garden will be a joint venture with community members and students. “The teachers are working hard, the kids have a real interest as well.”

The gardens are not the only projects that the school is undertaking. Through its partnerships with various such as both the US and Oregon Departments of Fish and Wildlife and many others, the children are learning about other aspects of sustainability. So far children already have raised and released trout into the local lake, have monitored erosion, learned about water quality, riparian restoration, made worm bins and removed invasive plants. There are plans for solar heated hand-washing stations in the future. “As a small community that is 45mins from anywhere,” said Miller, “we need to be able to take care of our selves a little more.”

Community Food Need & Efforts

Opportunities

Garden Opportunities:

- Work out some sort of water credit for having a home garden between local water provider and gardening residents so their bills aren't quite so high.
- Inform gardeners about rain catching techniques they can use to save money on their water bills.
- Encourage youth to get involved with more programs like 4-H and FFA. Possibly put more of an emphasis on home gardening and food education.
- Continue to explore alternative waste disposal options especially at schools throughout the county possibly through 4-H & Future Farmers of America (FFA) programs/projects.
- Hold informational workshops in each community to address unique challenges and strengths of each microclimate.



Steve Shaft, Shaft Farm

Methodology and Limitations

The researching and writing of the Columbia County Food Assessment used a variety of methods in order to gather data. Both quantitative and qualitative measures were utilized in order to obtain information. Surveys, such as the Food Pantry Client Survey, were administered online, in person, and at pantry sites throughout late Spring 2012. A total of 96 people responded. Other quantitative information about Columbia County was found through various studies done in both print and online through outside organizations, private and governmental. Due to the breadth and scope of certain reports, such as the USDA 2007 Census of Agriculture, there are large gaps of time between reports. A more up-to-date census report will be released after the completion of this food assessment. Qualitative data was gathered through formal interviews and informal conversations with individual community members and in group settings. It was the goal of the author to present a “picture” of the food system of Columbia County as accurately as possible in a reader-friendly format.

The intent of this report is not to be authoritative or 100% complete but rather to be a step toward understanding the food system of Columbia County’s strengths and areas of improvement more fully, as well as to serve as a starting point for further development. Given the complexity of food systems it is the author’s hope that this food assessment is seen as a “living document” meaning it is always adaptable to changes of situation and in the face of new information.

Appendix A

Food Pantry Client Questionnaire

Thank you for taking a moment to complete this questionnaire. We are gathering information on the food needs of the clients of the various food pantries in Columbia County. With your anonymous input we will better know the areas that we need to work on.

If you have any questions please contact Valerie Walker at the Columbia Pacific Food Bank at (503)397-9708 or valerie@cpfoodbank.org

1. Which community do you live in or nearest to?

- Saint Helens
- Scappoose
- Rainier
- Clatskanie
- Vernonia
- Unincorporated

2. Are you eligible for government food assistance?

- Yes
- No
- I don't know

3. If yes, which programs do you (or your children) use? (select all that apply)

- SNAP (Food Stamps)
- WIC
- Meals on Wheels
- Free or reduced school breakfast/lunch
- Food Pantry
- Community Meal Site
- None

4. Do you feel SNAP (food stamps) cover you food needs sufficiently?

- Yes
- No

Appendix A

5. Which factors, if any, affect your ability to access emergency food services? (select all that apply)

- There is not a food pantry near my residence
- I don't feel comfortable going there for help
- Transportation is not available
- Service hours are too limited and I can't get there in time before they close
- They don't have the kind of food I like or know how to cook
- The food box amount is too small to get by on from 3-5 days
- I don't have any trouble getting the emergency food I need

6. Which of the following types of food do you, or your family, need better access to? (Mark all that apply)

- Fruits and vegetables
- Meat
- Dairy
- Organic food
- Brand name food
- Culturally suitable food
- Locally grown food

7. Does your household eat all of the food items that you receive in your food box?

- Yes
- No

8. How often does your household order/eat out (restaurant, fast food, order pizza, convenience store) in a month?

- Once a month or less
- Once every couple of weeks
- Every week
- A couple times a week

Appendix A

9. How often are your household meals home-cooked in a week?

- A few here and there
- About one meal everyday
- Two meals a day
- Every meal

10. Do you grow any of your own food?

- Yes
- No

11. Has anyone in your household in the past year done any of the following (select all that apply)?

- Skipped a meal, or reduced the meal size, because there wasn't enough to eat
- Skipped a meal so a child could eat
- Struggled to feed children over weekends, school vacations, or over the summer

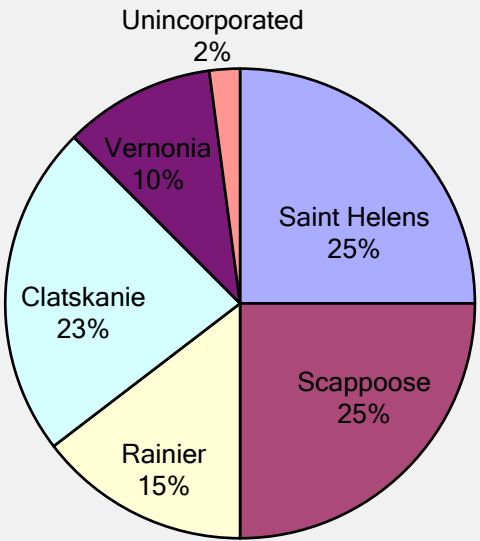
12. Select any of the following if you'd like to learn more on any of these topics (mark all that apply)

- Growing food in a home garden
- How to cook healthy food
- How to shop for food on a budget
- None

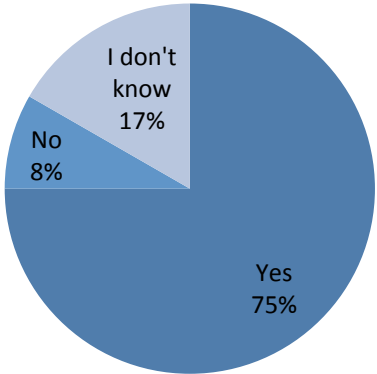
Appendix A

Survey Results

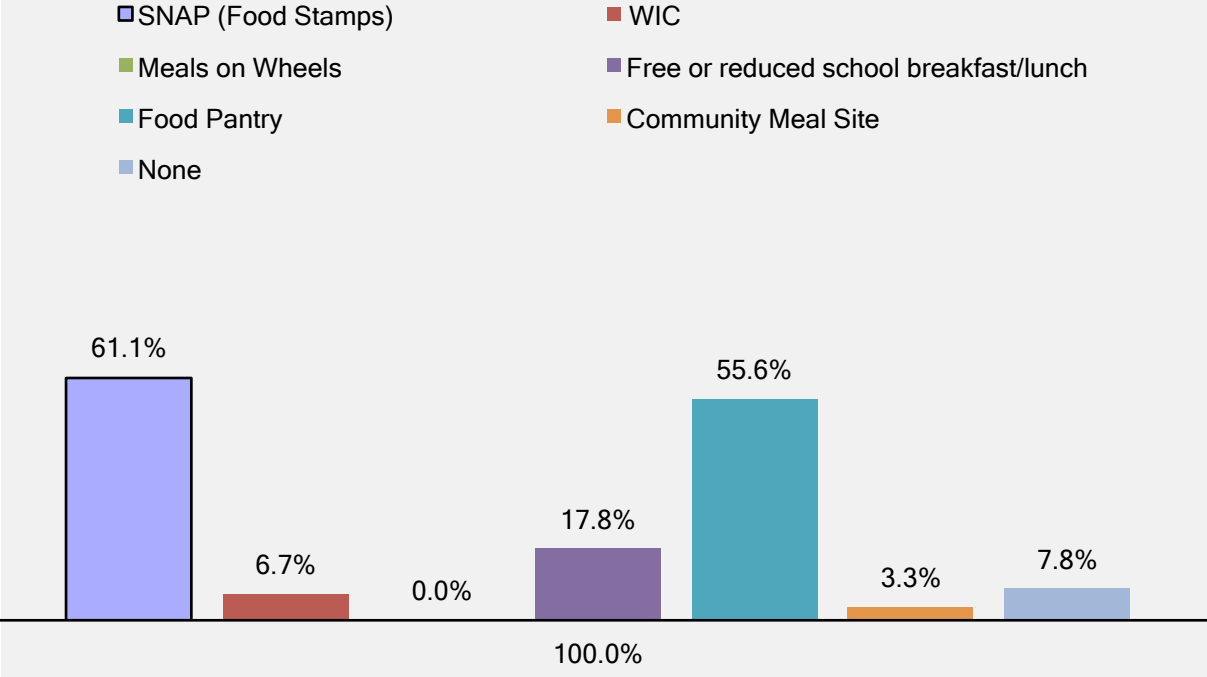
Which community do you live in or nearest to?



Are you eligible for government food assistance?



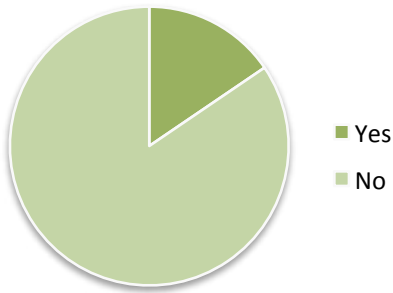
If yes, which programs do you (or your children) use?



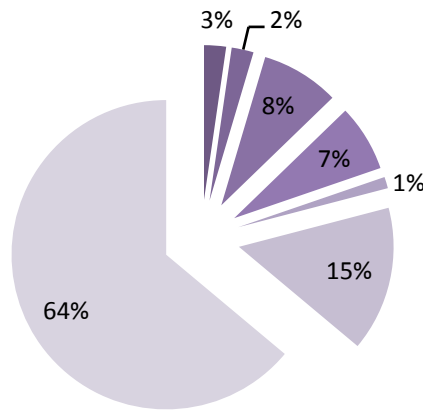
Appendix A

Survey Results

Do you feel SNAP (food stamps) cover you food needs sufficiently?

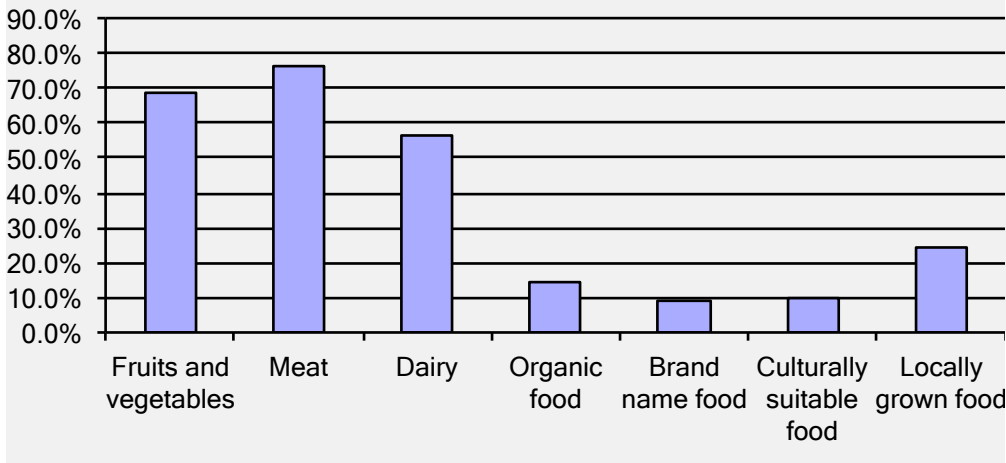


Which factors, if any, affect your ability to access emergency food services

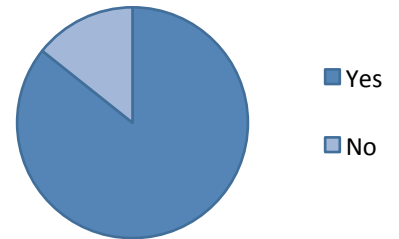


- There is not a food pantry near my residence
- I don't feel comfortable going there for help
- Transportation is not available
- Service hours are too limited and I can't get there in time before they close

Which of the following types of food do you, or your family, need better access to?

