



SECOND  
HARVEST  
FOOD  
BANK  
ORANGE COUNTY

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Fall 2024



# Nourishing College Students on Their Journey

The transition to college should be an exciting time – full of new experiences, new friends, a new campus and new ways of living. For many, this is the first time living away from home, navigating the responsibilities of paying bills, getting groceries and learning what it means to balance work, school and life in general. Unfortunately, many students have the added burden of not knowing where their next meal will come from.

## STRUGGLING TO KEEP UP WITH COURSEWORK ON AN EMPTY STOMACH

We have all heard the adage about college students living off of cheap instant ramen. **But why should we accept that reality?** Within the California State University system, two in every five students\* are currently experiencing food insecurity, including limited or uncertain access to nutritious food. This means that more often than not, 40% of college students are trying to focus and excel academically on an empty stomach.

## NOURISHING MINDS WITH SECOND HARVEST'S COLLEGE PANTRY PROGRAM

Thankfully, Second Harvest Food Bank's College Pantry Program makes it possible for students across 18 Orange County community college and university campuses to consistently access fresh, nutritious foods that nourish their bodies, minds and spirits. Each college pantry works like a small grocery store that offers fresh fruits and vegetables, pantry staples and grab-and-go snacks and meals—all completely free of charge for students to pick up between classes using their school ID.

While college brings its fair share of challenges, access to nutritious food doesn't have to be one of them. Join us in making it possible for students to focus on the future without facing the burden of food insecurity.

# Fueling Elementary School Students and Their Families

## 10 YEARS OF MOBILE SCHOOL PANTRIES

September marks 10 years since the generosity of donors like you led to the opening of the first Mobile School Pantry. We started with 12 pantries in 2014. Today, we have grown to include 76 pantries in 14 cities across Orange County that have distributed over 22.6 million pounds of food to date. Mobile School Pantries offer local families access to farmer's market-style food distributions conveniently located in their neighborhood (and oftentimes at their child's school!). With your help, we have been able to provide low-income families with the ability to choose fresh fruits and vegetables, eggs, dairy and protein.

“When grocery budgets get tight and items get cut, the community has been able to get important perishable items through this program. Over the past decade, Mobile School Pantries have gone from solely providing fresh produce to now also providing eggs, milk and other staples—items that families have told us are most important to them to receive.”

—Ellie Dinh, Director of Programs & Services at Second Harvest Food Bank of Orange County



A Mobile School Pantry food distribution at Horace Mann Elementary, one of the original 12 sites that started in 2014.

# The Latest from Our Board of Directors

We're thrilled to welcome Salman Alam as the new Chair of our Board of Directors! Salman has been a member of our Board since 2020, serving as Vice Chair for the past two years. His wisdom and experience will be invaluable in this new role.

In addition, we're excited to introduce four fresh faces to our esteemed Board.

Together, these highly qualified and dedicated individuals will bring important perspectives and expertise to our work. We appreciate their leadership in helping us to feed Orange County.



NEW CHAIR OF OUR BOARD OF DIRECTORS

**Salman Alam**

Vice President, Western Digital



**Heather Sanchez**

Head of Business Banking,  
Farmers & Merchants Bank



**Yassmin Sarmadi**

Restaurateur and Co-Owner,  
Knife Pleat



**Dana Rose Stauffer**

Vice President of Human  
Resources and Communications,  
Southern California Division of  
Albertsons Companies



**Stephen Wetterau**

Corporate Senior Vice  
President of Strategy,  
Technology, and Innovation,  
Golden State Foods

## Explore the Heart of Second Harvest: *Food for Thought* Tours

Second Harvest Food Bank proudly presents our *Food for Thought* Tours, an exclusive opportunity to explore our community-supported Food Bank and Distribution Center. Our leadership team will personally lead you on a tour to show how we provide nutritious food to over 400,000 people each month.

Ready to be part of the action? Reserve your spot by visiting [feedoc.org/tours](https://feedoc.org/tours). We're proud of our team and our facility, and we can't wait to share it with you.



# Making Magic Happen at D23

The Happiest Place on Earth just spread joy to those in need, thanks to the incredible spirit of generosity at this year's D23: The Ultimate Disney Fan Event. Each day of the three-day convention, a different charity was spotlighted. Second Harvest was the charity of focus on Sunday, the final day of the event. That's when the Disney enthusiasts in attendance teamed up with Disney VolunteARS—the company's dedicated employees who donate their time and energy to support their local communities—to assemble over 7,500 snack packs. These nourishing kits were then distributed to families facing food insecurity throughout Orange County via our Partner Network.

Disney's extraordinary support made this volunteer experience possible. Thank you, Disney fans and VolunteARS, for turning fandom into action. You've helped us make an impact, one snack pack at a time.



## Walk to Feed OC: A New Spring Date!



Mark your calendars! Join us for the Third Annual Walk to Feed OC on **Saturday, March 15, 2025**. This free, noncompetitive 1.5-mile walk brings together people from all walks of life to help raise funds and awareness about nutritional and food insecurity in Orange County. It's a perfect way for families, corporations (big and small), community-minded individuals and groups to celebrate National Nutrition Month with us!

