Getting food to people who need it
Mission Statement
The Berkeley Food Network seeks to end hunger and poor nutrition by using innovative, community-centered solutions to build a more sustainable, resilient, and equitable food system.

Values
Community
Sustainability
Collaboration
Innovation
Equity
Dear Neighbors,

BFN had a successful year addressing community needs despite COVID-related challenges. Weekly, we provided fresh, healthy foods to approximately 6,500 people through BFN direct distributions and through our vast partnership network. This year, BFN amplified our focus to provide high-quality support for individuals and families with respect and dignity.

This past year remained difficult for our neighbors. A significant number of them faced job losses and experienced cuts to the expanded COVID-era social safety net benefits they relied on heavily to support their families. At the same time, the expenses associated with groceries and housing in the Bay Area continued to soar, placing many in the challenging position of having to choose between nutritious food and rent. We sincerely thank all of the donors, volunteers, and partners for their support over the past year, which bolstered our collective efforts to address the urgent issue of food insecurity within our community.

We are actively enhancing and refining our efforts to continue to support our neighbors through high-quality and dignified services. We are listening and learning from our community and evolving what we do to make the greatest impact in their lives by staying responsive to their diverse needs and lived experiences.

Last year Sara Webber, our founding Executive Director retired. The Board wishes to express its appreciation for Sara’s remarkable leadership. Her commitment and vision played a key role in advancing BFN to new achievements. Under Sara’s guidance, BFN consistently delivered fresh and healthy food to our community while expanding our partnerships and services to provide support of the highest quality, always with respect and dignity. Sara’s dedication and determination have been a source of inspiration, and her legacy will continue to propel our mission.

We could not have completed another successful year of getting food to those who need it without the participation of our donors, volunteers, partners, staff, and community. We look forward to the coming year of maturing even further. With profound gratitude, we thank you for supporting BFN and partnering with us to eradicate food insecurity in our community.

In partnership,

Deborah Lewis
Board Officer, Chair
Your ongoing support helps us continue to grow our food purchasing budget to support regional producers, contribute to a resilient local food system, and provide healthy groceries for even more partners and community members in the coming year.
Our Network of Support

COLLABORATION & COMMUNITY

- Member Choice Pantries
- Partners that Get Food from BFN
- Grocery Bag Delivery Sites
INNOVATION

Member Choice Pantries—Dignity, Agency, and Empowerment

Thanks to your support, we’ve enhanced our pantry distributions by placing a stronger emphasis on improving the overall experience for our community members. We’ve implemented changes to the check-in process at both our 9th Street Pantry and Neighborhood Pantries, significantly reducing the stigma often associated with seeking food assistance.

Now, our members receive a colorful BFN Pantry Member card upon arrival, which is scanned to welcome them into this community-driven effort. Many have expressed that this card instills a sense of belonging, likening it to a membership experience similar to Costco or their local library.

9th Street Pantry
694 households served weekly

14 Neighborhood Pantries
250 households served weekly
Meeting Increased Need

When expanded COVID benefits expired last spring, BFN saw a surge in pantry visits and new member sign-ups. This tells us our neighbors are still struggling to provide healthy food for their families and view BFN as a reliable form of community assistance. Your support enabled us to once again ramp up at a critical time.

In the spring of 2023 we saw a...

- **24%**
  - increase in new pantry member sign-ups
- **58%**
  - increase in overall pantry visits

Shifting Language and Power Dynamics

In food assistance work, there can be an inherent power imbalance between those giving the food and those receiving services. BFN is consistently working to balance this dynamic. This year, we began referring to those we serve as “members” to create a more equalizing and empowering environment, paving the way for deeper engagement and trust with our community in the coming years.

Growing Member Choice

Our pantries resemble a farmer’s market to allow members to select the items and quantities they need, promoting dignity and reducing food waste. With your support this coming year, we will implement layout changes to our 9th Street Pantry to deepen our commitment to these values. The pantry will shift to a grocery store experience in which members will hand-select items off of shelves and produce displays, just as if they are shopping in a market.
COLLABORATION & COMMUNITY

Supporting and Expanding the Local Food Security Network

Our West Berkeley Warehouse is a food hub for a network of service providers in Northern Alameda County. Known as our Distribution Partners, many of these organizations are smaller grassroots efforts that are deeply engaged in their communities but lack the capacity to source or store large amounts of food. These organizations get anywhere from 3%-100% of their food from BFN to operate their own pantries, distributions, and meal programs.