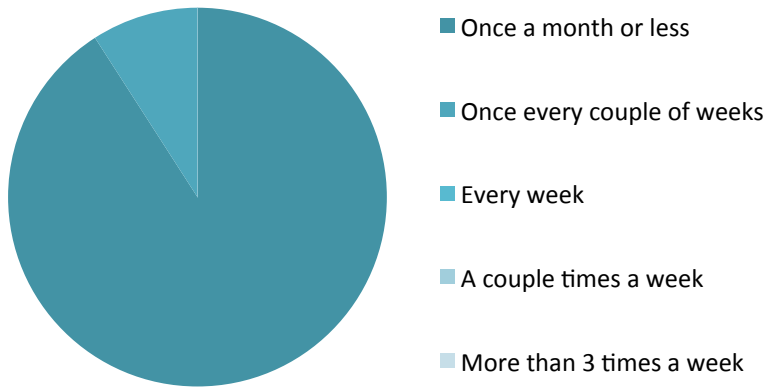


Does your household eat all of the food items that you receive in your food box?

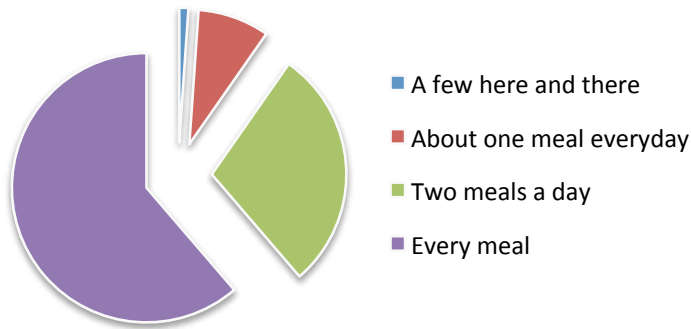


Appendix A

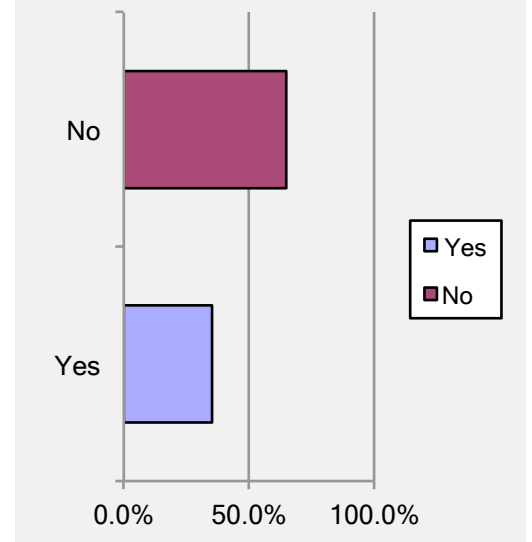
How often does your household order/eat out (restaurant, fast food, order pizza, convenience store) in a month?



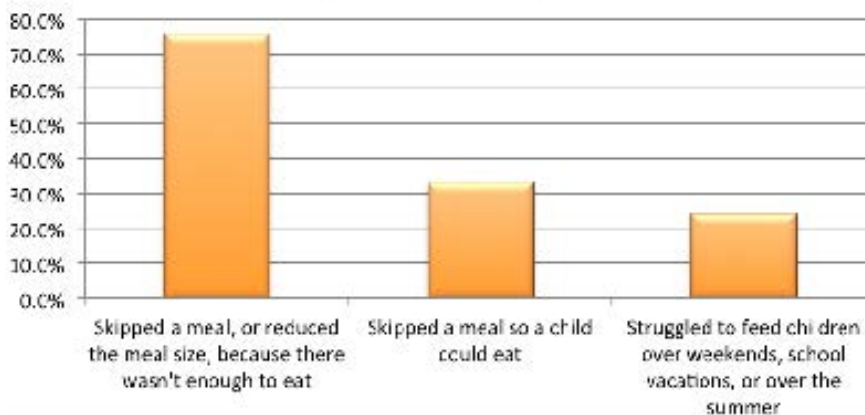
How often are your household meals home-cooked in a week?



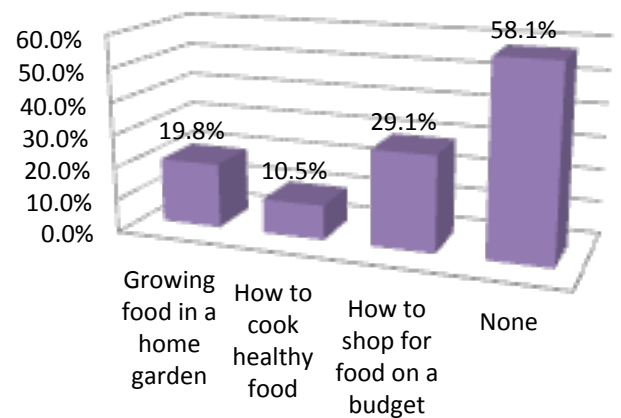
Do you grow any of your own food?



Has anyone in your household in the past year done any of the following?



Interest in Learning...



Appendix B

SPONSORED BY COLUMBIA PACIFIC FOOD BANK

2012 LOCAL FOOD GUIDE



FARMER'S & OPEN AIR MARKETS

SCAPPOOSE

Service: Weekly Farmer's Market
Season: Mid-May to September
Hours: Saturdays, 9a – 2p
Contact: (503) 543-3469,
scappoosefm@gmail.com
Behind the Scappoose City Hall next to
Heritage Park on 2nd Street.

SAINT HELENS

Service: Open Air Market,
Short-season weekly
Farmer's Market with 13 Nights
on the River
Season: June-August,
Open Air Market,
August Only – Farmer's Market
Hours: Thursday Nights, 4p – 9p
Contact: (503) 397-0685
In front of the Saint Helens City Hall

VERNONIA

Service: Weekly Open Air Market
Season: June - October
Hours: Saturdays, 10a – 2p
Contact: oamvernonia@gmail.com
Madison and Bridge street, Vernonia, OR

RAINIER

Service: Farmer's Market
Season: Early May – Mid-September
Hours: 1st & 3rd Saturday of each month, 10a – 3p
Contact: (503) 556-0186
Rainier City Park, W. "A" Street, Rainier, OR

Front page

THE USDA DEFINES ORGANIC:

"Organic is a labeling term that indicates that the food or other agricultural product has been produced through approved methods that integrate cultural, biological, and mechanical practices that foster cycling of resources, promote ecological balance, and conserve biodiversity. Synthetic fertilizers, sewage sludge, irradiation, and genetic engineering may not be used."

You can learn more about the USDA organic labeling program at their website: <http://www.ams.usda.gov/AMSv1.0/nop>

Due a variety of reasons, such as the cost of becoming certified or the size of the farm, there are growers and producers who do not choose to become organically certified but do choose to follow "organic practices". Ask your local farmer what that means to them.

WHY LOCAL?

Not only is local food generally safer, fresher, tastier and more nutritious for you, but it also helps the local economy when you financially support a local farmer, rancher or local retail business that grows or uses local food. Studies on local buying efforts show that buying locally can have twice the economic overall impact than if the money were spent at a big supermarket. Take a moment looking through these neighborhood producers and business owners and think of how your dollar can have twice the punch when you hand it over to one of them.

YOU GET WHAT YOU PAY FOR.

Why does it sometimes cost more to buy locally produced goods? Running an operation all by one's self can be a big job and the resources that come with a big corporation simply aren't there (think about how buying in bulk lowers the price). And considering the quality of the product one is getting you get what you pay for, whether it be cheap or a little bit more. Often, the produce in stores has been picked early, stored for long periods of time, shipped long distances and came from nobody knows who. With a local producer it was probably picked recently at the peak of ripeness and therefore more tasty and nutritious, came from only a few miles down the road, and you can ask the farmer or rancher yourself about the product. When you buy from a local producer you not only get a higher quality product, but you also know exactly where you got it.

FOOD PROGRAMS & MEAL SITES

SUMMER MEAL PROGRAMS

VERNONIA

Vernonia Community Church
967 State Ave., Vernonia, OR 97064
Free Summer Breakfast & Lunch for children, \$2-\$2.50 for adults, scheduled activity, volunteers welcome and eat free.
June 18th – August 24th, Monday-Friday
Breakfast 9a-10a, activity 10a-11a, Lunch 12-1:30p
(503) 369-6734, (503) 429-8033

SAINT HELENS

Campbell & McCormick Parks
Free Summer Breakfast and Lunch for children
June 18 to Aug. 24 Monday – Friday,
Breakfast is from 8:30 – 9 a.m. and lunch from noon-1p.m
(503) 366-7234 or
mistyc@sthelens.k12.or.us.

RAINIER

Briarcliff Pool Commons
28170 Old Rainier Road
Free Meals for children 1-18yrs old, adults \$3.80
June 18th – August 17th
Debby Webster, Rainier School District
(503) 556-4216 ext. 211
Breakfast – 8:15a- 9a
Lunch – 11:15a – 12:30p
Dinner – 6p – 7:30p

Riverside Church

305 W. 3rd St.
Lunch – 11:45a – 12:30p

PGE Trojan Park

73125 Prescott Beach Drive
Lunch 11:30a – 12:00p

CLATSKANIE

Westport Community Center
Westport Ferry Rd., Westport, OR 97016
Free Lunch for children 1-18 yrs old
Beginning June 25, M-F
Lunch: 11:00a

SolHaven

500 SW Bel Air Dr., Clatskanie, OR Lunch: 12:00p

Christian Learning Center

471 S. Nahalem St., Clatskanie, OR Lunch: 11:00a

Quincy Store

19667 Hermo Rd., Clatskanie, OR Lunch: 11:00a

Clatskanie Park

NE 5th and Poplar, Clatskanie, OR Lunch: 12:00p

Backpack Program

The Backpack program is weekend food program for children. It is often in collaboration with county school districts and other organizations that put together bags of ready-to-eat packaged food to be given to children on Fridays so that they may have food to eat over the weekends. Contact your local school district in the Fall for more information.

