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AMERICA**

FOOD SHARE

ventura county

*the
harvester*

FEBRUARY 2025 NEWSLETTER

WWW.FOODSHARE.COM



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A note from your CEO

As we close 2024, it is an excellent time to thank you for your significant contribution in supporting our hungry neighbors. Last year, we provided over 19 million pounds of food with a retail value of \$59 million. We rely on your generosity to help us reach all who need our support.

2025 will undoubtedly have both challenges and opportunities. We expect rising food and housing costs to further increase demand for our services. Economic uncertainty, inflation, and a fluctuating job market could exacerbate the need for food. We also anticipate supply chain pressures and government policy changes on food assistance program benefits.

Our community needs us more than ever, and we will work diligently to support it. Leveraging our partnerships, we will continue to advocate for policies addressing the causes of food insecurity, and support sustainable food programs. We will continue collaborating with our corporate partners, farmers, and supermarkets to reduce food waste and increase supply.

Food Share is committed to serving our community, but we need your help. Hunger is a daily crisis for our neighbors. Most donations are made during the holidays, but our food insecure families need Food Share’s help every week, not only during the holidays. If you are not already, I urge you to consider becoming a Food Share GEM (Give Every Month-er). If you have a local business, consider collaborating with us to match gifts, sponsor events, and organize team-building volunteer events. Maybe you have a few hours a week or a month to volunteer with us or can help educate some friends/colleagues on our services to encourage them to get involved. We are grateful for anything you do to help us fight hunger in Ventura County. Because no one should go hungry.

Thank you for being a valued member of the Food Share family.



Warm regards,
Monica White
Monica White,
President & CEO

Mark Your calendars!

2025 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 tours to discover the ins and outs of feeding 267,000 food-insecure individuals annually.
- May 10** The Stamp Out Hunger Food Drive in association with the National Association of Letter Carriers.
- June 15** Father’s Day Car Show at Channel Islands Harbor, benefitting Food Share!
- Sept 20** Our 4th Annual Fed Up Shindig will be held right here at our Oxnard headquarters.
- Dec 4-6** Our 14th Annual CAN-tree 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.

WHAT WE CAN SOURCE WITH A \$25 DONATION



At Food Share, we can turn every dollar donated into at least three nutritious meals for Ventura County families. We work with local partners, grocery stores, farmers, and community supporters who help us rescue surplus food and provide generous contributions. This rescued and donated food travels to our warehouses, where it is carefully sorted and stored by volunteers and staff.

Your donations are vital in keeping our operations going. They help cover the cost of storage, sorting, transportation, and distributing food safely and efficiently across Ventura County. Every dollar ensures that good food quickly reaches neighbors in need, with 92 cents of each dollar going directly to meal programs.

How We Calculate Cost Per Meal
Our “meals per dollar” calculation reflects the donated food we secure and Food Share’s operational costs, including collecting, storing, and transporting food. We estimate pounds per dollar by dividing the total amount of food we distribute by operational expenses. With each meal being roughly 1.2 pounds, we ensure that every dollar donated stretches as far as possible.

When you support Food Share, you’re not just donating — you’re amplifying your impact and helping us serve thousands of neighbors efficiently and effectively.

Food Share’s Buying Power: Stretching Every Dollar for Maximum Impact

When you donate to Food Share, your dollar goes much further than it would at the grocery store. Thanks to our partnerships and bulk purchasing power, we can secure food at significantly lower prices than the average consumer.

Here’s how we do it:

Wholesale and Bulk Purchasing:
Food Share works directly with food manufacturers, distributors, and local farmers to buy food in bulk at wholesale prices. This allows us to secure essential items like rice, beans, and canned goods at a fraction of retail cost.

Donated and Rescued Food: Some of the food we distribute is donated by grocery stores, local farms, and manufacturers. These donations often include surplus or slightly imperfect items that are still perfectly good to eat but would otherwise go to waste.

Efficient Distribution Network: With a large network of warehouses, food pantries, and distribution partners, we’ve streamlined the process of storing and delivering food to minimize waste and reduce costs.

CAN You Believe It?
A Tree-mendous Success!



The 13th Annual CAN-tree Drive was an incredible success. It transformed Figueroa Plaza into a dazzling forest of CAN-trees built with creativity and compassion.

Over the weekend, individuals, families, businesses, and organizations collaborated to build and decorate 190 trees, creating a festive and heartwarming display attesting to the power of community.



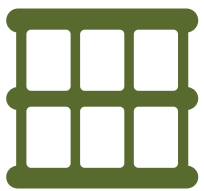
CAN-tree Facts



190 trees including 5 huge 15 foot trees!



140,000 pounds of food = 116,000 meals



127 different businesses and organizations participated



220 volunteers donated 600 hours!



This year's food drive brought in 140,000 pounds of food, benefitting our Ventura County neighbors in need. CAN-tree 2024 was a shining example of true community spirit, with neighbors giving back while celebrating the season together.

Save the date for CAN-tree 2025.
December 4-6



Feeding Hope

The Heart of Our Community Food Drive

We are incredibly grateful to all our supporters, volunteers, and donors who participated in over 400 food drives this past year. There were more than 200 just in October and November 2024! The events were driven by various groups; from schools, golf associations, and senior centers to corporations, mom's groups, and small business, and generated thousands of pounds of food for our hungry neighbors.