We established a formal onboarding and application process for new Distribution Partners to join our mission. With two new organizations joining the program last year, there are six more on the waitlist and we look forward to expanding our reach further.

BFN continues to adhere to high food safety guidelines, providing the backbone systems that allow our Distribution Partners to provide safe food. These guidelines include standards for:

- Storage
- Freshness and Quality
- Temperature
- Transportation

"BFN has been critical in providing food whenever we are low in between deliveries from the food bank. Without BFN, we wouldn't be able to keep our pantry stocked during the busy parts of the semester! The quality and variety of produce direct from farmers that we receive through BFN was better than anything we get elsewhere. I love how y'all are always improving and changing things up. It is very encouraging to know that BFN is not stagnant but working to meet people's and programs’ needs."

-Natalia Semeraro, Food Resource Coordinator, UC Basic Needs

34 partner organizations received food from us to serve their communities.
EQUITY

Fresh Food to Doorsteps

Despite our wide reach, many community members still struggle to access healthy food due to time, mobility, or transportation challenges. BFN reduced barriers to healthy food by bringing it directly to the homes of our highest-need neighbors through our Home Delivery program. Each box is customized to the household’s dietary and lifestyle needs and includes a wide variety of local produce, high-quality proteins, and shelf-stable items. We rely on a network of our own volunteers and organizations like Help Berkeley and Berkeley Public Schools Fund to distribute groceries.

| 50 | vulnerable households receive weekly grocery boxes |
| 75 | percent are households with seniors |

COLLABORATION

Feeding the Body and Mind—Addressing Student Hunger

The impact of food insecurity on students and learning is profound. Lack of consistent access to nutritious food at home can have dramatic effects on a student’s academic performance and health outcomes later in life.

In partnership with the Berkeley Public Schools Fund and its team of volunteers, we provided 1,000 food-insecure Berkeley Unified School District (BUSD) households with weekly grocery bags to every school in the district.

During COVID, many food banks pivoted to grocery bags as a method for distributing food in order to align with health protocols. As we grow our commitment to centering community members in our services, we are listening to the needs of BUSD families and working with Berkeley Public Schools Fund to redesign how best to serve them with more choice and agency.
SUSTAINABILITY

Reducing Waste with Food Recovery

We partnered with local grocery stores and wholesale markets under Senate Bill 1383 to divert surplus from landfills, saving CO2 emissions equivalent to 80 years of electricity consumption for one household!  

We are dedicated to procuring the highest quality foods possible for our members while also being an environmentally responsible organization. Last year BFN evolved our food safety standards, particularly around recovered items. We worked with our partners to ensure much of this food is the same quality you would expect to see at the grocery store.

About 80% of what we received from recovered partners was safe to distribute, saving our lean organization the time, resources, and money required to sort and compost food unfit for distribution.

BFN’s Future of Food Recovery

BFN seeks to connect with regional producers and growers to rescue pallet-size quantities of recovered food. The most effective way to reduce food waste is to recover food at the source, creating a better opportunity to resolve food insecurity. As a regional distribution organization, this will ensure we can maintain equity in food choices and quality throughout our programming and for our vast partner network.

Second Helpings with the Hub Kitchen

Berkeley Food Network is committed to finding innovative solutions to reduce food waste and to provide the most vulnerable members with high-quality and nutritious food. Our Hub Meals program does just that by transforming recovered food into vegetarian single-serving frozen meals. Three days a week, a dedicated team of volunteers selects food from our warehouse and prepares meals in a commercial kitchen. Many of these meals are 99% recovered food with only key items purchased. Most are distributed through our Home Delivery Program to support individuals facing barriers to cooking at home, such as seniors with mobility challenges.

2,000 meals served monthly
COMMUNITY

Hunger Relief Heroes

Our wonderful volunteers have been instrumental in making this past year of feeding our community a resounding success. Whether on the frontlines of our food distributions or in the warehouse, diligently packing Home Delivery boxes, these dedicated individuals have helped us create a culture of dignity and community while keeping our operations running smoothly.

