

Jan 9, 2019 -- Letter written by Beth Barker-Hidalgo and read by Commissioner Gold

South Coast Food Share (SCFS) is one of 21 Regional Food Banks (RFB's) in Oregon that work together to provide emergency and non-emergency food in every county in Oregon. This collaboration is known as the Oregon Foodbank Network.

SCFS provides support to 47 +/- agencies throughout the year. And through those partnerships we distribute an average of 15,000 pounds of food a month to an average of 12,000.

The Oregon Foodbank Network conducted a survey last spring to learn more about the folks we are serving. Below are some interesting things we learned through this survey.

- 69% of all households accessing food pantries are at 100% or below the federal poverty level
- With the added food from a pantry, 79% of survey takers meet their household's food needs for the month
- 29% of survey respondents only access an emergency food bank 1-3 times a year while 43% of respondents indicated that they came to a food pantry 10 or more times in the last 12 months (about once a month or more frequently).
- 57% of survey takers accessing food banks in Oregon are enrolled in SNAP.
- Of the 57% enrolled in SNAP
 - 9% say their SNAP support meets their monthly food needs
 - 30% say their SNAP lasts an average of 3 weeks
 - 32% say their SNAP lasts an average of 2 weeks
 - 29% say their SNAP lasts less than 2 weeks

Federal Government is proposing a rule change to the SNAP administration. Currently areas of high unemployment, such as Coos/Curry Counties, can apply for waivers for SNAP recipients to extend benefits past the normal 3 months over 36-months rule for disabled, elderly working or working adults without children. The proposed rule change would eliminate the waivers.

We appreciate the need to restrict SNAP to those who need it most, however this change will make stabilization for community members even more difficult.

This rule is open to public comment for 90 days as of December 20th. More information on making public comment will be posted on the taking action section of Oregon Food Banks website. Folks can sign up for advocacy alerts at: <https://www.oregonfoodbank.org/get-involved/advocate/>