



SECOND
HARVEST
FOOD
BANK
ORANGE COUNTY

FALL 2021

Spreading Hope And Health



As many friends and families begin to plan their big meals and joyfully gather for the holiday season, we're busy preparing for an especially difficult time of the year for those facing food insecurity. The coming months are a critical time for giving. With a renewed spirit, this year we're focused on providing fresh, nutritious food to those who need us most, providing comfort at every turn.

The strength of our community relies on the physical and emotional well-being of every person who calls it "home," and consistent nutrition is critical when it comes to achieving this strength. Yet, **nearly 1 in 4 Orange County seniors faces food insecurity**—battling the simultaneous challenges of rising medication prices and increasing housing costs.

They need us now. In providing our senior population with consistent meals and nutritious food, we serve our community in more ways than one. Our seniors are veterans, grandparents, sisters, brothers, activists, neighbors, parents, friends and keepers of the keys to tomorrow. Their legacies and values cement those of the

generations that follow, imparting traditions and ideals that have been integral to Orange County.

Second Harvest Food Bank of Orange County has made remarkable advancements in how we serve those who need food assistance, but there's so much more to be done. With so many seniors relying on us each month, we cannot slow our innovation or momentum. Our decision to harvest and purchase fresh local food is one way we're gaining ground on hunger.

As we go into this season, ready to celebrate the holidays, let's practice gratitude by giving to every person we can. Our "home" is better when everyone shares in good health and happiness.

Caring For Our Seniors

A Chance to Serve Those Who've Served For Us

Victor, a U.S. Marine Corps veteran, and his wife, Elizabeth, face challenging times. When Victor suddenly faced a serious health challenge, Elizabeth had no choice but to quit her job and take care of him. As a result, they live off a fixed income that barely makes ends meet; some months the ends never meet at all.

Not knowing where to turn, Victor reached out to a fellow veteran for guidance and support. His friend pointed him to the Veterans office for help. Ultimately, he and Elizabeth were referred to a Second Harvest community partner, the Norman P. Murray Community Center.

The Norman P. Murray Community Center is a seniors-focused food distribution site for struggling individuals and families like Victor and Elizabeth. **"Second Harvest are angels in disguise. If it were not for the food bank, we would have an even harder time," said Elizabeth.**

We're very thankful they were referred to us, and we're truly honored to serve them.



Victor and Elizabeth
at the Norman P.
Murray Center

"Sometimes we didn't have enough money for groceries. Without food from the Norman P. Murray Community Center, we would have a hard time paying for rent, and bills and everything."

—ELIZABETH

**NEARLY 45% OF ORANGE COUNTY SENIORS
DON'T HAVE ENOUGH MONEY FOR THEIR
BASIC NECESSITIES.**

—According to the Elder Economic Security Index, which figures in housing, food, transportation and health care

SENIORS HERE IN ORANGE COUNTY NEED YOU. PLEASE GIVE TODAY.

To donate, call **949.653.2900** or visit **feedoc.org**

Cabbage & Good Cheer

The Farm's First Harvest is Bringing Forth a Bounty of Fresh Produce



**“Being outside,
together and in
the fresh air,
seeing what
we’re doing and
seeing nature,
it’s a win-win
everywhere.”**

**–SUSAN SANCHEZ-
KULURIS, VOLUNTEER
AT HARVEST
SOLUTIONS FARM**

This August, we launched the Harvest Solutions Farm on a sprawling 45-acre site at the South Coast Research and Extension Center (South Coast REC) in Irvine. To establish the Farm, 26,000 tiny cabbage transplants were planted to serve Orange County residents in need. Broccoli and celery have also been planted. Now the time has come to harvest those cabbage plants and deliver them to the community.

On the Farm’s first harvest, held on November 18, 79 volunteers came together to gather bins of fresh produce, now fully grown, and prepare them to be delivered. An inspiring image of vast farmland with volunteers and Second Harvest team members working together is forever instilled in our memories.

DID YOU KNOW? Cabbage is a hearty, healthy power food. It’s packed full of nutrients, helping to decrease inflammation, lower blood pressure, keep

the heart healthy and lower cholesterol levels. It’s also relevant to many cultures—think soup, cole slaw, kimchi, salads or taco topping.

The launch of the Farm and the ability to deliver our locally grown produce is a great accomplishment for Second Harvest. We wouldn’t be able to serve as many as we do without the incredible help of our volunteers. Now that harvesting has begun, we need to recruit 250–300 volunteers weekly.

Our volunteers are a vital piece of our organization, and we are honored that so many offer their time to help further Second Harvest’s mission. We simply couldn’t do this without them.

