



Madras Community Food Pantry

Food for Thought

mcfp.volunteer@outlook.com

www.madrascommunityfoodpantry.com

Our Board

President:
Patty Lieuallen

Vice-President:
Nancy Jolstead

Secretary:
Les Weidner

Treasurer:
Donna Hagedorn

Board Members:
Paul Brown
Kathy Evans
Angela Guerassio
Antonia Botero
Jon Weiss
Father Victor Mena
Tami Kepa'a

Executive Director:
Kathleen May

What's New for 2025

from MCFP Executive Director

A lot changed for the Food Pantry in 2024! If you've been following our struggles with finding a new location, then you know it has been a roller coaster ride. We do have a new building, just not the one we planned on.



Our new home, Labbeemint Building

In February you will start to see activity at the Labbeemint building at 370 Culver Hwy. Jefferson County has purchased the building for our use. We have a signed lease and are waiting for the sale to be complete and a permit to be issued. We are eager to get started!

Although it is not as spacious as we would like, our cost for renovations to occupy this building is much less than the \$800,000 we anticipated for our previous site. Improvements include insulation and interior walls, an HVAC system, ADA access to the building, and an ADA restroom. Our most expensive project will be paving the parking area so that carts loaded with food will move easily. We hope to be moving in by May and in July apply for a Community Block Grant to add on an extra 2,000 sq ft. The new portion will be our hospitality and distribution area and the old part our warehouse.

The goal for moving, renovating, and enlarging is to improve access for those in our community who use, or would like to use, the food pantry. We'll do this by changing/expanding our operating hours to better meet the needs of our clients. We also plan to develop a garden area to provide more fresh produce. We are looking forward to the challenges that 2025 will bring!

Kathleen May
Executive Director



Finance Update



Volunteer Spotlight Donna Hagedorn

Donna has been involved with the pantry for three years. She is on the Board of Directors, holds the position of Treasurer, and is on the Finance Committee. She brings a vast knowledge of finance and organizational skills to the pantry.

She works tirelessly doing our monthly payroll and reporting, creating our annual budget, and contributing the financial data for all of our grants. She also volunteers in our food distribution program.

In addition to that she is the chair of our Festival of Trees fundraiser. 2024 was the first year for that event and Donna orchestrated it all. It was a great success!

Having lived in Madras for 40+ years she has many community contacts and always seems to know where to find the resources we need.

Donna you are appreciated for all that you do for MCFP.

The Pantry has been blessed with an abundance of donations this past year. We are thankful to the many individuals, organizations and community groups that support the Pantry, time and again.

The Pantry received a grant from United Way specifically for the purchase of food. This money had to be spent by the end of 2024, so currently our shelves are stocked to overflowing. We are pleased to have an abundance of food for our clients. This abundance will take us well into 2025.

In June, we had our 2nd annual "Dine Out" fundraiser. Numerous local restaurants and businesses supported "The Dine Out" making it a big success.

In November of 2024, we hosted our 4th annual Thanksgiving Dinner Box giveaway using monies: from the City of Madras' Community Grant, Grocery Outlet's "Independence from Hunger" fundraiser and monies from the United Way Grant. Once again, our community supported this program in a substantial way.

On December 7, 2024, we held our Annual Festival of Trees event at the Jefferson County Event Complex. This was our first year doing this fundraiser and we were please with the outcome. Next year will be even bigger and better.

Once the County completes the purchase of the Labbeemint building in Madras, we will begin the renovations necessary to make it our new home. Monies from the CO Health Council grant and other grants and donations will be used for this renovation.

With the addition of new programs spotlighted in this newsletter, our operating expenses have grown. Any donation given would help us cover our monthly expenses. You can mail our donation to Madras Community Food Pantry, PO Box 646, Madras, OR 97741 or visit our website: www.madrascommunityfoodpantry.com. We are thankful to our community for the continued support, which makes it possible for us to consistently meet our monthly expenses.



1st Annual Festival of Trees

On December 7th, 2024 we held our first annual Festival of Trees fundraiser at the Jefferson County Fairgrounds. It was a “sold-out” event with close to 200 individuals in attendance. Joe Davis of the Black Bear Diner cooked a delicious dinner, with the prime rib being provided by Lowell and Mary Forman of Antelope.

Sixteen Christmas trees were decorated by area organizations and auctioned off by Bob Sjolund. Those in attendance were asked to vote on their favorite decorated trees. Brightwood Corporation’s “Candy Cane Lane” was chosen Most Original. Dream’s Realty “The Grinch Everlasting” was chosen Most Unusual. Poland Dairy’s “Country Rustic” was elected as Voter’s Choice. Oregon Beef Company’s decorated tree “Meats & Cheese Galore” sold for the most amount.

