Silver Linings

Well, what can I say... it’s been a year! I was starting to think that a tsunami might hit Salem in November with the way 2020 had been going.

This year will be remembered as an unprecedented, trying, and silver-lining-finding kind of year. I say silver-lining-finding because without actively seeking to find those successes within the ever-changing circumstances that we faced, I might have given up altogether.

Early in the season it was apparent that our harvesting activities had to change in order to meet governmental guidelines put in place to protect people from contracting COVID-19. It was hard to make decisions concerning this because I knew that not everyone would be able to participate, or in the fashion we were all used to. However, masks had to be worn, physical distancing had to be maintained, and the number of volunteers together at the same time had to be limited. The silver lining - volunteers in these smaller, 12-person teams got to really know each other in a deeper way and, by having groups of similar age work together, bonds were formed that went beyond the fields. Also, no volunteer, leader, or staff person got sick at a harvest throughout the season. That’s a win!

The increase of collaboration in the community was a silver lining. This year we were able to work with 13 other nonprofits focused on food insecurity in our community and create something brand new in the Willamette Valley Hunger Challenge. Hundreds of people were able to gain a better understanding and empathy for families facing hunger. Without a reduced calendar of events and the glaring food insecurity issues brought on by the volatile year, I don’t think this important event would have been created.

The development and involvement of our board of directors was another silver lining. The pandemic brought unpredictability to regular financial resources, and our board took on the challenge finding new sources of funding to make up for the lost revenue from annual in-person events. New foundation grants were secured and added to our existing foundation partners (see the list on the next page). Relationships with local donors were increased, and matching campaigns were levied as well to help cover the costs of harvesting food to feed hungry families.

Did we set any new harvesting records this year? No. Did we have a great harvest season? YES! Just finding and acknowledging the silver linings shows me that without the pandemic we would have missed so much.

I am grateful for all of you and the roles that you played in making this another fantastic learning, growing, and collaborating year at Salem Harvest. Keep looking for that shimmery edge!

- Executive Director
In 2020, we may not have increased any of our measurable metrics yet it was a successful harvest season thanks to outstanding leaders, hard working interns, committed growers, and devoted volunteers. As you review these number for the past four harvest seasons, keep these things in mind:

- Distinct volunteers decline as more volunteers become more involved, attending multiple harvests through the season. Our average volunteer attends more than five harvests per season.

- Number of harvests was up and the overall roster slots down because of the 12 persons per harvest limit. The number of harvests is misleading for this reason in 2020.

- Total pounds harvested was down but still within our yearly average range. This number was down for several reasons; uncertainty in food markets, two weeks of not being able to harvest due to smoke, loss of crops due to smoke, wind, or rain damage, and some growers just weren’t operating this season.

### Recent Statistics

<table>
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<th>2017</th>
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<th>2020</th>
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<td>Distinct Volunteers</td>
<td>738</td>
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<td>Roster Slots</td>
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<td>Number of Harvests</td>
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<td>Distinct Harvest Sites</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total Pounds Harvested</td>
<td>367,131</td>
<td>408,934</td>
<td>507,084</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

### DOUBLE your Donation in December

Make your donation count TWICE as much! At only $0.16 per pound to harvest, thanks to you and your doubled donation, $25 could feed 625 hungry kids a serving of fresh blueberries.

**Donate Online**

Or mail a check to - Salem Harvest
P.O. Box 483, Salem, OR 97308

### 2020 Community Grants

- PGE Foundation
- Safeway Nourishing Neighbors
- Campbell's
- The Oregon Community Foundation
- Salem Foundation
- Northwest Farm Credit Services
- OCF
- SALEM LEADERSHIP FOUNDATION
- maps Community Foundation
OUR MISSION

To feed hungry families by harvesting food that would go to waste.

Salem Harvest connects farmers and backyard growers with volunteers who harvest fruits and vegetables that would otherwise go to waste. All food harvested feeds children or elderly, unemployed, low-income or homeless people, the majority being distributed through Marion-Polk Food Share and its affiliated food agencies. Salem Harvest rescues about 400,000 pounds of fresh, locally-grown fruits and vegetables annually.