



GRATITUDE REPORT The FISH NET Winter 2022-23

From Hungry to Hopeful: FISH Responds in a Time of Great Need



Soaring grocery costs. Surging gas prices. Skyrocketing rents. We see the stories on the news and in headlines every day. What does that mean for our local families? We see the results in our food lines each day.

At FISH, we are serving people who are living day to day with these budget-breaking prices. USDA reports that October 2022 retail food prices were 12.4% higher than October 2021. Eggs are predicted to increase 30% in 2022. While these are just numbers, they are having a major impact on the ability of our households to feed their families.

People need food. No one waits in line if they didn't need it. That is why we are here.

What keeps us up at night? Thinking about families in our lines with empty cupboards. Seniors who can't make their Social Security stretch to the end of the month. Individuals without homes and food. But we are grateful that we are able to fill cupboards, to provide nourishing foods for the growing number of people from infants to elderly, with and without homes.

"I eat so much better now due to all your fruits and vegetables!"

In the last year, our numbers, and the clients waiting in line, have nearly doubled (See page 3). People in need start lining up an hour before we open. But, with the support of financial and food donors and volunteer energy, we are working hard to make sure our produce bins are brimming, our canned goods are stocked and the coolers and freezers are full.

"We get to do Thanksgiving! We didn't know what we were going to do!"

This November, we gave away more than 600 turkeys with all the fixings for Thanksgiving dinner. It is very gratifying to imagine all those households enjoying a family dinner together. We hear from grateful clients every day.

Continued on page 3

Keeping Up with the FISH Team!

James Fitzgerald, Executive Director

Another year of serving our community is in the books...FISH's 53rd year. What an amazing year with record numbers of clients getting the food they need. We changed our format, but the mission and the compassion remain the same. We are here to serve anyone that comes to our doors and needs assistance. I am thankful for the Board that give such wise direction, for the small but dedicated staff that work so hard to serve the community, and for a community that cares about its own. In 2023, we plan expand our newest program, our Mobile Food Pantry. We anticipate adding many more locations to our route in efforts to break down barriers of people getting to us. We are also exploring every area of operations to see how we can be more effective and efficient at helping those in need. Hoping this finds you well, and that your 2023 is a blessed year. Happy New Year!



Anina Estrem, Operations Manager

2022 has been a year of growth for FISH- both in the scale of the work we're doing as well as in our education as anti-hunger champions. We've increased the number of people served, the pounds of food distributed, and our understanding of how to be a compassionate and respectful resource

for our community. Having spent another day watching a record-breaking number of shopping carts go out our door, heaping with delicious food, I am grateful for the community that has grown with us through this process. I appreciate the volunteers who have adapted to rapid systems change, the donors who continue to center FISH in their hearts, and the clients who allow us to experiment as we strive to build a better and stronger food pantry.

Megan Brown, Volunteer Coordinator

It has been amazing seeing the ways that FISH has grown and improved over the past year, from getting our mobile pantry to transforming into a shopping style pantry, all while keeping so many people fed. I am super grateful for all the volunteers that have put in thousands of hours to keep FISH running smoothly and for their compassion while helping others. We couldn't do it without them! I am also grateful for all the community support we have received, especially leading up to the holidays. I am excited to continue to build our volunteer team and see the other ways that FISH will grow and adapt to the increasing need for food.



FISH OF VANCOUVER BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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STAFF

James Fitzgerald, Executive Director

Anina Estrem, Operations Manager

Megan Brown, Volunteer Coordinator

Plus our very dedicated volunteers who donate thousands of hours each year to combatting hunger in our community.

Food Insecurity and Families in Need Skyrocket in Past Year

Continued from page one

We at FISH and our clients, are facing hunger together – one client, one family at a time. The double whammy of Covid and now food inflation are taking a toll on all.

*“Why didn’t I come here before?
Why was I hungry?”*

We are harnessing the power of community to tackle hunger. We will continue to innovate to meet the needs of our neighbors.

*“We live from paycheck to paycheck.
I am so thankful they have this here.
It is not only for the homeless
and the needy. It is also
for people like me.”*

We will continue to give the gift of nourishment here as we work to combat hunger and its root causes. Thanks to your support, we will continue to fill produce bins, stock shelves and feed anyone in need. Thank you for joining us as we move forward!

Always in Need at FISH

We can always use your donations of:

- Peanut butter and jelly
- Canned fruits, vegetables and soups
- Can openers
- Winter hats and socks
- Handwarmers
- New or lightly used cookbooks and children’s books

Drop donations by FISH, Monday through Friday, 9 am to 2 pm.