St. Helens

Community Meals

Service: Complete, hot evening meals
Dinner served from 5:30pm-6pm
Weekly: Tuesdays & Thursdays
(503) 397-0090 • www.cmeals.org
First Lutheran Church
Parish Hall 360 Wyeth St., Saint Helens, OR 97051

St. Vincent de Paul Mobile Kitchen

Service: Lunches, 11a-1p
3rd & 4th Fridays of the month • (503) 397-0148
St. Frederic Catholic Church Parish
175 S. 13th St., Saint Helens, OR 97051

Brown Bag

Service: Supplemental bag of food, \$15 annual fee
Last Wednesday of every month, 1p-3p • (503)-397-9708
Application site: Columbia Pacific Food Bank
474 Milton Way, St. Helens, OR.
Pick-up Location: Grace Baptist Church 58690 Ross Rd., Warren, OR

Rainier

Mary's Meals

Service: Dinner Every 3rd Thursday, 5p-6p • (503) 556-2073
Nativity of the Blessed Mary Catholic Church Hall
204 E. "C" St., Rainier, OR 97048

Susannah's Supper

Service: Dinner
4th Friday of each month, 6p • (503) 556-3440
Rainier United Methodist Church 101 E. "C" St., Rainier, OR 97048

Clatskanie

Bread of Life Ministry

Service: Dinner
Wednesdays, 5p-6p • (503) 728-2304
Clatskanie Baptist Church 415 S. Nehalem St., Clatskanie, OR 97016

Vernonia

Natal/Mist Grange

Service: Lunch provided when picking up emergency food box
2nd Wednesday of the month, 2p • (503) 429-8470
67542 Nehalem Hwy N, Vernonia, OR 97064

SENIOR CENTER MEAL SITES

Free lunches with suggested \$4 donation

VERNONIA SENIOR CENTER

Service: Lunch Contact: 503-429-3912
Hours: 10a – 1p
Location: 446 Bridge St., Vernonia, OR

CLATSKANIE SENIOR CENTER

Service: Lunch Contact: 503-728-3608
Hours: 8a – 1:30p
Location: 620 Tichenor St., Clatskanie, OR

SCAPPOOSE SENIOR CENTER

Service: Lunch, accept SNAP EBT cards
Contact: 503-543-2047
Hours: 8a – 1p
Location: 33342 Southwest Meadow Drive
Scappoose, OR

SAINT HELENS SENIOR CENTER

Service: Lunch, accept SNAP EBT cards
Contact: 503-397-3343
Hours: 8a – 1p
Location: 375 S. 15th St., Saint Helens, OR

RAINIER SENIOR CENTER

Service: Lunch Contact: 503-556-3889
Hours: 8a – 1p
Location: 48 West 7th Street, Rainier, OR

Last page

FOOD PANTRIES

The food pantries in the various communities give emergency food boxes to individuals and families, which provide people with 3-5 days of food.

GROW A ROW FOR THE HUNGRY

Oregon has an award winning statewide network of food banks whose efforts help feed our neighbors during tough times, but produce is something each emergency food agency could always use more of. While you are doing last minute planting in your garden this summer please consider designating a row of tasty fruits or vegetables to donate to your local pantry or meal site so that more people can enjoy the bounty of Columbia County. Any size donation of fresh produce will be gladly accepted and much appreciated.

SERVING ST. HELENS:

H.E.L.P INC. • 503-397-9708
Monday thru Thursday - 9am-12:45pm
474 Milton Way, St.Helens, OR 97051

SERVING RAINIER:

HOPE OF RAINIER • 503-556-0701
Monday, Tuesday & Thursday - 10am-4pm
404 East A Street, Rainier, OR 97048

SERVING CLATSKANIE:

TURNING POINT COMMUNITY CENTER
503-728-3126
Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday - 11am-3pm
220 E Columbia River Hwy
PO Box 773, Clatskanie, OR 97016

SERVING VERNONIA:

VERNONIA CARES • 503-429-1414
Tuesday & Thursday 10am-2pm
627 Adams Ave.
PO Box 126, Vernonia, OR 97064

SERVING SCAPPOOSE:

ST. VINCENT DEPAUL - ST. WENCESLAUS CONFERENCE
503-543-7495 EXT. 15
Monday & Thursday 1pm-3pm
51555 Old Portland Rd., Scappoose, OR 97056
Scappoose Four Square Church
Emergency Food Box • 503-543-5069
Hours: Wednesdays 12p – 1p, Sundays 10a-12p
33404 SW JP West Rd., Scappoose, OR 97056

CLASSES

Kids in the Kitchen

Free cooking class for children and their parents
Session 1: July 10 – July 19, • T, W, Th, 10a – 11:15a
Session 2: July 24 – August 2, • T, W, Th, 10a – 11:15a

(503) 556-4216 ext. 211

Briarcliff Pool Commons, Room 203 28170 Old Rainier Road, Rainier, OR

Oregon State University Extension Office Service:

Home Gardening, Small Farms, Forestry, 4H Youth, Family and Nutrition assistance, Master Gardeners, Master Food Preservers
Office hours M-F, 8a – 5p • (503) 397-3462
www.extension.oregonstate.edu/columbia
505 N. Columbia River Hwy, St. Helens, OR 97051
Online Healthy Food Recipes through OSU Extension services
www.foodhero.org

WHO IS IN AND WHO ISN'T.

The growers, businesses and institutions that have been included in the 2012 Local Food Guide were put in because of the food grown or food-based service they provide to their communities. Businesses that support the local growers by using locally sourced food and food-products, or fill a special food need, are what are included. This food guide is seen as a "living" document because it is hoped that it'll be updated each year since it is difficult to find every small farm or business in the area. Please contact the Columbia Pacific Food Bank (503) 397-9708 or cpfb@cpfoodbank.org if you want to see if your farm or business qualifies for the next food guide.

Columbia Pacific Food Bank: 474 Milton Way # B, St. Helens, OR 97051 • (503) 397-9708



Resource Assistance for Rural Environments

LOCAL AGRICULTURE

COMMUNITY SUPPORTED AGRICULTURE (CSA)

A CSA share is a way to get a regular assortment of seasonal produce.

When you buy a share through a farmer's CSA you not only get fresh, locally produced fruits, vegetables, honey, meat, and eggs but you are also giving a farmer financial security and support for their crops by paying upfront or through regular payments. Each farm has its own style. They may offer half shares, do weekly distribution, offer work exchange, they may allow you to choose what goes in a share, or maybe it'll be a surprise each time. It is also a great way to try new flavors by experimenting with new produce.



COMMUNITY SUPPORTED AGRICULTURE (CSA)

Starry Sky Farm

Product: Weekly Organic Mixed CSA Share
General Vegetables, Herbs, Cut Flowers, Meat, Eggs, Fruits, etc.
Contact info: (503)728-0157, starryskyfarm@aol.com
Season: Early June – October
Location: 21977 Shepard Rd., Clatskanie, OR

Sauvie Island Organics (Sauvie Island)

Product: Weekly Organic Vegetable CSA
Contact: 503.621.6921, csa@sauvieislandorganics.com
Season: 28 weeks, End of May - December
Hours: Thursdays after 4:30pm until Sunday noon
Location: No farm stand. Call to make arrangements for farm visit

Bella Organic Farm (Sauvie Island)

Product: U-Pick berries, various Tomatoes, Garlic, various Squashes, green beans, misc., weekly CSA share (22 weeks)
Contact: (503) 621-9545, www.bellaorganic.com
Season: June-November
Hours: 9a-6p, Daily during season
Location: 16205 NW Gillihan Rd., Portland, OR

Dairy Creek Farm

Product: CSA shares 18 weeks, partial or full shares
General Vegetables, Farm Fresh Eggs, Raw Honey & Bee products, blueberries, mushrooms
Contact: (503) 324-7819, www.dairycreekfarm.com
Season: June – October
Farm Hours: 4p-7p
Location: 23295 NW Highway 47, Buxton, OR

Morgan's Landing Farm (Sauvie Island)

Product: Exotic and Heirloom Melons
CSA – 23 week share (zucchini free) CSA.
General Vegetables, Herbs, Root crops, Greens, & Meat options
Contact: (503) 754-4998 morganslandingfarm@gmail.com,
Available for Burlingame and St. Helens
Season: End of May – End of October
Location: 21340 NW Gillihan Rd., Portland, OR

COMMUNITY GARDENS

Saint Helens Community Garden

Service: Crop share. 25% of produce goes to those who work in garden 75% goes to Columbia Pacific Food Bank & Community Meals.
Contact info: Byron & Colleen Ohler (503) 936-3634
sthelensgarden@hotmail.com
Location: Behind the Saint Helens Senior Center. 375 S. 15th St., Saint Helens, OR

Vernonia Community Garden

Service: Garden plots for rent
Contact: (503) 429-0196
Season: Late Spring - Fall
Location: On old school grounds, Bridge St.

FARMS

Shaft's Farm

Product: Heirloom, Organically grown tomatoes, Tomato starts, garlic, various, berries, squashes, many varieties of peppers, strawberries, rhubarb, kale, etc.
Contact info:(503) 543-6045,
Visit or facebook.com/shaftsfarm
Season: Spring – Fall
Location: 53827 Ring a Ring Rd., Scappoose, OR

Luttrell's Berry Patch

Product: Organically raised strawberries, U-Pick, pre-picked
Contact: (503) 397-3223, yanktonfarmer@yahoo.com
Season: Mid-June – Mid-July
Location: Yankton, OR. Call ahead for visit and directions

Olson Farm

Product: Eggs, Butter, Cream, Cheese (aged & fresh), Meat:
Beef – ¼, ½, whole, \$4 per lb cut, wrapped, or ground. Turkey, Chickens (friers, stewers),
Pork – plain, cured, peppered, \$4 per lb smoked, cured, cut, wrapped.
Contact: (503) 396-1418
Season: Year-Round
Location: Call to make arrangements and more information

Henry's Sandbox

Product: Various Vegetables
Contact: sandbox@rangelights.com
Season: June – October
Location: Vernonia OR, Please make arrangements through email

Riverview Heirloom

Product: 67 varieties of heirloom tomato start plants
Contact: (503) 286-9534, carol.canning@gmail.com,
www.riverviewheirlooms.com
Season: May – Mid-June
Location: Portland/Scappoose, Call or email to make arrangements

the Sweet Honey

Product: Raw orange blossom and blackberry honey, cream blackberry honey, honey bee wax products, honey in the comb, colony starts, colony rental, bee removal.
Contact: (503) 999-0697,
eifs@gmail.com,
Season: Year Round,
Hours: Please no calls after 8p
Location: Scappoose,
Call or email to make arrangements.

Mosquito Lodge Lavender

Product: U-Pick Lavender, dried lavender, lotion
Contact: (503) 429-0589, www.mosquitolodge.com
Season: July 21st – Early August
Hours: 10a – 2p
Location: 58329 Wilson Cutoff Rd., Vernonia, OR

Strawberry Farms

Product: Strawberries, animal grain, hay
Contact: (503) 396-0810
Season: June-February
Hours: Call between 9a-5p
Location: Warren OR. Call to make arrangements

Columbia Farms – Sauvie Island

Product: U-Pick berries, flowers, tomatoes, pumpkins
Contact: (503) 621-3909, www.columbiafarmsu-pick.com
Season: Late Spring - Fall
Hours: Tuesday – Sunday 9a – 5p
Location: 21024 NW Gillihan Rd., Portland, OR

Tarbell Farm

Product: Peppers, Tomatoes, Greens, Rhubarb, Berries, Eggs
Contact: (503) 397-3685, lionsroar@bmi.net
Season: June – October
Hours: 9a – 4p, Sundays
Location: 33349 Pittsburg Rd., Saint Helens, OR

Bernet Farms

Product: Squashes, sweet corn, pumpkins, pork (halves), and produce
Contact: gary@bernetfarms.com
Season: July – October
Hours: Weekends, 8a-7p
Location: Farm stand at 51372 Dike Rd., Scappoose, OR

Sket Case Farm

Product: Vegetable starts, hanging flower baskets
Contact: (971) 645-6185
Season: May - June
Hours: 9a – 4p, Weekends, call ahead on week days
Location: 33637 Church Rd., Warren, OR

Relixide Treasures

Product: Free-range, farm fresh organic eggs
Contact: (503) 397-5588, chpete@opusnet.com
Season: Year-round
Hours: 10a – 6p, everyday
Location: Deer Island, OR. Call to make arrangements

