



The Local Food and Hunger Connection

Helping Food Insecure People in Your Community Eat Locally



- **Plant a Row for the Hungry.** If you are a gardener check out this national initiative to grow extra food for your area food shelves or soup kitchens. This is a great project to do with youth. Promote this within the 4-H community.
- Volunteer at your regional food shelf or pantry to orchestrate fresh food donations. Often food shelves have no refrigeration and limited storage. Working with your local UW-Extension Nutrition program to coordinate a fresh food drop off and pick up system will encourage farmers and gardeners to share.
- Encourage local farmers who host a CSA program to ask members to sponsor a share. With a very minimal increase in member fees, one (or more) shares can be subsidized or donated to a family in need. Talk with your local WIC programs or Family Resource Center to identify families in need.
- Organize an orchard gleaning event. Many orchards are eager to part with slightly damaged or late fruit. This donation can then be given to regional food pantries. A few volunteers and a few hours can mean a lot of nutritious produce for hungry people.
- Encourage your local UW-Extension Nutrition Educator or Family Living Educator to host food demonstrations at farmers' markets. These events give people a chance to taste produce they may not have tried and come away with useful resources for cooking, processing, and storing fresh food.
- Cook with a child. UW-Extension may offer or be willing to offer cooking experiences for children. When a child is engaged in food preparation they are more likely to eat a varied diet. Working with fresh food is a life long skill, as well.
- Cook with a friend. Learning how to manage seasonal produce can be a challenge. Buying food together and preparing healthy foods for future meals is time saving and encourages seasonal food purchases. Again, UW-Extension may offer adult cooking classes. Encourage the use of local seasonal produce for these events.
- Volunteer at school gardens. This is a phenomenon that is taking off because of all of the advantages of making this kind of connection with food. Even a day or two during the summer would be a valued contribution. Volunteering to process or preserve food is also a valued donation of time.
- Shop at your local farmers' markets. If farmers are making a solid living selling their food they are in a better position to consider options for food insecure people such as discounts and donations. Engage farmers in a discussion about hunger and food insecurity in your community.
- Educate agency staff who work with food insecure people (WIC, FoodShare, etc) about local food. Make sure they are aware of current federal and state voucher programs. Make sure they are aware of market schedules and locations. Encourage them to talk to their clients about fun family time at the farmers' markets.



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WEBSITES:

FEAST - <http://chequamegonfeast.googlepages.com>
Partner Shares Program, a CSA model - www.macsac.org
Plant a Row for the Hungry Information - www.gardenwriters.org