

MEMBER OF
**FEEDING
AMERICA**

FOOD SHARE

ventura county

*the
harvester*

JANUARY 2024 NEWSLETTER

WWW.FOODSHARE.COM



The team that helped secure our outstanding AIB score. Story on pg 8.

(L-R) Daniel Velazquez, Jose Huerta, Andy Murphy, Jesus Villagomez, Francisco Avila, Miguel Garcia.

Not present (but still very much part of the team:) Daniel Wilson and Hairo Lazo.



inside this issue

A NOTE FROM YOUR CEO
PAGE 2

THANKING OUR PARTNERS
PAGE 3

**CELEBRATING OUR FAMILY
OF VOLUNTEERS**
PAGE 4-5

THE MAGIC OF CAN-TREE
PAGE 6

A note from your CEO

Did you know that 75% of people coming to Food Share make use of our services three times or less per year? Many are ashamed to admit that they're hungry and don't believe that word applies to them. But it's a sobering fact that since I started here in 2017, the number of hungry Ventura County residents has swelled from 75,000 to a staggering 267,000 annually.

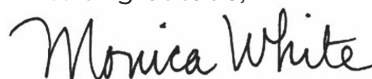
There's a disheartening myth that hard work guarantees the avoidance of hunger. Unfortunately, the overwhelming majority of the people in line for food have done just that. The reality is that life's challenges — whether it's losing a job, experiencing the loss of a loved one, facing unexpected health issues, or simply the sky-high cost of living — can put someone on a path to hunger.

My dream is to create an open dialogue about hunger, free from judgment. Providing someone with a meal not only fills their stomach but also nourishes their dignity and hope. We are here to provide fresh nutritious food to anyone who needs it — no questions asked.

Food Share has been feeding our community for 45 years. We value every donor, every volunteer, and work miracles with every dollar, because we are committed to being the best stewards of your generosity. There is still much more we need to do.

I sincerely hope we can continue to rely on your ongoing support. If you ever have questions about our work or suggestions on how we can enhance our services, please do not hesitate to reach out to me at mwhite@foodshare.com.

With gratitude,



Monica White
President & CEO



Mark Your Calendars!

2024 is brimming with fantastic events — don't miss out, get involved!

Bi-Monthly Join Food Share's President & CEO, Monica White, for a facility tour. Choose from one of our bi-monthly breakfast, lunch, or evening cocktails to discover the ins and outs of feeding 267,000+ food-insecure individuals annually.

May 11 Stamp Out Hunger Food Drive in association with the National Association of Letter Carriers.

June 16 Father's Day Car Show at Channel Islands Harbor, benefitting Food Share!

Sept 21 Our 3rd Annual Fed Up Shindig will be held right here at our Oxnard headquarters.

Dec 5-8 Our 13th Annual Can-tree Food Drive. Be a part of this festive event at Figueroa Plaza in downtown Ventura.



Visit [FoodShare.com/Events](https://www.foodshare.com/events) for all the latest updates.

Thanking Our Partners

Baby2Baby

Food Share is addressing the rising costs of essential items by extending its services to include basic needs and necessities. In partnership with Baby2Baby, a nonprofit organization aiding children in poverty, Food Share has distributed 36 car seats and 1.7 million essentials, including diapers, wipes, and diaper rash cream, to mothers, babies, and children countywide. Speaking about the partnership, Caitlin Buckley, National Program & Disaster Relief Coordinator for Baby2Baby, said, *“Food Share is a vital resource for children and their families in need within Ventura County. Together, we’re working toward a future in which no child is left hungry or without the basic essentials needed to thrive.”*

Among the 11 organizations benefiting from this support is Life Choices Pregnancy Clinic of Ojai, led by Michelle Kolbeck. She notes their clients, all from low-income households, struggle to afford expensive items like car seats, which retail between \$80-\$200. *“Our clients are overjoyed with being the recipient of this giveaway because their child will now be safe in a ‘new’ car seat and not one that is handed down.”*



Beylik Farms

If you’ve been to a farmers’ market in Ventura, Santa Barbara, or Los Angeles County, you might have seen Beylik Family Farms’ beautiful hydroponically grown tomatoes, cucumbers, and other produce. Happily, those gorgeous veggies are also available to the people we serve thanks to the generosity of the Beylik family, who’ve been donating surplus crops to Food Share for well over a decade. *“We have a great partnership with Food Share,”* comments owner Scott Beylik. *“Whatever is left unsold at the end of the week is picked up and distributed to the community. It’s wonderful to have a way of providing it to people who might not otherwise have access.”*



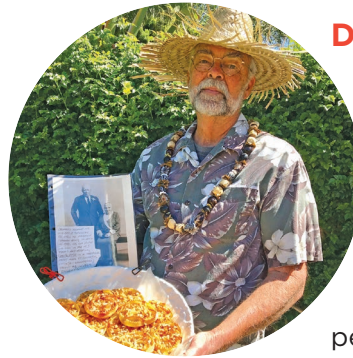
Celebrating Our Family of Volunteers

Volunteers are the backbone of Food Share. They not only play an essential role in helping us feed the hungry, but embody the spirit of community and compassion that defines our family of volunteers. Led by Christina Forino and Jenny Gamez from Food Share's volunteer department, more than 3,500 people donate their time to us each year. We cannot thank them enough! Here are some of our favorite photos from the past year.