Edwardship Farm

Product: Certified Organic Potatoes, Garlic, Kale, Beets, Swiss Chard, Parsley, Dill, Broccoli, Turnips, etc.
Contact: (503) 728-9020, 503-369-9330
Season: Late Spring - Fall
Hours: 9a – 5p
Location: Clatskanie Computers (Buying facilitator) Granis Square
10 W. Columbia River Hwy Suite #1, Clatskanie, OR

Friendship Farms

Product: Fresh blueberries, lingonberries, rhubarb, produce, regular & sugar-free jams & syrups
Contact: (503) 556-0134, fauterry@yahoo.com,
www.friendship-farm.com
Season: Blueberries (July – August), Lingonberries
(August – November)
Hours: Varied, please call ahead
Location: 68793 Wasser Rd., Rainier, OR

Crawford's Berries n' Cream

Product: Strawberries, U-Pick, We-Pick, raspberries,
lingonberries, blueberries
Contact: (503) 556-1247, www.crawfordberriesncream.com
Season: Early Summer
Hours: Daily 1p-7p
Location: 68660 Whitney Rd., Rainier, OR

Organ Road Farm

Product: Farm fresh Eggs, Potatoes, Rhubarb, Garlic,
Cilantro, Broccoli
Contact: (503) 730-3658
Season: Early June-Early October
Hours: After 4p, No calls past 9p
Location: Scappoose OR. Please call to make arrangements

Garden Marie

Product: Variety of squashes, tomatillos, beets, carrots
Contact: (503) 313-3680
Season: Spring to Fall
Hours: No calls after 8p
Location: Saint Helens, OR. Please call to make drop-off arrangements

Sauvie Island Farms (Sauvie Island)

Product: U-pick berries, peaches, various vegetables, pumpkins, Christmas trees
Contact: (503) 621-3988, www.sauvieislandfarms.com
Season: June - December
Hours: Seasonal, Summer 8a-7p, Closed Sundays
Location: 19818 NW Sauvie Island Rd., Portland, OR

BEVERAGES

Ye Ol' Grog Distillery

Product: Alcoholic Spirits (Grog & Vodka)
Contact: (503) 366-4001, www.yeolgrodistillery.com
Tasting Room Hours: Monday – Friday, 1p – 5p
Location: 35855 Industrial Way, Unit C, Saint Helens,

Captured by Porches

Product: Microbrewery of various beers & kombucha
Contact: (971) 207-3742, www.capturedbyporches.com
Tasting Room Hours: Call to make arrangements
Location: 38581 Industrial Way #D

Vernonia Coffee Roasters

Product: Micro-batch coffee roaster
Contact: (503) 816-2265, www.vernoniacoffeeroasters.com
Hours: Please no calls past 5p
Location: Vernonia, Call to make arrangements

RETAIL/RESTAURANTS/BAKERIES/BUSINESSES

Chinook Mini Storage and Landscape

Product: Certified Organic Dairy Compost
Contact: (503) 543-5191
Season: Late Spring through summer
Hours: Tuesday – Saturday 9a – 5p, Sunday 9a – 3p
Location: 53567 Columbia River Hwy., Scappoose, OR 97056

Blue House Café

Product: Mediterranean Food
Contact: (503) 429-4350, www.blue-house-café.com
Hours: Tuesday – Saturday 9a – 8p, Sunday 10a – 4p
Location: 919 Bridge St., Vernonia, OR

Simply Baked!

Product: dairy/sugar/wheat/ gluten-free baked goods, & baking classes
Contact: (503) 396-7052, (503) 397-3816
Hours: Wednesday – Saturday, 10a – 5p, or call ahead to be sure
Location: 380 Columbia Blvd., Saint Helens, OR 97051

Blackbird Catering

Product: Cooked to order catering using many locally-sourced ingredients
Contact: (503) 896-7776, www.blackbirdcatering.com
Hours: Call for appointment
Location: 170 S. 15th St., Saint Helens, OR 97051

Houlton Bakery

Product: Various Pastries, Breads & other locally-sourced products
Contact: (503) 366-2648, www.houltonbakery.com
Hours: 9am- 4pm, Tuesday – Saturday
Location: 2155 Columbia Blvd., Saint Helens, OR 97051

The Klondike Restaurant

Product: Food cooked from produce grown in restaurant garden
Contact: 503-366-2634, www.klondikerestaurant.com/index.html
Hours: Sun - Wed: 11a - 9p, • Thur, Fri, Sat: • 11a – 10p
Location: 1st & Cowlitz (71 Cowlitz St.) St. Helens, OR 9051

Joy Creek Nursery

Product: Vegetable and Fruit starts, herbs
Contact: (503) 543-7474, www.joycreek.com
Call in advance to arrange visit of nursery, and product availability
Season: Retail – Year-round, Plants – March – October
Hours: 9a – 5p, everyday
Location: 20300 NW Watson Rd., Scappoose, OR 97056

Columbia County Naturals

Product/Service: Non-profit Organic Buying Club
Contact: (503) 396-5198, www.colconatural.com
Season: Year-round
Hours: Weekly, call for arrangements
Location: Columbia City, OR

New Dimension Seed

Product: Asian Vegetable Seeds
Contact: www.newdimensionseed.com
Season: Anytime
Hours: Order online
Location: Scappoose, OR. Order online from website

Columbia Pacific Food Bank

Regional Food Bank for Columbia County
Emergency food service • (503) 397-9708
Office hours: Monday-Thursday, 8a-3p
Location: 474 Milton Way, Saint Helens, OR 97051

2013 Addendum



Introduction

Last year was the beginning of assembling the pieces of the picture of Columbia County's ever-developing food system. The Community Food Assessment (CFA) was the start at finding the things we do well, the people doing them and areas that we might want to focus more attention on that were identified at the end of each section of the assessment. The recommendations had both short and long term suggested actions. Over the past year many of those opportunities were pursued and others were put aside for a later time after other things have been tackled.

As we end our second year of looking closer at our local food system, this addendum provides an update on the activities undertaken in an effort to improve the food-related issues. We've met new friends and possible partners whose activities are highlighted in small profiles in this update, learned of new organizations or resources available, and what priorities have risen to the top. The areas of food literacy and need for further organization were areas that became the most apparent, and promising for growth.



Barefoot Farm & Flowers

Linda DePersis always wanted to be a farmer, she just didn't know it, "I love gardening. Wherever we lived we always tried to find a house with the biggest yard, pull out all the grass, and do cottage gardens." After 16 years of living in Hillsboro and running a childcare business, it all came to a head when neighbors didn't appreciate her chickens (this was before backyard chickens were en vogue) and she and her husband Angelo decided to move their family. "We started realizing that we were using every square inch for gardening and we need a little bit more. And someone said, 'Linda, you're screaming for a farm', and I went, 'Oh! A farm!' I mean, whoever thinks, unless they grew up on a farm, 'I want to be a farmer when I grow up'?" A realtor found a 17-acre unused farm in Clatskanie along the dike lands, but was unable to walk and show the property because it was completely overgrown. The DePersis family fell in love with it, bought it and Barefoot Farm and Flowers is now in its fifth year of homestead farming.

The farm has 200 fruit trees in various stages, 140 laying chickens, five cows, pigs, turkeys, and a wide variety of produce that find their way into the boxes of the farm's 38 CSA (Community Supported Agriculture) shareholders. Last year they had 30 families and Linda has a goal of feeding 50 families this year. "I think there is a trend where people are coming back to their roots. They're so tired of the city." Linda advertises in various ways such as: Craigslist, Local Harvest, Columbia County Local Food guide, Facebook and good old fashioned word-of-mouth. Because of laws against unpasteurized milk she is unable to advertise the raw milk her cows produce, but is a part of a herd share and sends off samples to be tested every week. "It's absolutely amazing how different their milks will taste." It is affected a little by what they eat, but mainly by the cows themselves." The farm is not certified organic but they try to follow organic and sustainable practices and adapt to the wetlands on their property. The cows are a large heritage breed, slow grass mowers, the turkeys help keep egg-stealing crows out, and chemicals are not used on the animals who spend most of their lives grazing in the fresh air. "Everything gets used, nothing gets dumped down the drain. It'll go to feed chickens, or our dogs. The leftover milk I make into ricotta or Greek yogurt."

Like many new farmers Linda is eager to meet other local farmers and get involved in the grange culture but hasn't had adequate time, "I want to be more involved in the community, especially with the elderly." She just learned that she can donate excess eggs or produce to the local food pantry, and over time hopes to get more integrated into the small town life of Clatskanie... when she's able to get off the farm for a little while, "That's the one downside, there's no vacation, no sick days. It's worth it to me for the lifestyle."

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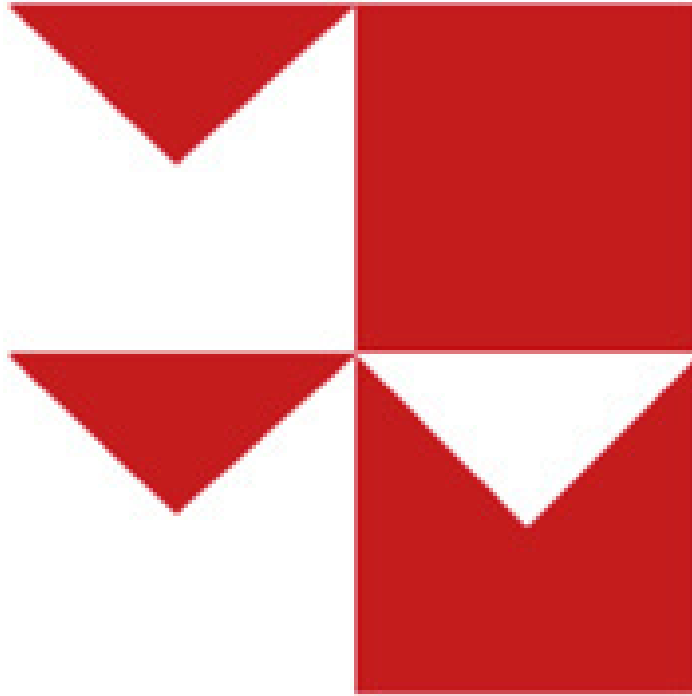


Herdshare

In a herdshare agreement, similar to what shareholders of Barefoot Farm & Flowers participate in, consumers pay a farmer a fee for boarding caring for and milking a shared dairy cow. Since most families cannot care for a cow at their home, and it is unlikely that a single family can consume all the milk produced from one cow, a variety of individuals can own partial shares in the produce of a single animal. Herd shareholders obtain from the farmer (but do not purchase) the milk (or meat, should the animal go to slaughter) from their own cow, because as the owner they are entitled to the milk. This arrangement is similar to shared ownership arrangements for a racehorse or a bull. In Oregon a farm may perform

on-farm sales of raw cow's milk with up to 3 milk producing cows. With regards to the raw milk of goats or sheep it is lawful to sell the milk on the farm and in retail stores. No permit is required for on-farm sales with 9 goats or 9 sheep. The state prohibits the advertising of raw milk for on-farm sales. A producer-distributor license is required for sale of raw milk of sheep or goat in retail stores. For more detailed information on Oregon's law on the sale of raw milk refer to Oregon Statute Title 49 Food and other commodities: Chapter 621 Milk; Dairy Products; Substitutes. This may be something that smaller, local farms offering dairy products, may want to explore further in order to provide a wider range of options to clients.

