



2025 IMPACT REPORT



Growing good eaters throughout Whatcom County!



A LETTER FROM OUR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Dear Friends,

As we look ahead to our 20th anniversary in 2026, I'm filled with gratitude for the community that has grown alongside Common Threads Farm. What started as a small summer camp on Lummi Island has become a countywide food education and access organization serving thousands of kids each year.

2025 also marked an important moment for our organization — the first leadership transition in our history. I'm proud of how our team, partners, and supporters came together to ensure a smooth and successful year of growth, learning, and impact.

In 2025, our team reached 3,758 students across five school districts, supported after-school clubs and camps, and served 3,700 nourishing meals through our mobile food truck. More than the numbers, we're proud of the curiosity, confidence, and connection kids build when they learn about food in the garden, in the kitchen, and at the table.

This work is only possible because of you — our supporters, partners, educators, and volunteers. Your belief in our mission helps ensure kids across Whatcom County grow up with the knowledge, confidence, and access they need to make healthy food choices for life.

With gratitude,

Stephanie Pal
Executive Director



We're on a mission to connect kids to nourishment, from seed to table.

In the future we envision, all children grow up with access to healthy food and the skills to prepare it.

OUR WHY



68%

of Whatcom County Kids don't eat enough fruits & vegetables on a daily basis.

-2023 DOH Healthy Youth Survey



75%

of Whatcom County teachers say their students increased fruit & vegetable consumption as a result of Common Threads Farm programs.



91%

of teachers say that their students have an increased sense of excitement or adventure when trying new foods with Common Threads Farm.



Did you know? A growing body of research supports that students who spend more time outdoors during the school day have lower cortisol levels, increased academic engagement, and improved social skills!

Food is a fundamental aspect of our daily lives, and we believe that **children deserve for food to be an integral part of the curriculum.**

School gardens are a critical tool – from the wonder of watching a seed's transformation to the pride of biting into a hand-grown tomato, involving kids in growing and making their own food makes a difference in creating a healthier future.



WHAT WE DO

We reconnect children to nourishing food in the garden, in the kitchen, and at the table.

SCHOOL DAY PROGRAM

75% average improvement in students' Next Generation Science Standard performance across our classes.



We go to where students already are--at school!--and provide **food education throughout the whole school year.**



During growing seasons, our garden lessons increase classroom teacher capacity to provide **state standards-aligned science education** in a rich, hands-on setting.



In the winter, students cook delicious recipes featuring garden produce. "Adventure bites" **expand their palates**, and teamwork reinforces **social - emotional learning.**



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AFTER SCHOOL CLUBS

We provide **high-quality childcare when it's most needed**: after school and during school breaks.

By deepening skills around cooking, gardening, and life sciences via fun projects, students build **improve their self-esteem** and walk away with an increased **sense of agency**.

Cooking Club Skill Development



Cutting and dicing

Peeling and grating

Mincing and chiffonade

Following recipes and measuring

Assessing and adding spices

Teamwork



Garden Club Skill Development



Planting and packaging seeds

Plant identification

Soil composition testing

Project planning

Weighing and pricing produce

Farm stand economics



100% of after school cooking club parents said their child was more willing to taste new foods & gained culinary skills.



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SPRING & SUMMER CAMP

Favorite Camp Day Activities

Exploring With Five Senses

Insect Investigation

Plant Technologies STEM Challenge

Nature Journaling

Soil Art

Veggie Print Making

Lunches and Snacks Campers Loved To Make!

Rainbow Rice

Garden Herb Popcorn

Homemade Pasta With Kale Pesto

Root Vegetable Latkes

Fresh Spring Rolls



84%

of camp parents said their child is more interested in the outdoors as a result of camp.

100%

of camp parents said they were very likely to sign up their child for our camp again!



“I’ve never seen our kids so happy after camp. They learned so much and came home eating much healthier.”

-2025 Summer Camp Parent

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FOOD TRUCK PROGRAM

“Basil” the Food Truck isn’t just a tool for fighting food insecurity—it’s also a **mobile classroom** that expands our reach!

We understand that **food is more than just fuel**, so when we serve free after-school meals at low-income housing sites, we connect with community & learn together.

“The Food Truck has had a **significant impact** on our community by providing access to fresh, healthy food for so many children who would otherwise not have this option.

What I personally enjoy the most is seeing those kids outside, already waiting in line, waiting anxiously for the windows to be open.”