Why walk? By participating, you're not just being active, you're activating hope. Our goal is once again ambitious, \$350,000, and we will need your help! With your participation, we will be able to provide nearly 15 additional truckloads of fresh produce to directly

support our community. Imagine that impact! Stay tuned for details about registering. For information about becoming a sponsor, email us at [walk@feedoc.org](mailto:walk@feedoc.org).

# Autumn at Harvest Solutions Farm

Harvest Solutions Farm, our partnership with University of California South Coast Research & Extension Center and Solutions for Urban Agriculture, recently celebrated its third birthday. Since the Farm's launch in August 2021, we've harvested 5.8 million pounds of nutritious food.

Our fields are currently full of seasonal superstars such as green beans, honeydew melon, spaghetti squash, acorn squash, butternut squash, yellow squash and zucchini. Volunteers are the root of our success, so please join us at the Farm and harvest, plant and maintain fresh, nutritious food to nourish those in need. Visit [feedoc.org/volunteer](https://feedoc.org/volunteer) for details.

Since we're all about celebrating the flavors of fall, we've got a super-simple, five-ingredient recipe that anyone can master. Check out one of our favorite go-to recipes for a perfect autumn side dish: Roasted Acorn Squash. It's not just tasty—it's a nod to the very squash we grow right here at Harvest Solutions Farm!

## ROASTED ACORN SQUASH

Prep Time: 10 min. | Cook Time: 35 min. | Total Time: 45 min.  
Serves 6

### INGREDIENTS

- 3 acorn squash, halved vertically and seeded
- Extra-virgin olive oil, for drizzling
- Maple syrup, for drizzling
- Chopped fresh sage and/or rosemary
- Sea salt and freshly ground black pepper

### DIRECTIONS

1. Preheat the oven to 425°F and line a baking sheet with parchment paper.
2. Place the acorn squash halves on the baking sheet cut side up. Drizzle with olive oil and maple syrup and sprinkle with salt and pepper. Use your hands to coat the squash. Sprinkle the sage and/or rosemary into the center of the squash. Roast until the squash is tender and golden brown around the edges, 25 to 40 minutes depending on the size of your squash.
3. Season to taste with sea salt and freshly ground pepper. Serve and enjoy!

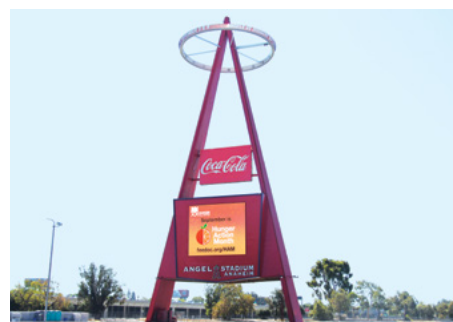
Courtesy of <https://www.loveandlemons.com/roasted-acorn-squash/#wprm-recipe-container-42479>



## LIGHTING UP AWARENESS FOR HUNGER ACTION MONTH

A vibrant orange glow appeared on landmarks throughout Orange County to bring the hidden hunger crisis into the spotlight for Hunger Action Month in September. These impactful visuals served as important reminders that we all can take action to help our neighbors in need. With one in 10 people in our community facing food insecurity, Second Harvest set out to draw extra awareness to this issue this month.

Hunger Action Month is a Feeding America annual nationwide campaign, uniting food banks and the public to raise awareness and mobilize efforts against food and nutritional insecurity. Throughout the month, Second Harvest helped to educate the community about how hunger affects Orange County and encouraged people to take action by volunteering, advocating and donating.



# Thank You To Our Funders

We appreciate these generous supporters who have made recent grants of \$5,000 or more to Second Harvest. Ask your company if employee nominations for grants are accepted. Contact [grants@feedoc.org](mailto:grants@feedoc.org) for more information.

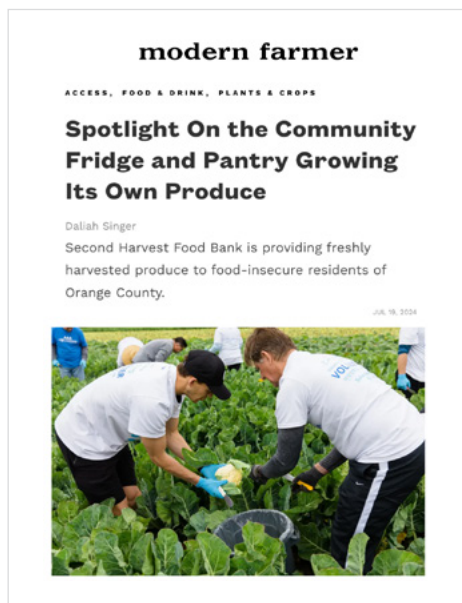
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## In The News

Second Harvest continues to capture the spotlight with key media coverage. Here are recent clips:



Modern Farmer | Spotlight on the Community Fridge and Pantry Growing Its Own Produce



Irvine Standard | Philanthropy: Claudia Bonilla Keller on How Volunteering Feeds Your Soul



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