589 active volunteers = 17,389 volunteer hours = 8.4 full-time staff members

We made improvements to the volunteer program to better develop and leverage our volunteers’ talents and passions to meet our mission:

- Implemented new volunteer software to streamline scheduling and volunteer intake.
- Provided volunteer training on trauma-informed food assistance and de-escalation in partnership with Leah’s Pantry.
- Launched monthly Volunteer Orientations to introduce new volunteers to BFN.
Unsung Heroes: Warehouse Wrap-up Volunteers

Hundreds of pounds of food and dozens of community members move through our 10,000-square-foot warehouse daily, so naturally it gets a little dirty. Every afternoon, our Warehouse Wrap-up Volunteers tidy and prepare the space for another day of food delivery, sorting, and distribution. These behind-the-scenes helpers are crucial to the success and safety of our programs and operations.

There is no wrap-up job too messy or humble for Caitlyn and Stephen, which is why they’ve earned their nickname among staff as “The Dream Team.” For the last two years, they’ve shown up every Thursday to mop the floors, clean up spills, and even scrub the inside of the compost bins.

“We really enjoy it. It’s not the most public or glamorous job but we love the mission and we can see how this job contributes to the whole picture.” - Caitlyn

“At a job a while ago, I saw my boss pick up trash after a staff party at our warehouse. I remember asking him why, as the boss, he was doing that task. He said, ‘You’re never too high to serve others. Remember where you come from.’ That stood out to me for over 10 years. That’s why I’m here today.” - Stephen
COMMUNITY

Art as Anti-Hunger Advocacy

Last year, local artist Eduardo Pineda brought together staff to co-create a design and concept for a new BFN mural commissioned by the City of Berkeley. Pineda’s vision for the public art piece was to generate a common understanding of food and nutrition insecurity in our community. Vibrantly wrapping around the exterior of our 9th and University warehouse, “Food For Thought” depicts 11 panels illustrating the inequitable state of food access in America; the significance of empowerment, choice, and innovation in solutions; and the vision of Berkeley Food Network for a hunger-free community.

BFN’s first Open House in the spring was a community-wide commemoration and celebration of the mural.

Photo by Erina Alejo
Partners

Acme Bread
Agriculture and Land-Based Training Association (ALBA)
Alameda County Community Food Bank (ACCFB)
Albany High School (AHS)
Albany Unified School District (AUSD)
Asian Business Institute and Resource Center (ABIRC)
Bay Area Community Services (BACS)
Berkeley Adult School (BAS)
Berkeley Arts Magnet (BAM)
Berkeley Bowl
Berkeley City College (BCC)
Berkeley Drop In Center (BDIC)
Berkeley Food Pantry
Berkeley High School (BHS)
Berkeley Public Schools Fund
Berkeley Technology Academy (BTA)
Berkeley Unified School District (BUSD)
Berkeley Youth Alternatives (BYA)
Boichick Bagels
Bridge Church
Cheeseboard
City of Berkeley - Family Wellness Center
City of Berkeley - Health, Housing, and Community Services
Department, Aging Services Division
City of Berkley, Public Health Division
Community Liberation Program
Consider the Homeless!
Cragmont Elementary
Dandelion Kitchen
Defending People’s Park (People’s Park Feeding Program)
Dorothy Day House
Downtown Streets Team
Earl’s Organic Produce
Elaine’s Love
Emerson Elementary
Food Not Bombs, East Bay Foodz
Franklin Preschool
Good Shepherd Episcopal Church
Harriet Tubman Terrace (HTT)
Help Berkeley
Hopkins Preschool
Indigenous Permaculture
J-Sei
John Muir Elementary
Kensington Farmers Market
King CDC
Longfellow Middle School
Lutheran Church of the Cross
Malcolm X Elementary
MLK Jr Middle School
Mother’s Kitchen
Multicultural Institute
Oregon Park Senior Apartments
Oxford Elementary School
Passione
Petaluma Farms
POOR Magazine
Redwood Gardens
Rosa Parks Elementary
Ruth Acty Elementary
Safeway
SAHA - Strawberry Creek Lodge (SCL)
Satellite Affordable Housing Associates (SAHA)
Self-Help Hunger Program (SHHP)
SF Produce Market
South Berkeley Community Church
South Berkeley Senior Center (SBSC)
Spiro
St. Paul AME
Sylvia Mendez Elementary
The Bread Project
The Covenant Church
Thistle
Thousand Oaks Elementary
Trader Joes
UC Berkeley Food Pantry, Basic Needs Center
UC Village - The Bear Pantry
United for Health
Urban Missions
Urban Remedy
Village Market
Washington Elementary School
Whole Foods
Willard Middle School
Women’s Day Time Drop-in Center (WDDC)
YMCA East Bay Head Start
Sources of Revenue