—Griselda Mendoza Vargas, Community Health Worker

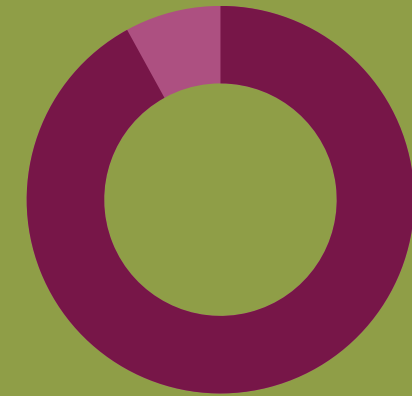


Veggie Wrap
from “Basil”

3,700+ after school meals served at 3 sites

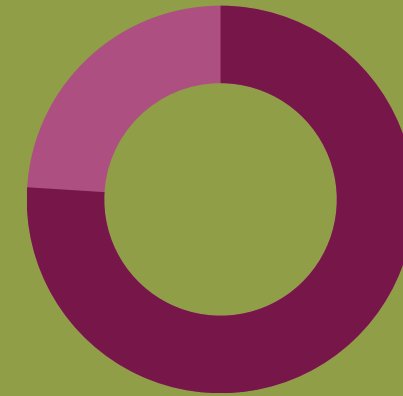


WHO DO WE SERVE?



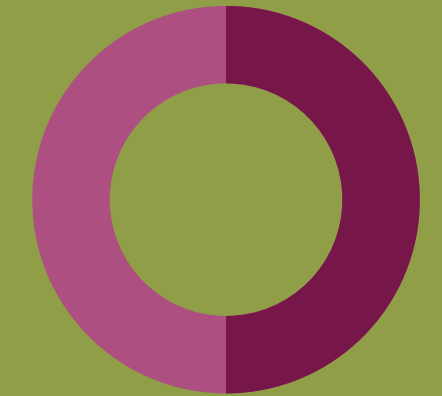
91%

of school sites are
Title I Schools



76%

of participants qualify
for free & reduced
lunch



50%

of schools are located
in USDA food desert
regions

We prioritize serving in times and areas of need.

School Day Program:

Acme Elementary	Lummi Nation School
Alderwood Elementary	Kendall Elementary
Birchwood Elementary	Nooksack Elementary
Cordata Elementary	Roosevelt Elementary
Everson Elementary	Sumas Elementary
Harmony Elementary	Skyline Elementary

Food Truck

Villa Santa Fe Apartments
Trailview Apartments
Sterling Meadows Apartments

*100% of residents at these sites
are identified as belonging to
vulnerable populations.*

2025 BY THE NUMBERS



3,758 students engaged



1004 school day lessons taught



516 hours of outdoor education during the school day



87% of teachers say students who are typically less engaged can shine during our classes



100% of club parents agree their child is more interested in cooking at home as a result of cooking club



92% of teachers say their school garden is an asset to the school community that would be challenging to sustain without Common Threads Farm

STORIES FROM THE FIELD



“During a cooking lesson with a third-grade class, I asked a student what he usually ate at home. His response was “McDonald’s!” I then asked if he ever ate vegetables like the ones we were preparing (carrots, onions, and cabbage), to which he said no.

After the class had prepared and tasted the Garden Stir-Fry, I checked back in with him. He responded with an enthusiastic nod, smile, and a double thumbs-up. I believe this small moment captured something that we work towards at Common Threads Farm: bringing joy to cooking and eating healthy, nutritious food, while **expanding kids' horizons.**”

-Ro Hyatt, Food Educator, 2025

“The **connection to our science standards** has been really wonderful. The Common Threads Farm lessons integrated perfectly with what we were working on in science.”

-Bellingham School District Teacher



“My students tried sorrel in the garden, a vegetable that none of them would have willingly tried otherwise - and they liked it. This has helped one of my children, who had a fear of foods, realize that **food is not scary.**”

-Ferndale School District Teacher



“Hearing comments like, ‘**My child has never eaten so many veggies!**’ and, ‘My kiddo loved your meal last week and wanted to make it at home!’ is common on the food truck. Community members often come up to thank us for serving their community. I have never doubted the impact of my work at Common Threads Farm”

-Mary Klingelhoef, Food Truck Team

LOOKING AHEAD

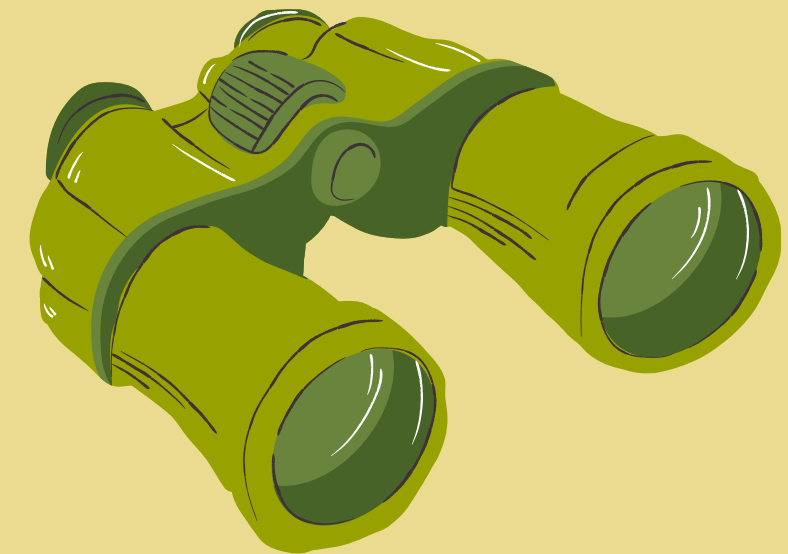
As we look to the future, our focus is on strengthening what we do best: delivering high-quality food education and access programs for kids across Whatcom County. We are prioritizing financial sustainability, program quality, and strong organizational systems to ensure our impact continues for years to come.