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Meyer Memorial Trust

Meyer Memorial Trust Grassroots \$22,000 Grant Awarded

In October 2012 Columbia Pacific Food Bank was awarded a \$22,000 Meyer Memorial Trust Grassroots Grant to support the improvement of food system development projects in Columbia County. The bulk of the funds went to pay for the University of Oregon program Resources Assistance for Rural Environments (RARE) position for the Food Systems Coordinator at the Columbia Pacific Food Bank. The rest of the funds paid for the various projects and equipment needed to support them (i.e. a projector in order to show food system films throughout the county). Being awarded this grant is a testament to the work already being done in Columbia to improve food system projects as well as highlighting the promise and possibility for continued growth and development. It is also just one of many other grant opportunities that could be awarded to fund future projects.



Lower Columbia School Gardens

Everybody likes the idea of a school garden. It is a great tool to incorporate so many different subjects. Everything from Math to Literature can be illustrated with the presence of a garden at school, not to mention all the other benefits of physical activity, environmental awareness, work ethic and social engagement. But often when ideas start to take shape and the logistics start to mount, it quickly can become intimidating and clear that there is a lot of planning involved. That is where Lower Columbia School Gardens (LCSG) can help out. The organization began in 2002 to address the high rate of obesity in Cowlitz county, which ranked 39th out of 39 in Washington state. Their mission is to help interested schools begin gardens, “We don’t just come and say, ‘We’re going to build you a school garden.’ they design it, decide what it’s going to be used for and who’s going to maintain it,” says the organization’s director, Ian Thompson. “They have to come up with a critical mass of interest.” Located in Longview, Washington, LCSG helps with getting schools started on the right foot by helping school administrators, teachers and involved parents with the planning stage, recruiting volunteers, raising and managing funds, as well as providing expert advice through the support of dedicated volunteers from all walks of life. They also use the food grown at school gardens in cooking classes and offer it for sale at local farmers’ markets. “Having kids learn to cook, using a knife for the first time, picking a berry; those are the sorts of things that make it all worth while,” says Ian. Currently, LCSG works with 12 gardens, with plans for three new ones this year. They have 140 volunteers that give time to making a garden a reality for the 2,200 kids who benefit each year from the school gardens. Although the organization focuses primarily in Cowlitz county, it sees the city of Rainier as part of its community and is willing to work with the school district thereto begin its’ school garden program. While it may be in a limited capacity, Ian says that they are open to consulting with other schools in Columbia County looking for advise on starting and maintaining a garden on school grounds. “I like when teachers say, ‘I wanted to have a school garden for 20 years’ and we’re finally helping them make it a reality,” says Ian. Over the past 10 years the organization has matured and gained local notoriety but Ian’s heart is not time spent in the office getting ready for the next garden despite its’ importance, “The biggest thing is working with kids and being there when they’re discovering real food, and the wonder of where it comes from.”

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Clatskanie residents attend a free movie showing of *A Place at the Table*

Food Literacy

Food literacy is an area that became more apparent as a point of needed focus throughout the year. A population without a solid understanding of the importance of nutrition, cooking skills, the value of supporting local farms and businesses, the pros and cons of conventional or organic foods, and the health balance between food and exercise, it is difficult for a community to launch projects that can depend on sustained support from that population.

Last year Rainier hosted a cooking class for parents and children to learn simple, nutritious recipes. Its effectiveness lay not only in the quality of the content, but also the timing of when it was offered. Parents who brought their children to the free summer lunch, or for swim classes at the school pool, were easily drawn in because attendance didn't require them to make an additional trip to the school. The cooking classes will be continuing again this year.

During the school year in the spring the school district also hosts a Healthy Hoe-Down, which involves children and the community to promote healthy lifestyle choices. Local food producers are invited to host a table in order to share with attendants what they're cultivating.

Oregon State University (OSU) extension office in Columbia County is beginning the second year of its

three-year GROW Healthy Kids grant, specifically focusing on the Rainier and Clatskanie communities. The main goals of the grant are to encourage healthier eating habits and more physical activity and to investigate the factors that may help or hinder people, especially children, to improve their overall health. This is done using several tactics. One approach the grant team is using is to do community "audits" of public spaces such as schools and roadways. They are also examining factors that affect food access, whether there are adequate sidewalks or bike paths for non-car transportation in the community, or what scheduling challenges folks might have. Measuring children's BMI (Body Mass Index) at the beginning, middle and end of the grant is a tool being used to determine if intervention through the grant has made a change.

The Clatskanie Presbyterian church has allowed the Master Gardeners to cultivate a garden for food which is donated to the local food pantry, Turning Point. The Master Gardeners are required to donate 60 hours of community service as a way to pay back the training they received through the OSU Master Gardener program. A local Clatskanie doctor has given permission to the 4-H youth group, an OSU program, to cultivate a garden on its premises. The goal of the garden is to

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teach local children what is necessary to run a prosperous garden, microenterprise and is part of a \$5,000 *Producing for the Future Youth* grant awarded over 3 years by OSU to study the effect of a youth led garden on the community and its youth participants.

While food education is important to everyone some may feel it isn't exactly the most thrilling or attention grabbing topic. However film showings over the past year were found to be an effective way to concisely bring various food issues more to the forefront in digestible, interesting ways and create an opportunity to start conversations. Movies about the business of farming, the various forms of farming food (conventional vs. organic), issues of hunger and its tie to politics and poverty, were themes of films shown. Through partnerships with organizations like the libraries, schools, churches and granges the public, at no charge, was able to see movies they might not otherwise have access to. These showings began in October on National Food Day and occurred sporadically throughout the year, the most widely watched being *A Place at the Table*. The Columbia Pacific Food Bank and Columbia Health Coalition will occasionally continue showing films since it is low cost and potentially broad reaching.

Another method of highlighting the many dimensions of food has been the monthly column Food for Thought in the local Saint Helens newspaper The Chron-

icle. In it the RARE took topics like SNAP, food conservation, home gardening, and hunger, wrote profiles, movie reviews and announced events like National Food Day and the release of the newest Local Food Guide. The idea was to take these large subjects and distill them to their simplest form and in a conversational tone simply engage people in a discussion about the food they eat, where it comes from and who the entire seed to garbage cycle effects.

The RARE partnered with the St. Helens School district and offered the opportunity for the children receiving meals during the Summer Meals program to plant edible plants and take them home. The school collaborated with advertising the program, saving and rinsing used milk cartons to be used as containers, and coordinating the meal with the plantings that day. For example, on Mondays radishes were grown and the children could try them in the salad being served with lunch. The kids were very excited to get dirty, the parents were happy for the project and not the mess and often the kids came back with reports on the progress of their cilantro or salad greens they planted the week before. The Columbia County OSU Master Gardeners will offer this project as one of the ways they can log hours towards their payback time. It is a cheap yet effective project requiring time, minimal coordination, the cost of seeds, popsicle sticks, and soil.

Local Business

Local food businesses have come in gone during this past year. In just the southern part of the county alone there have been changes. The local gluten-free bakery, *Simply Baked*, *The Hawaiian*, and *Oregon Smoke House* restaurants have closed their doors, *The Plantation House* restaurant was replaced with *St. Helen's Pizza & Pub* by the *Klondike's* owner and chef and a new cafe has opened, *Good Things*. These are just a few changes with traditional food-based businesses but there are others like *Brown Butter Bakery* in Scappoose, which is a custom order, domestic bakery selling to various local businesses, sometimes has a table at the Scappoose Farmers' Market and also successfully used the Pop-Up business model.

One of the more unique food centered businesses emerging in the county is one being managed by Susan Baker and partners of the organic buying club *Columbia County Natural*. They are only a few short months away from opening a new cafe *The Eatery* which will use mainly

organic ingredients and source from local farms as much as possible. It is scheduled to open in early October. They are planning to use the model of CSR, Community-Supported Restaurant, very similar to the CSA model farmers use to secure sales for their product, "I think it helps small restaurants create a small niche in a community and to be successful," says Susan. Various priced shares will be offered to appeal to different people, ranging from \$25 one month option up to \$750 2 year deluxe option with a goal of getting 200 people signed up. The Eatery will host Farm to Fork dinners once a month with the idea to showcase a local farm

and its produce and giving patrons an opportunity to meet their local farmers. The word will get out by Facebook, word-of-mouth, and articles in the local paper. They'll also offer pre-ordered to go dinners during the week for folks commuting back home from working in Portland all day. There is a possibility they'll offer cooking classes using their certified kitchen during days the restaurant is closed.

"I think it helps small restaurants create a small niche in a community and to be successful,"



Sauvie Island Center

The Sauvie Island Center is a 3-in-1 combo! It's a great example of public-private partnership: a non-profit that collaborates with a for-profit farm, Sauvie Island Organics, and operates on Howell Territorial Park, which is managed by Portland Metro. Since 2005 they've all worked together to serve as a center for food and farm education for many area elementary school students. During the school year groups are brought to the center giving the children get the chance to experience farm life for themselves. The curriculum is geared toward encouraging the children to literally get their hands dirty through a variety of rotations, with topics that include plant parts, the importance of pollination, the interconnectedness of the food web, discovering forest life, and exploring soil and the inner workings of compost piles. The students also help plant and harvest vegetables from the "Grow Lunch" garden. After the school year ends, the center runs a camp that dives deeper into the above subjects with the extra time the kids spend at the farm.

The center is grant-funded and run by a small staff along with many volunteers, such as Columbia County Master Gardeners who are helping as part of their 60 hours of payback time to improve their community. The volunteers are trained to teach the various modules to the school groups. Over half of the schools that visit the center are only able to come because of scholarships and donations. For many children it is the first time they've visited a farm and seen the connection between the food they eat and the earth that it comes from, "For me, it's about inspiring connection, engagement and stewardship in the kids," said Shawna Hartung, Education Program Manager at the center, "and to create a meaningful and lasting 'sense of place' for everyone and to connect people to their food and the environment it comes from." The experience the children have at the Sauvie Island Center makes real and tangible, what may have previously only been known through stories and school texts. At the end of each day the children share what they've learned in a large circle just before leaving the farm. For many it is the first time they've done things like taste kale or learn what owl pellets are, and many are surprised, along with their parent chaperones, that broccoli is a flower. These are just a few of countless memorable epiphanies that can only come from time spent on in an actual farm environment and a valuable opportunity to learn, which the center provides.

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Meetings

Throughout the course of the year meetings and events were organized to plan for future food systems projects, to establish a more formal group to oversee existing projects and to introduce farmers to local organizations and businesses.

The first meeting was the FEAST Reconnect held in January to review the past year's progress. The participants at the Reconnect also heard from neighboring food system organizations such as Food Roots based in Tillamook and North Coast Food Web based in Astoria through a Skype video conversation. During this meeting the consensus was that there needed to be continued food systems leadership from an AmeriCorps, or other volunteers, to fill the role that the RARE member has played the last two years. There was also a discussion about pursuing a second year of the St. Helens Farmers' Market. The conclusion reached was to skip the 2013 summer season and to form a steering committee, with involved community organizations, to apply lessons learned from the previous year's attempt. It was decided that there needed to be further community education on buying from local farmers, better advertising of the market in order to have a prepared clientele who come to the summer concerts, and to acquire more farmer vendors. The partnership with the 13 Nights on the River festival, along with the Thursday evening schedule of the market were also points of debate.

Another community event was the Farm to School Meet and Greet held in the spring at the Rainier School District. The event was a partnership with Ecotrust, who wanted to focus attention on the northern towns of Clatskanie and Rainier, and bring farmers and schools together to create possible business partnerships. Along with the schools, other businesses and organizations were also invited to meet local farmers and build relationships. It was a well-attended event, but no others were organized because of the time of year. Farmers can be difficult to reach, or tear away from their farms, after the

spring growing and planting season has begun.

