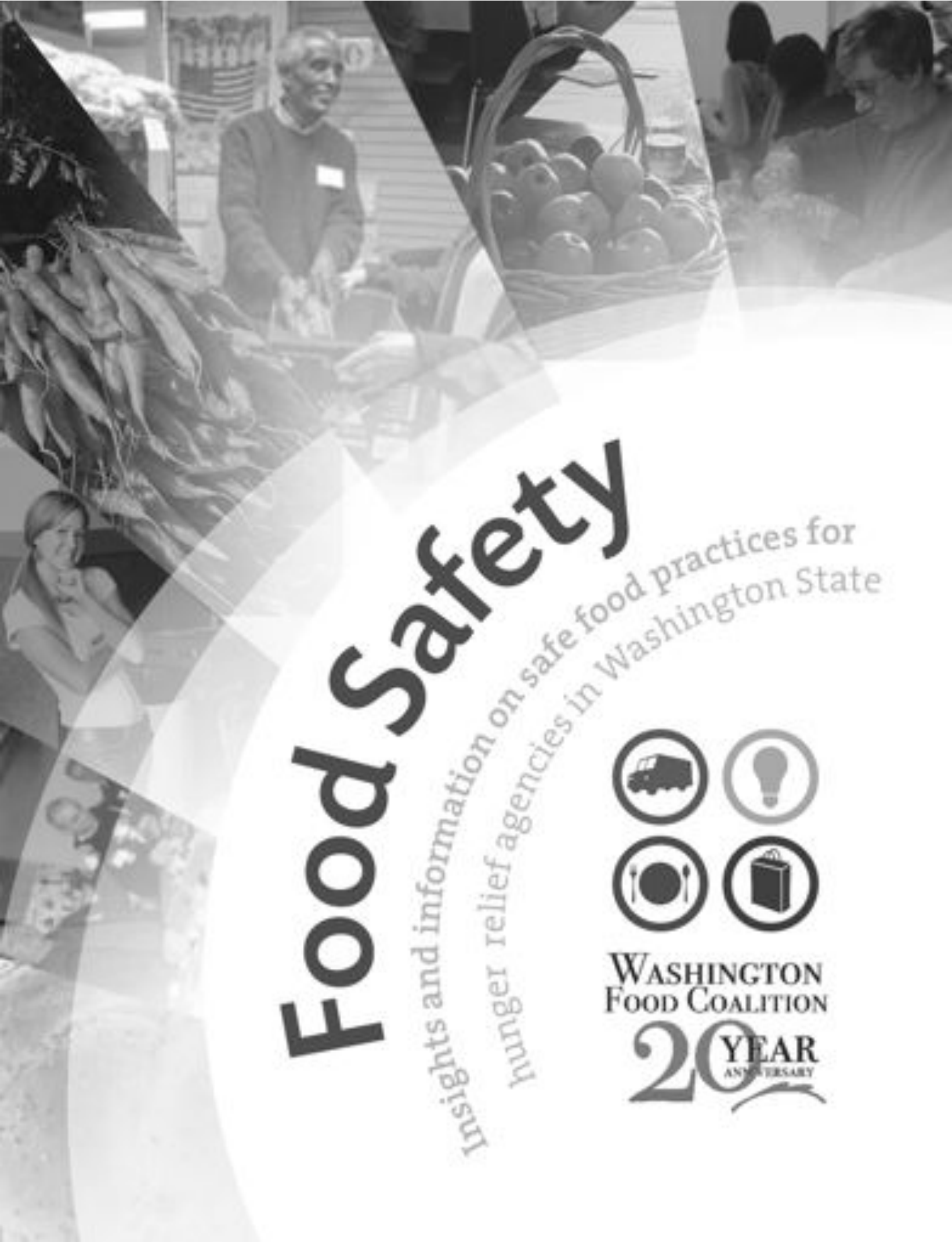

Food Safety

Insights and information on safe food practices for hunger relief agencies in Washington State

WASHINGTON FOOD COALITION

20 YEAR ANNIVERSARY

Overview of Washington Food Coalition

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

History

The Washington Food Coalition is a non-profit network of food banks, food pantries, food distribution centers, hot meal and food voucher programs throughout the state of Washington. Incorporated in 1992, the WFC is the result of a merger between the Western Washington Food Coalition and Eastern Washington's Northwest Regional Food Network. Members of these independently incorporated organizations envisioned a comprehensive and cohesive statewide network. Their goal was to work cooperatively to alleviate hunger and provide a unified voice for hunger programs. The WFC currently has a diverse membership of more than 300 independently incorporated agencies.

Food Safety: Insights and information on safe food practices for hunger relief agencies

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Our History

Honoring those who have fought hunger in Washington for decades.....

We not only strive to highlight the current innovations and solutions in hunger relief agencies, but we also honor those that have done the hard work of building a foundation for a strong emergency food system.

In the early 1970's, several factors including the 'Boeing bust' and a nationwide energy crisis caused a hard-hitting recession throughout Washington. Families who had previously been self-sufficient were left without employment and without food on their shelves. In 1972, concerned neighbors in Washington began to grow discontent when seeing others in their community face hunger. Slowly but surely, groups rallied together in pockets of the state to set up local food programs. Some had begun organizing before this, and some would soon come after, but 1972 marks a year of remarkable activity in the formation of early food program networks around the state. Organizations that began in 1972 include Puyallup Food Bank, Thurston County Food Bank, Bellingham Food Bank, and 2nd Harvest Inland Northwest.

The Washington State Legislature took a major step to fight hunger in 1985 when they formed the Emergency Food Assistance Program (EFAP) to provide funds to the developing food program system. In 1992, this program expanded to also support the Tribal Voucher Food Program.

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Since then, our work has been anything but light or easy. Varying economic times provide fluctuation in the strain our members face, but there has never been a season when they are not greatly needed. Our work is not confined to the traditional food bank, but we also represent all meal programs, distribution programs, and anyone fighting hunger in Washington.

Enough cannot be said about the grueling work that was done by those who formed a statewide emergency food system, when nothing of the sort existed a few short decades ago. Washington Food Coalition is proud to continue the hard work of building on what they have accomplished.

The situations, interests, and needs of our agencies are diverse. However, we find complete unity in the belief that no one in Washington State should go hungry and we share in the vision of a strong emergency food system.

For those of us who now carry the work of feeding our hungry neighbors, and those who will soon join our work, we press on with optimism and the fortitude to continue until no one in Washington goes hungry any more.

...we continue the work of building a strong emergency food system.

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