

*the
harvester*

AUGUST 2025 NEWSLETTER

WWW.FOODSHARE.COM

FOOD SHARE

ventura county



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Thank You from Monica White, President & CEO

Dear Friends,

Thank you to everyone who has reached out as our food bank faces unprecedented changes within the nation's hunger-relief safety net. It never ceases to amaze me of the incredible generosity and partnerships that make Food Share's mission possible. Whether you volunteered, attended one of our events, donated, or simply shared our work with others — **you are helping feed and provide hope across Ventura County.**

In this issue of *The Harvester*, you'll read about upcoming events, new programs, and powerful partnerships that have shaped the past few months. From Stamp Out Hunger to the launch of our Carts for Seniors initiative, every effort has moved us closer to a community where no one goes hungry.

As **Hunger Action Month** approaches this September, I encourage you to take action — wear orange, donate, volunteer, or spread the word. Every act, big or small, helps us raise awareness and meet the growing need for food across our country. Visit foodshare.com/HAM for more ideas.

I hope to see many of you at our **4th Annual FED UP Shindig** on September 20 — it's one of our favorite nights of the year and a powerful reminder of what we can do when we all come together.

Thank you for standing with us. Together, we're not just fighting hunger — we're building a stronger, more compassionate Ventura County.

With gratitude,

Monica White

Monica White
President & CEO



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Your impact in Action

How Your Support Fuels Families Like Lena's

For Lena, a full-time student at Oxnard College, pursuing her education is both a personal dream and a promise to her four children. "I want my kids to see me challenge myself," she says. "I hope they see I'm trying to make a better life for them."

Lena and her husband, who is on disability, work hard to make ends meet. During the school year, their children receive breakfast and lunch at school, but when summer comes, that vital source of nutrition disappears.

"During the summer, it's more hands-on — they're here all day," Lena shares. "It's a little more stressful. I need more resources during the summer to provide those meals." This is where your crucial support comes in.

Thanks to you, Lena has access to fresh, nutritious food from a local pantry partner of Food Share. With fruits, vegetables, and shelf-stable items available, Lena can feed her growing kids and stay focused on her studies.

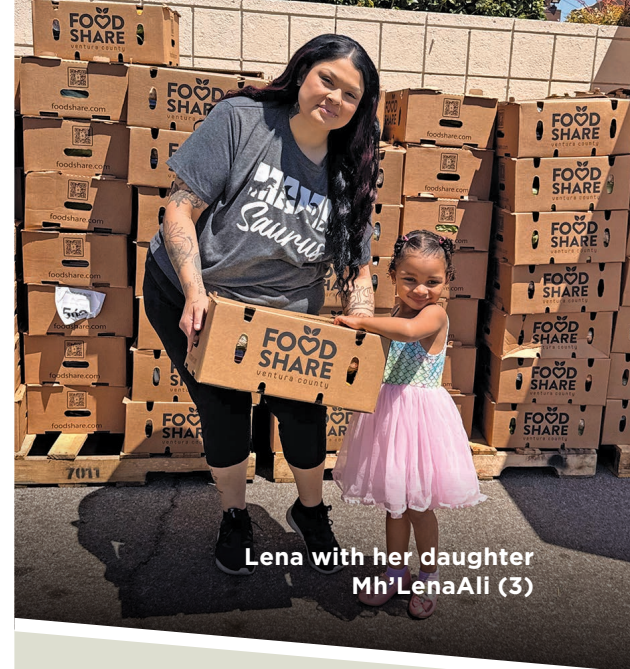


Lena with her son Roman (13)

Today, Lena's kids are not just fed but fueled for swimming, playing, and growing strong.

Your support is directly contributing to the health and well-being of Lena's children, making a real difference in their lives. And Lena has one less thing to worry about as she works toward a better future for her family.

To see videos of Lena and her family and read other stories of impact please visit foodshare.com/impact.



Lena with her daughter Mh'LenaAli (3)

“

"Having support from the food pantry saves me. It helps me worry less about food and focus on my studies."

— Lena

Thank you for being a part of Lena's story — and the stories of so many other Ventura County families. Your support is not just a donation; it's a vital part of the solution, and we couldn't do it without you.

Nourishing News

Food Share's Top Woman in Business!

We're thrilled to announce our President & CEO, Monica White, has been named one of *Pacific Coast Business Times* 2025 Top Women in Business!



