

FISH Food Bank
June 2018
Coordinators Newsletter

As I started writing this newsletter I was thinking about what information volunteers need to help them do a better job. There are a couple of things coming down the road but since I do not have complete information on them I am going to wait to share it with you until I can give everyone the full story.

But one thing we need to prepare for is the coming of the short term cherry pickers that typical are housed in Mosier. Yes, it is almost cherry season. It is estimated that they will start picking the early cherries around the June 10 and should be in full swing with picking of the Bings by June 20.

Since a lot of the short term cherry pickers live in Mosier, many of them come to Hood River for food assistance. In getting the paperwork ready for this short term group of client it reminded me that some of the families come back year after year. I started keeping separate forms for this group in 2010 and some families come every year.

Because there are many families that return year after year, we try to streamline the paperwork and just update the first form they have filled out. Does this sound familiar? It is like filling out the green form, except we just mark on the original form instead of a new paper. This makes it easy for the clients and easy for the individual registering the individuals.

Cherry season always adds clients to our normal numbers. So I recommend groups working the distribution for the next month and a half be prepared for a few higher numbers and an increased number of Spanish language speakers.

On a different note, I wanted to share a conversation I had with a new client. This conversation reminded my why the FISH food bank is so important to our community. I started the conversation by giving her the normal information about how if they find themselves totally out of food, they can always come back. Teary eyed, she explained how her husband was diagnosed with cancer two months ago and has been hospitalized 3 times since then. He has not been able to work and her work is not being very supportive. They are basically out money and being able to receive food was very much a blessing for her and her family. I was happy we were able to lighten her load, even just a little bit.

This is just one example of how we are important to many people in Hood River County. Thanks for all you do.

Billie Stevens
FISH Food Bank

How to Process Summer Migrant Workers

In 2017 we had 38 families that were in our area just for the cherry picking season. Because these families come just to pick the cherries and are here usually only about 6 weeks at the most, we process them a little different. The individuals who work in the apple and pear orchards are here usually at least 4 or more months. So we process this group of individuals as regular clients.

Many of the migrants that are picking cherries are repeat customers and are in our system. This makes the registration process easier (especially if you are not a Spanish speaker.)

For the individuals who are here just the short time to pick cherries, we will use the same system we have used in the past. I will try to be at the Hood River site most night, but I do have some vacation time scheduled.

Here is the process to register the clients that are here only for 1 or 2 months:

1. Start by seeing if the family or individual is in the area for only the short cherry picking season. If they are here longer, then process them like regular clients
2. If they are only here for a month or two then proceed as follows:
 - A. We **do not give punch cards to this group of individuals.**
 - B. At Hood River and Odell sites there is a notebook with **just** the migrant families' forms from past years. Also there is a folder with a master list. Parkdale has a master list.
 - C. Check the master list to see if the clients are listed.
 - D. If their name is not on the Master List, then they need to fill out a form. They do not have to show proof of address as they are not here permanently. They then can receive food.
 - E. If their name is on the list:
 1. Go in the notebook and find their form.
 2. If this is the first time they have been in for this year, pull their form from the notebook.
 3. Confirm the information is correct, if not ask them to change what is not correct. Many will not know their address, so they can just put the town like Mosier.
 - a. Then on the date line, cross out last year's date and write this year's date.
 - b. Put their Registration Form with the other forms that need processed.
 - c. **They will receive the full allotment of food.**

1. They do not get a punch card, just give them a card showing number of family members for the shopping area.
2. If this is their first time this year, please give them the letter reminding them they can only come once a month.
- d. If the farm worker client returns for the second month:
 1. Once again go to their form in the **"Migrant Client"** notebook
 2. This time mark on the sheet attached to the form that they received food and leave it in the notebook.
- e. If you see it is their second time in one month, they can have an Emergency Bag, like all clients. Please mark on the form found on the Registration Form that they received food a second time that month.

I know this seems like a lot of steps, but it actually has worked pretty well in past years. It is faster than trying to have everyone fill out a new form. Just ask if you have any questions.