In 2026, we will also complete a required name change due to legal considerations. While our name will evolve, our mission remains the same: to nourish kids and connect them to healthy food in the garden, in the kitchen, and at the table.

We're grateful to walk into our next chapter with the support of a community that believes in the power of food to teach, connect, and inspire.

With gratitude,

Stephanie Pal
Executive Director



THANK YOU!

FOUNDATION & GOVERNMENT SUPPORTERS

ClimeTime
Connections: Mount Baker School District
Dudley Foundation
John E Goerlich Charitable Trust
Mount Baker Foundation
OSPI Outdoor Learning Grants
SNAP-Ed
Washington National Park Service Foundation
Washington Service Corps
Whatcom Community Foundation
Whole Kids Garden Grants
WSDA Resiliency Grant
WTA Community Van Grant

BUSINESS & COMMUNITY FUNDERS

Align Pilates Studio
Assistance League of Bellingham
Bar Cicotti
Birchwood Garden Club
Cafe Blue
Catholic Community Services
Christ the King Community Church
Community Food Co-op
Crescent Specialty Foods
Fiamma Pizza
Hammer Head Coffee
Kroger
Kulshan Brewing
Larrabee Lager Co
Lowell Elementary PTA
Mercy Housing
PeaceHealth
Steve & Eileen Nelson Charitable Fund
Stones Throw Brewing
SuperFeet

COMMUNITY PARTNERS

Bellingham Public Schools
Carl Cozier Elementary PTA
Catholic Community Services
Foothills Community Food Partnership
Irene Reither Elementary PTA
The Kitchen
Lummi Nation
Mercy Housing
Mount Baker School District
Nooksack Tribe
Nooksack Valley School District
NWESD 189
Opportunity Council
Roosevelt Elementary PTA
Skyline Elementary
Vamos Outdoors Project
Wade King Elementary PTA
Western Washington University
Whatcom Coalition for Environmental Educators

VOLUNTEERS

Thank you to EVERYONE who supported our lessons, showed up to work parties, and helped our efforts in any way! We couldn't achieve our mission without you!

Aden Houran-Corkum	Feng Zhao	Lindsey Leak
Alasia Canares	Gavin Rappe	Lisa Tiemersma
Alison Sokol	George Zavakos	Liz Rogers
Alyssa Deroco	Gerlinde Culler	Marissa Sheley
Amy Mann	Gianna Bauchman	Mary VonKrusenstien
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Barbora Skacelova	Jadyn Deroco	Nate Hampton
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Carrie Johnson	Jeffrey Werring	Paige Swift
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Casi Herrera	Jessica Mase	Patty Proctor
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Debbie Knudsen	Katheryn Bachen	Sharon Avolio
Demaris Peterson	Kathy Boland	Shruti Kapoor
Dmitri Januszewski	Katie Bergley	Stu Johnson
Elizabeth Middlebrooks	Katie George	Talia Frank
Emily Nader	Kelly Balzer	Will Middlebrooks
Emily Bonenfant	Kelsie Ferry	
Evie Gray	Kristin Riley	...and many more who
Faye Gallant	Leann Kanda	joined us for work parties
		and helped care for gardens!

2025 BOARD

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Jess Meyer

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Eva Solevad
Olivia Luplow
Tess Reeber



Growing good eaters is not possible without your support!

Thank you to everyone who nourished us with time, energy, and resources in 2025. YOU make the magic happen!

FY2025 DONORS

\$1000 & ABOVE

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Sasha Leaman
Selva Wohlgemuth
Sonja Wingard
Stuart Daubenmire
Susan Roberts

IN-KIND

Bellingham Yoga Collective
Booda Organics
Brandywine Kitchen
Chckanut Builders
Habitat for Humanity
Kent’s Garden
La Fiamma Pizza
Legacy Tree Care
Peoples Bank
Samish Bay Soaps
Sirena Gelata
Sunseed Farm
Sweet as Waffles

And many more who made garden and cooking lessons possible!



Growing good eaters is not possible without your support!

Thank you to everyone who nourished us with time, energy, and resources in 2025. YOU make the magic happen!



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www.commonthreadsfarm.org



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@commonthreadsfarm



Common Threads Farm

Volunteer



Donate



Interested in board service?

Email:

stephanie.pal@commonthreadsfarm.org



Have an event coming up? **Make a difference and book Basil the Food Truck to cater**--all catering income supports our core programs!