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Newport Avenue Market encourages shoppers to help fight hunger during month of December via annual fundraiser

Annual Food for February fundraiser expected to generate at least \$50,000 in food donations for Bend's Family Kitchen

(Bend, Ore.) During the month of December, shoppers at Bend's employee owned and locally owned Newport Avenue Market will donate money to ensure that their neighbors have access to a nutritious meal in February, when food banks are historically low and the need for food assistance is high.

Now in its seventh year, Newport Avenue Market's own "Food for February" fundraiser invites customers starting Dec. 1 to donate any dollar amount they choose at check-out to the Family Kitchen, a volunteer-driven nonprofit that serves seven nutritious, no-cost meals in Bend each week. The market then matches 100 percent of the money raised, up to \$25,000.

Last year, the holiday fundraiser generated \$50,000 and Newport Avenue Market asks shoppers to help again this year. Since 2011, Food for February has raised nearly \$185,000 for hungry families in Central Oregon, including \$89,000 in matching funds from Newport Avenue Market. All money raised goes to Family Kitchen, meaning no admin fees are taken out of the total donation amount.

"It is not commonly known that February is one of the most difficult months for hungry families in Central Oregon," said Lauren Johnson, CEO of Newport Avenue Market. "Money is tight after the holidays, donations dwindle, and food pantries are depleted."

The origin of the Food for February program was spearheaded by Newport Avenue Market founder (and director of detail), Debbie Dory, who's mantra when it comes to helping her community is "Everyone, no matter their circumstance, deserves a hot meal."

All donations go directly to purchasing nutritious food that is requested by the Family Kitchen. By working with wholesaler SuperValu and other in-store brands, Newport stretches the value of each dollar donated by purchasing food items requested on Family Kitchen's list of needs, including dairy, meats, and fresh fruits and vegetables, in bulk at cost. "Our Food for February program offers the best donation value in term of our shoppers' dollars having the greatest impact. Donations simply go further with this program," said Johnson.

“Food for February represents Family’s Kitchen largest in-kind donation, and provides quality protein ingredients for nearly an entire year’s worth of meals for hungry neighbors who need extra help,” said Donna Burklo, Family Kitchen’s part-time development and marketing director. “Knowing the entire community pitched in to make it all happen adds a level of respect that our diners don’t often feel.”

Newport Avenue Market shoppers may participate in the fundraiser from Dec. 1 through Dec. 31 by letting the cashier at the register know how much they’d like to contribute. Shoppers can then write their names on a provided Food for February plate, which will be displayed in the store all month long.

“Food for February has been successful because of Newport’s loyal and giving customers who play a critical role in supporting the program,” said Johnson. “We can always count on our customers to support our community with their generosity.”

About Newport Avenue Market

Locally owned since 1976, Newport Avenue Market in Bend, Oregon, has been the No. 1 choice of Foodies in Central Oregon. A 100-percent employee-owned boutique grocer, Newport offers shoppers both mainstream and hard-to-find food items as well as kitchenware and unusual gifts. An 18-time winner of “Best Grocery Store” in Central Oregon by *The Source Weekly’s* annual community poll, Newport Avenue Market supports local producers, and offers an expansive selection of high-quality, in-demand food and beverage items, including 500 varieties of craft beer and cider. For more details, go to www.newportavemarket.com.

About Family Kitchen

Guided by the belief that nobody should be hungry, the Family Kitchen has been providing meals to anyone who is hungry for the past 29 years in the Central Oregon area. Family Kitchen serves three dinners and four lunches each week, averaging 5,000 meals per month and over 250 volunteers. Our mission is to serve nutritious meals to anyone in our safe and caring environment. Our patrons are treated with respect and are asked nothing but to leave with a full stomach. In the past 3 years, meals served have increased from 2,500 to 5,000 a month. In 2013, 55,970 meals were served – a 5% increase over 2012 and a 19% increase from 2011. Family Kitchen operates as a separate entity sponsored by Trinity Episcopal Church (EIN 93-0427371). For more information about Family Kitchen, please visit www.familykitchen.org.

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