

*the
harvester*

FEBRUARY 2026 NEWSLETTER

WWW.FOODSHARE.COM


**FOOD
SHARE**
ventura county



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PRESIDENT & CEO**
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Thank You from Monica White, President & CEO

Dear Friends,

As we begin a new year, I'm filled with gratitude for the generosity and compassion that continue to sustain Food Share and the thousands of neighbors we serve.

Reflecting on 2025, we stood strong through challenging times. Last November's government shutdown and subsequent SNAP benefit delays resulted in even more members of our community needing our support. Thanks to your generosity, no one was left behind.

Facing both man-made and natural disasters have pushed our facility of the last 40 years to its limits, revealing just how critical additional space and upgrades are to continue our work. In this issue, you'll read about **Feeding Our Future**, our plan to build a new home for Food Share that will allow us to meet the growing need across Ventura County now and for decades to come.

It's a milestone moment for our organization — and for everyone who believes that no one in our community should go hungry. I welcome conversations to share more about this legacy project and hope you will join us in *Feeding our Future*.

As always, thank you for your support and helping to feed hope in 2026.

Monica White

Monica White
President & CEO



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CEO Monica White and Ellen Wohlstader



Together, We Feed VC

Bowl of Thanks Generates Over 60,000 Meals for Ventura County

The Ventura County Potters' Guild's **2025 Bowl of Thanks** at Ventura Harbor Village was a wonderful celebration of community, creativity, and generosity. Hundreds of handcrafted bowls, donated by the Ventura County Potters' Guild, local potters and colleges, were sold to support Food Share's mission. Several restaurants within the Ventura Harbor contributed free, delicious tastings, adding warmth and flavor to the day. Together, these efforts provided **over 60,000 meals** for neighbors experiencing food insecurity.

Save the Date

The Ventura County Potters' Guild's 5th Annual Bowl of Thanks will take place on November 7 & 8, 2026.

The Difference We Make

Food Share Wins Oxnard Trophy

Food Share of Ventura County has received the 2025 Oxnard Trophy from the West Ventura County Business Alliance, recognizing its remarkable impact on the community.

"West Ventura County Business Alliance is thrilled to award Food Share the Oxnard Trophy," said Andy Conli, President & CEO. "Food Share provides much more than meals, it gives dignity and hope to our community and brings positive attention to Oxnard, showing it as a place of beauty and compassion."



Building a *Hunger-Free* Ventura County

feeding **our future**



For nearly five decades, Food Share has been the heartbeat of hunger-relief in Ventura County. Growing from a garage operation in 1978 into a countywide network today, Food Share now feeds **250,000 neighbors each year**.

Our current warehouses are at full capacity, pushing operations beyond our limits, even with an off-site facility. As hunger has surged — fueled by fires, floods, inflation, and ongoing economic challenges — our space limits the amount of food we can store, sort, and distribute. **This lack of space is hindering Food Share's ability to continue serving the growing need across Ventura County.**

That's why Food Share has launched the **Feeding Our Future Capital Campaign** — a \$50 million investment to build a new, **85,000 square-foot food bank** on Mariner Drive in Oxnard. This modern facility will double our warehouse space, increase refrigeration and freezer capacity, add six loading docks, and **bring all of our operations under one roof.**

Thanks to the incredible generosity of our community, we've already raised \$32 million through public funding, board designated reserves, and trailblazing gifts of support. Now, we are inviting supporters like you to help us cross the finish line. Your gift to this final phase of the campaign will help make this vision a reality — a food bank built for the future of hunger relief in Ventura County.

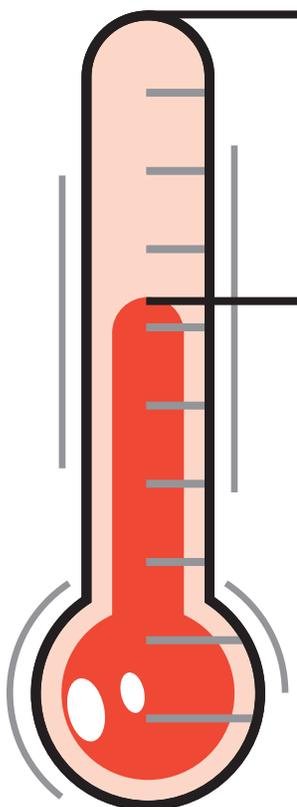
When complete, the new Food Share facility will have the capacity to **distribute 40 million pounds of food annually, doubling our current capacity.**

Your support will help create a lasting legacy of compassion, dignity, and access to food for all.

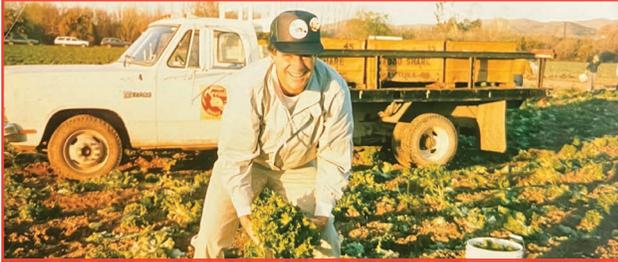
Please join us in *Feeding Our Future* at www.foodshare.com/future.

Campaign Goal:
\$50 Million

Total Raised:
\$32 Million



Timeline to *Feeding Our Future*



1978: The Beginning

Operating out of a two-car garage, volunteers gleaned and distributed 34,000 pounds of produce.