Doing the Bread Run

Spotted our Food Share trucks in your neighborhood early in the morning? It's probably one of our teams of devoted weekly volunteers who brave all types of weather to "do the bread run" — the job of collecting unsold food from retail partners across Ventura County. Their tireless efforts ensure no food goes to waste and our supplies are enhanced with diverse items, like meat, dairy, and yes, bread! A few were kind enough to provide their thoughts about what brought them to Food Share and why they continue to volunteer.



Dave Curci

I am grateful for the privilege of being part of the greater team dedicated to reducing food insecurity in our community. I feel my participation and contributions truly help solve a very large and important societal issue. I have enjoyed meeting and working with many wonderful people in the Food Share family.



Angela Marchbanks

Several years ago, a friend enlisted a handful of us to help at a Food Share distribution. That started a long list of opportunities for me, including food rescue sorting and packing kitchen-free bags. Then I was asked if I could be a bread truck helper. Here I am today, driving the Ventura route weekly and loving it!



Randy Guzik

I retired from teaching high school math in Oxnard three years ago. It was rewarding because I was preparing many students to be the first ones in their family to go to college. I get that same feeling of knowing I'm doing something to help others by driving a truck for Food Share. I look forward to my shift each Tuesday.



Jerry Mendelsohn

Our family has had a strong affinity for this tremendous organization and what it stands for since the 1980s, when my mother-in-law volunteered to set up Food Share's first computer system. In my approximately 15 years as a volunteer, I cannot think of another affiliation that appeals to me as much as this one! I truly look forward each week to my upcoming shifts and the other fine people with whom I will be interacting.

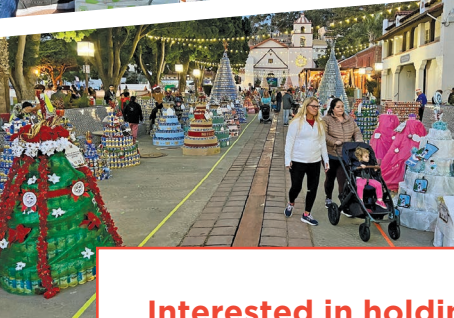


Interested in volunteering?
Sign up today at [FoodShare.com/Volunteer](https://www.foodshare.com/volunteer)



The Magic of CAN-tree 2023

In an explosion of color and creativity, 110 businesses and community organizations brought holiday cheer to our 12th Annual CAN-tree event in downtown Ventura in December. This is Food Share's biggest food drive of the year and is essential in helping us provide food for our 160+ agency partners and programs.



190 can "trees" graced Figueroa Plaza, crafted by hundreds of volunteers. Fox 11's Good Day LA covered the first day of the event live, and we collected a cool 120,000 pounds of canned food. Big thanks to all who joined the festive fun!

Interested in holding a food drive?

Organize food drives at your office, school, club, or congregation. Encourage friends and family to celebrate milestones by donating. Host traditional or virtual drives for non-perishable goods, with virtual drives leveraging our wholesale purchasing power for even greater impact! Visit [FoodShare.com/FoodDrives](https://www.foodshare.com/fooddrives) or scan the QR code.



Can I Donate This? A Guide to Reducing Food Waste and Helping Your Community

Donated food is vital for our community in need, but not all items are equally beneficial. Being selective ensures that your donations really make a positive impact. Here's a straightforward guide on what to donate and what to avoid when giving to a food drive. You can also maximize contributions through a virtual food drive!



SHELF LIFE GUIDE

PRODUCT	EXAMPLE	LIFE AFTER EXPIRATION
Liquid beverages	Soda, water, juice boxes, low acid juices (apple & grape)	1 year
Dry beverages & foods	Coffee, tea, rice, ramen, stuffing, pasta, mac & cheese	1 year
Canned foods (high acid)	Canned tomatoes, tomato-based soups & sauces, canned fruits, juices & pickles	1 year
Canned foods (low acid)	Canned meats, stews, soups (except tomato), canned vegetables	2 years
Cereal, oatmeal & snacks	Breakfast cereal, oatmeal, chips, crackers, popcorn	1 year
Condiments & misc.	Ketchup, mustard, mayonnaise, jelly, salad dressing, gravy, salsa	1 year (mayo 6 months)
Shelf-stable milk	UHT milk, soy milk, oat milk, almond milk	6 months
Nonfood items	Paper products, toiletries	Indefinite
Baby food		3 months prior to expiration

