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“Everyone Eats!” leaders want to know: How can fresh, healthy food be available for all?

“I’ve been shocked to find out how many people are going hungry in my neighborhood.” – Leadership Team member from north Portland

Six diverse, low-income residents of north and northeast Portland have recently begun visiting food pantries, churches, grocery stores and their streets to ask neighbors some important questions. Named the “Everyone Eats” Leadership Team, this group uses a survey they helped develop to conduct one-on-one interviews to learn about the challenges low-income people face in getting enough healthy food for their families. “Everyone Eats!” is a project of Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon’s (EMO) Interfaith Food & Farm Partnership.

As north and northeast Portland neighborhoods experience rapid gentrification, low-income residents are the most deeply affected. New high-end restaurants in these neighborhoods read as signs of economic prosperity, but they overshadow the fact that neighbors are going hungry.

A related EMO project—the Northeast Emergency Food Program (NEFP), located at NE 19th and Killingsworth—has served residents of northeast Portland and beyond for over 25 years. NEFP will soon relocate to the Cully neighborhood, fulfilling developing needs there.

The “Everyone Eats” Leadership Team and NEFP will work as partners to collect at least 200 surveys this summer and conduct three focus groups in English, Spanish and Russian. In the fall, a forum will follow to inform the community of the results and invite them to participate in choosing projects to be pursued that will help get more fresh and healthy food to low-income neighbors. The long-term goal of the project is to empower residents of inner north and northeast Portland to create a secure and sustainable local food system with nutritious, culturally-appropriate food for all.

The Interfaith Food & Farm Partnership is funded by the USDA Community Food Projects Grant. The “Everyone Eats” food assessment is primarily funded by the Catholic Campaign for Human Development.

Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon is a statewide association of Christian denominations—including Protestant, Roman Catholic and Orthodox bodies—congregations, ecumenical organizations and interfaith partners working together to improve the lives of Oregonians through community ministry programs, ecumenical and interreligious dialogue, environmental ministry and public policy advocacy.

MEMBER DENOMINATIONS

African Methodist Episcopal Church ■ American Baptist Churches ■ Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) Christian Methodist Episcopal Church
Church of the Brethren ■ Community of Christ ■ Episcopal Diocese of Eastern Oregon ■ Episcopal Diocese of Oregon
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America ■ Greek Orthodox Church ■ Presbyterian Church (USA) ■ Religious Society of Friends (Quakers)
Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Portland ■ United Church of Christ ■ United Methodist Church ■ Universal Fellowship of Metropolitan Community Churches