A wide variety of “Silent Auction” items were donated and sold, adding to the Festival’s pro-ceeds. Our thanks to all who made this event a success. Thanks to our Festival of Trees Sponsors who supported us: Madras Elk’s Lodge, Cloud Crest Homes, State Farm Insurance, Easy Build Construction, Still’s Development, St. Patrick’s Knight’s of Columbus, Keith Walk-ing Floors, Madras Farms, Home Depot, Kathleen Avila and Cascade East Veterinary Clinic.

Several individuals commented on how much fun they had and that they plan to attend again next year. We have set our Festival of Trees for Friday, December 5, 2025. We plan to make it an even bigger and better event.



Amazing Community Donation



A huge Thank You to the First Interstate Bank for the surprise donation of \$25,000!, they made last November. The Pantry is so grateful and will use the money to fill the shelves and supply Thanksgiving boxes at the food pantry. You are a great asset to our community and we appreciate your support of the Madras Community Food Pantry!

The Green Bag Project

In October 2024, the Madras Community Pantry started a new program to help increase variety and availability of foods received from the food pantry. It is called the Jefferson County Food Project. It is a nationwide food pantry effort commonly referred to as "The Green Bag Project". It is currently active in Redmond, Bend, Prineville and several other communities in central Oregon as well as communities throughout the United States.

A Neighborhood Coordinator delivers a green bag to the individuals in their neighborhood. The individual neighbors are asked to keep the green bag for a month while they fill it with extra items from their personal grocery shopping trip. The bags are then collected on the second Saturday of every even month (Feb, April, June, Aug, etc). The filled bags are then delivered to the MCFP by the Neighborhood Coordinators where they are unloaded, weighed, sorted and stocked by community volunteers.



The first collection day was Dec. 14 which provided 700 pounds of food from eight neighborhoods to the MCFP. Our goal is to increase the number of neighborhoods where we are collecting the green bags and we hope to double the amount of food the next collection day which is Feb. 8th. If you would be interested in becoming a Neighborhood Coordinator in your area, or helping on collection days, please call the MCFP and we will get you started. We are looking to recruit more Neighborhood Coordinators.

2024 Great Madras Community Dine-Out

On June 6, 2024 the 2nd Annual "Great Madras Community Dine-Out" event was held. A total of 25 restaurants across Jefferson and Deschutes counties participated and raised \$6000. The event coincided with the "First Thursday" event in downtown Madras giving folks a chance to eat at the various restaurants participating. Dine-Out coordinator Les Weidner claims, "it's a win-win event because this event generates more customers for the businesses and in return the pantry receives a generous donation from the businesses.

The 3rd Annual "Dine-Out" will be held on the first Thursday in June, June 5th, 2025.



Fresh Alliance Program

Fresh Alliance is the retail food recovery program of NeighborImpact in partnership with the Oregon Food Bank and national organization Feeding America. Les Weidner is the Madras Community Food Pantry Coordinator who works with volunteer Paul Brown. Each week they visit area grocers and retailers to pick up donations of food and supplies for the Pantry. This greatly helps cover shortages of food the Pantry routinely experiences. Safeway and Grocery Outlet are two grocers who donate the bulk of food collected.

Another product collected are bundles of paper grocery bags. The Pantry uses approximately 250 bags each week to bag frozen and refrigerated foods for Pantry clients. This represents \$50 of potential expense. During 2024, Les was able to get 6 area grocers to each donate 1 bundle of bags per quarter. The total savings to the Pantry is roughly \$2,500 per year. The participating grocers are: Trader Joe's, Safeway, Market of Choice, Local Acres, Oliver Lemons and Fred Meyer.

Fresh Harvest Kits



In June, 2024 the Madras Community Food Pantry (with the support of the High Desert Food & Farm Alliance) began offering FRESH HARVEST KITS to our clients. The “kits” are a grocery bag of food with a recipe and all the ingredients needed to cook a full meal for four. They include fresh vegetables from a local farm on the same day, as well as seasonings and shelf stable ingredients.

It's been very well received! Here are some of the comments that have been made: "I never buy lettuce because I can't afford it, but the Fresh Harvest Kit includes it!" and "It's cool to get all the ingredients to make a meal because I would never do it on my own" and "This introduces new vegetables to my family that I would have never bought on my own" and finally "I know this sounds silly, but this makes me feel rich- to bring one of these kits home to my family.”

Each Wednesday Virginia and Augustine (of 4 Acre Farm near Metolius) hand our Fresh Alliance Operation Manger (Les Weidner) the most beautiful, clean home-grown produce. Vegetables are bagged separately so that when Les gets back to the Pantry, he simply drops them into the kits.