Dinner Tonight—OSU Program at FISH Food Bank

OSU Extension is trying out a new idea, called Dinner Tonight. They are putting together an idea for a meal using the food available at the Food Bank. You will find a picture and/or actual food along with the recipe and the spices that are needed in the recipe. We are asking you to encourage the clients to take a recipe and try the idea. The OSU Extension Agents sent a long this letter to explain the program:

Dear FISH Food Bank Volunteers,

We are trying out a new program called 'Dinner Tonight' and we need your help to encourage FISH Food Bank clients to engage with this exciting new opportunity. Every month there will be a new Dinner Tonight meal displayed on the cart in the waiting area. These meals will include healthy foods from inside the pantry to give clients ideas on how to utilize the food and prepare meals for themselves and their families. There will be a recipe handout with spices for clients to take as well.

Three Key Points for 'Dinner Tonight' as a Volunteer:

1. Familiarize yourself with the recipe of the month
2. Look for the Food Hero stickers in the pantry
3. Encourage clients to take a recipe and spices

Feel free to check out the spin rack in the back of the waiting area for more recipes featuring fresh and local ingredients. In addition to encouraging clients to engage with 'Dinner Tonight' you can encourage clients to take as many recipes from the spin rack as well!

If you like this and want to learn more about how you can be involved with other cooking/healthy food related volunteer opportunities please join us for a **Food Hero Volunteer training on June 27th 9am-2pm** location to be determined (please contact Bridget or Lauren).

If you have any questions or suggestions for these programs please contact Bridget Hinton and/or Lauren Kraemer at 541.386.3343 or bridget.hinton@oregonstate.edu and lauren.kraemer@oregonstate.edu

We thank you very much for your assistance,
Bridget and Lauren

Special Thank You

Last month was the annual Postal Carriers Food Drive. There was over 3,500 pounds of food donated. While it was the Post Office Food Drive, FISH volunteers put a lot of effort into making sure this happens. If you see the following volunteers, thank them for giving an extra hand. Leslie Hidle for providing a special thank you to the letter carriers. Gary McFarlen, Mike Hendricks and Alan Yenne for driving around and picking up food. Glenna and Doug Mahurin for taking care of the food in Parkdale.

There is a special thank you to Barb Williams who baked treats for the carriers, spoke to the carriers about the process, coordinated with the post office, and coordinated the drivers who picked up food, picked up the food in Parkdale, and picked up the food at the Odell postal area. Barb was a key person in the success of this food drive.

Of course thanks to everyone who helped, sort and store the food. That is always a major job and we could not get it done without all your help.

Food Hero Training

The OSU Extension is conducting a training called Food Hero, which will train volunteers to teach cooking/healthy food programs. The training will be on June 27 from 9:00 AM to 2:00 PM. If you would like to learn more about this contact the OSU Extension Service at 541-386-3343.

Lions Food Drive

The Lions Clubs in Hood River are conducting a food drive for FISH this coming Saturday, June 9. You will see them at Rosauers, Walmart and the stores in Parkdale and Odell. Food from this drive will go to the Hood River, Mid-Valley and Parkdale sites. At Hood River we will need a little extra help in sorting the food on Monday, June 11. We will start sorting by 8:30 AM and continue until it is done or until noon. If you or individuals you work have a little extra time, stop by and give a hand.

Civil Rights Training—Has your Group Competed it?

I am not trying to nag you, but each year the Oregon Food Bank requires that we retrain our volunteers on Civil Rights. Has the group you worked with competed the form for this year?

This is a simple process, we need to just ask our volunteer to once again reread the handout on "Civil Rights Training" and sign the form. New this year there is a Confidentiality Form to also sign.

So if your group has not signed the Civil Rights training form and Confidentiality form, please ask them to do it. Thanks for your help.

FISH Board Meeting—June 13

The June FISH Board meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, June 13 at 12:00 Noon at the Hood River Tucker Road FISH Site. The meeting is open and anyone who would like to attend is welcome.

Important Dates to Put on Your Calendar

June 13	FISH Board of Directors meeting
June 9	Lions Food Drive
June 11	Sorting food from Lions Food Drive, Hood River

Enjoy the warm sunny days.

Billie Stevens
FISH Food Bank
541-490-5109

