



Washington State Department of Agriculture

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WSDA joins with Northwest Farmers to support food banks

Campaign to raise hunger awareness, address increased demand in summer months

OLYMPIA –Summer is a time of agricultural abundance in the Pacific Northwest but it also can be a time of concern for families with children who no longer receive the free or low-cost meals they get during the school year. So for the third year in a row, the [Washington State Department of Agriculture](#) will join farmers, food banks and the donating public to support the annual Northwest Farmers Fighting Hunger food drive.

The effort is a partnership between the [Dairy Farmers of Washington](#) and the [Dairy Farmers of Oregon](#). The month-long food drive kicks off with collection events in Seattle on June 5 and continues through June 26 with events around the state. Visit www.nwfarmersfightinghunger.com for the schedule.

As in previous years, WSDA will compete with the [Oregon Department of Agriculture](#) (ODA) to bring in the most food and money for those in need. WSDA brought in more food and cash donations in 2013 and ODA brought in more last year to win the “Director’s Trophy.”

During the food drive, Northwest Dairy Farmers, Fred Meyer and QFC stores, farmers and employees from the two state departments of agriculture will partner to raise food and donations for food assistance programs in both Oregon and Washington.

Through June, collection bins will be available at Fred Meyer and QFC stores in both states to accept donations of canned or non-perishable food and other items, like dish soap or toilet paper. In Eastern Washington, the donated food and money collected will benefit Second Harvest, while in Western Washington, Food Lifeline will receive the donations. In Oregon, the donations will go to the Oregon Food Bank Network.

In 2014, Northwest Farmers Fighting Hunger raised the equivalent of more than 85,000 pounds of food—a significant increase from the 58,000 pounds donated in 2013.

WSDA’s [Food Assistance Program](#) distributes food and money to 500 food banks, food pantries, meal programs, and tribes throughout the state. In Washington, one in five residents visited a food bank last year that received support through the WSDA program.

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