- **56.6%** Individual Contributions
  - $833,462

- **28.3%** Non-Government Grants
  - $416,489

- **10.5%** Donated Commodities
  - $154,006

- **1.8%** Program Revenue
  - $26,626

- **1.5%** Employer Match
  - $22,495

- **1.2%** Government Revenue
  - $18,000

- **0.2%** Corporate Giving
  - $2,527

TOTAL $1,473,605*

Operating Expenses by Program

- **87.1%** Food Sourcing and Distribution
  - $1,296,163

- **1.0%** Advancement and Fundraising
  - $14,430

- **12.0%** Administration
  - $178,211

TOTAL $1,488,804

*BFN relied on its cash surpluses to fund operating deficits as it handled outsize needs from the aftermath of the pandemic.
In July 2022, BFN changed our fiscal year from a calendar one to July through June. The transition created a short fiscal year of January 2022-June 2022. This donor list accounts for all funders between January 2022 and June 2023.

**Non-Government Grantors**
- A&P Lesbian Fund
- Alameda County Community Food Bank
- Altamont Education Advisory Board
- Bayer
- Bridge Grant (Bridge Association of Realtors)
- Clif Bar Family Foundation
- Crescent Porter Hale
- East Bay Community Energy
- East Bay Community Foundation
- Kaiser Foundation
- Medianews Group Inc.
- San Francisco Foundation
- Sunlight Giving
- UNFI Foundation
- Witkin Foundation

**Government Grantors**
- CalRecycle
- StopWaste

**Business and Corporate Donors**
- Amazon Smile
- E&J Gallo Winery
- G&G Auto Body, Inc.
- Genesys
- Moran Engineering
- North Berkeley Wealth Management
- Residence Inn Berkeley
- Star Grocery

**Recovered Foods Donors**
- Acme Bread
- Bake Sum
- Berkeley Bowl
- Boichick Bagels
- Cheeseboard Collective
- Highwire Coffee
- Kensington Farmers Market
- Middle East Market
- Passione
- Safeway
- SF Produce Market
- Spiro
- States Coffee x Bread
- Third Culture
- Thistle
- Trader Joes
- Triunfo Foods of California

**Employer Matching Gifts**
- Adobe
- Apple
- Agilent
- Charles Schwab
- Chevron
- Comcast
- Cupertino Electric
- Durfee Foundation
- F5 Networks
- Franklin Templeton
- Fremont Group
- Gen
- Genentech
- Google
- Hewlett Packard Enterprise Foundation
- Intel
- JP Morgan Chase
- Kaiser Permanente
- Kazan-McClain Partners’ Foundation
- Lam Research
- Microsoft
- Roblox
- Silicon Valley Bank

Urban Remedy
Village Market
Whole Foods
Religious and Community Organizations
Associated Students of the University of California (ASUC)
Berkeley Lions Club
Berkeley Rotary Endowment
Epworth Methodist Church
Microsoft Alumni Network
NAIOP San Francisco Bay

