



# Food for Thought

Washington Food Coalition newsletter / Fall 2025

*No one in Washington State should go hungry*

**Dear WFC Members,**

A Warm Welcome,

Thank you to everyone who joined us for this year's Washington Food Coalition Conference! It was inspiring to connect in person, share ideas, and celebrate the incredible work happening across our state. From honoring Trish's leadership to engaging in meaningful sessions, this year's gathering reminded us why our network is so special. For a full recap of conference highlights, check out our article on the next page.

We're excited to remind you that translation and interpretation services are now available through Language Line to better support your work. If you're interested, email Trish to receive an access code.

Looking ahead, we have important opportunities to connect and learn together:

- Food Assistance Advisory Committee meeting: October 23rd, 1:30–2:00 PM (via Zoom)
- WFC x NAMI De-escalation Training: October 30th, 2:00–4:00 PM (registration coming soon)

Finally, keep an eye out for your upcoming membership renewal. We look forward to continuing this work with you in the year ahead.

Warmly,  
The WFC Team

*This newsletter is based upon work that is supported by the Statewide Technical Assistance and Training Grant through WSDA, Food Assistance.*

**Our Mission:** The Washington Food Coalition actively educates and networks with organizations that strive to alleviate hunger throughout Washington

**Our Vision:** The Washington Food Coalition is the unified voice for a strong emergency food system



Greetings from WSDA Food Assistance (FA),

Change is inevitable and not knowing about upcoming changes in the hunger-relief world can lead to even more anxiety about what the future may hold. Our goal with this article is to share what we know, share some of our assumptions moving forward, and share our appreciation for you, the organizations that you represent, and the care that you show for the people that you serve.

Updates:

- Final State Budget Pass-through Buckets SFY 2026 (July 1, 2025 – June 30, 2026):
- EFAP and EFAP-Tribal Client Data for SFY2025 (July 1, 2024 – June 30, 2026) is almost final. Once available it will be posted on our webpage <https://agr.wa.gov/services/food-access> with additional county/regional analysis. Based on the preliminary SFY 2025 EFAP data it shows a 6% increase in total client visits compared to SFY 2024 – almost 14.18 million. A record number of pounds of food were distributed – over 237.28 million.
- All programs, state and federal, will be receiving amendments and/or agreements in the coming weeks. Key high-level changes include:
- Reduced audit requirements for state funding
- Increased fiscal training
- Revised nondiscrimination clauses
- Updated TEFAP client intake requirements – removal of addresses
- If there is a federal shutdown, we anticipate that TEFAP and CSFP will continue to operate business as usual. We will continue to monitor this closely and provide updates as they are received.

I want to take a moment to highlight the successes of the 2025 WA Food Coalition Conference. The conference continues to be a pulse on the many challenges and opportunities facing emergency food providers in WA State. Our team heard from many of you and appreciated the thoughtful and nuanced conversations.

In addition to connections made, the conference was an opportunity to further WSDA FA’s community engagement while also celebrating the work of a true icon in the state’s emergency food system, the retiring Executive Director, Trish Twomey. Echoing the praise of so many at the conference, her steadfast commitment to service in WA State over 42 years was deserving of an event like the conference to celebrate and praise the difference she has and continues to make. We were delighted to present Trish with a certificate of appreciation signed by WSDA Director Derek Sandison and myself. If you missed the presentation, here is what it said:

*Thank you for planting the seeds for a stronger hunger relief system in the State of Washington for over four decades! Your care and dedication to cultivating relationships, listening to a wide variety of perspectives, and delivering world class education and training opportunities is legendary. The annual Washington Food Coalition conference is just one example of the incredible work that you have accomplished and where your tenacity shines brightly. We recognize your amazing contributions and wish you the very best in your well-deserved retirement. You will be greatly missed but your significant impact on the hunger relief system will live on. Congratulations on your retirement!*

In the spirit of onward and upward, I will leave you with what I see every day in all of you. You are resilient, you persevere, you are open to possibilities, you engage in partnerships, you make a difference, and you know how to pivot and innovate in tough times.