2022: 1425 Mariner Dr.

Purchased 11.8-acre site to build a modern food bank capable of doubling storage and distribution.



1982: The Fire Station

Moved into an unused fire station in Saticoy and distributed 1 million pounds of food.



2025: Design Complete

City of Oxnard Planning Commission gives unanimous approval for project.



1985 & 2005:
4156 and 4183 Southbank Road

Purchased and expanded first and second warehouses to meet rapidly rising demand.



2026/2027: Groundbreaking

Pending permit approval, pre-construction to begin.



2020: Third Warehouse

COVID-19 brought a further escalation in demand. A 10k sq. ft. warehouse was leased.



2028/2029: Building Complete

Food Share moves into its new home.



Fueled By *Generosity*

2025
CANtree
drive
14TH ANNUAL



In December, CAN-tree once again transformed Figueroa Plaza in downtown Ventura into a sparkling celebration of generosity and creativity. Each tree was adorned with colorful decorations, twinkling lights, and carefully crafted ornaments that reflected its unique spirit. With 180 trees built, each CAN-tree provided much-needed meals, a total of 200,000 pounds of food for our neighbors.

Join us for our 15th Annual CAN-tree on December 3-5, 2026, where a magical display of art, community and giving combine to provide nourishment for our neighbors.

CAN-tree Facts



180 trees plus
7 HUGE trees holding
10,000 cans of food each!



120 different businesses,
schools, agencies, and
organizations joined in



200,000 pounds
of food equals
167,000 meals



232 volunteers
donated
680 hours

The Biker Grinch Who Didn't Steal Christmas — He Delivered It

Biker Grinch Ventura wore leather instead of velvet and rode into Food Share on a motorcycle instead of a sleigh, proving once again that the heart of our community is bigger than any stereotype.

This holiday season, the Biker Grinch rallied riders, friends, and generous supporters for his annual diaper drive — aptly named “Stink, Stank, Stunk.” With humor, heart, and a whole lot of horsepower, the drive collected thousands of much-needed diapers for local families served through Food Share of Ventura County.

Diapers are one of the most requested — and least donated — items for families with young children. They're essential, expensive, and impossible to stretch. When parents don't have access to diapers, it affects everything from a child's health to a caregiver's ability to work.

To the Biker Grinch and every donor who participated in Stink, Stank, Stunk: thank you for turning a playful idea into powerful action. Your generosity reminds us that compassion shows up in many forms — and sometimes, it rides a motorcycle.



Your Impact in Action

Local Senior Grateful for Food Share's Support

At 75, Louise from Port Hueneme has always worked hard to stay independent. But when degenerative wrist pain forced her to stop her part-time job and federal benefits were cut, she suddenly found herself facing an impossible choice between rent and food.

"After paying rent, there's just not enough left for food some months," she shared.

Louise discovered Food Share while looking for volunteer opportunities. She began attending distributions to supplement her diet with fresh produce and pantry staples — rice, beans, and vegetables that stretch her limited budget. *"It's been a godsend,"* she says.

Having access to healthy food means Louise can stay in her home, tend her small garden, and keep her dignity. *"Without Food Share,"* she admits, *"I'd probably have to move again."*

To the people who donate and volunteer, Louise's gratitude is simple but profound: *"You're such good people. God bless you. You don't know how much of an impact this makes for those of us who are struggling and frightened."*



Watch Louise's interview at [foodshare.com/impact](https://www.foodshare.com/impact)



Mark Your Calendars!

- Bi-Monthly** Join a (free) *Food for Thought* breakfast or lunch to tour our warehouses and see how we feed 250,000 neighbors experiencing food insecurity each year
- Mar 26** March to a Million Meals! Starting March 12 and culminating on Day of Giving, March 26, fundraising teams will compete to raise the most — jump in and help your favorite team win! [foodshare.com/million](https://www.foodshare.com/million)
- May 9** *Stamp Out Hunger Food Drive* with the National Association of Letter Carriers
- June 21** *Father's Day Car Show* at Channel Islands Harbor, Oxnard



- Sept 19** 5th Annual FED UP Shindig at Food Share
- Nov 7-8** Ventura County Potters' Guild's Bowl of Thanks at Ventura Harbor
- Dec 3-5** 15th Annual CAN-tree Drive in Downtown Ventura

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



Food Drives 2026

Help Us Feed Our Neighbors — Host a Food Drive!

We are so grateful to the community members who powered **more than 300 food drives** in 2025. Your generosity provided **thousands of pounds of food** and brought comfort to our neighbors.

Hunger is a year-round challenge, and you can make a difference anytime. Hosting a food drive is simple and impactful — collecting essentials like peanut butter, canned tuna or chicken, beans, rice, and pasta helps families stay fed and healthy.

Host a food drive today and join our community in ensuring that every neighbor has access to nutritious meals, no matter the season. For a food drive toolkit, visit foodshare.com/fooddrives.



Shelf Life Guide

Product	Example	Life After Expiration
Liquid Beverages	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

Most
Needed
Foods

Canned Protein
Peanut Butter
Canned Vegetables
Canned Fruit

Rice
Soup
Beans (Canned or Dry)
Pasta (Noodles & Sauce)
Cereal (Low Sugar)



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MEMBER OF
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