Monica's dedication, vision, and tireless work to fight hunger in Ventura County inspires us daily. This recognition is well deserved — congratulations, Monica!

Best Place to Work – It's Official!

Food Share is proud to be named, once again, one of the *Pacific Coast Business Times* 2025 Best Places to Work! This honor reflects our mission-driven culture, compassionate leadership, and the everyday dedication of our team and volunteers.



Powered by You: Event Highlights



Stamp Out Hunger Delivers Big!

The National Association of Letter Carriers' annual **Stamp Out Hunger Food Drive 2025** once again proved the incredible power of tradition, dedication, and community spirit. While the format remained the same, the impact was anything but — over 120,000 pounds of food were collected in just **one day** across Ventura County!

Our local letter carriers went above and beyond, with one letter carrier finishing his route even after his vehicle broke down, ensuring every bag of food left out by our generous neighbors was picked up. It was a shining example of what can happen when a community comes together, with **volunteers, letter carriers, and residents** all playing a part in making sure no one goes hungry.

Huge thanks to the Letter Carriers, USPS staff, volunteers, food donors and everyone who helped make this year's drive such a massive success. Hunger doesn't take a day off — and clearly, neither do you.

Driving Home the Dough: Father's Day Car Show

Engines revved, chrome shone, and hearts opened at the Father's Day Car Show. This feel-good event benefited Food Share as more than 300 car enthusiasts gathered at Channel Islands Harbor to show off their rides and rally against hunger. The family-friendly event helped fill Food Share's shelves with over 81,000 meals just in time for summer!



Toasting Generosity: Conejo Wine & Food Fest

Supporters savored the best of the Conejo Valley's culinary and wine scene while raising vital funds to support our hungry neighbors. The 2025 Conejo Wine & Food Fest put on by St. Paschal Baylon Men's Club of St. Paschal Baylon Church, was a delicious success, pairing community spirit with a powerful cause.

Thanks to the incredible generosity of attendees, sponsors, and volunteers, the event raised the equivalent of 15,000 meals for individuals and families across Ventura County.

Feed SoCal 2025: Your Community United

Our annual partnership with ABC7 and Stater Bros. Markets once again brought together the power of media, retail, and community to fight hunger across Southern California. Held at **Stater Bros. Markets in Simi Valley** on June 20, this year's campaign was a powerful reminder of what we can accomplish when we work together.

Thanks to the incredible support of shoppers, volunteers, and community partners, **Feed SoCal 2025 raised 303,000 pounds of food, all going directly** to feed our Ventura County neighbors in need.

Now in its 14th year, this long-standing campaign continues to demonstrate the strength of regional collaboration in driving food equity and raising awareness about hunger during the summer, in our communities. We're deeply grateful to everyone who helped make it a success!



The Difference You Make

Your kindness makes life a little easier for our Ventura County Seniors

At a recent Senior Food Box distribution, several of our older neighbors received brand-new rolling carts — and with them, a safer and easier way to access the food they rely on each month.

Many seniors walk home from distributions, often carrying heavy boxes while coping with health challenges or emotional loss. One recipient receives dialysis three times a week but still makes the trip to pick up their food box. Another, recently widowed, is adjusting to life alone and shared how much easier it now feels to get home with the new cart — and a little more dignity.

Food Share's **Senior Food Box program** enhances the health and well-being of **income-eligible seniors aged 60 and older** by providing **them with monthly, shelf-stable, nutritious food at 40 distribution sites** across Ventura County.

Thanks to your support, we're not only delivering food — we're helping people maintain their independence, even in challenging times.



Mark Your calendar!



Sept
20

Get Ready to Get FED UP

Dust off your boots and mark your calendars — the **4th Annual FED UP Shindig** is happening September 20, and it's going to be our best party yet!

We're bringing back everything you love: delicious bites, generous spirits, and that unbeatable down-to-earth vibe. Plus, by popular demand, we've expanded our **Silent Auction** to include all things **tableware** — think gorgeous, handcrafted pieces and stunning sets. And that's not all ... we're cooking up **brand-new activities** that have never been part of the Shindig before.