What to Donate

- ♥ **Nonperishable items**, which means items that won't spoil and have a long shelf life.
- ♥ **Preferred items** include peanut butter, canned soup, canned fruit, canned vegetables, canned stew, canned fish, canned beans, pasta, and rice.
- ♥ **Specialty foods** like olive oil, dressings, or marinades that don't need refrigeration — but please avoid anything in glass as it easily breaks.
- ♥ Besides food, **personal hygiene products** like toothpaste, soap, shampoo, and sanitary items are also highly appreciated by those in need.

Additional Tips for Donating Food

- ♥ **Check for damage:** Ensure that the packaging is intact and not damaged in any way, as this can compromise the safety and quality of the food.
- ♥ **Nutritional value:** Consider donating items that have good nutritional value and are appropriate for a wide range of dietary needs, such as low-sodium, low-sugar, and whole-grain options.

What NOT to Donate

- ♥ **Perishable items** like produce, dairy, and meat cannot be donated, as they require refrigeration.
- ♥ **Expired food**, as it might be unsafe to eat.
- ♥ **Leftovers** or food made in personal kitchens due to safety concerns.
- ♥ Items with **damaged** packaging or already open containers.
- ♥ **Baked goods** from personal kitchens cannot be donated for safety reasons.

Expiration dates Is this still good to eat?

It's essential to consider the quality and safety of the items you're giving, but not everything that's past its "use-by" or "sell-by" date is unsafe to eat. Check out the shelf life guide (above) and, provided an item is within the "life after expiration" range, it's still good to donate.





Outstanding 980 Score in AIB Accreditation Highlights Food Safety Excellence

Food Share is delighted to have received an outstanding score of 980 out of 1000 in its most recent AIB Food Safety Accreditation. The AIB Accreditation is a certification granted by the American Institute of Baking, affirming that a food-related business adheres to rigorous standards and practices in ensuring food safety and quality.

Food Share's Facilities and Food Safety Supervisor, Laura Thomson, commented, "This achievement reflects the dedicated efforts of the team in upholding the highest food safety standards. We are committed to maintaining excellence and ensuring the very best quality and safety for our food products. Well done to everyone who helps keep our warehouses sparkling clean!" Check out our front cover image featuring some of our awesome warehouse team.



Welcome New Board Member Rick MacLennan Ed.D.

Food Share is delighted to welcome Dr. Rick MacLennan to its Board of Directors. Dr. MacLennan is Chancellor of the Ventura County Community College District. He has more than 30 years of experience in educational leadership at community colleges in Idaho, Maryland, and Washington. He is dedicated to supporting Moorpark, Oxnard, and Ventura Colleges in providing equitable, student-centered access to quality and relevant educational programs and support services. Dr. MacLennan believes that by reducing barriers to education and strengthening partnerships with high schools, business and industry, and social service agencies, communities and their members thrive. He is deeply engaged in his communities, serving in leadership roles for regional economic development efforts, higher education policy and planning, local nonprofit boards, and community foundations.



CONTACT US

Food Share of Ventura County

4156 Southbank Road
Oxnard, CA 93036

TEL: 805-983-7100

FAX: 805-983-2326

www.foodshare.com

info@foodshare.com

2024 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Drew West Chair

*Retired General Manager,
Global Academic Partnerships
The Trade Desk*

Hannah Wirz Vice Chair

*Head of North America Product
Supply, Bayer*

James Jones Treasurer

*Founder,
The JKT Financial Group, LLC*

Yissel Barajas Secretary

*Chief Human Resources Officer,
Reiter Affiliated Companies*

Shawn O'Hara Immediate Past Chair

Principal, O'Hara Management

Brad Bartlett

*Retired President,
Dole Packaged Foods, LLC*

Scott Burrows

*Chief Financial Officer,
Spyre Therapeutics*

Peter Firestone

*Senior Managing Director,
Protiviti*

Jed Harris

*President,
Puretec Industrial Water*

Ryan Maley

*Managing Director, Private Client
Advisor II, Bank of America*

Rick MacLennan

*Chancellor, Ventura County
Community College District*

Bethany Mancilla

*Chief Business Officer,
Capsida Biotherapeutics, Inc.*

Nidia Rodriguez

*Associate Director of HR,
Meissner Filtration*

Ian Thompson

*Senior Vice President,
General Manager, Amgen U.S.
General Medicine Business*

Lysa Urban

*Marketing Manager,
Women's Economic Ventures*

Mike Velthoen

*Partner, Ferguson Case Orr
Paterson, LLP*