**WANT A UNIQUE WAY TO GIVE? DONATE
TO OR VOLUNTEER AT THE HARVEST
SOLUTIONS FARM.**

Call **949.653.2900** or visit **feedoc.org**

Romaine on the Horizon

Announcing The Romaine Urban Farming Program



Big things sometimes come in small packages. In this instance, a significant change is on the horizon, thanks to Second Harvest's raised grow beds. Each of the 150 beds are being sown with nutrient-dense romaine to help feed those we serve.

FARM-FRESH BENEFITS OF GROWING OUR OWN FOOD LOCALLY:



**Drastically cuts time
to table**



**Provides more
nutrient-dense
produce since it's
picked at peak
ripeness**



**Delivers more health
benefits because
produce arrives
fresher**



**Reduces
environmental
impact**

Our New Addition

Launching A New Mobile Market In Senior Communities: Fresh Delivered

Since the launch of the very first Park-It Market in 2018, Second Harvest has proudly traveled many miles to deliver fresh produce, dairy products and other perishables to low-income senior housing communities and senior centers. Specially designed for Second Harvest, this refrigerated “shoppable” truck providing service to seniors marked a turning point as the first-of-its-kind

to be run by a food bank. Our full-service and completely free mobile market showcased what’s possible when innovation and an unstoppable vision combine to fight senior hunger.

Now, an enhanced version of the Park-It Market is about ready to serve. Construction is in the final stages for the newest vehicle in our fleet.



Impossible Choices

The Reality Of Senior Hunger: Forced To Balance Priorities

The population of seniors in Orange County stands at roughly 450,000, with a staggering 22% struggling to get enough to eat. Fixed incomes, medical expenses, transportation challenges and debilitating medical issues are just a few of the many reasons that seniors are facing unimaginable hunger. They're sometimes forced to choose between paying a utility bill or getting groceries, picking up medication or picking up food; foregoing one basic need for another.

Sadly, the malnutrition that results from consistently missing meals or failing to get the proper nutrients weakens the body's immune system and causes it to grow frail and vulnerable. It's a vicious cycle that we're committed to ending, ensuring every individual is food secure and well-nourished.

FOOD-INSECURE SENIORS* ARE:

262%
more likely to
have depression

74%
more likely to
have diabetes

78%
more likely to
have asthma

71%
more likely to
have congestive
heart failure

SOMEONE NEEDS YOU RIGHT NOW. PLEASE GIVE TODAY.

To donate, call **949.653.2900** or visit **feedoc.org**



**The State of Senior Hunger, Feeding America 2021*

TimesOC

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 5, 2021 // Times Community News publication serving Orange County // timesoc.com



Photos by Kevin Chang | Staff Photographer

VOLUNTEERS PLANT cabbages at Second Harvest's new 45-acre farm in Irvine.

As the pandemic worsens food insecurity, new farm will help feed Orange County

BY BEN BRAZIL

Second Harvest Food Bank broke ground this week on a 45-acre farm in Irvine in an effort to combat a spiraling food crisis in Orange County.

Due to the economic consequences of the pandemic, the food bank is now serving almost twice as many people as before. But Second Harvest — one of the county's two major food banks — isn't just hoping to increase its food stores, it's also aiming to provide nutritional food to the underserved populations in the county.

During a news conference on Tuesday morning, Second Harvest board Chairman Dave Coffaro said that when he first started working at Second Harvest three decades ago, they weren't concerned with getting people nutritional food. Rather, they were just trying to get food to people who needed it. The food bank started focusing on alleviating nutritional insecurity in the county last year, providing consistent access to fresh



U.S. REP. Katie Porter (D-Irvine) speaks during a news conference at Second Harvest's new farm in Irvine.

protein, produce and dairy, as opposed to relying on donated foods.

Claudia Keller, Second Harvest chief mission officer, said the food bank's goal is to have produce account for at least 50% of its distribution. She said the yield will be about 140,000 pounds of produce a month from the farm, though it has the capacity for 600,000 pounds of food a month.

"Our commitment is to

meet food insecurity, but really going forward to tackle nutritional insecurity," Keller said. "We want to make sure that the people that need the most help are getting the good food that all of us can get at a super-market. We want to make sure that they're getting it with dignity and on a consistent basis."

This is Second Harvest's first substantial farm,

See **Farm**, page R4

FARM

Continued from page R2

though it does have a little farm at its facility that is less than 1 acre. Prior to the 45-acre farm, Second Harvest's bank was filled with food that it either purchased or received from donations.