A partnership was created between the Rainier and Vernonia school districts in order to find the appropriate greenhouse for Rainier who is working on beginning an agriculture program. The new Vernonia school is built, used during the 2012-2013 school year and continues making progress on the teaching gardens. Volunteer organizations came during their Spring breaks to help with the labor-intensive projects improving the school and community gardens. The Vernonia School district did research on which greenhouse would be most useful for a school program and purchased a greenhouse. The Rainier school district was in need of guidance due in part to being in between agriculture teachers, and was able to save time by shortcutting the search by working with their sister school district.

The Columbia Health Coalition added a new food emphasis to their mission. They have committed to continuing the legwork for updating the Local Food Guide in future years, while the Columbia Pacific Food Bank will support it through funding the publishing of the guide.

The 2013 Columbia County Local Food Guide was larger than the previous launch year. A Washington section was added to the guide in recognition of those in Rainier who frequent Longview and surrounding areas in Washington to do their shopping. The only grocery store in Rainier is a discounted non-perishable food store that sells dented, discontinued, or repackaged food, but little-to-no produce, so folks seeking fresh, local food often look to resources across the river in Washington. Another different approach from last year was the attempt to attract producers through placing ads in the community's local newspapers. This was successful in attracting unknown food producers, but may not have been the most cost effective approach. It is possible that as the guide becomes better known in future years, this approach will work better.

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Demonstration planter in front of St. Helens H.E.L.P food pantry

Food Need & Assistance

The regional food bank, Columbia Pacific Food Bank (CPF), continues distributing food resources to the various small food programs (pantries, meal sites, drop sites, etc) throughout the county. There has been more need identified in the county in recent years, however there is an issue of having enough food to provide to these places of need. Currently CPF receives a percentage of the total food and donations within the Oregon Food Bank network share and is further supported by community food donations and of money that are used toward operations costs and purchasing of food that isn't regularly donated but creates a nutri-

tional balance in the food boxes distributed to clients. Grants are also written to address large needs like new refrigeration or a new truck. This year CPF is preparing to embark on a capitol campaign to raise money for a new, larger building.

The monthly drop in Mist/Natal is continuing with the possibility of a new one in Beaver Homes, Rainier and Oregon Food Bank is dropping Clatskanie's portion of its allotted produce directly in the town this spring, essentially skipping CPF on its regular delivery to Astoria. This change is saving CPF a drive and Clatskanie is receiving more and fresher fruit and vegetables.



The Ingenuity Innovation Center

The Ingenuity Innovation Center is a place for people who think outside of the box. It's for folks who like tinkering, do-it-yourself projects, and to build, invent and dream. Kate Wildrick and Aaron Imhof, along with a team of other "Ingenuers," have created a place on 20 acres of land in St. Helens for doing.

The Ingenuity Innovation Center has a community-centered, holistic approach with the goals of addressing issues of food quality and accessibility, alternative energy, improved health, clean water and over-all well-being in practical ways. Since Wildrick and Imhof moved to Saint Helens in September 2012, they have been spending much of their time setting up their 20-acre property. However in December 2012 they experienced a setback when the old barn burnt down. They have since rebuilt a new, lofted barn through a "Barn Raising", the first of many planned events at the Center. There is also a 1,500 sq. ft. greenhouse that features large, food-grade containers currently being modified for aquaponic gardens. The gardens will be used to teach classes and techniques about the symbiotic relationship between Koi fish and plants, with the goal to grow food, "What we like about the whole aquaponics system is that it's our first whole systems design."

Kate's journey to St. Helens began after getting hit hard personally and professionally by the economic downturn. While living in Service Creek, OR, the town she owned and operated along with her now ex-husband, "I learned where bad country songs came from...and I started over and moved back to Portland." Finding work and beginning a new life in a new town wasn't easy in the city but she knew she didn't want the life she had before, "I just knew I had to do something really different. I didn't want to go back to the corporate world."

After moving to Portland Kate met Aaron, an amateur, self-taught inventor and together they discovered what really mattered to them and decided to move to St. Helens, having tired of living in the city. They found the perfect property for the new lifestyle and mission they were planning and began the Ingenuity Innovation Center, "Everything we do with the Ingenuity Innovation Center is through the lens of building sustainable community-based solutions," said Kate.

Through the Center Kate, Aaron and the other "Ingenuers" want to address economic development possibilities, educate people on localism and use the knowledge and skills that people of all backgrounds, generations, education and abilities have. They want it to be a place that creates community and encourages people's curiosity and special interests. They are beginning with food because it is a basic community building block. They raised their greenhouse and have a prototype aquaponic tank producing more food than they can handle, with plans to donate to the St. Helens food pantry in the future. In just a short time they've generated lots of community interest. For now they are focused on food but if the momentum continues, the Ingenuity Innovation Center will produce more than just a few grilled Koi and zucchini dinners if Kate and Aaron have anything to say about it. For more information on the Ingenuity Innovation Center visit www.ingenuity.pro



St. Helen's Summer Lunch Meal participants plant cilantro seeds at Campbell Park

Conclusion & Opportunities

Food is so prevalent in our everyday lives that we often don't pay attention to its far-reaching impact. Where we choose to spend our money for groceries, what we purchase and how we prepare it all have incredible, far-reaching consequences. In the not so distant past our connection with the land, and the food grown in it, has been greatly removed to the point that people can't identify the original state of foods before they've been processed into more recognizable, altered forms. We do not learn gardening or cooking skills through osmosis in the home as we took for granted in the past. Classes in agriculture and home economics are no longer a part of the standard courses in school and we are seeing how that's affecting our communities and relationship to food. However, with the ease of accessing information we have so many more opportunities to learn on our own, organize those of us with similar goals, find funding for projects and connect with others who've been successful in similar endeavors.

Time and resources are the essential elements of projects. Columbia County has many resources but, as in most things, it is finding the time and perseverance that become the deciding factors in the longevity and success of goals. We lead busy lives and it is hard to volunteer time for meetings or lead a class even for a cause we feel is important, but finding the right people and avoiding burnout will ensure a steady awareness and improvement as has been the case in sister communities.

This document has identified areas of needed attention and highlighted various resources and people in the area who care about their family's, neighbor's and community's well-being. Individually they are taking action in the form of business, organizations or programs. Seeds of interest and possibility have been sewn over these past two years. The most impactful continuing steps are to organize these concerned and interested residents into a group of dedicated people who are passionate about educating their community about the importance of food and will strengthen the rich food system of Columbia County.

Appendix C

Food System Work in the Media

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

Give back by cutting back

Remember when you were a kid and you didn't want to eat your vegetables but you weren't allowed to leave the table until you did? You'd sit and sit and your parents would try to coax you in a variety of ways into nourishing yourself but finally would break out the guilt card saying, "You know, there are hungry children in Africa who'd love to eat your Brussels sprouts!" To which you'd reply with the classic snotty go-to comeback that has been used throughout the ages, "Yeah, well, why don't you send it to them, then?" At this point I will close the curtain on the sad scene that inevitably follows...

But it brings me to those starving children in Africa whose vegetable eating habits we've been told to emulate since at least the '80s. In 1984, a dizzying amount of musicians got together to sing a Christmas song about a particularly devastating famine in Ethiopia to raise money that provided aide to those who'd suffered. You've all heard the song, "Do They Know It's Christmas?" but have you listened to the words? They're disturbingly dark and composed to inflict maximum guilt during "The Most Wonderful Time of the Year!"

These may be the scariest lyrics to a Christmas song, ever (unless you count the frightening suggestion of

"Baby, It's Cold Outside");

"But say a prayer, pray for the other ones At Christmas time it's hard, but when you're having fun There's a world outside your window, and it's a world of dread and fear Where the only water flowing is the bitter sting of tears And the Christmas bells that ring there are the clanging chimes of doom Well, tonight thank God it's them instead of you"

After thanking God and saying a prayer for "the other ones" I think we should maybe try to do a little more, especially for "the other ones" that live in our own town and not necessarily half way across the world. The holidays tend to be a time we may be feeling particularly guilty for our over-spending and gluttony, while still thinking of "other ones" less fortunate.

Luckily, the solution – at least part of it – is easy, something we can do year round and will actually save you money. Being mindful of how we use our resources is the best thing an individual can do everyday and not just around the holidays. While there are many, many ways to conserve, this is a column

about food so let's limit it to that.

According to a United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) study commissioned in 2011 to investigate food loss, 1/3 of the food produced in the world is lost - as in not eaten, just gone.

But there is a difference in HOW it is lost between developing countries and medium/high income countries. In poorer countries, they lose food due to bad infrastructure, rodents, spoilage, etc.

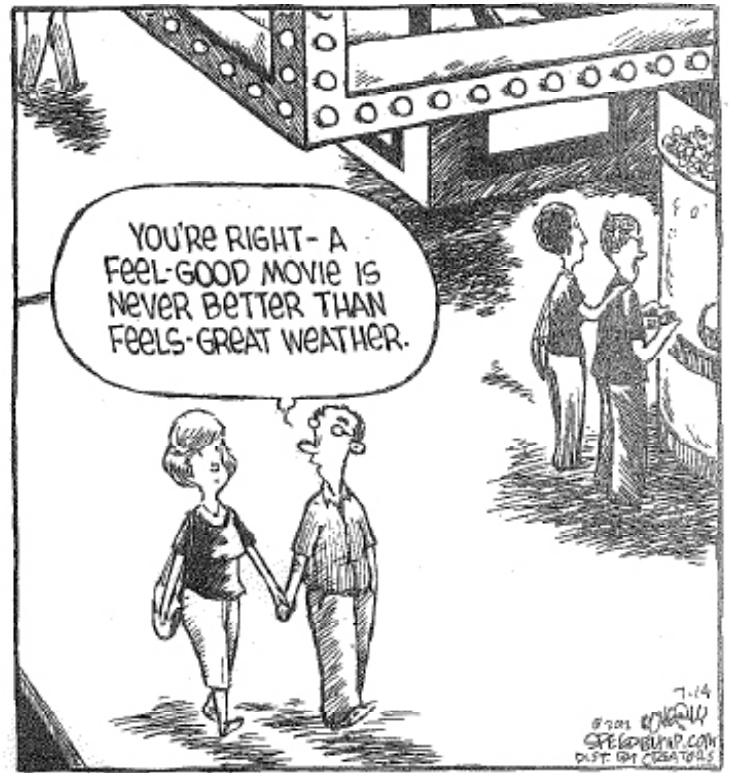
In richer countries we simply throw it away. That's right, we thoughtlessly throw out food that other people would be desperate to eat. In developed countries we toss food out because we make too much at dinner and scrape it into the garbage, we don't eat what we buy before it spoils, we try to save it in Tupperware but it turns frightening colors in the back of our 'frig, the food lays waste in the fields because it's cheaper to leave it there than to pay people to pick it, or the produce isn't perfect looking, and the boxes



Valerie Walker
Columbia Pacific
Food Bank

SPEEDBUMP

BY DAVE COVERLY



and cans have dents in them. We throw out food for so many reasons, most of which are rather frivolous.

If you want to do something more everyday besides writing a check to your

favorite non-profit, or you're tired of Bono making you feel guilty about starving children in Africa, remember that by simply re-evaluating the size of that heaping spoonful of mashed potatoes headed for

your plate helps keep just that much more food from landing in the trash (and possibly accumulating around your waistline).


You're excused from the table, now.



Above: An example, and the 3rd article of *Food for Thought* published monthly by The Chronicle in St. Helens, OR.

Left: Screen shot of the Facebook group page Columbia County OR Food in 2012.

Appendix C



FOOD

FOR THOUGHT!

