



RARE and Oregon Food Bank

What is the RARE Program?



The mission of the Resource Assistance for Rural Environments (RARE) Program is to increase the capacity of rural communities to improve their economic, social, and environmental conditions through the assistance of trained graduate-level participants who live and work in communities for 11 months. RARE is administered through the University of Oregon's Community Service Center and has been in operation since 1994.



"The dedicated work of the two RARE Participants has had a direct impact on the way we view our region, the way we serve our allied programs, the way we build collaborative relationships with other community partners, and the way we think about the impact of our rural farm economy."

*Peter RC Lawson, Branch Coordinator
SE Oregon Regional Food Bank, Ontario*

OFB and RARE

Since 2008, Oregon Food Bank has partnered with RARE to place participants in seven communities serving 17 counties in Oregon & Washington. RARE participants placed in collaboration with OFB have focused on local food system assessments and planning including the following elements:

- Two-part community food assessments of the target area
- Coordination and facilitation of community food system organizing events
- Working with the Regional Food Bank and the local community to promote "seed to table" style discussions

RARE Accomplishments

Communities and organizations that have hosted RARE volunteers in collaboration with Oregon Food Bank:

2008-09:

SE Oregon Regional Food Bank, Ontario, OR
Harney & Malheur Counties

2009-10:

SE Oregon Regional Food Bank, Ontario, OR
Harney & Malheur Counties

OSU Extension, John Day, OR
Grant County

CAPECO, Pendleton, OR
Umatilla, Morrow, Wheeler & Gilliam Counties

Gorge Grown Food Network, Hood River, OR
Hood River, Sherman & Wasco Counties and Klickitat & Skamania Counties, WA

CCA Regional Food Bank, Astoria, OR
Clatsop County & Pacific County, WA

2010-11:

Grant County Economic Development Office,
John Day, OR
Grant County

Ten Rivers Food Web, Corvallis, OR (2 RAREs)
Linn & Lincoln Counties

Klamath & Lake County Community Action Services, Klamath Falls, OR
Klamath & Lake Counties



Accomplishments to date:

- 5 Community Food Assessments completed covering 14 counties
- More than 250 producers, processors and farmers identified and engaged in discussion to change current sales or donation models that will support local food systems
- 6 local food resource guides published, linking producers to buyers in 17 counties
- Farm to school collaborations are underway in some communities and in planning stages in others
- FEAST food systems organizing forums held in 8 communities
- Increased community engagement to develop or bolster farmer's markets, community gardens, community kitchens and nutrition education