The farm is located at the University of California South Coast Research and Extension Center in Irvine. Second Harvest is partnering with the UC system for the first time.

Once the food is harvested, it will go to the food bank's facility, which is about half a mile from the farm. Then the food will get distributed through Second Harvest's pantry network, which serves families, seniors, homeless people and others who have been financially impacted by the pandemic throughout the county.

The crops are estimated to be ready for harvest by Nov. 18, right in time for Thanksgiving. The farm will include zucchini, squash, summer corn and other crops.

Several political leaders spoke at the news conference, including county Supervisor Don Wagner, Irvine Mayor Farrah Khan and Rep. Katie Porter (D-Irvine). While they ad-



Kevin Chang | Staff Photographer

VOLUNTEERS PLANT cabbage seedlings on 45 acres at the Harvest Solutions Farm in Irvine.

dressed a small crowd, volunteers were out in the field planting about 26,000 cabbages.

"Food insecurity has gotten worse during the pandemic," Porter said. "But it was a problem before, and it's sadly going to be a problem after. Today we're taking an important step to addressing not just the amount of food but the type and the quality of food, to investing in nutrition and investing in people in our community."

Second Harvest is responsible for recruiting most of the volunteers for the farm. The food bank also partnered with Solutions for Urban Agriculture and the University Extension Center for volunteers.

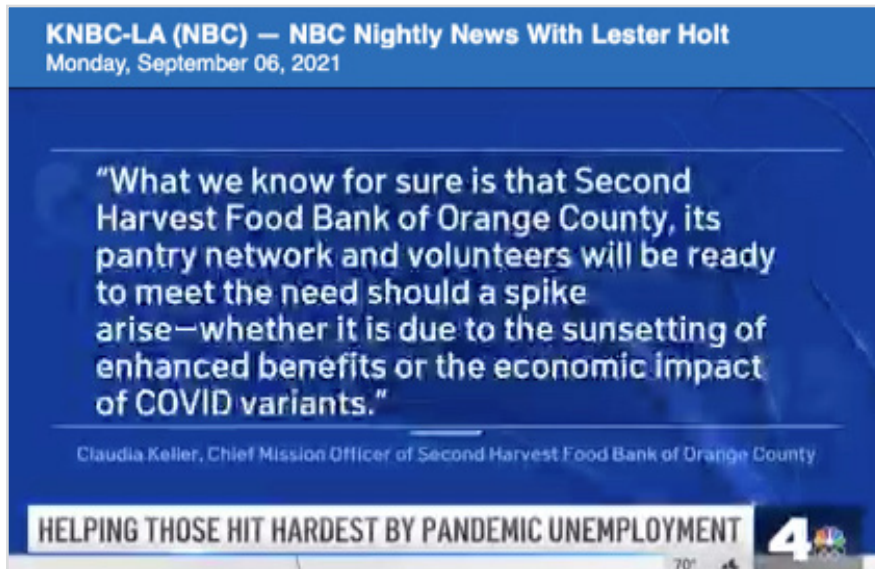
In addition to addressing nutritional needs, the farm allows Second Harvest to take control of its supply chain, fortifying it against the inflated food prices and supply chain issues caused by the pandemic.

Since the food bank previously purchased food from the Central Valley, Second Harvest had to work around disruptions in the supply chain.

"It is a new era for us in food banking here in the county," Keller said. "We are taking some control of our own supply chain. We are shortening the time from farm-to-table for our most vulnerable citizens."

benjamin.brazil@timesoc.com
Twitter: @benbrazil

Recent News



Recent News

THE ORANGE COUNTY REGISTER

Hunger remains an issue and could get worse, even as economy improves

Orange County food suppliers and others worry still-high need will spike again as unemployment benefits end.



Love Community Outreach volunteer (Binh Ho) helps cars navigate a food distribution line on Saturday, September 4, 2021. (Photo by Mindy Schauer, Orange County Register/SCNG)

By **THERESA WALKER** | thwalker@scng.com | Orange County Register
PUBLISHED: September 7, 2021 at 5:33 p.m. | UPDATED: September 7, 2021 at 7:20 p.m.

Cars snaking through parking lots and seemingly endless lines of people waiting for boxes of groceries were poignant symbols of hardship as the pre-vaccine pandemic chewed up 2020 and ground into 2021.

Now, those scenes of desperation have diminished — if not disappeared — as the economy has started to recover. And because it's not as visible it might seem to outsiders that food insecurity is no longer a problem.

Not so, say people who feed the hungry in Orange County.

