College of Forestry
Rootstock 2023-2024 Report

Mission

Rootstock, the College of Forestry's food pantry, actively works to provide a variety of resources and educational experiences for faculty, staff and students to ensure that more people in our community have the food and resources they need.

About

Did you know that approximately 1 out of every 4 Oregon State University students is impacted by food insecurity? The rising cost of living has forced students on the margins to skip meals to make ends meet.

To support College of Forestry students and make sure their valuable energy is focused on school instead of worrying about where the next meal will come from, the college established the Rootstock food pantry in January 2022.

Rootstock is centrally located on the first floor of the Peavy Forest Science Center and staffed by college staff and faculty volunteers. When a student visits Rootstock, they can "shop" much-needed food—including fresh fruits, vegetables, meat and dairy products—along with hygiene products and cleaning supplies. They also learn about programs available to students through the OSU Basic Needs Center, including SNAP benefits and textbook lending programs.

In addition, Rootstock works with faculty and staff to reduce catering waste after events by emailing and tweeting when leftover food is available from events and meetings.

Rootstock 2023-2024 Impacts

Thousands of items were handed out, including fresh and packaged foods, cleaning and hygiene items.

380 total students served in the 2023-2024 academic year.

Hired a part-time student worker to help with pantry shopping, restocking, and general management.

20 thanksgiving meals handed out to families this past November.

Began offering multiple days for students to visit the pantry to help with varied class schedules.

Donations came from the October CoF/ OSU Foundation crowdfunding campaign, 2nd Annual College holiday art and craft fair, bottle and can recycling, a student-led chili cook-off, food donations from Mountain Home and personal donations from faculty, staff and community members.

2023-2024 Funding

Women's Giving Circle grant $5,000

Crowdfunding campaign $13,230

Holiday art & craft fair $12,429

FSG student chili cook-off $330

Dam Proud Day dunk tank $1,030

Personal donations $1,500

Thank you to our Committee Members and Key Volunteers

- Carrie Berger
- Kevin Bladon
- Rona Bryan
- Allison Culver
- EJ Davis
- Madison Dudley (chair)
- Jennifer Elston
- Christina Fierro
- Jessica Fitzmorris (chair)
- Erin Giebner
- Eric Hansen
- Brooke Harrington
- Jeff Hatten
- Jordan Tunde
- Cathy Knock
- Kevin Lee
- Misty Magers
- Katherine McCool
- Hillary McMillan
- Mark Needham
- Amy Riley
- Seri Robinson
- Morgan Shahan
- Juliet Sutton
- Joanna Tan
- Terralyn Vandetta
- Adrienne Wonhof
- CoF communications team

Report on 2023-2024 Goals

GOAL: *Continue working on long term, permanent funding.*

➡ We are still searching for permanent funding.

GOAL: *Continue to educate students, staff and faculty on college and campus-wide resources.*

➡ Resources are shared at department meetings, and student onboarding events like START and Annual Ring, and we continue to share the program with potential donors and alumni that give to this initiative.

GOAL: *Grow our vendors and shopping attendance at the art & craft fair.*

➡ In our second year, the Art and Craft Fair, Bobbin' Through the Woods, we doubled in vendor size, hosting over 60 vendors. Due to this, we were able to almost triple our earning from this event raising $12,429.92. We were absolutely BLOWN AWAY by the generosity of our community.

➡ We started a holiday tree auction called Firs for Food Insecurity. Units around campus decorated trees that were then sold to the highest bidder. In its first year, we raised almost $2000. Trees and stands were generously donated by Starker Forests, Inc.

GOAL: *Connect with on-campus partners to see how we can support each other.*

➡ We were able to share a sizeable donation of freeze-dried food from Mountain Home with the Basic Needs Center (approx. 30 cases).

➡ Made connections with the Dept. of Finance & Admin Food Insecurity Committee to see if we could collaborate with their group.

➡ Co-chairs Jessica Fitzmorris and Madison Dudley participated in a video for the OSU Foundation to promote the Women's Giving Circle grant.

GOAL: *Collaborate with the college's Clothing Library to support their efforts.*

➡ Helped the library committee create and distribute a survey to students asking about their biggest needs. The survey had 68 student responses.

➡ Rootstock committee members helped organize the clothing library for its new leadership to move forward with their plans to create an inviting location, and better serve student needs.

Student Feedback:

• Students noted this year that they like that there are multiple days and times to visit the pantry as the pantry hours don't always align with their class schedules. We see less students at these shorter hour sessions, but the students who are visiting are students in need.

• Students responded that they appreciate the consistency of knowing what food and products will be available each week.

• Students continued to be grateful for the service, especially those who received small EBT benefits.

Goals for 2024-2025

- Continue to look for permanent funding and explore new fundraising opportunities.

- Find solutions for student pantry hours that will accommodate more undergraduate visits to the pantry.

- Find new ways to improve floorplan, customer service and volunteer support for the December Art and Craft Fair.

- Streamline committee and volunteer tasks to support Rootstock efforts in the pantry and at educational activities across campus.

- Host one film or lecture to bring awareness to food insecurity and waste.

Clothing Closet:

Rootstock committee chairs Madison and Jessica worked with RSF to create and collect data from students about what their needs are for clothing and field gear. We received 60 responses, most students didn't know about this resource. The survey allowed the Clothing Library to fine tune their services.

Top clothing needs:
1. Field clothes
2. Boots/shoes
3. Safety gear/PPE

Sizes more needed:
1. Medium
2. Large
3. Small
4. Extra Large

forestry.oregonstate.edu/rootstock