While it is wonderful to receive so many donations for the holidays, hunger is year-round, and we encourage you to participate at any time. These food drives include much-needed provisions such as peanut butter, canned tuna, chicken, beans, rice, and pasta.



The Vital Role of Food Sourcing, Fleet, and Inventory Control at Food Share

The Food Sourcing, Fleet, and Inventory Control teams at Food Share form a critical department that delivers food to our 267,000 hungry neighbors annually. Their collective efforts ensure that food moves efficiently and safely to the tables of those facing hunger in Ventura County.

Kevin Herold, Food Share's Food Sourcing Supervisor, helps secure millions of pounds of nutritious food annually through partnerships with local farmers, manufacturers, the Port of Hueneme, and many other organizations. Kevin also strategically purchases essential items to fill supply gaps, ensuring a balanced variety of fresh produce, proteins, and shelf-stable goods. Collaborations with Feeding America and local growers add seasonal items to enhance the nutrition of distributed meals.

Andy Murphy, Food and Fleet Manager, ensures this food reaches its destination efficiently. Coordinating a fleet of trucks, Andy's drivers collect donations and deliver food to Food Share's warehouses, partner agencies, and mobile pantries. He manages tight schedules and varying terrains to ensure timely and safe transportation. Andy's team also delivers food to College Park, the largest weekly drive-thru food distribution event in Ventura County.

Inventory Control Director Chelsea Kuntz plays a critical role in managing Food Share's food supply within our three warehouses. Using

advanced tracking systems, her team oversees all incoming and outgoing inventory to maintain accuracy and efficiency. They ensure food is stored safely, rotated properly, and distributed promptly. This process prevents waste, maintains food quality, and ensures every pound of food has maximum impact.

Together, the Food Sourcing, Fleet, and Inventory Control teams create a seamless supply chain, bridging the gap between surplus food and those who face hunger. Their work furthers our mission of fighting hunger in Ventura County.



Shelf Life Guide

Product	Example	Life After Expiration
Liquid Beverages	Soda, Water, Juice Boxes, Low Acid Juices (<i>Apple & Grape</i>)	1 Year
Dry Beverages & Foods	Coffee, Tea, Rice, Ramen, Stuffing, Pasta, Mac & Cheese	1 Year
Canned Foods (<i>High Acid</i>)	Canned Tomatoes, Tomato-Based Soups & Sauces, Canned Fruits, Juices & Pickles	1 Year
Canned Foods (<i>Low Acid</i>)	Canned Meats, Stews, Soups (<i>Except Tomato</i>) 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 (<i>Mayo 6 Months</i>)
Shelf-Stable Milk	UHT Milk, Soy Milk, Oat Milk, Almost Milk	6 Months
Nonfood Items	Paper Products, Toiletries	Indefinite

We need more gEMs!



"We moved to Ventura County in 1992 when Dave was beginning his career as a pilot for Alaska Airlines. We soon became aware of the growing need for food assistance and the efforts of Manna Food Bank in Thousand Oaks. Over the years, we heard of Food Share and its efforts to coordinate food assistance among the various food banks in the county. We began supporting Food Share as we became more aware of the organization's concrete and deliverable results. When COVID hit, we upped our giving because we knew the economic trends were not good and realities were challenging a large segment of the county's population. This response by us and many others has had a verifiable impact. This moral response by our own community must continue because the risk of food insecurity is real. Thank you Food Share!"

- Dave and Jeannette Bauer

Most Needed Foods

Canned Tuna
Canned Chicken
Low-Sugar Cereal
Peanut Butter

Pasta
Rice
Oats
Dry Beans

For a food drive toolkit, visit
foodshare.com/fooddrives

Or contact Laura Thomson
Email: lthomson@foodshare.com
Phone: 805-983-7100

Join Our Volunteer Family

Help us feed 267,000+ neighbors in need each year! Volunteers are the heart of Food Share, and we couldn't do our job without them.

Opportunities Available:

Ages 12+: Individuals and groups welcome

Flexible Shifts: Weekdays, evenings, and weekends

Roles: Packing food boxes, sorting rescued food, gleaning, boxing produce, and helping at our drive-thru distributions

Outcome: In just a few hours, you will make a difference. You will support our mission to fight hunger in Ventura County.

Sign up at www.foodshare.com/volunteer or contact Jess Hug, Senior Director of Community Engagement at (805) 983-7100 or at jhug@foodshare.com



Brian Fisher, Michelle Hatch, Monica White, and Jennifer Caldwell

A Year of Excellence Celebrating Food Share's Remarkable 2024 Awards

Food Share of Ventura County had an exceptional year of recognition in 2024, celebrating multiple awards and honors. Monica White, President & CEO, was awarded the Rodney Fernandez Founder's Award for Excellence in Visionary Leadership from VCCDC, and named one of Senator Monique Limón's Women of the Year for her outstanding work in hunger relief. She also earned a place in the Pacific Coast Business Times' Top 50 Women in Business for the fourth consecutive year.

The LA Rams recognized Jennifer Caldwell, Chief Development Officer, as a 2024 pLAYmaker, celebrating her dedication and impact in Ventura County and beyond. We are proud of them both!



FOOD SHARE
ventura county

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