Operators of the county's two food banks and others who provide fresh produce and shelf-stable items such as canned goods and grains, say the number of people still seeking help remains more than twice as high as it was before the [coronavirus](#) pandemic. That's true even though some emergency resources, such as the USDA's Farmers to Families food boxes, have stopped.

On Saturday, Sept. 4, the weekly Love Community Outreach drive-thru food distribution in Santa Ana attracted more than 300 recipients. People started queuing their cars at 5 a.m. in a line that eventually stretched about two miles.

"That tells you where we're at as a community," said Ralph Magana, director of [Love Community Outreach](#), a nonprofit that gets pallets of food from the Orange County Food Bank and donations from private supporters.

There is reason to think more people will be in need of assistance in the immediate future.



1 of 18

More than 300 cars go through a food distribution line in Santa Ana on Saturday, September 4, 2021. The line extended for about two miles. (Photo by Mindy Schauer, Orange County Register/SCNG)

READ FULL ARTICLE HERE:

ocregister.com/2021/09/07/hunger-remains-an-issue-and-could-get-worse-even-as-economy-improves/

PHILANTHROPY

By Kim Stemper | philanthropy@ocbj.com



Planting Solutions

► Claudia Keller, chief mission officer, Second Harvest Food Bank; Daren Haver, director, South Coast Research and Extension Center; Don Wagner, Orange County Supervisor, District 3; Farrah Khan, mayor, city of Irvine; Dave Coffaro, board chair, Second Harvest Food Bank; Katie Porter, representative, 45th Congressional District; A.G. Kawamura, chairman, Solutions for Urban Ag and former California Secretary of Food and Agriculture

Second Harvest Food Bank of Orange County, in partnership with local sustainable farming firm Solutions for Urban Agriculture, has launched a farming initiative on 45 acres of land at the University of California Agricultural and Natural Resources' South Coast Research and Extension Center, along Irvine Boulevard in Irvine.

The goal of the project is to help provide consistent access to nutritious food for residents in Orange County by growing produce for distribution to food bank partnerships throughout Orange County. The endeavor is called the Harvest Solutions Farm.

The Food Bank planted its first cabbage transplants on Aug. 31. Dave Coffaro, board chair, Second Harvest Food Bank, joined A.G. Kawamura, chairman, Solutions for Urban Ag and former California Secretary of Food and Agriculture; Darren Haver, director, Agriculture South Coast REC; and dignitaries including Farrah Khan, mayor, Irvine; Katie Porter, representative, 45th Congressional District; and Don Wagner, OC supervisor, District 3, on-site for the ceremonial planting of the first crops.

Volunteers transplanted approximately 26,000 young cabbage plants. Second Harvest expects to receive 40,000 pounds of cabbage per week as of Nov. 18 when the first harvest is expected to take place. When all 45 acres are fully planted, they are anticipated to yield over half a million pounds of produce over four months.

"This is a historic day for Second Harvest Food Bank of Orange County," Coffaro said. "Few food banks, if any, have attempted to grow their own food on this large a scale. Our unique good fortune to have access to 45 acres in the heart of an urban center like Irvine where we are able to cultivate an array of crops and supply our food pantry partners with fresh, nutritious produce brings us a huge step closer to making nutritional security a reality for our entire community."

The Harvest Solutions Farm is the latest component in Second Harvest's strategy to fuel nutrition security for all, including a new focus on pursuing planned nutrition based on consistent access to fresh protein, produce and dairy, rather than relying on situational nutrition driven solely by donations.

The farm also allows Second Harvest to mitigate challenges like pandemic-induced inflated food prices and supply chain disruptions.

Thank You

FALL 2021

3M FOUNDATION

CAPITAL GROUP COMPANIES FOUNDATION

COTTON FAMILY FOUNDATION

DISNEYLAND RESORT

DON YODER FOUNDATION

KRAFT HEINZ COMPANY FOUNDATION

TJX FOUNDATION

THE WALT DISNEY COMPANY

THANK YOU TO OUR 2021 “NO LUNCH” LUNCH SPONSORS

INTERNATIONAL PAPER

MUFG UNION BANK FOUNDATION

RAYMOND HANDLING SOLUTIONS

**TOGETHER WITH YOUR GENEROUS SUPPORT, WE ARE
COMMITTED TO BUILDING A BETTER TOMORROW**

Donate today by visiting feedoc.org

Call for more information

CHRISTINE MONTEVIDEO

SENIOR DEVELOPMENT MANAGER

949.208.3150

CLAUDIA KELLER

CHIEF MISSION OFFICER

949.208.3136

Visit our website
feedoc.org



MEMBER OF
**FEEDING
AMERICA**

FEDERAL TAX ID # 32-0362611

