

How do I make a donation to the TCFB?

If you call ahead, someone will be available to assist you. Please bring donations to the warehouse door on the Franklin St. side of the building. At that time we can give you a receipt for your donation. If you plan ahead when harvesting produce, you can come by the food bank and pick up a few plastic bins. These bins are stackable and are perfect for washing produce since they have tiny slits for aeration and water drainage.

How do I best package the produce?

Should the produce be washed?

The best way to package and donate produce is have it arrive clean, washed, stackable, and not soaking wet. We prefer that you use our black bins, but waxed or regular boxes (if produce is dry) are ok as well. The food bank doesn't have a proper sink or an outside location to wash all the donated produce we receive on a regular basis. This method helps out the produce volunteers tremendously because then they are able to display the produce without any reorganizing and extra washing.

What is the best time to donate?

The best time is during our donation hours from 8am to 4pm, Monday thru Friday. We understand that when produce needs to be picked it has a certain window of time. The food bank would prefer that produce **NOT** be delivered past 2pm on Fridays, because our goal is to keep items as fresh as possible for our clients.

How can the Food Bank best support you?

Please let us know how we can best help you and your gardening efforts. Feel free to call or email us at any time with questions, comments, requests, ideas, or suggestions.

Thank You.

Produce Growers Guide

Thurston County Food Bank



*Questions and Answers about
what types of foods to grow,
how to best donate, and how
we can support you.*



Thurston County Food Bank
220 Thurston Ave. N.E.
Olympia, WA. 98501
(360) 352-8597

This is a basic guide for anyone who is interested in growing a little extra food this season for the Thurston County Food Bank and we thank you for your interest. Every item donated to help out those in need makes a huge difference. We greatly appreciate your hard work and dedication to helping us help others.

Donation Hours: Monday thru Friday
8:00am to 4:00pm

Service Hours: Monday, Wednesday, & Friday: 11:00am to 12:00pm & 1:00pm to 3:00pm
The 2nd & 4th Wednesday of the Month the TCFB is open from 5:00pm to 7:00pm

Who to Contact:

Sarah, Produce Manager
Produce@thurstoncountyfoodbank.org
(360) 352-8597 x 105

How do I best use my garden space to grow for the food bank? Should I grow a variety of produce for the food bank or focus on a few items?

Limit to growing one or two crops. Our goal is to have enough produce to distribute during the food bank's open hours. We like to call that volume over variety. (Not to say the variety can't be unique, delicious, and somewhat different!) Our organization is run by the dedication of volunteers' time and energy; hence we try to make the process of distributing food, produce, and other products an easy process.

What type of vegetables should I grow?

The food bank works directly with the Kiwanis Food Bank Garden in the early season to determine what crops will be grown at their garden and at other locations. As you can see on the next page, the food bank has generated a list of fruits and vegetables that we have a need for and would still like to see throughout the year.



We have a huge supply of produce donations in the months of July, August, September, and October.

We encourage all growers of the food bank to consider growing more produce in the winter time. Our need for fresh produce is greater from the months of January thru May.

Specific Crops We Need

Late Winter/Early Spring: Plant starts for distribution to clients at the Food Bank. The food bank will supply the literature describing how best to grow the crop.

Spring: Radishes, Lettuce, Green Onions, Fresh Herbs, Spinach & other Greens.

Summer:

- Lettuce, Carrots, & Beets- Succession planting throughout the season (please remove carrot tops)
- Cucumbers- Easy to grow and harvest
- Broccoli- TCFB high demand vegetable
- Chard- Crop will continually produce leaves
- Potatoes- Great for summer, fall, and winter
- Tomatoes- Only small (cherry or plum size)
- Bell Peppers- Any variety
- Hot Peppers- Grow a variety (properly i.d.)
- Eggplant- Any variety
- Garlic
- Sugar Snap peas
- Fruit- Summer berries & other fruits

Fall/Winter:

- Carrots & Beets- Will grow with row cover or in a hoop house (please remove carrot tops)
- Winter Squash- Only small varieties: Delicata, Acorn, Buttercup, Red Kuri, Butternut
- Onions- Great storage crop
- Cabbage- Great storage crop
- Lettuce
- Kale- Will produce all winter
- Turnips
- Parsnips
- Potatoes- Great storage crop
- Apples, pears, & other fruits

Please NO....Pumpkins, Green Beans, Summer Squash, or Large Winter Squash