Coming Up!

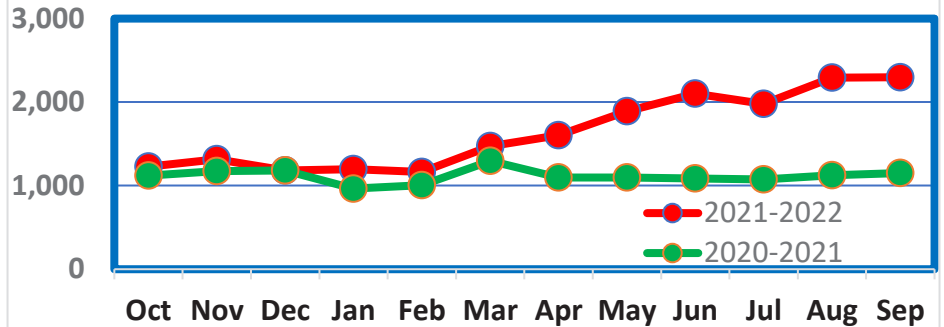
January 19, 2023 – Cashback Day at Beaches – Come support FISH!

May 2-3, 2023 – GiveBIG Campaign, replacing Give More 24

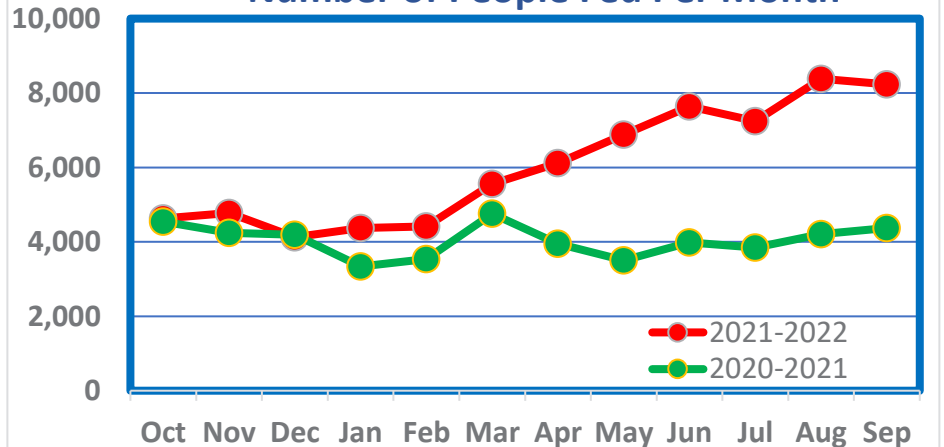
FISH ANNUAL STATISTICS – 2020-21 and 2021-22

Households Served	2020-21 – 13,373	2021-22 – 19,723
Number of People Fed	2020-21 – 48,479	2021-22 – 72,373
Pounds of Food Distributed	2020-21 – 767,890	2021-22 – 1,130,352

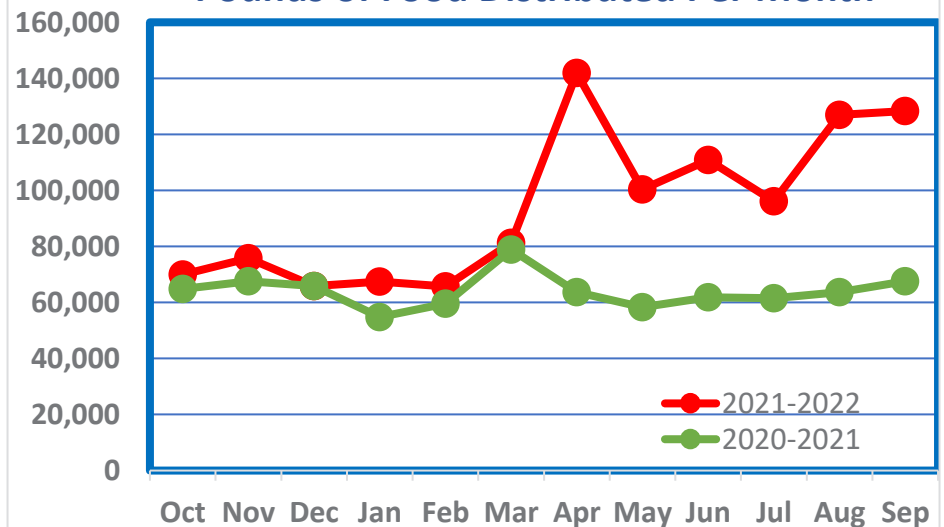
Households Served Per Month



Number of People Fed Per Month



Pounds of Food Distributed Per Month



Thank You, Donors! Your Contributions Give Access to Nutritious Foods and Help Combat Hunger for Thousands in Need in Our Community