The Fresh Harvest Kit program ran for 20 straight weeks in 2024 during the growing season (June - October). In 2025 the number of weekly kits will increase to 25 bags, and be offered each Wednesday on a first-come-first-served basis during regular Pantry hours.

Home Delivery Program

As a result of a community need identified by the Jefferson County Food Coalition (of which the Madras Community Food Pantry is a charter member), the HOME DELIVERY program was inaugurated in March, 2024. Target clientele is someone who is physically unable (disabled) or elderly seniors who do not have transportation to visit the Pantry.

On the afternoon of the 3rd Wednesday each month, volunteers contact those who have asked to be on a call list. The volunteer relays what foods are available. Based on the client's choices, boxes are packed and the following morning (the 3rd Thursday of the month) deliveries are made.

The number of clientele has continued to grow considerably and around 40 households per month are being served. The program operates within a 10 mile radius of the Pantry- serving Jefferson County communities as well as Metolius and Culver. Anyone who is interested in being added (to the call list) should call (541) 325-1747 and leave their contact information. A return call will be made the next Pantry business day.



Our Front Porch



The Madras Community Food Pantry may not have a front porch but we can still gather one morning a week for coffee, goodies and uplifting conversation.

Each Tuesday morning from 9:00 to 10:00 am volunteers gather at the United Methodist Church prior to opening the doors to the Pantry for the week. We like to call this our front porch because it symbolizes a time when people would sit out on their porch and connect with their neighbors. The gathering happens at the United Methodist Church prior to the opening for the week. It is a good way to start the week off.

Plant a Row

Madras Community Food Pantry thanks the community for another successful "Plant A Row" campaign. Home gardeners planted, nurtured and cultivated home crops during the months of May through November and delivered to us 1,189 pounds of fresh vegetables and fruit, which helped sustain 12,084 children and adults during that period of time. We are grateful to our Jefferson County community for partnering with us in providing healthy, fresh produce to those most in need who visit the MCFP each week. Again, thank you very much!



Chamber of Commerce Community Awards Banquet



On January 24th several pantry board members attended the awards banquet sponsored by the Chamber of Commerce.

The Madras Community Food Pantry received the Community Impact Award. "This award is given to an individual, organization or group that has made a significant and positive contribution to their community through initiatives, volunteer work or advocacy efforts that demonstrably improved the lives of others within their community." We're honored to have our community service recognized by receiving this award.

Welcome To Our New Board Members!



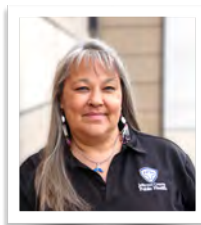
Father Víctor Mena is a Catholic priest. He was born and raised in Mexico City. He earned a degree in Actuarial Science and a Master in Education and Human Development. It was while he was teaching mathematics at the High School level that he was called to become a priest. During his priestly formation at Mt. Angel Seminary he earned a Master of Divinity degree. He has been the pastor of St. Patrick Catholic Church in Madras for 4 years.



Jon moved to Madras in November of 2020 when he purchased the Madras Grocery Outlet. When not at the store, he coaches JV basketball at Madras High School. Jon enjoys the beautiful weather, scenery and community that living in a small town in Central Oregon brings.



Maria "Antonia" Botero was born in Colombia and has called Culver home for 18 years. She has been married for 25 years. Antonia holds a General Associate's degree from Central Oregon Community College, a Bachelor's degree in Business, and a Master's degree in Economics from the Universidad Javeriana in Colombia. She has worked for several community organizations in Central Oregon. She currently works as an interpreter for health care organizations and volunteers as well.



Tami Kepa'a has been WIC Coordinator for Jefferson County since 2018. Tami also serves as the Breastfeeding Coordinator, Outreach Coordinator and Public Information Officer for Jefferson County Public Health. A resident of Madras since 2009. Tami is passionate about community outreach and engagement. She is married and has two adult children residing in Maui, HI and Bend, OR, as well as three adult stepchildren living in Oahu, HI, Kalispell, MT, and Las Vegas, NV.



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P.O. Box 646
Madras, OR 97741

If you would like to make a donation to the
Madras Community Food Pantry,
please make your check payable to
Madras Community Food Pantry

Send your check to:

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If you would like to volunteer, give us a call
at 541-325-9747 or email us at
mcfp.volunteer@outlook.com

Want to go paperless and receive our newsletter
electronically? Just contact us at the number
or email above.

Our Mission:

To alleviate hunger and food
insecurity for those persons
living in Jefferson County
and the surrounding areas
who are at risk