CALLING ALL COLUMBIA COUNTY (AND CLOSE NEIGHBORS) GROWERS, LOCAL BUSINESSES AND INSTITUTIONS THAT USE LOCALLY-SOURCED FOOD!

Would you like to be listed for FREE in the 2nd annual Columbia County Local Food Guide?


We are now accepting submissions to be listed. The guide publishes June 2013. Contact the Columbia Pacific Food Bank at 503-397-9708 or by email valerie@cpfoodbank.org

Tell us what product(s)/service you provide, your contact information, season, hours and location along with any website addresses you may have. If you're not sure if you fit, contact us anyways and we'll figure it out!

Above: Pro-Bono ad created by The Spotlight newspaper to attract new producers for the 2013 Local Food Guide

Top Right: Flyer made to invite people to view *A Place at the Table* film, an example used across the county.

Bottom right: The postcard sent out to invite people to the FEAST event held in January 2012.



FREE Movie Night!

Come join us for a free showing of *A Place at the Table* a well-made, thought provoking film about hunger in America. Hunger is a reality that affects the lives of hundreds of Columbia County residents yearly. Learn about the issues and what you can do about them.

"A FILM THAT SHOULD MAKE YOU FURIOUS."
-Huffington Post

"POWERFUL. More than an eye-opening portrayal of hunger in America. It's also a call to action."
-Boston Globe


Where: Scappoose Public Library
52469 SE 2nd St, Scappoose

Cost: \$0.00 a.k.a FREE!!

When: April 29th, 2013

Time: 5:30 pm

Presented by the Columbia Pacific Food Bank



SAVE THE DATE

JANUARY 14, 2012



2013 LOCAL FOOD GUIDE

SPONSORED BY COLUMBIA PACIFIC FOOD BANK



FARMERS & OPEN AIR MARKETS

SCAPPOOSE

Scappoose Farmers' Market
Contact: (503) 848-3469, scappooseinfo@gmail.com
Season: May – September • **Hours:** Saturdays, 9a-3p
Location: Behind City Hall on 2nd Street, Scappoose

SAINT HELENS

13 Nights on the River Open Air Market
Contact: Rob (503) 369-9001 • **Season:** June – August
Hours: Tuesdays 3p-6p (4th of July 11a-11p)
Location: Columbia View Park, Olds Town St. Helens

VERNONIA

Vernonia Open Air Market
Hours: Weekly Open Air Market • **Season:** June – October
Hours: Fridays 4-7pm • **Location:** Post Ct, Vernonia

COMMUNITY SUPPORTED AGRICULTURE (CSA)

A CSA share is a way to get a regular assortment of local, seasonal product.

When you buy a share through a farmer's CSA, you not only get fresh, locally produced fruits, vegetables, honey, meat, and eggs but you are also giving farmers financial security and supporting their crops by paying upfront or through regular payments. By buying a share of the farm's output you are helping to fund the farm's operating costs and risk (including weather damage) of growing. Each farm has its own style. They may offer full shares, or weekly distributions, offer work share packages, they may allow you to choose what you're a share, or maybe tell you to accept what the farm offers or will include a little option or choice happening on the farm as well as recipes for that strange looking vegetable that you've never seen. This is a great way to try new things by experimenting with new produce. And besides having regular fresh and delicious food you'll have access to a reliable farmer who will undoubtedly give you a tour of where your food is coming from.

WHO IS IN AND WHO ISN'T.

The growing, harvesting, distribution and handling included in the USDA Local Food Rules exempt producers of the food they grow, raise, produce or use domestic livestock they produce in their communities. "The food guide is applicable to someone 'growing, harvesting, distributing or using' locally produced, processed, prepared, preserved, packaged, or transported food originating in various stages of value who are selling their food for its basic utility. Businesses who have been selling their goods for a long time, the manufacturers, processors, or distributors that have started to incorporate local products into their supply chain, those who are... Columbia Pacific Food Bank, (503) 324-6222, <http://columbiapacific.org/> if you want to see if your farm, operation or business qualifies under the food guide.

WHY LOCAL?

What is the big deal about buying local? Not only is local food generally fresher, better, tastier and more nutritious for you, but it also helps the local economy when you consciously support a local farmer, rancher or local business that grows or raises local food. Studies on local buying efforts show that buying locally can have twice the economic overall impact than if the money were spent as a big corporation. Take a moment looking through these neighborhood producers and business owners and think of how your dollar can have twice the punch when you hand it over to one of them.

WHAT IS ORGANIC?

The USDA defines organic:
 "Organic is a labeling term that indicates that the food or other agricultural product has been produced through approved methods that integrate cultural,

biological, and mechanical practices that foster cycling of resources, promote ecological balance, and conserve biodiversity. Synthetic fertilizers, sewage sludge, irradiation, and genetic engineering may not be used."
 One's variety of sources, such as the cost of becoming certified or the size of the farm, these are growers and producers who choose not to become organically certified but do choose to follow "organic practices". Ask your local farmer what that means to them.

GROW A ROW FOR THE HUNGRY

Oregon has an award winning statewide network of food banks whose efforts help feed our neighbors during tough times, but produce is something each emergency food agency could always use more of. While you are doing last minute planting in your garden this summer please consider designating a section of easy fruits or vegetables to donate to your local pantry or meal site so that more people can enjoy the bounty of Columbia County. Any size donation of fresh produce will be gladly accepted and much appreciated.

LOCAL AGRICULTURE

COMMUNITY GARDENS

Red Hill Urban Community Garden

Location: Long Street, 200' of produce space in front area next to bus station
FWS grows in the 12-month cycle. Located at Community Block
Contact: Joyce Kitchener, jkitch@redhillcommunitygarden.com
Website: www.redhillcommunitygarden.com

Yosemite

Location: Oakdale, plots and produce space shared. Spring 2014
Contact: (505) 261-7911 for membership
Website: redhillcommunitygarden.com

FOODS

Strong City Farm

Location: locally-grown about 100 acres (vegetables, eggs, etc.)
Website: www.strongcityfarm.com
Phone: 505-261-7911

Reddy Street Farm

Location: 100 acres, 10 miles north of Redmond, general vegetable, fruit, herbs, etc.
Website: www.reddystreetfarm.com
Phone: 505-261-7911

Old Sage Farm

Location: locally-grown eggs, CSA, crops, seasonal vegetables, flowers, etc.
Website: www.oldsagefarm.com

Mariposa Lodge Community

Location: 100 acres, 10 miles north of Redmond, general vegetable, fruit, herbs, etc.
Website: www.mariposalodge.com
Phone: 505-261-7911

The City Farm

Location: locally-grown eggs, CSA, crops, seasonal vegetables, flowers, etc.
Website: www.thecityfarm.com

Reddy's Red Farm

Location: 100 acres, 10 miles north of Redmond, general vegetable, fruit, herbs, etc.
Website: www.reddyredfarm.com
Phone: 505-261-7911

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Location: locally-grown eggs, CSA, crops, seasonal vegetables, flowers, etc.
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Location: locally-grown eggs, CSA, crops, seasonal vegetables, flowers, etc.
Website: www.oldsagefarm.com

J & J Farms

Location: 100 acres, 10 miles north of Redmond, general vegetable, fruit, herbs, etc.
Website: www.jandj.com

Mariposa Lodge

Location: 100 acres, 10 miles north of Redmond, general vegetable, fruit, herbs, etc.
Website: www.mariposalodge.com
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Phone: 505-261-7911

Up: NW Farm Markets

Market: Washouak Valley Farm Market
Contact: (503) 268-2824, www.washouakvalleyfarm.com
Address: Washouak Valley - Astoria - 4th Saturday 9-12
Location: 2000 Washouak Hwy, Astoria, OR 97103

Explored by Forster

Market: Silverton Farm and Landscape
Contact: (503) 325-2188, www.silvertonfarm.com
Address: Silverton, OR
Location: 2000 Washouak Hwy, Astoria, OR 97103

Traverse Valley Market

Market: Traverse Valley Market
Contact: (503) 2-542288, www.traversevalleymarket.com
Address: Traskwood - Silverton
Location: Washouak (off Washouak Hwy)

Northwest Palmyra

Market: Northwest Palmyra Market, 8th & Commercially owned/operated
Contact: (503) 243-6333, www.nwpalmyramarket.com
Address: Palmyra - Astoria
Location: 2000 Washouak Hwy, Astoria, OR 97103

Woodhill Marketing

Market: Woodhill Marketing, 100% organically grown/operated
Contact: (503) 325-2188, www.woodhillmarketing.com
Address: Woodhill Marketing - Clatsop
Location: 2000 Washouak Hwy, Astoria, OR 97103

Northwest Palmyra

Market: Northwest Palmyra Market, 8th & Commercially owned/operated
Contact: (503) 243-6333, www.nwpalmyramarket.com
Address: Palmyra - Astoria
Location: 2000 Washouak Hwy, Astoria, OR 97103

Mac: Grove: Wall

Market: Mac Grove Wall
Contact: (503) 325-2188, www.macgrove.com
Address: Mac Grove - Astoria - 4th Saturday 9-12
Location: 2000 Washouak Hwy, Astoria, OR 97103

Traverse Valley Market

Market: Traverse Valley Market, 100% organically grown/operated
Contact: (503) 243-6333, www.traversevalleymarket.com
Address: Traskwood - Silverton
Location: Washouak (off Washouak Hwy)

Organic Produce Supply

Market: Organic Produce Supply
Contact: (503) 243-6333, www.organicproduce.com
Location: Washouak

Mac: Grove: Wall

Market: Mac Grove Wall
Contact: (503) 325-2188, www.macgrove.com
Address: Mac Grove - Astoria - 4th Saturday 9-12
Location: 2000 Washouak Hwy, Astoria, OR 97103

Palmyra Farm Box Supply

Market: Palmyra Farm Box Supply
Contact: (503) 243-6333, www.palmyrafarmbox.com
Address: Palmyra

Palmyra's

Market: Palmyra's, locally produced, unbranded products
Contact: (503) 243-6333, www.palmyras.com
Address: Palmyra - Astoria - 4th Saturday 9-12
Location: 2000 Washouak Hwy, Astoria, OR 97103

Market: 8th Street and Landscape

Market: 8th Street and Landscape
Contact: (503) 325-2188, www.8thstreet.com
Address: 8th Street - Astoria - 4th Saturday 9-12
Location: 2000 Washouak Hwy, Astoria, OR 97103

Lower: Washouak Valley Market

Market: Lower Washouak Valley Market
Contact: (503) 268-2824, www.washouakvalleyfarm.com
Address: Washouak Valley - Astoria - 4th Saturday 9-12
Location: 2000 Washouak Hwy, Astoria, OR 97103

Explored by: Organics

Market: Explored by: Organics
Contact: (503) 325-2188, www.exploredby.com
Address: Explored by - Astoria - 4th Saturday 9-12
Location: 2000 Washouak Hwy, Astoria, OR 97103

Organically Sustainable Market

Market: Organically Sustainable Market
Contact: (503) 243-6333, www.organicallysustainable.com
Address: Organically Sustainable - Astoria - 4th Saturday 9-12
Location: 2000 Washouak Hwy, Astoria, OR 97103

Organic Market: University, Columbia

Market: Organic Market: University, Columbia
Contact: (503) 243-6333, www.organicmarket.com
Address: Organic Market: University, Columbia - Astoria - 4th Saturday 9-12
Location: 2000 Washouak Hwy, Astoria, OR 97103

SAUVIE ISLAND AND WASHINGTON?