\$25,000-\$60,000

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\$10,000-\$24,999

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Thank you to all our donors! This donor list reflects contributions made from October 1, 2021 – September 30, 2022. Note: Some Give More 24! donations arrive after Sept 30 and will be gratefully recognized in the next fiscal year. We strive to accurately list all names and donation levels and apologize for any discrepancies or omissions. Please contact us at 360-433-2244 to report any changes. Thank you!

There are many ways to help combat hunger at FISH of Vancouver!

Make a Financial Contribution

- Go to our secure Donate button at www.fishvancouver.org
- Become a Sustaining Member by becoming a monthly donor
- Hold a fundraiser for FISH
- Become a BFF (Business Friend of FISH)

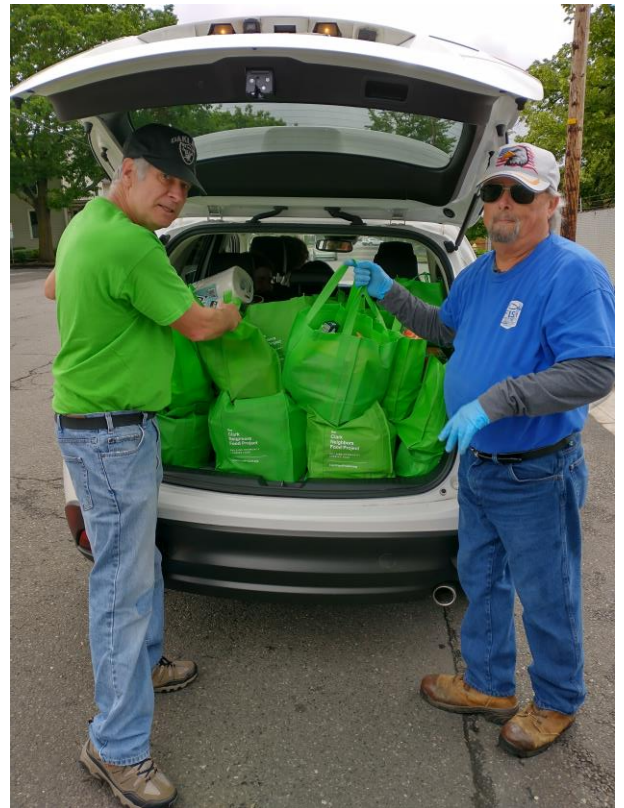
Involve Your Organization – Businesses, churches, service clubs and more...

- Sign up for volunteer projects, hold a food drive, organize a fundraiser

Join the FISH Team

- Volunteer to work a weekly shift at FISH or join the Mobile Pantry Team. Call Megan Brown for details at the Volunteer Hotline, 360-566-3243

We Give Thanks for the Thousands of Pounds of Food Donations that Fill Empty Cupboards and Feed Local Food Insecure Families



**Thank
You,
Food
Donors!**

Every day, FISH receives food donated from a variety of generous sources. Pictured here are some of our major food donors, clockwise from the top left, the Clark County Food Bank, Clark Neighbors Food Project, Glenwood Community Church food drive, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints and Grocery Outlet. Dave's Killer Bread donates 500 loaves of high-quality bread each week. Church, business and event food drives fill FISH barrels with donations. The Walk & Knock Local Food Drive provides thousands of pounds of food. Grocery stores give daily. **To ALL food donors, we say Thank You!**



FISH in Action – Distributing Food from the Pantry and in the Community



Hunger doesn't take a holiday. And neither does FISH. The new Mobile Food Pantry goes where the need exists including senior facilities (above and left) and sites like Sea Mar Community Health Centers. The Harney Street Pantry is always busy with shoppers and volunteers ready to give out nourishing foods. More than 600 turkeys, plus all the Thanksgiving fixings, were given out in November 2022 (below).



**GIVE
MORE 24!**
COMMUNITY FOUNDATION SOUTHWEST WASHINGTON

GENEROSITY
RISING

Thanks to you, FISH raised \$100,956!!! We couldn't have done it without you!
Thank you for helping to combat hunger in our community!