This is *the* feel-good, come-as-you-are event of the season, where every laugh, every bid, and every toast helps feed our hungry neighbors. **Don't miss it! Buy your tickets now at www.foodshare.com/fedup.**

Nov
8-9

Ventura County Potters' Guild Bowl of Thanks

Ventura County Potters' Guild (VCPG) *Bowl of Thanks* will be held at Ventura Harbor on November 8 & 9. Handmade bowls are \$25, and the first 250 purchasers each day will receive a free tasting at select harbor restaurants. This is a fantastic event in a beautiful location, and the best part is that VCPG donates all Bowl of Thanks sales to Food Share!

Dec
4-6

CAN-tree

CAN-tree is everyone's favorite event of the year, and our 14th annual CAN-tree drive promises to be even bigger and better in 2025. Why not start a new family tradition by building and decorating a family tree or sponsoring one in honor of someone special? Full details are at foodshare.com/cantree.



Ventura County Hunger Sheet: *State of the County*



1 in 4 people in Ventura County experience food insecurity — including children, seniors, and working families. This sobering reality drives our mission and fuels the need for your continued support. This snapshot reflects the need in our community in calendar year 2024.

Pounds of Food Distributed	20,964,185
Equivalent Number of Meals Provided	17,470,154
Retail Value of Food Distributed*	\$66,372,610
Emergency Food Boxes Distributed	38,790
Number of Residents Served Through Pantries	249,516
Percent of County Population Served	29.71%
Number of Retail/Grocery Partners	112
Number of Pantry Partners	200
Number of Food Distribution Locations	335

All data is from calendar year 2024.

**The estimated value at full retail price of the distributed food.*







Food Share Launches Bold New Strategic Plan Ahead of 50th Anniversary



As Food Share approaches its 50th anniversary in 2028 and continues to look for impactful ways to serve our community, we are proud to share our new strategic plan — a roadmap to a stronger, more inclusive, and more resilient future.

Grounded in our legacy and built for the future, this plan outlines how we will continue to meet the evolving needs of Ventura County with compassion, innovation, and integrity. It affirms our commitment to ensuring that no one in our community goes hungry, while expanding our impact in new and meaningful ways.

Key strategic priorities include:

-  Increasing access to nutritious, culturally relevant food;
-  Strengthening and supporting our partnerships within our nonprofit network;
-  Building long-term financial and operational sustainability;
-  Deepening community engagement and elevating the voices of those we serve.

This plan reflects more than a year of listening, learning, and planning with our staff, board, partners, and community members. Together, we are shaping the next chapter of Food Share's story — one rooted in service, guided by equity, and driven by a shared vision of a hunger-free Ventura County.








Your Support Fuels Everything We Do

Food Share relies on the generosity of our community through donations of funds, food, and time to help feed over 250,000 people across Ventura County every year. For every **\$10 you donate**, we provide **30 nutritious meals** for someone in need of food assistance.

Will you consider becoming a **Food Share GEM — Give Every Month-er?** GEMs ensure that no one in Ventura County goes hungry — not just today, but **throughout the year**. Monthly gifts provide us with reliable, consistent support, enabling us to plan effectively, respond quickly to emerging needs, and serve our neighbors with dignity. Simply check the box for monthly contributions on your remittance slip or call today to get set up. Just **\$50/month** provides **150 meals** to local families in need.

There are many other ways to give:

-  **Gift of Stock:** An efficient and **tax-smart** way to give that can make a lasting impact.
-  **Donor Advised Funds (DAFs):** A simple, flexible giving option that allows you to support Food Share while maximizing your **tax benefits**.
-  **Leave a Legacy:** Remember Food Share in your **estate plans** and support our mission for years to come.
-  **Cryptocurrency:** We currently accept more than 70 cryptocurrencies.
-  **Distributions:** We gladly accept IRA and Qualified Charitable Distributions (QCD)

If you would like additional information about any of these donation programs, please contact Jennifer Caldwell, Chief Development Officer, at 805-983-7100 x129, or via email at jcaldwell@foodshare.com.

**Thank you for being part of the solution.
Together, we are leading the fight against
hunger in Ventura County.**



Impact of OUR Work



250,000

Food Insecure Neighbors
Served Annually



200

Agency Partners and Pantries



4,400

Volunteers Provided 44,000
Hours of Service



16,000,000

Meals Provided Last Year

**FOOD
SHARE**
ventura county

MEMBER OF
**FEEDING
AMERICA**

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