THEY'RE NOT IN COLUMBIA COUNTY, WHAT'S THE DEAL?

As if it isn't difficult enough to be able to get all our favorite local products in the Puget Sound area, it is also difficult (especially for us) and for this reason we have included some neighbors. Sauvie Island was included last year and we hope there is a similar situation in the future. Sauvie Island is in Columbia County. This year we've included Washington for the folks who are interested in shipping over the river to do their shopping.

OUR NEIGHBORS

WASHINGTON

Two Island Farm Market

Season: May - October, Fridays 9-4pm
Contact: Diane Stockhouse (360) 894-1188 • www.twoislandfarmmarket.com
Location: 59 W. Burke Slough Road Collierville, WA, Stockhouse's Farm

Orrippen Creek Farm

Product: Eggs, chickens (boiler), pigs & all other pasture-raised.
Contact: Billy & Don Spasiano (360) 795-0525, thefarmorrippencreek.com, www.rippencreek.com
Season: Eggs are available year-round, chickens in the Summer & pigs in the fall (order in the Spring). • Location: Skamokawa, WA.

Bonnie Doble Nursery

Product: Vegetables, fruits, poultry, eggs, floral designs, bedding plants & Christmas wreaths.
Contact: Bonnie Doble, (360) 877-4227, www.pacificcoastnurseries.com
Season: May - November • Location: Longview, WA, Coville Community Farmers' Market

Wanda's End Farm

Product: Vegetable, fruits, greens, Asian vegetables all grown with organic practices, kimchi & soured but. • Contact: Carol Wanda wandaendfarm@gmail.com
Season: May - October, small orders • Location: Puget Island, Collierville, WA, Two Islands, Astoria & Benton Farmers' Market

Stockhouse's Farm

Product: Vegetables, herbs, cut flowers, pasture chickens, eggs, goat cottage. Contact: Rob & Diane Stockhouse, (360) 894-1188, rob@stockhousefarm.com, www.stockhousefarm.com
Season: May - October • Location: Collierville, WA

Walden Garden Works

Product: Variety of vegetables & fruits pesticide-free, full-bearing container plants, lemons, eggs, NH natives and ornaments, call for availability. • Contact: Scott & Dale Edwards, (360) 825-2454, • Dale@waldengardenworks.com, www.waldengardenworks.com
Season: April - October Tues- Fri, 10-5p, Saturdays 10-5p • Location: Longview, WA, Farm direct

Life Island Farm

Product: Fruits, berries, chickens, turkey, beef and pork, sausages, All pasture-raised and hormone-free.
Contact: (360) 889-4892, Mike and Kim Howell • Season: Call ahead for visits and availability
Location: Puget Sound, Collierville, WA, Two Island Farm Market

Shula Farm

Product: Beef, manure & composted soil, hay • Contact: Joe & Debbie (360) 378-7522
Season: Beef available in the fall, soil anytime, hay until gone.
Call ahead for availability. • Location: Coffee Rock, WA

Youngquail Farms

Product: Vegetable produce, pumpkins, gourds, corn stalks & hay bales.
Contact: Van & Judy (360) 877-0884, youngquail.com
Season: June - October • Location: Farm stand on Millay Grove Rd, Longview, WA

SAUVIE ISLAND

Sauvie Island Farms

Product: 8-pick berries, peaches, various vegetables, pumpkins, Christmas trees
Contact: (503) 621-3988 • www.sauvieislandfarms.com • Season: June - December
Hours: Seasonal, Summer 9a-3p, Closed Sundays
Location: 1911 NW Sauvie Island Rd., Portland, OR

Sauvie Island Organics

Product: Weekly Organic Vegetables CSA
Contact: (503) 621-6801, sauvieislandorganics.com, www.sauvieislandorganics.com • Season: 21 weeks, end of May - December
Hours: Not open to public, must be a member • Location: Sauvie Island

Bella Organics Farm

Product: 8-pick berries, over 70 varieties of organic fruits and vegetables, various fresh, canned, dried, and bottled products in the farm stand, Market CSA • Contact: (503) 621-9545, www.belloorganics.com Season: June - November
Hours: 9:00am - 3:00pm, daily during season.
Check website for extended hours. • Location: 1428 NW Gilman Rd., Portland, OR

Columbia Farms

Product: U-Pick berries, flowers, tomatoes, pumpkins
Contact: (503) 621-3988, www.columbiainfarmmarket.com
Season: Late Spring - Fall • Hours: Tuesday - Sunday 9a - 5p
Location: 2182 NW Gilman Rd., Portland, OR 97221

Soggy Feet Enterprises

Product: Naturally raised, hormone-free, grass fed/finished Angus beef in wholes, 1/2, 3/4, & burger. • Contact: Kyle & Amanda Hoyt (503) 823-7168, www.soggyfeetenterprises.com, soggyfeetfarm@gmail.com
Season: Year Round • Hours: By Appointment
Location: 15821 NW Charlton Rd Sauvie Island, OR 97221

Morgan's Landing Farm

Product: Bell and Heirloom Melons • CSA - 21 week share (zucchini free)
CSA available for Bullington and St Helens • General Vegetables, Herbs, Root crops, Greens, & Meat options • Contact: morganlandingfarm@gmail.com, (503) 754-6298
Season: End of May - End of October • Location: 21340 NW Gilman Rd., Portland, OR 97221

FOOD PROGRAMS & MEAL SITES

SUMMER MEAL PROGRAMS

VERNONIA

Veronica Community Church
IMP Pick-A-Plate, Vernonia, OR 97154
 Service: Free Summer Lunch for children 1-18, adults \$2 - Contact: **Rev. Mark (503) 755-9795**
 Hours: 12:30-1:30pm, June 17th - August 16th
 Location: **Veronica Community Church**

ST. HELENS

St. Helens Food Bank
 Service: Free Summer Lunch for children 1-18, adults \$2 - Contact: **Rev. Mark (503) 755-9795**
 Hours: 12:30-1:30pm, June 17th - August 16th
 Location: **Veronica Community Church**

CLATSkanie

Veronica Community Church
 Service: Free Summer Lunch for children 1-18, adults \$2 - Contact: **Rev. Mark (503) 755-9795**
 Hours: 12:30-1:30pm, June 17th - August 16th
 Location: **Veronica Community Church**

RAINIER

Veronica Community Church
 Service: Free Summer Lunch for children 1-18, adults \$2 - Contact: **Rev. Mark (503) 755-9795**
 Hours: 12:30-1:30pm, June 17th - August 16th
 Location: **Veronica Community Church**

CLATSkanie

Veronica Community Church
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Food Pantry Community Center

Food Pantry Community Center
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Veronica Community Church
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 Location: **Veronica Community Church**

St. Helens

Community Meals
 Service: Complete, hot evening meals
 Contact: (503) 397-0090, www.oregon.org
 Weekly: Tuesdays & Thursdays
 Hours: Dinner served from 5:30pm-8pm
 Location: First Lutheran Church Parish Hall
 363 Myrtle St., St. Helens, OR 97051

St. Vincent de Paul Mobile Kitchen

Service: Lunches - Contact: 1-855-375-6004
 Hours: Sat & 1st Friday of the month, 11a - 1p
 Location: St. Frederic Catholic Church Parish
 175 S. 15th St., St. Helens, OR 97051

Brown Bag

Service: Supplemental bag of food, \$1.50 annual fee
 Contact: (503) 397-9705
 Hours: Last Wednesday of every month, 1p-3p
 Application site: Columbia Pacific Food Bank
 474 Milton Way St. Helens, OR
 Pick-up Location: Grace Baptist Church
 55350 East Rd., Werners, OR

Rainier

Suzannah's Supper
 Service: Dinner
 Contact: (503) 555-3440
 Hours: 1st Friday of each month, 6p
 Location: Rainier United Methodist Church
 101 E. 10th St., Rainier, OR 97068

Clatskanie

Bread of Life Ministry
 Service: Dinner - Contact: (503) 738-2304
 Hours: Wednesdays, 5p-8p
 Location: Clatskanie Baptist Church
 415 S. Reuben St., Clatskanie, OR 97016

Vernonia

NataWist Grange
 Service: Lunch provided when picking up emergency food kit
 Contact: (503) 429-6170
 Hours: 2nd Wednesday of the month, 1p
 Location: 4752 Reuben Hwy N, Vernonia, OR 97054

SENIOR CENTER MEAL SITES

Free Lunches with a suggested \$4 - \$5 donation

VERNONIA SENIOR CENTER

Service: Lunch - Contact: (503) 429-3912
 Hours: 12-12:30, M - F
 Location: 488 Bridge St., Vernonia, OR

CLATSKANIE SENIOR CENTER

Service: Lunch - Contact: (503) 735-3508
 Hours: Bag in serving at noon, M-F
 Location: 333 Tichenor St.
 (Use Bryant parking lot) Clatskanie, OR 97016

SCAPPPOOSE SENIOR CENTER

Service: Lunch, accept SNAP EBT cards
 Contact: (503) 543-3047
 Hours: 12:00 - 12:45p, M - F
 Location: 33342 South west Meadow Drive
 Scappoose, OR 97056

ST. HELENS SENIOR CENTER

Service: Lunch, (accept SNAP EBT cards)
 Contact: (503) 397-3303
 Hours: Bag in serving at noon, M-F
 Location: 375 S. 15th St., St. Helens, OR 97051

RAINIER SENIOR CENTER

Service: Lunch - Contact: (503) 555-3569
 Hours: Bag in serving at noon, M - F
 Location: 48 West 7th Street, Rainier, OR 97068

FOOD PANTRIES

The food pantries in the various communities give emergency food boxes to individuals and families, which provide 3-5 days of food.

Columbia Pacific Food Bank Regional Food Bank for Columbia County Emergency food center
 (503) 397-9705 - Office hours: Monday-Thursday, 10-3p
 Location: 474 Milton Way, St. Helens, OR 97051

SERVING ST. HELENS:
 HELP BOXES (503) 397-9705
 Monday-Thursday, Food Bridge
 474 Milton Way, St. Helens, OR 97051

SERVING RAINIER:
 MORE OF BARNES - BURNBROS
 Monday-Thursday & Thursday Afternoon
 474 Milton Way, St. Helens, OR 97051

SERVING CLATSKANIE:
 TISHENOR POINT COMMUNITY CENTER
 MON. THURS.
 Monday-Thursday, 10am-11am
 333 Tichenor St., Clatskanie, OR 97016

SERVING VERNONIA:
 VERNONIA CARES - POLARIS
 Monday & Thursday 10am-3pm
 474 Milton Way, St. Helens, OR 97051

SERVING SCAPPPOOSE:
 ST. VINCENT DEPAUL -
 ST. WENDELADE CONCERN
 POLARIS BOXES
 474 Milton Way, St. Helens, OR 97051
 Monday-Thursday, 10am-3pm
 474 Milton Way, St. Helens, OR 97051
 Support: Peace Square Church
 Emergency Food Box - 555-3440
 Food Bridge: 397-9705, Food Bridge: 397-9705

Backpack Program

A Backpack Program is a weekend food program intended to provide food for children for over the weekend. It is often in collaboration with county school districts, local organizations and many volunteers. These groups work together to compile bags of ready-to-eat packaged food which are then given to children on Fridays so that they may have food to eat when a school breakfast or lunch isn't available to them over the weekend. Contact your local school district in the Fall for more information.

Columbia Pacific Food Bank 474 Milton Way # B, St. Helens, OR 97051 • (503) 397-9705



COLUMBIA HEALTH COALITION
 Making A Healthier Active Community







All photos included in this report were taken by
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NOTES

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