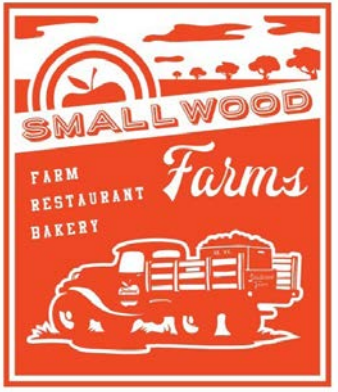
In appreciation,  
Kim Eads and the WSDA Food Assistance Team

Fresh Results Awards

Celebrating Fresh Results: Honoring Smallwood Farms

At the Washington Food Coalition, we believe in the power of community-led solutions to end hunger and build a more resilient food system. That’s why, in partnership with the Washington State Department of Agriculture (WSDA), we created the Fresh Results Award: to celebrate growers, farmers, and producers who are making a real difference in their communities.

This year, we are thrilled to honor Smallwood Farms, nominated by Stasia Hazelwood, Food & Nutrition Programs Manager at Okanogan County Community Action Council (OCCAC). Smallwood Farms, run for generations by Dennis and Mallory Carlton, exemplifies what it means to give back to the community. Their dedication goes far beyond growing produce; they are generous partners, innovators, and true champions in fighting food insecurity.



OCCAC shares: "Smallwood Farms donates throughout the season, supports our gleaning program, and has even lent us ladders when we were just starting out. They have been instrumental in helping us provide fresh, healthy food options to clients across Okanogan County. Already, we’re feeding 30% of the county through our food pantries, with Smallwood Farms contributing a large majority of the fresh, local produce through donations, purchases, and gleaning. Dennis and Mallory are always willing to step up when our pantries need more food or our funding falls short. Their generosity, openness, and guidance — even as we learn best practices for safe harvesting and organic farming — make them truly remarkable partners."

This year, we were excited to honor Smallwood Farms at our annual conference in Kennewick, September 17–19, 2025. While Dennis and Mallory were unable to attend in person, their impact was celebrated by attendees who share in their vision for a stronger, healthier food system. Through initiatives like the Fresh Results Award, we continue to spotlight those who are cultivating not just food, but hope and connection.

**Read more about other nominees on our website soon.**



## WFC Annual Conference - Seeds to Solutions: Growing the Impact Conference RECAP

### *Thank You for Joining Us at the Washington Food Coalition Annual Conference 2025!*

*What an incredible three days we shared in Kennewick! Over 250 attendees came together to connect, learn, and celebrate the work we're all doing to strengthen our food system. Your energy, ideas, and commitment made this year's conference truly unforgettable.*

*A special moment for all of us was honoring Trish for her extraordinary dedication to the hunger relief community. At breakfast on Thursday, the Washington State Department of Agriculture celebrated her with a commemorative plaque and at dinner an open-mic gave many folks the chance to share their gratitude - a heartfelt day and tribute to her leadership and vision. Trish, your impact inspires us every day!*

*And who could forget our Wednesday welcome reception? Held at a truly one-of-a-kind venue, an event center combined with a cemetery, it surprised us all. The space offered breathtaking surroundings, stunning décor, and an unforgettable atmosphere... proving that sometimes the best connections happen in the most unexpected places.*

*We also want to extend a huge thank you to our sponsors and exhibitors. Your support makes this event possible, and your commitment to our mission amplifies its impact. We are grateful for the partnerships, resources, and energy you bring to the table.*

*From heartfelt conversations to inspiring sessions, this conference reminded us why we gather: to share knowledge, build community, and work together toward a stronger, more equitable food system. We can't wait to see you again next year. Until then, thank you for making the Washington Food Coalition Annual Conference 2025 a truly special event!*

### **The Washington Food Coalition + Conference Planning Team**

*A special thanks to our conference planning committee:*

- Kellie McNelly
- Kris Van Gasken
- Barb Shimizu
- Cecilia Chavez
- Christy Fitzgerald
- Chris Benson
- Leigha Maland
- Linda Breitzke
- Lara Ashley Monroe
- Kyla Tucker
- Bonnie Baker