Individuals and Family Funds
Anonymous (76)
Hilla Abel and Asaf Shor
Julie Ackerman
Richard Adam
Susan Adams and Loring Barker
Barbara and Carlo Alesandrini
Marilee Allan and Tom Ashkenas
John Allen
Adele Amodeo
Seshadri Anantharaman
Rachel Anderson and Sally McCoy
James Andrews
Keira Armstrong
Sam Arriola and Rene Kvidahl
Doris Ash
Geoffrey and Suzanne Ashton
Carrie Avery and Jon Tigar
Irma Axelrod and Lori Piazza
David Bacher and Kirsten English
Heather Ball
John Balmes and Sherry Katz
Walter Bankovitch and Jocelyn Pou
Chris Bankovitch and Catherine Stefani
Walter and Barbara Bankovitch
Magali Barbieri
Kerry Barker
Dottie Barnett and Bill Kaufner
Andrea Barrello
Dick Baughn and Witta Priester
Sophie Beach and Qiang Xiao
Patricia Becker
Natasha Beery and Sandy McCoy
Leslie Bender
Jon and Ina Bendich
Jordan Bennett
Lisa Bereny
Cheryl and Jesse Berg
Steve Berger and Paula Hughmanick
Alex and Michelle Bergtraun
Karen Beroldo
Caroline and Michael Bettendorf
Eric and Jeni Bez
Betsy Bigelow-Teller
Robert Biniaz
Naomi Black
Susan Black
Russell Blackburn
Willow Blish
Tawwaba Bloch
Dona Boatright
Amy Bond
Victoria Bonnell
Melanie Bowden
Carol (Charlie) Bowen
Gloria Bowles
Clymela Box
Anne and David Boyder
Eva Bramwell
Esther Brass-Chorin
Alan and Laura Breiner Davy
Nancy Breslin
Dona Bretherick
Cheryl Brewster
Anna Brock and Alexandre Makler
Peter Brock
Stephen Brook
Marit Brookkothlow and Enrico Casarosa
Carol Brosgart and Joseph Gross
James Brown and Eva DeLair
Gail Brown
Neal and Agneta Brown
Justin Bugajski
Dana Buntrock
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Anne Campbell and Steve Tong
Janet and Robert Campbell
Kate Campbell King and Brian King
John Caner and Paul Booth
The Leo J. and Celia Carlin Fund
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Ian Carr
Alicia Carter
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Russell Champa
Radha Chandra
Nagarathna Chandrasekharan
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Ruby Chang
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Patricia and John Chapman
Allan Chartrand
Martha Chase
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Michael Choy and Shannon Moffett
Robert Choy and Jenny Tan
Susan and Ronald Choy
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Robert and Pamela Clark
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Betsy Cohen and Lewis Apetkar
Diana Cohen and Bill Falik
Jeannine and Aaron Cohen
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Susan Hubl
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Chris Hudson and Cindy Chang
Eric Hudson
Kathy Huff and Dave Beittel
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June Hunt
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Phyllis Isaacson
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Chuck and Locke Jaeger
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Laurence Kaplan
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Bill and Emily Marthinsen
Chris Martin and Petronella Van Berry
Martha and Thomas Martin
Chris and Sarah Martiniak
Jill and Piero Martinucci
Craig Martz
Bonnie Mattison
Together, Let’s Keep Fighting Food Insecurity with Dignity and Lasting Impact!

Berkeley Food Network Impact Report

Susi May
David and Jeanmarie Mayfield
Jacquelyn McCormick and Michael Salkin
Laura McCrea
Susan McKay and Gerry Morris
Karen McKie and Barry Krisberg
Stephanie McKown and John Brennan
Charles McLaughlin
Susie Medak and Greg Murphy
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Margaret and Contee Seely
Ira and Carol Serkes
Randall Serrurier
David Shames
Pat and Merrill Shanks
Leah Shellada
With deep gratitude and utmost admiration, BFN expresses heartfelt appreciation for founding Executive Director Sara Webber, who retired in July 2023. Sara’s remarkable dedication and leadership during her seven-year tenure have left an indelible impact on the organization. Under her guidance, BFN evolved from a concept into a $1 million organization serving over 6,500 people weekly in just five years, a testament to her exceptional influence. Her unwavering commitment to addressing food insecurity in the Berkeley and Albany communities, especially during the challenging times of the COVID-19 pandemic, ensured the uninterrupted delivery of vital services.

This list reflects board membership for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2023.
Losing my job was devastating, and our financial situation was uncertain. To assist my family as we worked towards our economic recovery, we sought out food programs, including support from the Berkeley Food Network. The dignity of the process of receiving groceries was astounding. There was no shame in the process, only kindness and patience throughout each interaction, and the best part of all, no immigration status questions. We are forever in gratitude to The Berkeley Food Network and our community for their assistance during our most vulnerable moments.

–Christina, former BFN pantry member