

HISTORY OF THE FCFP AND SUPPORTED PROJECTS:

2013: *Partners come together around the common goal of improving access to healthy foods in the Foothills region*

2013-14: *The Winter and Spring Pantry program launches, serving MBSD students with healthy, kid-friendly meals and snacks over school breaks*

October 2014: *A series of listening sessions gather community opinions and ideas about how to improve access to healthy foods in the Foothills*

November 2014: *The Foothills Food Summit brings together over 60 local residents, businesses, farmers, government, and community organizations, leading to the development of the Foothills Food Access Plan*

June-October 2015: *Twin Sisters Market, a mobile farmers market, serves multiple locations in the Foothills with fresh, Foothills-grown produce and other goods*

October 2015: *The East Whatcom Photovoice Project engages local volunteers to explore hunger and community solutions through photography*

October 2015: *Whatcom County, with support from the Opportunity Council and Foothills Food Bank, receives \$750,000 in Community Development Block Grant funding to construct a second building at the EWRRRC, which would provide a permanent home for the Foothills Food Bank*

November 2015: *The Foothills Food Bank applies for funding through the USDA Community Food Projects program to support strategies from the Foothills Food Access Plan*

December 2015: *The Winter Pantry serves over 200 students, doubling the number of kids served from last year*

Foothills Community Food Partnership

2015 in Review

The FCFP is a grassroots, community-based coalition of community members and partner agencies, formed to promote access to healthy foods for all residents of the Foothills region.



A letter from FCFP partner agency, the Foothills Food Bank...

The Foothills Food Bank had an epic year in 2015. We made significant progress on our goals of increasing the number of families and individuals served in our programs, building partnerships with other organizations serving low income families, and in raising funds towards our purchase of refrigerated/frozen storage space so we can offer more perishable and healthy food items. Highlights from 2015 include:

- A \$3,000 grant from the Whatcom Community Foundation supported us in continuing the Winter and Spring Pantry Programs. This funding allowed us to serve 110 students from 46 families during the 2015 Spring Pantry Program and 209 students from 76 families for the Winter program from all three MBSD elementary schools.
- A local farmer grew produce for the Foothills Food Bank this summer through Sustainable Connections' Food to Bank On program. The farm was only a 1/2 mile away from St. Peter's Church and the vegetables were about as fresh as you can get. Local residents continued to donate surplus vegetables from their home gardens, helping us provide fresh food to our customers.
- Our "Chill Fund" grew to around \$22,000, thanks to local Foothills residents' contributions. Our goal is to raise \$30,000 to purchase a walk-in refrigeration/freezer unit so we can increase our offerings of perishable food items.
- We partnered with the Opportunity Council to raise funds to build a second building at the East Whatcom Regional Resource Center site, which will include space for the Foothills Food Bank. We're now entering into the design phase of the building and anticipate moving into the building sometime in 2017.
- With our partners in the Foothills Community Food Partnership, we wrote a USDA Community Food Projects grant proposal to support paid Food Bank staff, partnerships with local farmers, and expansion of our ability to provide fresh, nutritious food to Foothills residents.
- WSU Extension's Food \$ense program has been providing cooking demonstrations and nutrition education once per month at the Tuesday morning distribution. We want our customers to have the skills they need to be able to prepare healthy nutritious meals for themselves with the food items that they are receiving.
- The monthly Mobile Food Pantry distribution at the EWRRRC site continued in 2015, thanks to our partnerships with Food Lifeline and the Opportunity Council. Not only are we able to provide an extra distribution day each month, thanks to the Whatcom Humane Society, we also have a pet food distribution and local social service agencies provide outreach about resources available in Whatcom County for those in need.

Thanks to everyone who contributed their time, money and energy to the Foothills Food Bank in 2015. By working together, we can ensure our neighbors have enough nutritious, healthy food to eat and alleviate hunger in the Foothills.

Gratefully,

Cheryl Thompson

Foothills Food Bank Board President

2015-2016 Initiatives

These initiatives represent our vision for the next year, and where the FCFP will be focusing its efforts through 2016.

911

Whatcom County Fire District 14 Stations are stocked with an adequate supply of healthy, non-perishable food for distribution in emergency situations.

A WTA bus stop is constructed at Saint Peter's Church on Mount Baker Highway to improve access for Foothills Food Bank clients



Twin Sisters Mobile Farmers Market is supported by the community in bringing fresh, locally-grown produce to east Whatcom County.

The EWRRRC acts as the storage hub and home for a second Foothills Food Bank distribution.



The Winter and Spring Pantry program supplies low-income MBSD students with supplemental nutritious food to help prevent hunger over school breaks.

MBSD schools have thriving gardens and integrated food education programs.



Our Vision:

All Foothills residents are fed, nourished, and have the resources to access the food they need.

WHAT'S NEXT?

We are continuing to implement the strategies outlined in our **Foothills Food Access Plan**.

In 2016, we hope to see a second Foothills Food Bank distribution at the EWRRRC and funding to support paid food bank staff.

We are collaborating with the MBSD to develop a shared vision for food and garden education in schools.

We are working in support of the Twin Sisters Market to expand and accept EBT, and bring the Fresh Bucks SNAP-incentive program to the Foothills.

In May, we will be welcoming a new AmeriCorps VISTA, who will act as FCFP Coordinator.

Thank you for your support and passion for promoting healthy food access in the Foothills region!

Learn more about our 2015-2016 Initiatives **HERE**.

For more information or to get involved, please contact us at **foothillsfoodpartnership@gmail.com**